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Samples of Curriculum Design: I—A Functional Curriculum

by PATRICIA J. HARRISON

HERE WE will show our readers *a sample portion only* of this curriculum *in the making*. This is not the completed curriculum, but is intended to show one method of arriving at a genuinely functional curriculum. It is the *process* we are concerned with at this point, and it is not claimed that this is necessarily the ideal curriculum, though it looks like being a very practical one. The target population is urban lay leaders in Papua New Guinea.

The writers used the *Do* and *Know* model. (Some vary this with *Do*, *Be* and *Know*.) They first sat down and listed the main things urban lay leaders need to be able to *Do*. Then they listed what these leaders would need to *Know* in order to be able to *Do* these things. The *Do* list in a sense is a list of behavioural objectives, and the *Know* list shows cognitive steps involved in reaching those objectives. The correlation of the two lists quite precisely ensures that the lay leader's limited time is not frittered away with knowledge for its own sake. From the two lists, course areas and, later, specific courses can be drawn up. It is important that the churches and the prospective students have a part in contributing their insights to the *Do* and *Know* lists, and that some leeway be left for individual guided research, contract studies, etc., to meet needs as they arise. A good curriculum should have some 'open' areas like this, and should not be completely 'closed' or predetermined. There needs to be flexibility enough to respond to needs and to the promptings of the Spirit. Such 'open' spots can be within existing courses; they can also accommodate full courses designed to meet needs.

If the *Be* section ('What do we want the student to *Be*?') is omitted, this must be subsumed in the *Do* and *Know* lists as appropriate.

Here are a few sample sections from the curriculum-in-the-making: [p. 146](#)

A. WHAT DO URBAN LAYMEN NEED TO BE ABLE TO *DO*?

AREA 1: SPIRITUAL AND CHURCH LIFE

- ___ Use Bible, prayer, fellowship and service for spiritual food.
- ___ Witness to, and build up others in the Christian faith.
- ___ Demonstrate Christian character increasingly.
- ___ Discover and use gifts to develop the local congregation, and local and international outreach.

AREA 2: FAMILY LIFE

- ___ Fulfil Christian duties and experience joy at each stage of psycho-sexual development.
- ___ Prepare for marriage with patience, purity and joy.
- ___ Act responsibly within the extended family.
- ___ Use the home for Christian outreach and hospitality.

AREA 3: CULTURAL LIFE

- ___ Worship in a meaningful way with others.
- ___ Celebrate important personal, family and community events in a Christian and culturally significant manner.
- ___ Carefully think about enjoy traditional life.

- ___ Evaluate, respect and use traditional and other cultures on a Christian basis.

AREA 4: COMMUNITY LIFE

- ___ Be a good employer, employee, or job-seeker.
- ___ Make creative use of leisure time, and participate in sports, hobbies, etc.
- ___ Take responsible action to improve community life.
- ___ Develop both a local and an international perspective and concern.

N.B. These are general areas only, the counterpart of general objectives, and obviously must be developed in more detail lest they remain merely visionary. The same applies to the *Know* items below. [p. 147](#)

B. WHAT DO URBAN LAYMEN NEED TO *KNOW* IN ORDER TO DO THESE THINGS?

Each Area from the *Do* section is developed in the following *Know* section, and all items in the *Know* section relate definitely to items in the *Do* section.

We are not reprinting the whole *Know* section here; just to show the process, we reproduce one area only, and have picked for this purpose one of the areas which is generally not thought about as much as it should be in curriculum planning:

AREA 3: CULTURAL LIFE

The student will need to *Know*:

- ___ Scriptural principles for evaluating aspects of culture (this would include some theological as well as direct Biblical study).
- ___ How to evaluate and utilize cultural values and customs from a Christian perspective. This also involves:
 - ___ Knowing the *meaning* of customs connected with birth, initiation, marriage and death, etc.
 - ___ Anthropological insights.
 - ___ Seeing the variety in customs, but the common needs and aspirations involved.
 - ___ Differences between Animism and Christianity.
- ___ Understanding and accepting one's own culture within Christian guidelines, and respecting other cultures:
 - ___ Learning about various cultures, and sharing in several types of music, dress, food, drama, etc.
- ___ Use of local culture in making Christian faith relevant:
 - ___ Singing, musical forms, drama, story-telling, etc.
 - ___ Selection of topics and issues which need Christian influence.

C. SUMMARY OF COURSE AREAS

The final step, in this still preliminary phase, is to summarize the general *Areas of Study*—these are not yet specific courses. We find the following result. Notice that in each area of study elements of both *Knowing* and *Doing* are included. No section is wholly theoretical. [p. 148](#)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----|------------------|
| 1. KNOWING AND SHARING OUR FAITH | (Doctrine
1 course | and | Witness) |
| 2. KNOWING AND OBEYING OUR LORD | (Doctrine
1 course | and | personal ethics) |

3. KNOWING AND USING OUR BIBLE	(Biblical Studies; Conducting Bible Study Groups etc.) 2–3 courses
4. OUR PLACE IN THE CHURCH	(Ecclesiology and practical studies) 2 courses
5. OUR PLACE IN THE FAMILY	(Bible and practical studies) 2 courses
6. OUR PLACE IN THE COMMUNITY	(Bible principles; local culture; ethics; practical studies; theology of work, leisure and social involvement) 2 courses or more

TOTAL: 10–12 courses. p. 149

Samples of Curriculum Design: II—A Spiral Curriculum

by PATRICIA J. HARRISON

THE PREVIOUS article also mentioned the Spiral Curriculum, by which the designers develop a series of very concise fundamental ideas of a discipline (or of several disciplines, in an integrated course). These six to 15 fundamental ideas represent, not minimal understandings of a subject, but those basic concepts which represent the total structure of thought in the area. The spiral approach is to return constantly to these same ideas, but each time in a more sophisticated manner, gradually developing understanding and illustrating the idea in greater depth and variety. The approach fits in well with material which has its own internal logic. We have suggested that a good curriculum does not include such knowledge for its own sake however, but because a basic task analysis (a *Do* list like that in Sample I above) shows the students' need for it. This then, is an approach to be used *after* the basic *Do* and *Know* lists have been done (or after application of some other functional approach).

FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS OF SOCIOLOGY

The theoretical structure of sociology has been developed with Professor Robert Perrucci of Purdue University.

(1) Human societies exhibit patterned social behaviour that can be described and explained.