A Proposed Program for the Veterans' Institute at Dowagiac, Michigan

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A PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE VETERANS' INSTITUTE
AT DOWAGIAC, MICHIGAN

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by
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of this study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation of terms used</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans' Institute</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job training</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Law 346</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Law 16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship programs</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative occupational training programs</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Community</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical conditions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population factors</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of the Veterans' Institute in Dowagiac</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The problem of the returning veteran</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How schools are attempting to meet the problem</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Dowagiac approached the problem</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**CHAPTER**

**II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correspondence study</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence study in Veterans' Institutes</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult education</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans' Institutes in Michigan</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**III. THE STRUCTURE OF THE VETERANS' INSTITUTE AT DOWAGIAC**

| Academic training | 22 |
| On-the-job training | 26 |
| Agricultural training | 29 |
| Course outline for veterans training in agriculture at Dowagiac | 33 |
| Classroom | 34 |
| Farm skills and abilities | 35 |

**IV. A SURVEY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VETERANS' INSTITUTE AT DOWAGIAC**

<p>| Introduction to questionnaire on Veterans' Institute | 39 |
| Questionnaire concerning Dowagiac Veterans' Institute | 41 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Findings from the questionnaire</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ages of veterans</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of discharge</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous occupations</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous education</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present occupations</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related courses</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance in enrolling</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions for improvement of education in the classroom</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction in agriculture</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job instruction</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions for improvement of administration</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural program</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job program</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions involving restrictions placed by the Veterans' Administration</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural and on-the-job programs</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SOME FEATURES OF THE VETERANS' INSTITUTE</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHICH SHOW A NEED FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job training</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A testing program</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of candidates</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for employment</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration of the Institute</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent of Schools</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of the Institute</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional staff</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE DOWAGIAC VETERANS' INSTITUTE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for the on-the-job program</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A guidance system</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A full-time supervisor</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical instructors</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical equipment</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for the agricultural program</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration classes</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for the academic program</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A look to the future</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Distribution of Responses in Evaluation of Dowagiac Veterans' Institute by On-the-Job Trainees</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Distribution of Responses in Evaluation of Dowagiac Veterans' Institute by Agricultural Trainees</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURES</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ages of Veterans Enrolled in the Agriculture Program at Dowagiac Veterans' Institute</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ages of Veterans Enrolled in the On-the-Job Program at Dowagiac Veterans' Institute</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Education Completed by Veterans in the Agriculture Program at Dowagiac Veterans' Institute</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Education Completed by Veterans in the On-the-Job Program at Dowagiac Veterans' Institute</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The close of World War II and the return to civilian life of its large number of young men and women veterans has been a period of rapid adjustments. A large number of these adjustments have been facilitated, or at least affected, by the legislative provisions of the national government. These provisions, in turn, have been affected by the applications made of them by local communities and their agencies. One example of the local application of the aims of the veterans' benefit laws is the Veterans' Institute jointly sponsored in Dowagiac, Michigan, by the Cass County Veterans' Advisory Committee and the Dowagiac Board of Education.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. As the Veterans' Institute of Dowagiac approaches the end of its second year of operation, it is considered desirable to examine its record, to evaluate its achievements, and to discover its shortcomings. This involves a brief look at the progress made by individuals who have studied, or are studying, in one of the branches of the Veterans' Institute, and at their present employment. An effort will be made (1) to discover what
relationships may exist between the training in the Veterans' Institute and subsequent employment, (2) to ascertain what points in training are strongest or most need strengthening to best serve each individual case, and (3) to formulate a proposed future program for the Veterans' Institute at Dowagiac, Michigan.

**Importance of this study.** There are at the present time a large number of veterans enrolled in the Veterans' Institute at Dowagiac who are likely to continue with it for several years. The prospect is, also, that there will be a large number of younger men being discharged from the various services during the next few years, the majority of whom had only a high school education, or less, before entering service. It is the primary purpose, then, of this study to discover how the Dowagiac community, through its Veterans' Institute, can best improve its service to these veterans.

Of ultimately greater importance, however, is the possibility existing in the structure of the Veterans' Institute (with its academic, on-the-job, and agricultural training) for a future development into a more far-reaching Adult Education Institute to serve both veteran and non-veteran in a long-range program.
II. EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED

Veterans’ Institute.\(^1\) When referring to a Veterans’ Institute, this thesis will include any training, not on a college level, that is given by a local educational institution, as approved by the State Department of Public Instruction and the Veterans’ Administration.

On-the-job training.\(^2\) This term will refer to work experience in a regular job, supervised by the employer, plus regular classroom or correspondence study, supervised by an instructor, coordinated into a program approved, for each individual case, by the State Board of Control for Vocational Education.

Public Law 346.\(^3\) This G. I. Bill of Rights was passed by the Seventy-eighth Congress. Although it includes other provisions of a different nature as well, Public Law 346, when referred to in this study, will mean that portion of the

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Bill which is related to educational provisions. As such, its purpose is to enable former service men of World War II with over three months service to receive at government expense from one to four years of educational benefits.

As originally written, the G. I. Bill limited its benefits to men twenty-five years of age or under, or those who could prove their education had been interrupted by their military service. This was changed late in 1945 to disregard the clauses concerning age limit and interruption of education. Originally the Bill provided that tuition and book fees up to a maximum of five hundred dollars a year would be paid for veterans enrolled in approved institutions, and that fifty dollars for single veterans and seventy-five dollars for married veterans would be paid monthly in subsistence. The changes late in 1945 raised the subsistence levels to sixty-five and ninety dollars respectively. In 1948 the subsistence was raised again to seventy-five dollars for a single person, one hundred five dollars for a married person, or one with one dependent, and to one hundred twenty dollars for anyone with two or more dependents.

Public Law 16.\(^4\) This law, as referred to in the thesis, applies to its educational provisions only. Public

\(^4\)Ibid., pp. 4-5.
Law 16 is for the disabled veteran. Higher subsistence levels than in Public Law 346 are allowed for former service men of World War II with service-connected disabilities. Programs under this law for disabled veterans are subject to more close supervision than under the G. I. Bill. Each applicant is required to take a thorough battery of tests before his rehabilitation program is approved.

Apprenticeship programs. Anyone taking apprenticeship training under the G. I. Bill is required to have the same type of program as any other person not a veteran who would be serving a similar apprenticeship. This is one of the main types of on-the-job training. It applies to trades in which skills must be learned. Ordinarily an apprenticeship program is set up for a three, four, or five-year period. Examples of trades in which apprenticeship plans are used are carpentry, machinist, and plumbing.

Cooperative occupational training programs. These are programs in occupations not approved for apprenticeship. Usually the skill demanded is not as great as that of an apprenticeable trade. The training program is shorter in


6 *National Apprenticeship Program*, loc. cit.
length, ranging from three months to two years. Such training as office practice and retail selling are the more common examples of this type of program.

III. THE COMMUNITY

Physical conditions. Dowagiac is a small city of approximately seven thousand people, located in southwestern Michigan, one hundred ten miles from Chicago, and forty-three miles southwest of Kalamazoo, Michigan. For many years the city has been noted chiefly as a stove-making center, and at the present time there are three furnace companies operating. In addition, there are several other small manufacturing plants. The newest industrial concern, and one employing a large number of men, is the Kaiser-Frazer foundry, which succeeded the Round Oak Stove Company early in the summer of 1947.

The school system consists of Central School, a modern building housing the senior high school, the junior high school, and a portion of the grades; and two elementary schools in other parts of the city. In the Central School are also located the Veterans' Counseling Center and the Veterans' Institute.

Dowagiac is situated on the edge of the Benton Harbor-St. Joseph fruit area. Many of the farmers in the vicinity
are fruit farmers, and many of those who do more general farming devote a large portion of their land and time to fruit crops.

Dowagiac, surrounded by the many lakes of Cass County, is one of the natural centers of the resort area of South-Western Michigan. Much of the lake property is owned by residents of Chicago, South Bend, and other large cities, who maintain summer homes there. Also, many local people make their full-time residence on the lake shores. A number of the people from the larger cities have purchased not merely cottages or lake frontage, but actual farms in the lakes region.

**Population factors.** Dowagiac is one of the older settled areas in Michigan. Many of the families now resident in the community are descendants of the first settlers, and have been here for generations. A considerable number, in fact, are descendants of the original inhabitants, members of the Pottawattomie tribe of Indians.

About one-tenth of the present population is of the Negro race, and many of these, too, have long been resident in the community. Only a few miles outside the present city was one of the outlets of the Underground Railway, and many Negroes still here are descendants of those brought here.
during pre-Civil War days. More recently, and especially during the last three or four years, factories have brought in a number of Negro workers from the southern states.

IV. HISTORY OF THE VETERANS' INSTITUTE IN DOWAGIAC

The problem of the returning veteran. During and immediately after the close of the late conflict, there was evident in the United States a widespread desire to pay back, at least in part, to the returning veteran for the time and opportunities which he had sacrificed for the national benefit. History has shown, in previous national emergencies, that such intentions often have been expressed, but, in the midst of returning to normalcy, have failed of fulfillment.

