

Mr. Infts CTA

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What do you say?

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The University of Chicago  
The School of Commerce and Administration

March 27, 1923

*Educational Experiments*

President Ernest D. Burton  
University of Chicago

My dear Mr. Burton:

This requires no action; it is merely to keep you in touch with an educational experiment.

We have, in the spring quarter, four sections of a course called Risk and Risk Bearing. We shall conduct an experiment in the technique of collegiate instruction. A brief statement of what we are after would run something as follows:

1. We shall abandon entirely the orthodox method of presenting material, and shall use neither the lecture method nor the discussion method as those two methods have been known in the past. We shall, of course, make use of certain parts of these methods. In the main, however, we are trying a method which we believe is designed to get the following results from the students:
  - a. He is to organize the material himself, rather than have others organize it for him.
  - b. He is to come in contact with three or four times the usual amount of reading material.
  - c. This is to be accomplished by a system of squads and squad leaders - the same being designed to force upon the students themselves a considerable amount of self instruction.
  - d. Fairly active participation and cooperation by the students themselves in the instructing process.
2. The technique of the new method is, of course, to be tried out. We have so arranged the work that we can, in the course of the quarter, try the matter out in as many as five somewhat different ways. The more interesting general features of the technique are these:
  - a. An initial presentation of rather a large topic designed to give the student guide posts for his own journeying through that topic.
  - b. Small group meetings under expert guidance for the discussion of material, with two meetings a week of the class as a whole in order to make certain that important issues will be seen by the whole class.
  - c. A period of organization at the close of each major topic, in which the burden is put upon the student, of organizing the material that has been studied.
  - d. The course is to be conducted not merely as a course in Risk and Risk Bearing, but in terms of its place in the entire business curriculum. One of the main tasks of the instructors, of course, will be that of assisting the student to reach out and make connections with other functional fields.

The University of Chicago  
The School of Government and Administration

March 27, 1933

President Ernest D. Burton  
University of Chicago

My dear Mr. Burton:

This requires no action; it is merely to keep you in touch with an educational experiment.

We have, in the spring quarter, four sections of a course called Risk and Risk Bearing. We shall conduct an experiment in the technique of instruction. A brief statement of what we are after would be something as follows:

1. We shall abandon entirely the orthodox method of presenting material, and shall use neither the lecture method nor the discussion method as these two methods have been known in the past. We shall, of course, make use of certain parts of these methods. In the main, however, we are trying a method which we believe is designed to get the following results from the students:
  - a. He is to organize the material himself, rather than have others organize it for him.
  - b. He is to come in contact with three or four times the usual amount of reading material.
  - c. This is to be accomplished by a system of boards and cards, teachers - the cards being designed to force upon the students themselves a considerable amount of self-instruction.
  - d. Fairly active participation and cooperation by the students themselves in the instructing process.
2. The technique of the new method is, of course, to be tried out. We have so arranged the work that we can, in the course of the quarter, try the matter out in as many as five somewhat different ways. The more interesting general features of the technique are these:
  - a. An initial presentation of material is made to the students to give the student some basis for his own organization through the topic.
  - b. Small group meetings under expert guidance for the discussion of material with the teacher a week or two of the class as a whole in order to make certain that important issues will be seen by the whole class.
  - c. A period of organization at the close of each major topic, in which the student is put upon the student of organizing the material that has been studied.
  - d. The course is to be conducted not merely as a course in Risk and Risk Bearing, but in terms of the place in the entire business curriculum. One of the main tasks of the instructor, of course, will be that of assisting the student to reach out and make connections with other functional fields.

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3. It will be the duty of one instructor to supervise the work in general and to arrange for such measurements of the experiment as may prove feasible. We expect to have, at the end of the quarter, some considerable mass of evidence as to how the plan works.
4. This experiment is intended as a preliminary to an experiment which will be conducted next year in another course. The spring quarter experiment will put emphasis upon breaking the class into groups. The experiment next year will put emphasis upon retaining the class organization.

Yours very sincerely,

*L C Marshall*

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The School of Commerce and Administration

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President Ernest D. Burton

- 3. It will be the duty of one instructor to supervise the work in general and to arrange for such measurements of the experiment as may prove feasible. We expect to have, at the end of the quarter, some considerable mass of evidence as to how the plan works.
- 4. This experiment is intended as a preliminary to an experiment which will be conducted next year in another course. The spring quarter experiment will not emphasize upon breaking the class into groups. The experiment next year will not emphasize upon retaining the class organization.

Yours very sincerely,

*J. C. Marshall*

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