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# A&M helps economic education

By MARGIE SANTAMARIA  
Although the United States is among the most literate nations, many believe its education system has failed to instruct students in basic economic reasoning.

"Educators really haven't paid a great deal of attention in educating students in economics," said Dr. John W. Allen, associate professor of economics and associate director of Texas A&M University's Center for Education and Research in Free Enterprise.

SURVEYS SHOW that most adults have never had a course in economics and the average person knows little about how the economic system works.

According to a study done by the Joint Council on Economic Education in 1973, social studies courses tend to neglect the tools of economic analysis necessary for literate citizenship. Moreover, 36 states do not require training in economics for high school teachers of social science — those most likely to teach economics. Only half of these teachers have taken a course in economics. The report also stated that only 22 percent of future teachers who have taken economics received instruction in methods for teaching it.

The same study showed that three out of four college students had not taken an economics course. Only two states, Texas and Arizona,

required a course in economics for high school graduation.

In 1961, the American Economic Association served as a co-sponsor of a year-long national television course in basic economics. The show was carried by 182 national stations and all educational television stations in the United States during the 1962-63 school year.

The program's objective was to help the general public, students and teachers gain a better understanding of economics. At the end of the course, the National Opinion Research Center conducted a study to measure the effectiveness of the course and to collect extensive information on what economics was being taught in high schools, how and by whom.

THE TESTS showed that social-studies teachers who had taken no college courses in economics did about as well as those who had taken a year or two of courses in economics. This reflected the short

range effect of college courses over about eight years, the average period since the teachers had left college.

Texas A&M is pooling its resources to take action to improve economic education by creating a university-wide program.

The Center For Education and Research in Free Enterprise, known as the "Free Enterprise Center," was endorsed by the Board of Regents early this year. Last weekend, the Center received the Eagle Award from the Invest-In-America Council, in recognition of its economic education contributions.

"Our ultimate objective is to make teachers effective in educating their students on economic matters," he said. "The Center represents the nation's first effort to coordinate a single major university or truly comprehensive and integrated program responsible for training teachers at all levels, developing original instructional materials and reaching out to non-student populations through a variety of continuing education and awareness programs."

The educational programs of the Free Enterprise Center concentrate on free enterprise. According to the information that the Center distributes, programs at the pre-college level put an emphasis on teacher training. This is offered through intensive on-campus summer training programs for public school teachers and through specially designed extension-type short courses presented at various public schools across the State.

College level programs aim to increase college student exposure to the study of economics and the free enterprise system, increase the economic content in social science teacher certification programs and encourage careers in economic education.

The Center is dedicated to providing the public with opportunities to learn through a variety of conferences, workshops, symposiums, lectures and debates.

A Research Division is used to promote scholarly research for the development of new and improved knowledge about economic systems.

ALLEN SAID the Center depends exclusively on the private donations. "We are very fortunate that 60,000 former students have provided the initial funding for the Center. We are seeking contributions from businesses and industries for annual operating expenses and for the creation of a permanent endowment," he said. The Center was given \$250,000 and has an endowment target of about \$20 million.

Because the Center is still in developmental stages, high schools have not been formally notified programs but Allen said they will be in the near future.

On November 30 six instructional leaders from across the state met at Texas A&M to discuss how they could best assist Texas teachers. It was to be a planning meeting for a spring conference that will be attended by 150-200 teachers from across the state.

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## Dump gets 'rubbish,' couple gets cleaned out

United Press International  
LONDON-It was, Richmond borough council officials admitted, "a ghastly mistake."

Three days after moving into their new public housing apartment, Mr. and Mrs. Noel Haynes came home and found nearly all their possessions were gone.

Burglars? No; city workers who had stripped the apartment and destroyed almost all its contents by mistake.

The workmen had been told to clear some rubbish from the site outside the Haynes' entrance. Instead, they entered the apartment, removed most of the contents and later destroyed them at a municipal dump.

"Drawers had been turned out, clothes had been taken and the bed of our furniture had gone," Mrs. Haynes said.

"They didn't even go into the shed," her husband said.

"Instead, they let themselves into the apartment. They said missing items included a television set, two transistor radios, an alarm clock, a coffee cabinet, four chairs, a sofa, a bed side table and many items of clothing and footwear.

"We are taking statements from the workmen concerned," a council spokesman said.

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