The Federal Government, through the passage of the G. I. Bill of Rights (Public Law 346), set out to insure that tangible assistance would actually be available to veterans. Colleges immediately made provisions to comply with the legal requirements of the Bill, and to accommodate a large number of veteran students in their courses.

While a great number of veterans have, and will continue to, take advantage of the college opportunities thus afforded, there still are many more for whom a college training program is unsuited. Many are ineligible, because
of insufficient educational background; many, for example, did not complete high school work. Many others are not suited for, nor desirous of, the type of education which college training could offer them.

For this larger group, many communities and agencies interested in veterans' welfare have sought to provide comparable benefits under the provisions of the G. I. Bill. The Veterans' Advisory Committee of Cass County and the administration of the public schools of Dowagiac, the largest community in the county, were especially concerned with this non-college majority of the veterans in the county.

How schools are attempting to meet the problem. One of the most commonly used means of providing education for veterans by schools and communities was the establishment of a Veterans' Institute. These Institutes went about their central purpose in various ways. Geoffrey Moore, Director of the Lansing Veterans' Institute, found that out of ninety-two Veterans' Institutes reporting, seventy-five used correspondence school materials. Some used correspondence study in connection with on-the-job training, and

others used it for academic subjects. Either by correspondence school materials, or materials provided by teachers in the regular school system, these Institutes offered an opportunity to complete regular high school work without requiring attendance at regular high school classes.

**How Dowagiac approached the problem.** In the fall of 1945, the Veterans' Advisory Committee for Cass County, which had been taking care of veterans' problems, began to realize that the handling of veterans' affairs was beginning to assume large proportions. It seemed that a full-time counseling service would be needed. Dowagiac, the largest community in the county, was selected as the most logical location for such service.

The Dowagiac Board of Education was also seeking a way to serve its returning service men. An agreement was reached whereby the school would provide a full-time counselor, part of whose salary would come from an appropriation by the County Board of Supervisors. The school would also provide an office, in Central High School, for the counselor's use. A former teacher in the high school, just returned from four years' service in the army, was chosen as counselor. The counseling office was opened February 1, 1946.

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8 Moore, _loc. cit._
On that date, too, the Veterans' Institute was opened, primarily then as a school in which veterans studied, by correspondence course methods or in regular high school classes, with one of three ends in view: to complete courses in order to graduate from high school, to refresh themselves in preparation for college, or to prepare for a trade.

At the same time, a number of veterans were enrolled in on-the-job training programs. The agriculture program did not come into being until some months later. The first veteran was enrolled in the farm apprenticeship program on May 13, 1946.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Although the growth of Veterans' Institutes has been widespread, and the interest in that field has become great during recent years, the development of these educational establishments is yet so new that few published works dealing directly with Veterans' Institutes have appeared.

There are, however, numerous works, both published and unpublished, dealing with the closely related subjects of supervised correspondence study and adult education. These have a bearing upon some common methods used at present in Veterans' Institutes, and also serve to indicate some possibilities for desirable future development of the Institutes.

In addition to these related works, there is a considerable body of material, mainly in bulletin form, regarding the requirements and functions of this type of institution, as set up under the G. I. Bill of Rights. These bulletins are issued at intervals by the Veterans' Administration and the Michigan Department of Public Instruction. The latter Department has the responsibility for approving the training institutions and the courses offered.
I. CORRESPONDENCE STUDY

Correspondence study under supervision of qualified teachers was first employed as a means of providing additional vocational training for which regular classes were not offered.¹

Mitchell gives a good account of how supervised study can be used as a means of supplementing the curriculum of a high school. This method has been used with success in Benton Harbor High School, where emphasis on varying abilities has indicated an opportunity for individualization of training.²

In order to make correspondence study effective, proponents of the Benton Harbor plan advocate three essential characteristics for supervised correspondence study: (1) competent guidance in selecting courses, (2) a


supervisor, for advice, help, and encouragement, and to take care of the mechanics of the study. 3

It is important to remember that, while supervised correspondence study differs from regular classroom study in many respects, the objectives of both methods are almost exactly the same. School preparation should permit the student to prepare himself to live and work in a well-adjusted and effective manner in a democratic world. Supervised correspondence study provides a possible means of offering more individualized preparation than is generally available within the physical limitations of class group instruction alone. In this way it justifies its inclusion as a means of curriculum enrichment.

James strikes a keynote for this relationship:

"The usual philosophy of our educational program is to prepare pupils for life. The philosophy of this program is to prepare the pupil for his life work." 4

In a survey of five small high schools in Nebraska, Meierhenry sought to check the effectiveness of supervised correspondence study and work experience. As a result of

3 Ibid. p. 17.

questionnaires sent to students, parents, teachers and employers, he arrived at what he terms a surprising conclusion—"that organized work experience did not make supervised study a great deal more effective." 5

Meierhenry makes some points which might well be noted regarding correspondence study in general:

These general conclusions now seem warranted: The Experimental Group on the whole did as well as those who had their vocational education in a regular class, although a few of the experimental cases made lower scores and a few higher scores than one would expect. Formal work experience did not seem to provide students in the Experimental group with superiority of information as indicated by a comparison of their records with those made by individuals who had only supervised correspondence study courses. The fact that on the one hand no direct measurement of skills was made in this study, and, on the other hand, that the projects contained in all supervised correspondence study courses somewhat approximate work experience, may explain why superiority of formal work experience was not found in this study. 6

II. CORRESPONDENCE STUDY IN VETERANS' INSTITUTES

The use of some type of directed or supervised correspondence study in Veterans' Institutes was first legalized in 1945, by Act 182 of the Public Acts of that year. In order to use this type of study, the Institute must give these courses under the direction of teachers

5 Meierhenry, op. cit., pp. 81-82.
6 Ibid., p. 86.
employed by the Institute. Correspondence materials and services may be contracted for by the Board of Education and paid for at district expense. Standards of approval for all schools wishing to sell materials to Veterans' Institutes must be set up by the State Board of Education. Veterans' Institutes are allowed to purchase these materials only from schools on the approved list. 7

The State Department of Public Instruction in Michigan gives a general plan of instruction for correspondence study in Veterans' Institutes. It is as follows:

1. Designate a supervisor to take charge of the correspondence study department of the Veterans' Institute.

2. Establish a connection with one or more State Board approved correspondence schools offering the courses desired by students.

3. Plan a period of time, day and/or evening, during which time the student or students will prepare their lessons under the supervision of the supervisor, or instructor.

4. When the lessons are prepared see that they are promptly corrected locally or mailed to the home office of the cooperating home study school in accordance with the policy established.

5. Give assistance to students in problems of writing and understanding of problems where needed.

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7 Supervised Correspondence Study in Veterans' Institutes (Lansing, Michigan: State Department of Public Instruction, 1946), pp. 1-2.

8 Ibid., p. 1.
III. ADULT EDUCATION

In many instances the facilities of high schools are being put to additional use through the offering of special classes, usually in the evenings, for out-of-school young people or adults. Adult education classes vary in the scope of subject matter covered. In certain areas of the country, much emphasis is being placed upon instruction in English and in Americanization. These areas are usually port areas; for example, New York City. These cities receive the bulk of immigrants, and therefore try, through their adult education classes, to help these people become oriented to the United States.

In other parts of the country vocational courses are quite strongly demanded. This is especially true in some of the larger cities, in which industrial skills are required. Schools, through their vocational departments, have tried to meet this demand.

During the depression of the 'Thirties and until the beginning of World War II, adult education all over the country has been confronted with a large group of people in the late teens and early twenties. These people, victims of the economic strains of the period in which they lived, were highly receptive to any help they might receive educationally. Although many schools attempted to
meet this need for adult training, they still considered
it an extra function of the school, not as a basic part
of the educational program. For example:

Over one-half of the cities queried indicated
that they still obtained large proportions of their
teachers from the day school staffs. It is admitted
that this practice has its evils, and there is a
growing advocacy of hiring teachers of adults on a
full-time basis with a normal schedule of classes
divided between day and evening.9

Mort suggests a model state school system. As one
part of this school system, he includes adult education. His
proposal is for joint administration, and also joint support,
of adult education by the State Department of Education and
by the local school districts, all of this to be governed
by the State Board of Education.10

Hendrickson sums up the status of adult education
generally:

Only here and there are schools more than
vaguely aware of the new adult education clientele
which is arising to displace the old formal night
school groups. Exceptions are where community schools,
some of them of the opportunity school type, have been
developed, based largely on the principle of offering

9 Andrew Hendrickson, Trends in Public School Adult
Education in Cities of the United States, 1929-1939 (New

10 Paul R. Mort, Principles of School Administration
to adults educational experiences that they want, under informal circumstances, without any attempt to meet externally imposed requirements or specifications.11

IV. VETERANS' INSTITUTES IN MICHIGAN

It was late in 1945 that the first Veterans' Institutes in Michigan were approved. On December 1, 1945, seventeen Veterans' Institutes were listed as approved educational institutions for veterans in the State of Michigan.12 Until that time numerous schools had been approved in Michigan, but they were either colleges, high schools, or trade schools.

