

**THE TECHNIQUE
OF
CURRICULUM MAKING**

BY

HENRY HARAP, PH.D.

CLEVELAND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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PREFACE

THERE is a great need for continued study in the field of curriculum making. We must preclude the development of an attitude of complacency, which unfortunately has already set in. The work thus far has been largely of a pioneer nature. We have not yet entirely cleared the woods.

Very few curriculum studies are complete and coherent projects. The absence of a completely organized methodology has left curriculum revision to individual ingenuity, with the effect that many misguided products have gained wide currency. We do not find fault with these fragmentary beginnings. It is characteristic of a new movement involving so many complex factors. The work of the pioneers is praiseworthy, but from now on we must become more exacting. It is the purpose of this book to aid in the development of a sound technique of curriculum making.

This is not a theoretical treatise. It developed as a result of actual experience in making courses of study. The actual steps in the process were recorded and later became the basis of the instructional material presented here. The illustrations are drawn from actual curriculum investigations and courses of study. There is not a single step in the technique proposed here for which a pragmatic illustration cannot be found.

The material has been tried with over a dozen graduate and undergraduate classes of mature students. In fact, the book is organized into approximately sixty meetings with

detailed directions for individual and class work. This arrangement, however, does not prevent the user from adapting the contents to his special needs.

This is an interpretative work as well as an expository work: that is, the book does not merely report how curricula are being made, but it attempts to evaluate them as well. It takes a position wherever there is a controversy or where one is obliged to choose from several proposed procedures. Two chapters are devoted exclusively to a summary and critique of the existing productive work. However, the material is so organized at every successive step as to induce the student to arrive at independent principles, policies, and procedures.

Special pains were taken to include a complete list of curriculum studies which are classified, first, by method of investigation, and second, by subject. The reader will recognize an attempt to introduce order into a field which is sadly confused.

This is a work book, not merely a reading book. It is intended that the student shall actually perform the steps which are outlined. He should have the same experiences in abridged form which curriculum makers actually have. Only by such procedure can the student prepare himself to apply the practical technique of curriculum making. The assignments throughout are arranged by subjects, making it possible for each person to become familiar with the whole literature of curriculum making in his special field and to train himself for curriculum work for that field.

I am grateful to Dr. Charles W. Hunt, Dean of the Cleveland School of Education, for making an opportunity for me to present this material to my classes; to many of my students whose ideas I have freely adopted; to Dr. Douglas Waples who took the pains to read the first draught of this material and to make suggestions which I have followed;

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to Miss Florence A. Stratemeyer and Dr. Herbert B. Bruner for the courtesy of their busy office of curriculum research at Teachers College, Columbia University, and for their valuable collection of courses of study.

HENRY HARAP

January, 1928.

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PART I

CLEARING THE GROUND FOR CURRICULUM MAKING

THE TECHNIQUE OF CURRICULUM MAKING

FIRST MEETING

THE PLAN OF THE COURSE

THE AIM OF THE COURSE

It is the aim of this course in the *Technique of Curriculum Making* to help students to make a new course of study, to revise a course of study, to evaluate a course of study, and to interpret intelligently the extensive revision of curricula which is now in progress.

THE METHOD OF THE COURSE

The method of this course is to familiarize the student with the steps one actually needs to take in making or revising a course of study. First, each step is analyzed and discussed. Second, the student studies existing curricular material which concerns the step under consideration. Third, the student is given one or more actual problems which give him an opportunity to carry out each step independently.

The course is arranged by meetings, the assignment for each being given clearly and fully. When the latter is not an exercise, the student is expected to read at least one reference and to be prepared to contribute the result of his reading to class discussion. A set of questions is furnished to guide the discussion. Whenever the student makes a report which can be followed most conveniently with the help of a written

statement, he is expected to furnish enough copies (usually typed) for all the members of the class.

Throughout the entire course, it is possible for the student to limit himself to his particular field. Whenever the references are not generally applicable, they are listed by subjects, making it possible for the student to select the references in his special field.

At the conclusion of the course, the student is expected to have collected a bibliography of the curriculum investigations in his own field, and to have familiarized himself with it to a considerable degree. He is expected, also, to be able to make a practical plan of curriculum revision.

BOOKS MOST FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO IN THIS COURSE

To help the student to select the books which he may want to purchase, we give a list which includes those books which are referred to at least twice. A university or teacher's college library should purchase all the works listed below. This list is in the order of importance.

DEPARTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENCE — *Second Yearbook; Third Yearbook; Fourth Yearbook; Fifth Yearbook.*

CHARTERS, W. W. — *Curriculum Construction*, Macmillan, 1923.

CURTIS, F. D. — *Investigations in the Teaching of Science*, Blackiston, 1926.

BOBBITT, F. — *How to Make a Curriculum*, Houghton Mifflin, 1923.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION — *Twenty-Sixth Yearbook*, Pt. I and II, Public School Publishing Company, 1926.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION — "Keeping Pace with the Advancing Curriculum"; *Research Bulletin*, Vol. III, No. 4 and 5.

BONSER, F. G. — *The Elementary School Curriculum*, Macmillan, 1921.

- SALISBURY, E. I. — *An Activity Curriculum*, Harr Wagner, 1924.
- SCHORLING, R. — *A Tentative List of Objectives in the Teaching of Junior High School Mathematics*, Wahr, 1925.
- BOBBITT, F. — *Curriculum Investigations*, University of Chicago Press, 1926.
- WELLS, M. E. — *A Project Curriculum*, Lippincott, 1921.
- BURKE, A. AND OTHERS — *A Conduct Curriculum*, Scribner, 1924.
- COLLINGS, E. — *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum*, Macmillan, 1923.
- HARAP, H. — *The Education of the Consumer*, Macmillan, 1924.
- KEELOR, K. L. — *Curriculum Studies in the Second Grade*, Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1925.
- GUILER, W. S. — *Objectives and Activities in Arithmetic*, Rand McNally, 1926.
- COUNTS, G. S. — *The Senior High School Curriculum*, University of Chicago Press, 1926.

SECOND MEETING

COMPOSING THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Determine the composition of the curriculum committee.

When a superintendent of schools decides to revise a course of study, it is necessary for him to determine who shall do the job. He may turn the work over to one of the supervisors. He may call in an outside specialist. He may organize a committee of supervisors. He may organize a committee of teachers, to be guided by an expert in curriculum construction. He may form a committee representing several branches of the educational service and call in an outside expert as a consultant from time to time. The several modes of composing a curriculum committee are discussed by a number of writers who have had practical experience along this line. The student will be obliged to read

what success these men have had with various types of curriculum-making groups and arrive at his own idea of what should determine the composition of a curriculum committee. For purposes of guidance, the following rules which should be observed in composing a curriculum-making group are proposed:

The group should consist of the most capable and most industrious persons who can do the job.

It should include persons who have the authority to call upon many teachers for assistance at any step of the process of revision.

The chairman of the group should have some knowledge of the technique of curriculum making.

The group should include the person who will be responsible for training the teachers who will carry on the new course of study.

It should include classroom teachers who will think in terms of actual conditions.

It should include principals and other supervisory officers who represent the administrative point of view.

The condition which is most frequently violated is the one which requires that the chairman of the group should have some knowledge of the technique of curriculum making. In general, many well-meaning but unsuited persons have been given the task of supervising curriculum revision. The result has been the production of courses of study which have been incomplete or faulty in some other way.

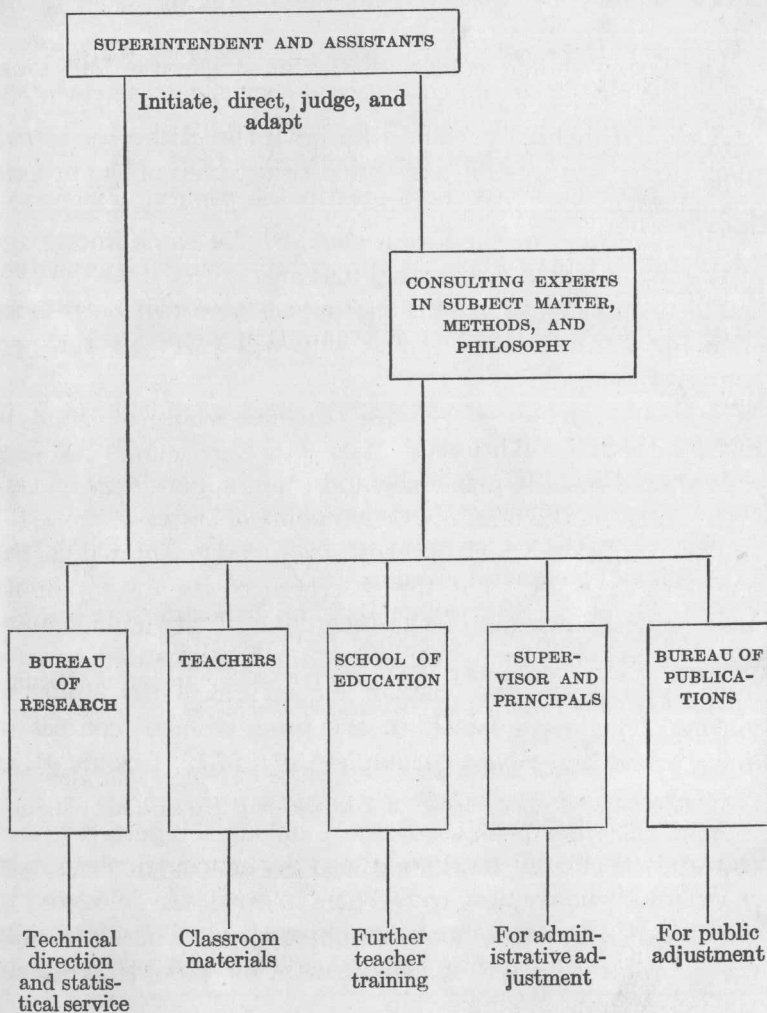
Also, there has been a failure to include the person who is to train the mass of teachers to use the new curriculum. In most cities, the training of teachers in service is delegated to the local training school or university. Therefore, the proper representative of that institution should belong to the curriculum-making group.

