

On-Job Training Sharpens Future Voc. Ag. Teachers

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"Learning to do, doing to learn," motto of the Future Farmers of America, is also a basic principle of the program for teacher education in agriculture at the University of Arizona.

The role of the teacher of vocational agriculture (or advisor as he is often known to his students) is more than that of a classroom instructor. Preparation for this work, therefore, includes a background of farm experience, college courses in the major branches of Arizona's agriculture and professional content on the art and science of teaching. To develop the abilities required of a beginning teacher the pre-service training program provides both theory and practice.

Duties Are Varied

Since regular classroom teaching occupies only about 35 per cent of the teacher's professional time, many of the other duties are performed outside the school. Most important of these is supervision of student farming activities. This is the teacher's main responsibility in summer.

Other work includes the teaching of adults, usually in the evening, advising the FFA chapter, community and public relations, maintenance of facilities, guidance and counseling of students, general school activities and professional improvement.

Year-Around Job

Farming, especially in Arizona, is an all-year activity. Effective teaching "at the doing level" is therefore a continuous

process. Although there are no regular high school classes in summer, this is the productive period for the teacher in terms of educational service to the community.

In order to give prospective teachers experience in both summer and winter activities, nine weeks of apprentice teaching is divided into two periods. The first is in August and September preceding the senior year in college. The second period, which includes a full load of teaching and related duties, is scheduled in the last semester of the trainee's senior year.

Learn By Doing

During both periods of work the student lives in the community and serves as a member of the high school faculty under the direction of the school administrator. This principal is a qualified supervising teacher of vocational agriculture and is assisted by the teacher education staff at the University of Arizona.

The objective of the first period at the school is to acquaint the trainee with the human and material resources of the school and community in relation to his job as a teacher. He assembles and organizes much information on the units to be taught later and learns what additional information and material he will need. He participates in the annual state FFA leadership conference and helps his supervising teacher in a full range of activities.

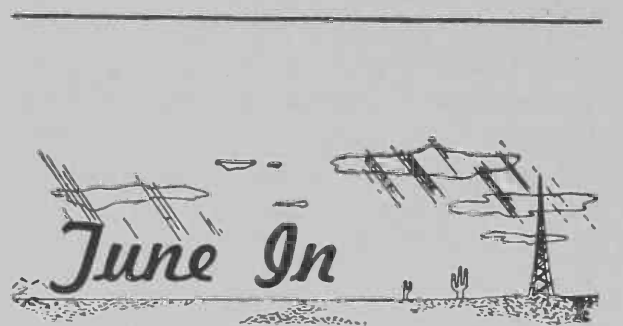
Learns About Organization

The second period on the job is directed toward further development of competency of the beginning teacher. Emphasis is directed at organization of instruction and class management, aiming at a high level of student interest, morale and work standards.



LEARNING while helping teach is shown in these two pictures taken at Florence. Fitting and judging a steer, above, are (left to right) John Musgrave, Dale Gibson, William Bond and Mark Clemans.

Below, a lesson in the Arizona system of filing bulletins. Left to right, Bond, Musgrave and Gibson. The two student teachers are Musgrave and Bond; Gibson is vocational agriculture teacher at Florence, while Clemans is a Florence high school student.



University of Arizona

Thursday, 9:35 p.m. (Farm Report)
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 "Arizona Agriculture"
 KGUN, Tucson