Dowagiac's Veterans' Institute was officially recognized in the list that appeared January 4, 1946.13 The actual approval was recommended to the Superintendent of Public Instruction by his Veterans' Institute Committee, December 24, 1945, after formal application had been made

11 Hendrickson, op. cit., p. 80.
by the Union School District Number One Fractional, Dowagiac, Michigan. Forms required as a part of the application were: (1) a statement of the proposed way of financing the Institute, (2) a copy of the resolution of the Board of Education bringing the Institute into effect, and (3) a proposed plan for operation. This latter plan had to do with maintenance of the building, instruction, courses, counseling, and attendance rules.\(^{14}\)

In July, 1946, Geoffrey Moore, surveying ninety-two Veterans' Institutes which had been in operation for several months, reached these general conclusions, which may indicate certain trends among such institutions:

1. There is no consistency in following the standards set forth by the American Council on Education.

2. In many institutes, no attempt was made to form a policy in order to meet future problems.

3. There is a noticeable lack of testing facilities available for veterans.

4. There is a considerable difference in budgetary practices in the different institutes, in tuition rates, and in the problem as to whether or not tuition would cover the expenses of the institute.

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\(^{14}\) Application for Approval of a Veterans' Institute, Form V. I. 1 (Lansing, Michigan, State Department of Public Instruction, 1945).
5. In communities where there are both an institute and an Adult Education program, there was a need for better coordination of the two programs.

6. One of the most often listed problems was the inability to receive satisfactory and immediate answers to questions asked of the Veterans' Administration.

7. Another problem was what to do in case a program could not be entirely financed by reimbursement from the Veterans' Administration.¹⁵

CHAPTER III

THE STRUCTURE OF THE VETERANS INSTITUTE
AT DOWAGIAC

The Veterans' Institute in Dowagiac, as set up in February, 1946, had two main ends in view. First and most popular was academic school training; second was the on-the-job training. Later came the farm program.

I. ACADEMIC TRAINING

The academic school training was conducted in the form of a supervised study hall. The veterans came either for five or twenty-five hours a week. Those attending twenty-five hours were considered as full-time students, and therefore were entitled to the subsistence allowance granted by the G. I. Bill. Those attending only five hours had their tuition paid, but were not eligible for subsistence payment.

The Institute was open five days a week from one until five o'clock, and on Monday and Tuesday evenings from seven to nine-thirty. During the afternoons, students taking correspondence study were supervised by the director of the Institute, who taught half days in the high school, and was allowed the other half days for this work. The
study during the evenings was supervised one night by the director, and the other night by the assistant director, who was a full-time teacher in the high school.

This plan was followed until July 1, 1947, when individualized correspondence study programs were

restricted to related instruction required in apprenticeship and other on-the-job training programs and payment for resident instruction wherein correspondence materials are used will not be made for veterans who are not pursuing such instruction as a required part of apprenticeship or other on-the-job training courses.

During this time eleven enrolled veterans were graduated from the high school. All of these were given credit for army service and training, and allowed to complete their required number of courses by either supervised correspondence training or actual high school class attendance.

Of the seventy who were enrolled during this time, seven were colored. This compares exactly with the percentage of colored people in the city. Five of the former students are now pursuing in colleges a continuation of the type of courses they took in the Institute.

---

Seventeen different types of courses were studied. The most popular study was electrical engineering, in which eight were enrolled. Auto mechanics and architecture enrolled five each; mechanical engineering and drafting each had four. Three persons selected each of the following courses: arts and decoration, modern crime detection, and plumbing and heating. Other courses in which one or two veterans were enrolled included: photography, foundry management, conservation, salesmanship, accounting, radio engineering, diesel engineering, civil engineering, civil service, and food handling.

Correspondence materials for the various courses in the Veterans' Institute at Dowagiac were obtained from the following institutions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American School</td>
<td>High school courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American School of Photography</td>
<td>Photography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Decoration</td>
<td>Interior decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence Study Department, University of Michigan</td>
<td>High school, vocational, and avocational courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Correspondence Schools Approved for Veterans' Institutes (Lansing, Michigan: State Department of Public Instruction, 1946), 3 pp.
Institutions (continued) | Courses (continued)
---|---
International Correspondence Schools | High school courses, vocational courses
Institute of Applied Science | Criminal identification and investigation
LaSalle Extension University | Higher accountancy and business management
University of Nebraska, Extension Division | High school and adult courses
Wisconsin Institute of Horology | Watch repairing

In addition to the correspondence courses mentioned, various high school courses were given in the evening. These were not limited to veterans, although in some cases all the members were veterans. For instance, a course in trigonometry was given by the high school mathematics teacher during the summer and early fall of 1946. Typewriting courses were offered during the second semester of 1946, and again a year later. The chemistry teacher taught a class of veterans and the laboratory was opened for their use. Other subjects offered by the Institute and taught by regular high school teachers, outside of school hours, were: German, carpentry, shorthand, general mathematics, history, English and physical education.
Several veterans took one or more regular high school classes as a part of their Veterans' Institute training. The Institute encouraged this plan in all cases where it was at all possible. For instance, two veterans spent from one to three o'clock each afternoon in the manual training shop, working as members of the class. Quite often the veteran did not care to pursue this type of course, for he felt his war experiences had left quite a wide gulf between him and the other students in a class.

II. ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

Since February 1, 1946, fifty-five veterans have been enrolled in either apprenticeship or cooperative training programs. There are now twenty-six actively enrolled. Nineteen of these are in apprenticeship programs which run from two to five years. Seven are in cooperative occupational training programs. The latter are divided into three groups. One is in trade and industry, four are in retail businesses, and two are in office training.

A ten-hour program of health practice is required of each one of these trainees. This training is given by the coordinator of the program, and is meant to be a help in preventing accidents on the job. At present, each trainee gets his training in health practice individually,
but the coordinator plans to enroll a group of perhaps ten who are in related industries, and teach the course to all of them at one time.

The coordinator of the on-the-job training for veterans is also the coordinator for the on-the-job training programs set up by the Dowagiac schools and local industries for high school students. He is given half a day in his schedule to take care of both of these programs. He also spends Monday and Tuesday evenings at the school, supervising the study of the trainees.

Each program, whether it is an apprenticeship or a cooperative training program, must be drawn up to meet very specific demands which are set up by the State Board of Control for Vocational Education, under the Apprentice Training Service of the United States Department of Labor. The Veterans' Administration insists that these programs be approved by the State Board of Control for Vocational Education before it will approve them. Usually the Veterans' Administration makes no additional demands on the program.

If the veteran desires to take apprentice training under Public Law 16, more difficulties stand in the way of getting his program approved. This law pays more subsistence, but the Veterans' Administration is more exacting in its demands.
An apprentice training program calls for not less than four thousand hours of employment. This must be supplemented by 144 hours of related classroom instruction per year. The coordinator in Dowagiac obtains material from the various correspondence institutions to suit the individual programs. The four hours a week (two evenings) more than take care of the requirement of 144 hours of study per year. Accumulate check on the number of hours is kept, but the veteran is allowed to miss some hours provided he meets the minimum requirement.

Certain standards are set up for apprenticeship training. They are:

1. An apprenticeable occupation is considered one which requires 4000 or more hours to learn.

2. A schedule of the work processes to be learned on the job.

3. A progressively increasing scale of wages for the apprentice that should average 50 per cent of the journeyman's rate over the period of apprenticeship.

4. Provision for related classroom instruction (144 hours per year of such instruction is normally considered necessary).

5. The terms and conditions of the employment and training of each apprentice to be stated in a written agreement and registered with the State apprenticeship council.

6. Review of local apprenticeship by a State apprenticeship council.
7. Adequate supervision and the keeping of records should be required for all apprenticeship programs.

III. AGRICULTURAL TRAINING

This section of the Veterans' Institute was put into operation in May of 1946, because the Dowagiac school system felt that it had an obligation to the farm veteran as well as to the one interested in industry or in regular academic training. The vocational agriculture teacher took over the direction of this branch of training along with the regular high school teaching.

As the summer progressed, more and more of the time of this instructor was required to handle the increasing number of veterans enrolled in the agricultural program. By the beginning of the fall semester, it had become necessary to hire a new full-time instructor to take over the entire high school agriculture program. In addition, the regular veterans' instructor found that he needed to divide the trainees into two groups. The second group was organized under another full-time instructor, to meet at Keeler, Michigan, a small fruit-belt community, fourteen miles northwest of Dowagiac.

This new instructor is a former public school teacher and a fruit farmer. Instructors in this program have to be certified by the State of Michigan. Those who are teaching agricultural subjects must be present or former agriculture teachers, or qualified public school teachers who are also farmers. Teachers of related subjects must also be approved, but do not have to be farmers; for example, the trainees are given thirty-five hours of shop, taught by the regular manual training teacher at the high school.

A full-time instructor in this program may have assigned to him from twenty to twenty-five trainees. This means that he is responsible for the amount of training these men receive. That amount of training varies with the individual man. When the trainee is first enrolled, a program is drawn up for him which must be approved by the State Department of Public Instruction and then by the Veterans' Administration. This program calls for a minimum of three hundred hours of training a year. One hundred hours consist of training on the job, mainly instruction and help given by the instructor on visits to the farm. The other two hundred hours are classroom work.