COMPOSING THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

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A SAMPLE OF THE COMPOSITION OF A CURRICULUM-MAKING GROUP

(According to the Research Bureau of the Cleveland Board of Education.
W. G. Connor, Director.)



ASSIGNMENT

Read as many of the following references as you can within a reasonable amount of time. Among other things look for the following information and submit in writing:

Who is at the head of the curriculum-making group?

What branches of the educational service are represented in the personnel of the curriculum-making body?

What provision is there for expert guidance?

What part do the teachers play in the program of curriculum revision?

Describe the personnel of a curriculum-revision committee for a specific situation with which you are familiar. Be prepared to justify your choice of committee members.

READINGS

- COUNTS, G. S. — "Who Shall Make the Curriculum?" *School Review*, May, 1927, pp. 332-339.
- DEPARTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENCE — *Second Yearbook*, pp. 111-125. The Denver program is given on pp. 118-120. The Cincinnati program is given on p. 121.
- FENTON, M. M. — "Curriculum Building in Seattle"; *The Elementary English Review*, March, 1926, pp. 91-94.
- FOSTER, C. R. — "Teacher Participation in Curriculum Making in Secondary Education"; *Chicago School Journal*, December, 1925, pp. 142-145.
- HORN, E. — "Who Shall Make the Course of Study and How?" *Addresses and Proceedings of the National Education Association*, 1923, pp. 971-974.
- KELLER, P. G. W. — "Rebuilding of a Course of Study"; *School Review*, January, 1924, pp. 49-52.
- KYTE, G. C. — "The Coöperative Development of a Course of Study"; *Educational Administration and Supervision*, December, 1923, pp. 517-536.

- MINOR, R. — “Making the Course of Study”; *Elementary School Journal*, May, 1922, pp. 655-664.
- MONROE, W. S. — *Making a Course of Study*; University of Illinois Bulletin, Educational Research Circular No. 35, pp. 13-17.
- NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION — “Keeping Pace with the Advancing Curriculum”; *Research Bulletin*, Vol. III, No. 4 and 5, pp. 119-124.
- SALISBURY, E. I. — “The Construction of a Course of Study”; *Educational Administration and Supervision*, October, 1920, pp. 381-387.
- STRONG, E. K. AND UHRBROCK, R. S. — *Job Analysis and the Curriculum*, 1923, pp. 72-73.
- THRELKELD, A. L. — “Curriculum Revision: How a City May Attack the Problem”; *Elementary School Journal*, April, 1925, pp. 573-582.

THIRD MEETING

DEFINING THE AIM OF EDUCATION AND THE TERM CURRICULUM

Agree on the aim of education.

Agree on the definition of the curriculum.

It is not for academic reasons that the committee of curriculum makers need to discuss and to get some agreement on the general aim of education and the nature of the curriculum. Let us take a practical illustration to show how a curriculum is completely dominated by the predetermined aim of education. Very early in Bobbitt's *How to Make a Curriculum* appears this statement: “Education is to prepare men and women for the activities of every kind which make up, or which ought to make up, well-rounded adult life: it has no other purpose; everything should be done