

(if you're wise)

that all were really pleased with the course.

"Word of mouth. A friend who went last year told me about so I knew a little of what it was about before I started."

"What did your friend say about it?"

He said it increased his speed and helped him in his studies so I figured I could use the same sort of help. How did you think it could help you?

I didn't think I was working hard when reading. I thought that if I doubled my speed I would be satisfied.

Did you know about the lab before being told?

Yes, I read something about it but didn't give it any more thought.

Did you find the study techniques valuable?

Yes, skimming was especially valuable because it allowed me to pick out the important parts and with practice, the lesser details. Having a mental recall after reading is also very useful. So all in all you were really satisfied with the course?

Yeah, it was a great help.

The second student I talked to was Nancy McNeil, a senior. A friend also told her about the course.

Were you satisfied with the results of the course?

Well my speed wasn't up as much as I thought but I was nervous at the last test, so that slowed me down. I think if I hadn't been nervous I could have done better. I was really pleased with my vocabulary and comprehension, because they

both went up.

What did you think of the study techniques?

Very good. Especially the one to check over the last paragraph of an article. I've done that ever since. Yes, they helped me a lot. In what way have you most benefitted from the course?

What I really got was confidence, confidence that I was taking in what I was reading. The study techniques helped me in this way also. Will you continue going to the lab even though you've finished the course?

Well, that depends on my summer job. If I happen to have one near here, say within easy driving distance, I want to start the skimming and scanning part of the course this summer. I'll practice anyway in my reading.

The third person I located was John MacMillan, another business student. John told

me that his girlfriend told him that he should take the course because it would help his reading speed.

Did you know anything about the reading lab before you were told about it?

Well, I knew there was one but I thought it was only for people with reading problems and I read quite a bit so I didn't think it would be very good for me. I went to Mrs. Manovill and she told me that any student, no matter how good a reader he was, could benefit from the course. After taking the preliminary test, I realized that I wasn't quite as good a reader as I had thought. How did you like the course?

After I got into it I became very enthusiastic and it was a challenge for me to improve both my speed and comprehension. I only spent a half hour a day at the lab but after a short while I could already see myself improving. By the end of the course I had doubled my speed.

Did you believe at first that the reading lab could help you?

Well, I was somewhat dubious at first but my reading was soon coming a lot easier and I enjoyed it a lot more too.

Do you think the study techniques are valuable?

Yes, but they are better suited for some courses than for others. Learning how to preview an assignment, that is how to get the main ideas before really reading the article, is a valuable technique.

All in all, do you think the course was worthwhile?

Yes, for me it was worthwhile. I am going to keep on and try to improve my speed even though I've finished the classes. I think any student, regardless of his reading ability or marks, can benefit from the program over here.

From talking to Mrs. Manovill and her students I would say that many students are missing out on a very valuable course. Perhaps the reading lab should be given more publicity. Anyway, I think I'll go. Mrs. Manovill says to remind anyone else who wants to take the course, that they must sign up at registration either in the fall or after Christmas because the classes are usually filled up after registration. You know, you probably could have had this article read in half the time if you'd paid any attention to that skinny little yellow pamphlet.

Yours truly,
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Signed -- Wiser

ample, every student would have to take two courses in biology, chemistry, math or physics.

A compulsory course in "rhetoric" for students who fail to pass a placement test in composition. It is suggested that this course include training in logic, "especially ... that area known as the logical fallacies."

The suggestion that all arts students be required to take a survey course in English literature, and possibly one in "development of Western civilization."

The establishment of a system of faculty advisors to guide students in order to "ensure that a student takes a sound . . . program."

This type of "straightjacket" curriculum was popular in North American Liberal Arts colleges about 50 years ago. It was beginning to fade out when I was a university student in the 1950's. Now it is being resurrected as part of the regressive, authoritarian movement in higher education, which is rapidly gaining ground at UPEI.

There are certain features implicit in such a scheme which may not strike the reader at first glance.

One is the ensurance of full employment for a staff

who might be underemployed (or even unemployed!) in a free elective system.

This would be one of the results of the "distribution" requirement and the mandatory courses, boring lectures, or harsh grades alienate students in a free curriculum would be assured of full classrooms again.

Another feature is the regimentation and brainwashing inherent not only in the compulsory old-fashioned courses but in the use of faculty advisors to guide students into "sound courses."

I disliked this kind of curriculum when I was a student and I am even less attracted to it after 20 years of teaching. In my judgement it would seriously handicap UPEI's efforts to halt its declining enrollment.

It is to be hoped that students who feel as I do will make their views known, especially when the proposal, or some version of it is brought before the Senate for final decision.