The classroom work is varied to suit the individual needs of the trainees. The veterans meet together one evening a week for a three-hour class period. In these
classes, lectures are given on various farm topics, problems of individual class members are considered, discussion groups are held, and outside speakers are brought in to talk on vital topics.

The County Agricultural Agent conducts farm meetings at intervals for all the farmers in the county. Those on the veterans' agriculture program are required to attend these meetings and receive classroom credit for that attendance. In the past year, from fifty-five to sixty hours of this type of training have been given to all the veterans enrolled in the agriculture program of this Institute.

Attendance is checked rather closely at all of the classes held. Reports have to be made to the Veterans' Administration regarding the number of hours of classes attended. Some veterans have been dropped from the program because of lack of attendance.

There is no actual testing of the veteran to find out what he has retained from the classes attended. No tests are given and no grades are reported. The Veterans' Administration simply requires that the veteran make satisfactory progress on the farm.

In addition to the full-time instructors, this program also allows for part-time instructors and half-time instructors. Anyone with a full-time job who meets the
requirements for certification may assume responsibility for the instruction of five veterans. A half-time instructor may take from ten to twelve men.

The Institute in Dowagiac has had as many as ten teachers instructing agricultural veterans. One of these has been at Hartford, one at Keeler, one at Cassopolis, and three at Marcellus. The others have been in Dowagiac. A veteran, to be eligible for this program, must work at least two thousand hours a year on the farm. He may be a farm owner, a tenant farmer, or a hired helper on the farm.

The length of the program is determined by the Agricultural Advisory Committee of Cass County. Programs are usually two or four years in length. This is providing the veteran's eligibility is for that length of time.

Eligibility is determined in the same manner as it is determined for any other student under the G. I. Bill, depending upon his length of service. Most of the programs have been set up for four years. The agricultural advisory committee is composed of the following: the agriculture teachers of the county, the county forester, the soil conservation director, the county agricultural agent, county home demonstration agent, the county Agricultural Adjustment Administration director, and extension leaders from Michigan State College.
Farm trainees who were in the program before September 30, 1947, are eligible to receive a farm trainee kit. This kit contains a large variety of tools which are most useful on the farm, and is valued at $72.00. Eighty-one of the veterans are eligible. If they discontinue, or are dropped from, the course before completing it, these tools revert to the Veterans' Administration. If they complete the course of two, three, or four years, the tools become their own property. This provision for tools is similar to that for on-the-job training in industry, which allows tools needed for a particular job, at the expense of the Veterans' Administration, up to the amount of one hundred dollars.

IV. COURSE OUTLINE FOR VETERANS

TRAINING IN AGRICULTURE AT DOWAGIAC

When a veteran seeks to enroll in the farm training program, Form Number 280, Revised, is filled out for him. This form from the State Department of Public Instruction must be approved by that office. This form is filled out according to the course outline as developed by the supervisor of the veterans' agricultural program at Dowagiac. Inasmuch as approximately three-fourths of the veterans enrolled in the Dowagiac Veterans' Institute are taking the farm program, the course outline for this work is here included.
Classroom. Each veteran will receive instruction off the farm in the classroom, laboratory, and farm shop. There will be 200 hours of instruction in the following subjects:

I. Crop Production

A. 1. Wheat
   2. Corn
   3. Oats
   4. Rye
   5. Spelts
   6. Alfalfa
   7. Beans
   8. Clover
   9. Vetch
  10. Tomatoes
  11. Melons
  12. Cucumbers
  13. Peppers
  14. Cover Crops

B. 1. Adapted Varieties
   2. Seed Bed
   3. Fertilizer
   4. Cultivation
   5. Rotation

II. Livestock

A. 1. Swine
   2. Poultry
   3. Sheep
   4. Dairy

B. 1. Housing
   2. Breeds
   3. Breeding Stock
   4. Feeding
   5. Winter Care
   6. Parasites
   7. Marketing
   8. Culling
   9. Pasture
  10. Artificial Insemination
  11. Sanitation
  12. Minerals

III. Farm Machinery

A. 1. Care and Repairs
   2. Farm Construction
   3. Purchasing Equipment
   4. Painting
   5. Water Supply

IV. Farm Management

A. 1. Farm Accounting
   2. Farm Records
   3. Analyzing Farm Business
   4. Father and Son Partnership
   5. Farm Survey
   6. Farm Credit
V. Farm Woodlot
VI. Vegetable Growing
VII. Grass Silage
VIII. Curing Hay
IX. Seed Selection
X. Landscaping Grounds
XI. Registration of Stock
XII. Laws of Heredity

XIII. General
A. 1. Developing Farm Plan
   2. Farm Land Value
3. Farm Loans
4. G. I. Bill

XIV. Fruit Production
A. 1. Apples
   2. Peaches
   3. Pears
4. Plums
5. Cherries

XV. Small Fruit
A. 1. Strawberries
   2. Raspberries
3. Melons

XVI. Farm Shop

Each program is set up so that certain skills will be taught on the farm. There is a specific list of skills used by the enrolling instructor to serve as a guide for the actual on-the-farm training.

Farm skills and abilities. Each veteran enrolled will be given instruction on the farm according to the individual farm program and for as many hours per year (50 or 100) as indicated on his farm program.

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### A. General Farming

1. Care of Farm Machinery
2. Soil Testing and Conservation
3. Marketing Farm Produce
4. Balancing Rations
5. Castration
6. Sanitation
7. Field and Fence Layout
8. Contouring, Strip Crops
9. Housing Livestock
10. Dehorning Cattle
11. Care of Livestock
12. Insect and Weed Control
13. Feeding Minerals
14. Diseases
15. Parasite Control
16. Grub Control
17. Handling Manure
18. Pasture Program
19. Seed Treatment
20. Inoculation of Legumes
21. Germination
22. Certified Seed
23. Cross Breeding
24. Survey of Farm Needs
25. Soil Water Supply and Conservation
26. Farm Land Values
27. Soil Analysis
28. Soil Types
29. Barnyard Manure
30. Plant Tissue Testing
31. Commercial Fertilizer
32. Fertilizer Formulae
33. Land Use
34. Care of Farm Woodlot
35. Family Food Supply
36. Milk Testing
37. Landscaping Grounds
38. Vegetable Storage
39. Self Feeder
40. Hog Cots
41. Candling Eggs
42. Brooding Chicks
43. Culling Poultry
44. Raising Pullets
45. Crop Rotation
46. Developing Farm Plan

### B. Small Fruit and Garden Farming

1. Selection of Varieties
2. Planting Systems
3. Arranging Varieties for Pollination
4. Adapting Fruit to Site and Soil
5. Buying Nursery Stock
6. Handling Nursery Stock
7. Operation of planting
8. Care of Young Orchards
9. Pruning Fundamentals
10. Thin Week Method of Pruning
11. Fruit Beating Habit in Relation to Pruning
12. Pruning Tools

13. Training Systems for Fruit Plants
14. Methods of Applying Fertilizer
15. Study of Spray Calendar

16. Spray Materials
17. Use of Spreaders and Stickers
18. Contact and Poison Spray Materials

19. Insecticides and Fungicides
20. Spray Coverage and Timing
21. Weather, Temperature, Humidity in Relation to Spraying

22. Prevention of Spray Injury to Foliage
23. Mixing Spray Materials
24. Pressures, Guns, Disks, Nozzles, Delivery

25. Operation of Spray Equipment
26. Power Take-Off and Separate Engine Operated Pumps
27. Fruit Insects

28. Fruit Diseases
29. Life Histories of Insects and Diseases
30. Fundamentals of Disease and Insect Control

31. Control of Rodents, Birds and Other Pests
32. Use of Frost Prevention Devices
33. Fruit Thinning

34. Controlling Set in Fruit Trees
35. Methods of Fruit Culture
36. Employment and Handling of Transient Fruit Pickers

37. Housing Transient Help
38. Grading Fruit
39. Packing Fruit

40. Kings of Packages Used in Shipping Fruit
41. Fruit Storage
42. Construction of Farm Fruit Storages
43. Marketing Fruit
44. Advertising Fruit
45. Use of Radio, Papers, Magazines, Stickers, Labels, Road Side Signs

46. Co-Operative Fruit Marketing Associations
47. Processing Fruit
48. Frozen Fruit Products

5 Ibid., pp. 4-6.
CHAPTER IV

A SURVEY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VETERANS' INSTITUTE AT DOWAGIAC

In order to check the effectiveness of the Institute, a questionnaire was distributed to the one hundred ten veterans in the Institute. Eighty-five of these were agriculture trainees, while twenty-six were enrolled in the on-the-job training program. At the time of the survey there were no veterans enrolled in the strictly academic field. The questionnaire was divided into two parts; the first part dealt with data in regard to the veteran, such as age, education, when discharged, when enrolled in the Institute and type of training he is now undergoing. The second part was an evaluation of the work of the Institute. The trainees were assured that this questionnaire would not affect their status in the Institute directly, in that they, individually, would not be connected with any statements they might make. In this way, an attempt was made to achieve a more frank evaluation.

