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Independent study tried at Brigham Young

Cut-rate college credits for self-starters

By PATRICIA McCORMACK
UPI Education Editor

Self-starters at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, can pick up \$35 college credits for \$10 apiece.

It's not done by jamming into a clearance or more-than-half-off sale run by the nation's largest private university.

Rather, it's done by independent study — a path to knowledge that requires huge lots of self-discipline.

Students cashing in on this bargain in college courses learn alone and do not sit in class and absorb from a lecture.

Once they have mastered a body of knowledge they go to an evaluation center on campus and prove they have grasped the subject. They take a test or make a speech or write a report or even put on a demonstration for a testing panel.

When they pass the evaluation, they get the \$35 credit for \$10.

The savings is possible due to many factors. But, simply, when the school doesn't pay a faculty member to instruct a student, the school saves.

Marion J. Bentley, Director of General Education at BYU, talked about the bargain in higher education. He also focused on the school's general education program aimed at

putting more structure into secondary education.

It is the drumbeat along the academic trail these days, attracting to campus a rebirth of the basics in higher education.

Harvard is getting ready to march to the beat. Ditto for Yale and lots of schools.

At BYU, according to Bentley, general education was reborn in a big way back in '76.

The trend to general education springs from dissatisfaction over

what students were picking from college catalogs for their four years' worth of higher education.

Without requiring certain courses of all students, be they pre-law or pre-computer major, some strange things were happening on college campuses.

A student, given a smorgasbord of the education equivalent of pate or stuffed olives or corned beef and cabbage.

In education, that would mean

four years of increasingly advanced courses in a certain era of history or music or art or even going very deeply for four years into one or two languages.

The person, as a result, came out of college with a degree and depth of knowledge in a certain subject or subject area.

What was wrong with that: not knowing much about anything else.

The general education movement, according to Bentley, attempts to give all students, regardless of their major or career goal, a significant range of mankind's most valuable knowledge and achievements.

"In the process, general education improves student abilities to think accurately, communicate clearly, respond esthetically, and act wisely," Bentley said.

Why general education? "It provides students with many important lifelong benefits," Bentley said.

"For one, general education can help in a person's lifework. Five years after graduation, a majority of college graduates are in jobs outside their major.

"And even if one remains in his or her chosen field, that field can progress so swiftly that knowledge gained in college quickly becomes outdated.

"A solid general education can help students develop the breadth and flexibility needed to adjust to a new job or adapt to a rapidly changing job.

"General education also teaches student skills to keep on learning."

The general education program at BYU requires students to:

—Analyze written material in a critical and logical manner and to write clearly and correctly.

—Show competence in elementary math, including basic algebra and geometry.

—Show a good grasp of knowledge of good health practices, including nutrition, disease and accident prevention.

—Demonstrate a skill outside student's major. Subject areas include but are not limited to foreign languages, ecosystems, mathematics and historical method.

Text tells survival in real world

United Press International
A new high school textbook does do with survival. But it's not about foraging for edible berries or catching fish with shoestrings and a perclip when stranded in the wilderness.

This schoolbook tells how to survive in the paper jungle in the civilized world after graduation. It gives examples of skills taught, how to read roadmaps, bus, plane and train schedules; apply for licenses or a copy of a birth certificate; register to vote; run a checkbook.

Also: how to read the classified newspaper to find a job, a place to live, a good used car or a free dog; fill out a job application, income tax forms — plus many other practical but seldom-taught matters, including how to use a mail order catalog.

The "survival" book — actually a series since there will be a different one for each state — was described in a report at the annual meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies in Houston.

Books for 26 states are ready now. Editions for remaining states will be ready by summer's end, according to Betty L. Hall, the main author and course designer.

The Texas and California versions may be republished in Spanish to serve the heavy concentrations of Mexican-American populations in those states.

Mrs. Hall, a veteran high school teacher from Naselle, Wash., says each book has its state name in its title. For example, the one for Indiana is called "Indiana Survival" (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Publishers).

Mrs. Hall, mother of six ranging in age from 9 to 31, said more than half of the contents of all the books are the same but the rest is about the individual state's laws, regulations and "paper" requirements for surviving everything from leases to loans and auto registrations.

A "glossary" in the survival books ranges from A — for absentee ballot, to W — for W-4 Form.

It lists definitions for words one must know to survive in the paper world. For example:

— annual percentage rate, borrower.

— character references, collateral, compensation, contract, credit.

— prime rate, principal, principal balance, promissory note, promissory secured loan, spouse, state income tax, tenant or lessee, 20-10 rule.

The 20-10 rule?

"Never borrow more than 20 percent of your yearly take-home pay and never have your payments more than 10 percent of your monthly take-home pay."

Bill would give teachers power

United Press International
AUSTIN — A Grand Prairie lawmaker believes it's time teachers had the right to remove problem students from their classrooms.

"We have a real problem in our schools — a problem that everybody acknowledges but one that no one has done anything about," said Rep. Carlyle Smith, D-Grand Prairie.

He said the top problem in education this past decade has been incorrigible students. Smith told the House Public Education Committee his bill would give teachers authority to remove problem students and recommend suspension.

"The teachers need this right in order to permit learning to take place in the school house, and to provide for their own personal safety and that of their students," said June L. Karp.

She said the bill would not correct the problem of incorrigible students, but would allow school districts to begin seeking alternative methods and design policies to deal with the problem.



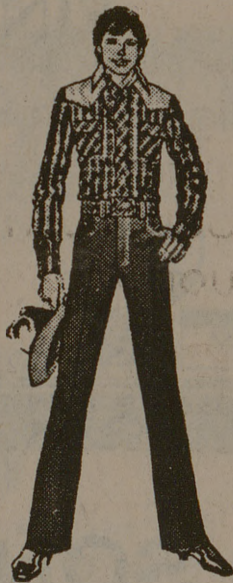
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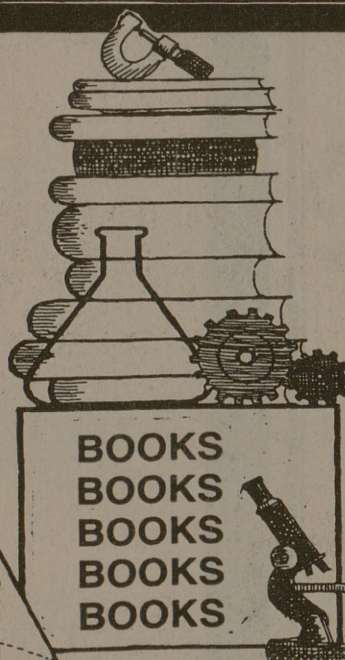
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