An introductory sheet attached to each questionnaire explained the purposes of the survey and gave directions. The following pages contain a copy of this introduction, and of the questionnaire submitted to the on-the-job trainees. The questionnaire, as given to the agricultural trainees was
the same, with the exception of questions five, six, and seven of the evaluation, which were not considered applicable to the farm program.

I. INTRODUCTION TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON VETERANS' INSTITUTE

This questionnaire is a part of a study being made of the Dowagiac Veterans' Institute. The purposes of this study are (1) to find out how worthwhile the program has been to the people who are working in it; (2) to find out the weak points and strong points of the program; and (3) to find out what things can be done to make the whole program more useful or valuable to the people enrolled in it.

The information which you put on these sheets will be considered strictly confidential. These sheets will be used only by the person making the survey. After the questionnaires are tabulated, you will be welcome to the results of the survey.

Most of the questions on the sheet can be answered in one or two words. You can be of great assistance, however, if you will answer the last two questions on the page more fully.
II. QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING DOWAGIAC VETERANS' INSTITUTE
(On-the-Job Training Program)

Part I. General Information.

Name ___________________________________________________ Age ___

When discharged from service ___________________________, ___
month year

What was your last work before entering service? __________
_________________________________________________________
How long? ___

Education completed before entering service number of grades
years in high school years in college

Education while in service: (check X) ASTP________, V-12____, USAPI______, Other (Please specify)___

Courses completed ________________________________________

How long were courses worked on if not completed? _______

Course you are now taking in the Veterans' Institute (as
 carpentry, cooking, or other) _______________________________

Present occupation ______________________________________
Part II. Evaluation of the Work of the Veterans’ Institute

In questions 1-9, underline the words which most nearly describe your opinion of that item.

1. Did or does the Veterans’ Institute contribute to your present job?
   
   A great deal       Some       Not at all
   Quite a lot        Very little

2. How would you rate the instruction given?
   Excellent       Very good       Average       Poor       Very poor

3. How adequate have materials and equipment been?
   Excellent       Very good       Average       Poor       Very poor

4. How adequate have building facilities been?
   Excellent       Very good       Average       Poor       Very poor

5. How would you describe supervision of correspondence course study?
   Excellent       Very good       Average       Poor       Very poor

6. How would you describe supervision of correspondence course study?
   Excellent       Very good       Average       Poor       Very poor

7. How helpful has your employer been in regard to your program?
   Of great help     Of some help     Of no help
   Of considerable help     Of little help

8. How well have you been able to apply yourself to your courses?
   Very easily      Fairly easily     With great difficulty
   Easily           With difficulty
9. How useful have related courses been?

Of great value       Of some value       Of no value
Of considerable value Of little value

In questions 10 and 11, answer YES or NO.

10. Have you had sufficient help in selecting your courses?

11. If you were starting again, would you select the same courses?

Answer questions 12-15 in detail:

12. If your answer to question 11 is NO, what other courses would you take?

13. What related courses have you taken?

14. How could related instruction have been of more value to you?

15. How could the whole Veterans' Institute program be more helpful to you?
III. FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Ninety-one of the veterans enrolled in the Institute completed the questionnaire and returned it. Of these, seventy-six were agriculture trainees and fifteen were in the on-the-job program.

Ages of veterans. The ages of those enrolled in the agriculture program ranged from twenty to forty-three years, while the on-the-job students were between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-eight years. This seems fairly typical of the age range to be found in the veteran population generally.

The predominating age group among the farm veterans was twenty-four years, and among the on-the-job trainees was twenty-five years. Only seven of the ninety-one veterans now in the Institute who responded are beyond the age of thirty-five. A complete range of ages in the two groups is shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Date of discharge. Most of the men were discharged after the first of September, 1945, although there were eleven agriculture veterans and two on-the-job trainees who were discharged before this time. One was discharged as early as 1942, and the others were distributed throughout the two succeeding years.
Eleven veterans were discharged during November, 1945, the largest number for any one month. The number has decreased steadily since that time. Although the last discharge date noted is May, 1947, probably there will continue to be some veterans entering the program who will be discharged in the future.
Previous occupations. Sixty-four of the agriculture veterans indicated that they were working at the time of their entrance into the armed services. Forty-seven of these were working on farms in some capacity. Eight of the number were in school, five being in high school and three in college. Those working and not on farms were employed in a number of occupations, chiefly unskilled and semi-skilled.
Of the on-the-job trainees, thirteen were working and two were students in high school. Of those working, about half were employed in the same jobs in which they now are employed.

**Previous education.** There is a wide variation in educational attainment. One farm veteran had completed only six grades, while another farm veteran had had six years of college. Most of the veterans had completed high school. Thirty-nine (thirty-one farm and eight on-the-job) veterans indicated that they belonged in this category. Six agriculture veterans and one industrial trainee had attended college.

**Present occupations.** The majority of the agricultural trainees are engaged in general farming. Only seventeen indicate that they are fruit farmers, and some of these say their occupations are a combination of fruit and general farming. Practically all of the fruit farmers are in the Keeler area.

The jobs of the industrial trainees differ widely. Three are employed in retail stores. Three are automobile mechanics; two are plumbers; and two are printers. One each is employed as a wholesale cream buyer, a welder, a carpenter, a sheet metal worker, and a machinist.
FIGURE 3

EDUCATION COMPLETED BY VETERANS IN THE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM AT DOWAGIAC VETERANS' INSTITUTE
Related courses. For the agriculture veteran there have been two main related courses. These were welding and farm shop. Twenty-three indicated that they had already had the welding course, and twenty-eight had had farm shop. It is the intent of the Institute that all will have farm shop. At the present time it seems doubtful that they will all have the welding course. This is a matter of obtaining suitable instruction. As explained earlier in this study, the shop teacher in the high school, who is also qualified to teach farm shop to high school boys, is hired by the Institute to give farm shop to all the men in the program.
The school does not have the equipment to teach welding, and would have to go to an actual shop to get this equipment. Early in the program, one of the shops in town was given a contract to give a course in welding to the men then enrolled in the program. Since that time the Institute has been unable to go out and contract with such an establishment for part of its training.

The on-the-job trainees listed a large number of related courses. The largest number indicating one course was five; they mentioned mathematics. The next largest was two, and the course was blue print reading. It is understandable that these two courses would head the list, for there is adequate instruction in both of them. The regular mathematics instructor in the high school is hired to meet with the veterans taking mathematics two hours a week; that is, one of the two nights they spend at the school. As for the blue print reading, the school coordinator and veterans on-the-job training adviser is a regular shop man and qualified in this area.

Other related courses in each of which one veteran is enrolled are: bookkeeping, business law, sales promotion, metal finishing, buying, chemistry, and an International Typographical Union printers' course. Two of the trainees employed in retail stores have attended special demonstration
schools in South Bend, Indiana. These demonstration schools were courses dealing with particular products handled by the retail dealers employing the men, and were operated by manufacturers or wholesalers.

Guidance in enrolling. An overwhelming majority of the veterans stated that they were well satisfied with the help they had had in selecting their courses, and that they would take the same courses if they were enrolling again. Only one, an agriculture veteran, stated that he did not have enough help in outlining his course. Only four felt that they would select different courses if choosing again; three of these were on-the-job trainees.

On the whole the veterans rated the Institute quite highly. Perhaps this could be expected, for the government does make this type of instruction easy to take by means of subsistence payments. The average veteran in the Institute did not feel that there were any outstanding weaknesses in the first eleven items covered by the evaluation questions. This does not mean, however, that there were no weaknesses, but it does mean that the veterans generally agreed there were no glaring weaknesses in the fundamental structure of the Institute itself.

Tables I and II summarize the ratings given by the students in both branches of the Institute for the various questions.
### TABLE I

**DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES IN EVALUATION OF DOWAGIAC VETERANS’ INSTITUTE BY ON-THE-JOB TRAINEES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question number</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Number of trainees giving each rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Most favorable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Contributing to job</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Materials and equipment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Building facilities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Correspondence instruction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Supervision of correspondence</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Helpfulness of employer</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ability to apply self</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Related courses</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the responses from the on-the-job trainees, the largest number fell into the second, or very favorable, group. Question three, on materials and equipment, and
question eight, on ability to apply self, were exceptions. More men rated these two points in the favorable category.

In general, the agriculture trainees rated the items slightly higher than the industrial group. Items one, on contributing to job, and two, on instruction, were given the most favorable rating by the majority of veterans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question number</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Number of trainees giving each rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Contributing to job</td>
<td>Most favorable: 55, Very favorable: 21, Favorable: 1, Less favorable: 0, Unfavorable: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Most favorable: 47, Very favorable: 25, Favorable: 4, Less favorable: 0, Unfavorable: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Materials and equipment</td>
<td>Most favorable: 21, Very favorable: 37, Favorable: 14, Less favorable: 1, Unfavorable: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Building facilities</td>
<td>Most favorable: 19, Very favorable: 33, Favorable: 20, Less favorable: 0, Unfavorable: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ability to apply self</td>
<td>Most favorable: 28, Very favorable: 37, Favorable: 12, Less favorable: 0, Unfavorable: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Related courses</td>
<td>Most favorable: 34, Very favorable: 38, Favorable: 0, Less favorable: 0, Unfavorable: 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The suggestions made by the veterans in their answers to the last two questions on the questionnaire show some real interest in improving the operation of the Institute. As could be expected, quite a number did not feel it important enough to mention any possible improvements. Some merely said that everything was all right as now operating.

Some of the suggestions had to do with improvement of the actual class situation. Others dealt with the administrative aspects of the Institute, and still others used this as a way of voicing their objections to some of the things that the Veterans' Administration has done.

III. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Instruction in agriculture. Two things suggested by the veterans which might strengthen the regular course work were field tours and movie strips. The term movie strips seemed to refer to the whole field of visual education, with special emphasis on slides and movies. This Institute has done quite a bit with field tours and they seem to be rather well-received by the average student veteran. During the past year several tours have been arranged by the County Agricultural Agent and the Soil Conservation Director. The agriculture instructors in the Veterans' Institute program
have insisted that their veterans attend all of these tours and demonstrations if it was at all possible. Such instruction has been a very important part of the agriculture program. It is evident that this makes the instruction easier for the individual agriculture teacher. This does not imply that the plan has worked to the detriment of the student veterans' training. In this way, they have received as good, and often more meaningful, training than they might have gained from regular classroom work.

One group felt that the instructors should give more emphasis to practical applications of the courses. One suggestion was made that there be less case history; another recommended more detailed discussion of marketing and present farm conditions. Along the same line was the suggestion that the instructor stick more to present-day problems. Some felt that there should be more talks on general farming. It might be possible that the individuals who suggested more talks on general farming had not entered the course until after that topic was considered. It might appear at one time that too much stress was being laid upon a few aspects of farming, although the entire course, when completed, would show a balance of many different types of training, so as to make a well-rounded study. The Course Outline for Veterans' Training in Agriculture indicates
the broad range of farm instruction included throughout the period of training.¹

A request for "more soils" indicates that there are some veterans who want the instruction to be more specific, rather than more general. As set up at the present time, the course tends to be more general than specific. It would be impossible for any one veteran to receive the specialized instruction that he might receive as a student in agriculture at Michigan State College. With the limited number of qualified instructors, as well as the limited number of students, it would not be practicable to offer extensive courses, such as soils or the raising of one particular crop or type of livestock, when those subjects would not be of interest to a number of the veterans in the Institute. It might be possible for these trainees to receive more instruction in special topics by working at individual projects.

On-the-job instruction. Several men in this training indicated that the correspondence work was not entirely satisfactory as now set up. Some felt that they should have someone to interpret clearly the books dealing with their particular field. Others felt that the books themselves

¹ See Chapter III, pp. 33-38.
were not as valuable as they should be. For instance, three men mentioned that the books on retail selling were keyed to the large chain-store businesses and not to the small-town independents. The men enrolled in this training who work in selling jobs are employed by independent merchants.

A request for classes in different subjects has been made to the coordinator. This also came up several times in the responses to the questionnaire. As indicated earlier in the study, only one or two such courses have actually been given. The veterans indicated that they felt that specializing instructors would make the in-school part of the training more effective.

The men felt very strongly the lack of adequate instruction, even though they are aware of the conditions which make this deficiency almost unavoidable. The Veterans' Institute receives six dollars per month per veteran on this program. This sum must take care of building facilities, administration, cost of books, and instruction. To illustrate: these men come to the school two hours a night, two nights a week. The prevailing wage for high school instructors who have helped with the various aspects of the program is two dollars an hour. At four hours a week, four weeks a month, at two dollars an hour, the Institute has to
have at least six veterans taking any one course. The Institute could collect thirty-six dollars, of which thirty-two dollars would go for instruction alone. As yet this Institute has not had that many individuals enrolled in any one program at any one time. If the Institute were larger, it might be able to solve this problem, at least for some of the students. Another possible solution could be the bringing in of resource specialists from the community.

One man, who is on the program of auto mechanics, said that he would like more practical work and experiments with testing equipment and machines under the direction of an instructor. This is, of course, desirable, but at the present time not quite practicable. It would be the view of the Institute that the bulk of this type of training must come on the job. If the Institute were larger, or had at its disposal the equipment available in one of the larger technical high schools, something might be worked out in this area.

IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Agricultural program. Several men suggested that a better program could be worked out in regard to textbooks and reference materials. The agriculture instructors
depend heavily on the amount of printed material available from Michigan State College. The instructors seem to feel that this is sufficient, but some of the veterans think they could get more out of the use of agricultural textbooks.

Two aspects of publicity were mentioned. One of these was in reference to more publicity being given to the program so that the general public could know more about it. This could affect the veterans who are not now aware of the opportunity of which they can avail themselves. This publicity could also help the veteran in his relationship with the rest of the community.

Another veteran wrote that he thought the letters from the office of the Director of the Institute should be less emphatic. This was not the feeling that was prevalent among the men in the Institute. Very likely this criticism can be traced to a discrepancy on the part of the veteran himself. The Director of the Institute has, from time to time, found it necessary to write rather emphatic letters to a certain few men who did not comply with regulations set down by the Veterans' Administration. For example, two hundred hours a year of classroom work are required. Several men in the program have completed the two hundred hours in the winter months. They then took it upon themselves to
decide that during the busy season they would not come to class. The Veterans' Administration has said specifically that this cannot be done. Either they must come to school when classes are held, or their program will be terminated. The Director has had to comply with these instructions.

A good suggestion, and one that the administration might be able to do something about was to have available war surplus items useful for training and work. Other veterans indicated that they would like to learn welding. As explained earlier in this study, there are certain factors that seem to make this impossible at the present time.

On-the-job program. It was suggested that more time be spent in school by the veterans in this branch of the Veterans' Institute. The lack of enough teachers seems to hinder the achievement of this very worthwhile goal. The amount of reimbursement for instruction also keeps down the amount of time that can be spent on teaching in the school.

Another thing that the administration may be able to do something about is the request that there be more cooperation between the employer and the trainee. The coordinator of the on-the-job training program is directly responsible for this cooperation. It is his prerogative to stop the program if he finds that the employer is not complying with his part of the bargain. The Veterans' Administration
does not want the program to be a source of cheap labor for employers.

V. SUGGESTIONS INVOLVING RESTRICTIONS PLACED BY THE VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION

Agriculture and on-the-job programs. The raising of subsistence rates seemed to rank rather high in the criticisms of both groups. This has, at least partially, been taken care of by Congress by the raising of ceilings and raising of allotments. It is quite evident that the money involved plays an important part in the way the average veteran looks at the program.

Some veterans wanted longer periods of training; the maximum period of training, of course, is set by the number of months a man was in service. The usual means of figuring it is twelve months plus length of service, provided that the man was in service for at least ninety days. The maximum period is forty-eight calendar months. Even though a man may have the maximum amount of eligibility, this does not necessarily mean that he will have a four-year agriculture course. In most cases it will be four years, however. The county provides an Agricultural Advisory Board, which decides whether a program shall be two, three, or four years in length.
A complaint was that tool kits were not issued to those who started in the program after September 1, 1947. This was decided by the Veterans' Administration. There is a possibility that it may be changed later.
CHAPTER V

SOME FEATURES OF THE VETERANS' INSTITUTE WHICH SHOW A NEED FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

I. GUIDANCE

On-the-job training. The National Apprenticeship Program insures a certain amount of selection in the men who become apprentices. The programs set up have to be approved by the State Board of Control for Vocational Education, which works in conjunction with the National Apprenticeship Program. Certain principles of selection are suggested by Bergevin:

1. A good testing program should be a part of the process of selection.

2. Apprentice candidates should be between seventeen and twenty years of age, preferably.

3. A candidate for apprenticeship should be a high school graduate or the equivalent.

4. Each candidate for apprenticeship should submit an official transcript of his high school record.

5. The candidate should be physically fit for the particular trade.

6. The candidate for apprenticeship should be morally sound.

7. The candidate should show interest in learning a trade.

8. The candidate should show aptitude for trade work.
9. The employing agent should use his own judgment in the final analysis regarding selection.¹

A testing program. Under the usual apprenticeship training program, tests are of considerable value. They likewise can be of value to the veteran entering upon an apprentice program. In fact, it would be desirable to have all of the veterans go through a series of tests comparable to those given to all disabled veterans. At the present time, the veteran enrolled under the Public Law 346 does not have to be tested, although such tests would be valuable in order to find out whether he is likely to succeed in a certain work before entering upon training for it. This is left entirely to his wishes and the discretion of educational directors. Frequently veterans are allowed to start courses that they will have little chance of completing, and in which they will have little likelihood of succeeding. The expense of such a suggested program would be quite great, but probably the results would far outweigh the expense.

An objection often voiced is that there is not sufficient personnel to take care of such large numbers

of veterans in the counseling centers now set up. This may very well be a real objection in some local situations, but it should not be one in this community.

It would be very fine to have all veterans go to Kalamazoo and go through the Psycho-Educational Clinic at Western Michigan College of Education, if the clinic were prepared to handle that number of people. The clinic is not prepared to do so, so it would seem that the local counseling center should do this.

As noted earlier in this thesis, Dowagiac has had a full-time counselor most of the time since the end of the war. From February, 1945, until September, 1947, one man was hired to do just this work. He was supplied with clerical assistance. Since September, 1947, this has been on a part-time basis. The salary of this counselor has been paid partly by the school and partly by the County Board of Supervisors. It is evident that the people in this community, through their elected representatives, feel the need for such a counselor. It would be possible to have this person give a battery of tests to each one entering the program, and especially to those going into work of an apprentice nature, or those taking work of an academic nature.

There are two general types of tests that might be given in the counseling center. These would be standardized
tests, and tests made by the individual counselor or school. In most cases it probably would be easier to get a battery of standardized tests and give several similar tests which would measure aptitudes and interests. The Kuder Preference Record might be a good one with which to start. The Detroit General Aptitudes Examination might be used as one of several aptitude tests that could show a veteran where his aptitudes lie. It would be advisable to use more than one test of each type, in order that a higher degree of validity might be obtained from the testing, by comparison of results from several different ones.

For most of the apprenticeable trades, a simple test involving fundamental arithmetic, use of decimals, and writing a piece on "Why I want to be" a machinist, carpenter, or auto mechanic would prove valuable. The person making out such a test should spend considerable time on it, and should include such points as would be of significance in helping the student to reach the correct decision. In the situation that this Institute faces, probably the standardized test would be more satisfactory. The test made by an individual would work better in the case of an industrial concern which would be taking on groups of apprentices at frequent intervals, and thus could employ a man largely for the purpose of devising such tests.
Bergevin\(^2\) gives a good series of tests which he calls home made, in the Appendix F of his book on \textit{Industrial Apprenticeship}. One of these tests is for machinists, toolmakers and millwrights; another is for electricians; and a third is for draftsmen and tool designers.

In a summary of the problems of testing apprentice candidates, Bergevin gives the following suggestions:

a. Select the proper tests or make them to fit the particular need.

b. Not expect to borrow a testing program from another organization.

c. Use more than one test. One test may give a distorted idea.

d. Not rely on tests to do the whole job of proper selection. Background, school record, previous work record, and the interview should all be weighed and evaluated.

e. Know how to give the test and how to interpret it. Tests are an attempt to put selection on a scientific basis; therefore, personal opinion and hunches must give way to scientific reasoning.

f. Not be misled by advertising and hearsay about testing. A good test for you is one that works; this is the final criterion.\(^3\)

\textbf{Age of candidates.} The suggested age for candidates, seventeen to twenty, has been changed for veterans because, quite obviously, the majority of the veterans are apt to be

\footnotesize\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 249-64.
  \item \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 169-70.
\end{itemize}
beyond twenty. The young age was preferred because a man was not settled in a job at that time. Usually he had just finished high school and was looking around for something to do. A large number of apprentice programs run up to four, five, and six years, and it was well to get the man started in his late teens, so that he would be earning journeyman's pay by the time he was in his early twenties. The veterans' program had to change this, since most men were over twenty. There are at least two compensations. Men coming out of the army were just as unsettled, as far as jobs were concerned, and the subsistence allowed serves as a cushion to allow men of an older age to spend several years in training.

It was also suggested that candidates should be high school graduates. This has not been adhered to very closely, either on the veterans' program or in the school training program. Some of the veterans have not completed high school, but neither have those high school students who have started on apprentice programs after reaching the age of sixteen.

The principle of seeing to it that a candidate is physically fit is one that should be given more attention than sometimes appears. Numerous jobs have certain factors in connection with them that might render them hazardous to a worker with even a slight physical defect of a certain type. Heart weakness, loss of hearing, and poor eyesight
are common deficiencies which, even though very slight, might cause a worker suffering from them to endanger his own life or those of others if he works at certain occupations.

Opportunities for employment. There are certain services which the Institute should provide in order to be of optimum value to the veterans coming under its leadership. Germane and Germane recommend:

Three factors to be considered in vocational choosing are the interests of the individual, his special aptitudes and abilities, and the opportunities in the field of his choice.4

The first two of these factors have already been considered in what has been said concerning preference records and aptitude tests. The third factor is equally important, and is one that has not been given enough attention by our schools and colleges. Any person taking up a specific occupation has a right to know what the chances are for employment in that specific occupation at the end of his period of training. This is true of people going to college and getting professional training. It is also true of those enrolled in all branches of a Veterans' Institute. By means

of a community survey these men should have available to
them statistics regarding job opportunities in this
community.

Students should also be able to obtain some informa-
tion about the chances for employment in a chosen field on a
national scale. They should have the best ideas available
on what are the chances for their employment five or ten
years after completing their training.

Moreover, students should be informed about the
hundreds of jobs that pass into oblivion each year. Some
statisticians estimate that due to inventions
and to technological changes, about twenty-five per-
cent of our 29,000 described types of jobs will be
obsolete within five years. Young people need not
be alarmed or discouraged because of this changing
picture. But this information should help the indi-
vidual student to realize the need for discovering
his pronounced interests and special aptitudes in
some one or two of the large families of occupational
fields, or from twenty to forty different but rather
closely allied jobs, for which he is best adapted;
and in the light of these facts to prepare himself
technically, socially, physically, and emotionally
for anything within his carefully selected family
of occupations. 5

II. FINANCE

While it is not the primary purpose of this study
to find out what is the number of veterans an Institute
must have to operate, it is interesting to note the

5 Ibid., pp. 392-93.
approximate size needed to keep such an organization going satisfactorily.

Samuel V. Bennett, in April, 1948, made a survey of the Veterans' Institute at Hillsdale, Michigan, for the Upjohn Institute of Community Research in Kalamazoo. In this study, he went into the expense involved in running the Hillsdale Institute. The Institute in Hillsdale is in certain respects quite similar to the one in Dowagiac.

In that Institute there were one hundred seventy-one enrolled. Three per cent were in the high school or general course; sixty-five per cent were in the on-the-job training program; and thirty-one percent were in the agricultural program. The figures for Hillsdale were as of October 15, 1947.

The figures for the entire State of Michigan and its one hundred thirty-six Veterans' Institutes are as follows: Total enrollment, 17,367; high school or general course, twenty-five per cent; on-the-job training, sixty-three per cent; agricultural program, twelve per cent. These figures are of November, 1947.

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7 Ibid., p. 21.
Bennett suggests that if a Veterans' Institute offered only academic work, it would have to have thirty-five students enrolled in order to cover total expenses. Bennett does not take into consideration the fact that some of the expenses charged to the Institute might be absorbed as part of the regular school system. He wants it to stand alone, but it can not work that way in some situations.

He suggests that if all the trainees were on-the-job students the Institute would need five times as many to pay its way. A total of 850 hours of instruction was presumed for the academic trainees, and a total of 168 hours of related instruction is required for the on-the-job students; therefore, with one-fifth the training hours, it would take five times as many men.

It was suggested earlier in this thesis that it might be profitable financially and educationally to have a great many more on-the-job trainees in the program. An agricultural veteran's program calls for up to 300 hours of instruction per year, and by the same reasoning it would take three times as many men as for full-time academic work to make it profitable.

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8 Ibid., p. 19.
9 Loc. cit.
10 Ibid., p. 20.
In the final analysis, it is how interested the school and community are in helping out the veterans and in running a Veterans' Institute which determines how effectively it may be run. If the Institute is managed in connection with the local school, using some of the teachers from that school, using the school building and equipment, probably an Institute with twenty students in academic training at any one time could be run satisfactorily. This could bring in approximately $10,000.

III. ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTE

The staff of the Veterans' Institute at Dowagiac consists of the Superintendent of Schools, a Director, eleven instructors, and a half-time secretary.

Superintendent of Schools. The superintendent has very little actual contact with the Institute itself, but nevertheless he represents the Board of Education in actions of the Institute. He has to put his stamp of approval on anything of a financial nature or a contractual nature.

Director of the Institute. The Director, at the present time, works at the Institute on a half-time basis. The other half of his time is spent as a teacher in the local high school. For the first year and a half that the Institute was in operation, he directed the academic program.
Since the spring of 1947, there have been very few men enrolled in this program; in fact, at the present time, only one man is so enrolled. In this way, his duties, of an instructional nature, decreased decidedly. At the same time, the other two aspects of the program (agricultural and on-the-job) remained the same or became larger. The Director was given the responsibility of keeping the files for all the branches of the Institute. He also was given the important job of doing the billing for the whole program. He is directly responsible to the Superintendent of Schools for the financial status of the Institute.

The Institute has three men in positions of approximately equal authority. The Director does the billing, and handles what academic program there is; the school coordinator has full control over the on-the-job training; and the veterans' agriculture instructor has charge of the agricultural program. The only way that the Director has control over the coordinator and the veterans' agriculture instructor is through his authority to do the billing. By billing is meant the handling of all the correspondence with the Veterans' Administration, having to do with bills for instruction, administration, building facilities, and other expenses of the Institute.
The Director has no power to approve or disapprove of the way the other two men handle their organizations. These men are responsible directly to the Superintendent. The Director has the power to cause the removal of trainees from their programs if they do not comply with attendance requirements set up by the Veterans' Administration.

The Director has arranged for an extension of the Institute into the various towns in this locality. The Superintendent has delegated this duty to him. Branches have been set up in Hartford, Keeler, Cassopolis, and Marcellus.

There seems to be a weakness in the structure of the Institute in that authority is so divided that there is no direct line of responsibility. It would appear advisable to give the Director, whoever he might be, some authority over the other two branches of the Institute, and also some responsibility for the programs of these departments.

**Instructional staff.** The two previously mentioned instructors hold a bit higher position than the other nine instructors, as indicated in the paragraphs concerning the Director of the Institute. The agriculture instructor is the director of the agriculture program, and he also is responsible for a full load of twenty to twenty-five trainees. This number fluctuates from time to time, as men enter
the course, transfer from one instructor to another in the course, and drop the course.

The other special instructor is the school's vocational coordinator. This man teaches a half day, during the school year, as metal shop instructor in the high school. The rest of his time is spent in the general duties of a school coordinator, and in supervising the work of twenty-six on-the-job trainees.

Because of the many demands on his time, the coordinator should be relieved of his veterans' load. The usual answer to this is that the Veterans' Administration does not pay enough to employ a full-time supervisor. That is, of course, true, with twenty-six veterans, but in a city the size of Dowagiac, there should be more than twenty-six veterans interested in apprentice and cooperative training. If a man were able to devote his full time to such a program, it seems likely that from seventy-five to one hundred veterans could be enrolled.

The usual rate of pay for instructors who have taught the related courses has been two dollars an hour. Of course, the teachers of vocational agriculture have worked on a different basis. They take five veterans as a part-time load, and are responsible for their training and supervision on the farm. Five veterans is considered a
quarter of a full-time load, and an instructor of such a group is paid accordingly. This amounts to from $850 to $1000 dollars a year.
CHAPTER VI

A PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE DOWAGIAC VETERANS' INSTITUTE

The apprenticeship program has been made rather attractive to the average veteran. Industry has had quite a need for trained personnel, especially so since the war, for during the war the men who would have been apprentices were drawn directly into the armed services. At the end of the war, this trend was reversed.

In the latter months of the war, and particularly in the early post-war period, discharged service men were the best source of apprentices. Public opinion, coupled with the desires of employers and unions, fostered a most favorable setting and reception for this group. Training benefits provided through veterans' legislation substantially increased the total remuneration, and thereby made apprenticeship an especially attractive inducement. ¹

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ON-THE-JOB PROGRAM

There are five specific recommendations that might be made regarding the future program of this part of the Institute. They are:

1. An adequate system of guidance, with special emphasis at the time the veteran enrolls in the program.

2. A full-time supervisor.

3. More instructors from industry; fewer in proportion from the high school.

4. More practical equipment so that the veteran can be assisted better in his training by the instructor.

5. Try to have more classes with competent instructors; fewer trainees just studying from a textbook.

A guidance system. The very first thing in setting up a program for a veteran in on-the-job training should be a series of tests to measure his interests, abilities, and aptitudes. These could be given either by the school counselor, or by the man supervising this particular branch of the program. The cost of the testing could be borne by either the school district or, in the event enough veterans are enrolled, by the money received from the Veterans' Administration. The amount of money expended for these tests would be a small enough amount to pay for helping to secure the success of the trainees.

A full-time supervisor. The on-the-job section of the Veterans' Institute could be of much greater value if it were somewhat larger. The size has a great deal to do with the effectiveness, for only in this way can it be financially possible for classes to be set up in which the veteran receives adequate instruction.
In a small city the size of Dowagiac, Michigan, a man working full-time as supervisor of the on-the-job program could very likely have seventy-five to one hundred veterans enrolled in his branch of the Institute. That is not possible at this time, while the supervisor has a full-time job as metal shop teacher and school coordinator. It is too much to ask of any one person to do all of this work. It would probably be best to hire an additional man, so that one could give all of his time to the high school and coordinator job, and one would devote full time to enlarging the veterans' program.

Practical instructors. The instructors in the Institute should be specifically trained for teaching a particular subject, with an adequate understanding of practical applications. The tendency to hire high school teachers merely because they are the ones most available should be changed. This does not mean that the high school teachers could not be used, if the trainees require certain subjects which they are best qualified to give. If at all possible, it would be advisable to have instructors who are not carrying a full-time load either in industry or the schools.

Practical equipment. From this study, it has been found that often the trainees think that their related instruction is rather far removed from their actual jobs.
In setting up the programs, considerable time is spent in trying to give the right related instruction for each program. But some of the men seem to feel that they do not get very much help from reading a book on some technical subject.

If mock-up equipment could be made available to help out in several of the trades, the related instruction could be much more meaningful. This would not necessarily have to be equipment in the school. The town should be canvassed to see if any such things could be procured.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM

This branch of the program seems to be quite effective as it is now organized. The Veterans' Administration has provided considerable money and the school has done the rest in choosing well-qualified instructors for the agricultural program. These things, in themselves, tend to make a good program. If an agriculture instructor can make from two to five hundred dollars more as a veterans' agriculture instructor each year than as if he remained as a high school agriculture teacher, the program can expect to employ well prepared teachers.

Three recommendations seem desirable in regard to the agricultural program of the Dowagiac Veterans' Institute:
1. An adequate system of guidance, with special emphasis on job opportunity.

2. A full-time supervisor, or at least one man who is responsible for the entire program.

3. More demonstration classes and fewer lectures.

**Guidance.** It may be a little harder in the agricultural program than in the on-the-job program to see the vital need for a guidance system. It is, nevertheless, important that each agricultural veteran should become aware of what types of farming are best suited to the land in this area, the prospects for farming in the next several years, and his own abilities in regard to those particular types of farming.

**Supervisor.** As a result of the findings of this study, it appears that there should be a direct line of responsibility in the whole Institute. It was suggested earlier that the Director of the Institute should have authority and responsibility over the heads of the different branches. This should help to assure a better use of the money spent for such a program as this.

In the agricultural program itself there should be one man whose duty it is to know what is taught in all of the classes in agriculture. This man, probably, would be
the one who was the first veterans' agriculture teacher in the program. He should be given some authority and also some responsibility in regard to the over-all farm set-up.

**Demonstration classes.** Probably in no other field is it more true that instruction should be of a practical nature. Michigan State College, where the agriculture teachers are trained, is very much aware of this fact. All of the high school agricultural training is planned from the most practical standpoint. However, some instructors and some outside experts use the lecture method almost exclusively. Much emphasis might be placed on the importance of giving more attention to demonstrations, class discussions, and visual aids in some of the classes.

There is a wealth of auxiliary material provided through such agencies as the State Board of Control for Vocational Education and Michigan State College to aid in making farm instruction more practical. One of these is a bulletin on Teaching Techniques\(^2\) as applied to the teaching of vocational agriculture.

Another series of bulletins that should be of great help has been issued by the State Board of Control for

\(^2\) Teaching Techniques and Instructional Planning for High School Classes in Vocational Agriculture (Lansing, Michigan: State Department of Public Instruction, 1945), 49 pp.
Vocational Education. These bulletins are a series of instructional units which are set up as an outline for adult classes in vocational agriculture. The instructional units are divided into several parts. The first part is given to objectives of the unit; the second part has to do with problems to be met; the third section is a subject-matter outline; and the fourth part presents principles to be applied to practices in agriculture in the local area.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Since the Veterans' Administration decided that correspondence study would have to be supervised if it were to be handled by a Veterans' Institute, the number of trainees has dropped off so that there are hardly any taking this type of course. There is at least the hint that correspondence study without supervision was merely a means of obtaining subsistence payments from the Veterans' Administration in the easiest possible way.

There are, probably, two reasons why the academic training has decreased in number of participants to almost the vanishing point. One of these reasons is that the

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3 Repair, Operation and Construction of Farm Machinery and Equipment (Lansing, Michigan: State Board of Control for Vocational Education, 1943), 80 pp.
veterans, on the whole, have been home long enough to have made the transition from military life to civilian life. Some looked upon this academic training as a part of the transition; in fact, many could not make arrangements to attend the regular session periods when they became settled in regular jobs.

The other reason, which is of as much importance at least, is that the school has not provided the supervision of subjects, or has not provided the classes in which these men might be interested. It seems that it is the responsibility of the school to find out just what these men want, and then offer it to them. This would be in accordance with the philosophy that a school's duties do not end when a student finishes the formal school program, but that those duties extend to the entire community.

The veterans are a convenient group for the extension of school services. Within a very short time, the veterans should cease to be treated as a special group, and should be considered more as a part of the adult community. The school has a definite responsibility in meeting the needs of all out-of-school people.
IV. A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Whether any lasting good for the community as a whole is to be achieved from the few years of operation of the Veterans' Institute, depends upon whether the school district and community can make the transition from a purely veteran conception of adult education to a more inclusive idea of education for all interested adults.

There seems to be little reason to doubt that there actually is a need for many types of educational programs for adults, beyond the temporary needs of adjustment for veterans. Without Veterans' Administration assistance, this would require payment of part of the costs of such educational offerings on the part of the individuals taking such courses. It seems likely that a school district which has been as interested as the Dowagiac district has been in providing worthwhile services for its veterans, would willingly assume the obligation for its share of the finances, and would provide the leadership.
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