

Do SDA Boarding Academies Offer Balanced Education?

By Eugene W. Rau

The April-May, 1980, issue of THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION concentrated on the subject of balanced education with the theme of head, heart, and hand ideals in SDA education. The articles in that issue mentioned some exemplary curricula from overseas schools, but none from the United States. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to examine the curricula of the 40 SDA residence academies in the continental U.S. that were in operation during the 1979-1980 school year to ascertain how well and in what way they are fulfilling their educational task. The material for this investigation was obtained from the 1979-1980 bulletin of each academy concerned, the study having been completed in the spring of 1980.

School Philosophies

School philosophy will be considered first in an attempt to correlate the academy concepts with those written by Walton Brown, retired director of education for the SDA Church. Brown's article, printed in the above-mentioned *Journal*, lists 16 specific subject categories that serve the curriculum prescribed by Ellen White for balanced education.¹ These 16 points will be matched, if possible, with subjects in the

1979-1980 curriculum of the 40 academies.

In their declarations of philosophy, 17 of the 40 academies quote a sentence from page 13 of the book *Education* written by Ellen White in 1903. This sentence says that "It [true education] is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers."² According to Webster³ the word *harmonious* means "freedom from discord;

The number of units required for graduation [ranged] from 18 to 23.

having parts adapted and proportional to each other; agreement in action." From this definition the physical, mental, and moral powers should have "agreement in action," implying a dynamic process as opposed to a static state of coexistence. In this article the phrase *true education* is considered to be equivalent to balanced education.

Eleven academies make an explicit statement of a desired balanced education for their students. In using the words *balanced education* or *educational balance*, these schools refer to a concept of equilibrium that is to exist among all phases of the student's development. Direct reference is made to the physical, mental, and moral aspects of growth in seven schools; while three others have adopted a more

general philosophy.

Some of the academies, excluding those above, quote from pages 15 through 18, passim, of the book *Education* in formulating a philosophy of training and instruction. Two academies did not include a philosophy in their bulletins.

From the goals and objectives that are part or consequence of their philosophy, it can be seen that the administrators and teachers in the academies want to supply a balanced education of the whole person. Their goal appears to be to train the youth to grow proportionately in the physical, mental, and spiritual phases of education as was enjoined by Ellen White.

A correlation between the subjects taught in these academies and the 16 categories of subject curricula needed for balanced education delineated by Brown (taken from literature by Mrs. White) is worthy of our consideration. Reference is made to the items in the order Brown presented them. Items 4 (teacher training), 5 (Biblical languages), and 14 (medical) are not included in this study, since they are subject curricula for higher education. The order is not intended to correlate to the importance of each category.

Course credit throughout this article is expressed in the traditional Carnegie unit. One unit of academic credit is given to a subject that is taught for five 40-minute sessions a week for 36 weeks. Fractional units may be earned in many subject areas.

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What About the Basics?

The common branches are those subjects that are basic to the needs of the student. These basics are shown as subjects or subject areas in Table 1. Graduation requirements are only for the high school diploma and may not satisfy college entrance requirements.

The number of units required for graduation varied somewhat among the 40 academies repre-

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sented in this study, ranging from a low of 18 units to a high of 23. Twenty-five of the schools require 20 units to be earned for graduation; 13 require more; while only two require fewer than 20 units.

Each academy requires a formal Bible course for each year of enrollment, so a student attending four years encounters four Bible courses of one unit credit each. Ten of the academies offer a fifth Bible subject as an elective. Perhaps more subject electives in religion would be appropriate, considering the extra courses that are available in other subject areas.

All 40 academies specify that students are expected to attend all weekend religious services in addition to morning and evening dormitory worships during the week.

Fifteen of the academies provide for Christian witnessing activities off campus. Since only a few nominate students for church office positions such as elders, deacons, or Sabbath school leaders, many thus lose an excellent training possibility for the youth. Such activities should be given more attention,

Table 1
Graduation Requirements

Subject Field	Number of Academies Requiring Certain Number of Units							
	0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0
Business ¹								
Foreign Language ²								
Language Arts ³					13		27	
Mathematics		29	3	8				
Music ⁴	6	2						
Physical Education ⁴	19	1	4	3				1
Religion								40
Science		31	1	8				
Social Studies		3	12	18		7		
Vocational ⁴	1	31	2	1				

1. Not required for graduation from any of the academies. See Table 2 for details of courses.

2. Not required for graduation.

3. Speech is offered in 13 academies. Twenty academies offer a fifth-year English course as an elective; three offer college writing for college credit.

4. The remaining academies do not require this for graduation.

planning, and participation than they currently receive. Membership in prayer bands is optional but is urged in most academies. Although some bulletins do not include a full, written description of student witnessing activities, this would be a desirable addition. A half-dozen schools teach a course in Christian witnessing, allowing students to earn academic credit for this important function of SDA secondary education.

Social Studies

Courses such as U.S. history, U.S. government, State history, world history, foreign government, and economics comprise the area of social studies. All 40 academies require a course in U.S. history and government, while only five require a course dealing with the history of the State in which the academy is located. World history is taught in 29 of the academies, although none of them requires it for graduation. However, the course fulfills social studies requirements for graduation. Three schools offer minicourses in the history and government of various foreign countries in place of a year-long course in world history. Economics or consumer economics is taught in ten of the academies. Three academies offer a three-quarter

hour college-level history course.

Foreign Languages

Twenty-five of the 40 academies offer two years of a foreign language, with Spanish being taught in 19 schools, German in three, and French in six. Three academies offer a second

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Mathematics

Courses in mathematics range from general mathematics through calculus. All schools offer a course in general mathematics, consumer mathematics, or prealgebra; all offer algebra and geometry, or their equivalents. Thirty-eight academies teach a third year of mathematics, 30 a fourth year, and three a fifth elective in the subject area. One academy offers a three-quarter hour college mathematics course. The

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dents as well as an attitude for the child to accept for himself.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Roun Tunley, "Deafness—the Silent Epidemic," condensed from *The Lion in Reader's Digest* (March, 1974).

² D. A. Ramsdell, "The Psychology of the Hard of Hearing and Deafened Adult," in Hallwell Davis and Richard Silverman (eds.), *Hearing and Deafness* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970), pp. 435-445.

³ Hayes Newby, "The Handicap of Hearing Impairment," in *Audiology* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1978), pp. 391-425.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 426-450.

⁵ Phyllis Gildston, "The Hearing Impaired Child in the Classroom," in Wingred H. Northcott (ed.), *The Hearing Impaired Child in a Regular Classroom* (Washington, D.C.: The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, Inc., 1973), pp. 37-43.

⁶ Raymond A. Stassen, "I Have One in My Class," Northcott, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-31.

Boarding Academies and Balanced Education

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mathematics electives aid the student in certain college majors, and in some cases are required for college entrance into such departments as engineering.

With the recent availability of inexpensive computers, instruction in programming has become a possibility in 12 of the denomination's residence academies. Ten of these schools include enough content to offer one unit of credit. Computer programming is a growing vocation, and those academies not teaching it should study the feasibility of doing so in the near future.

The Sciences

Science subjects such as biology, chemistry, general science, physics, physical science, and life science dominate the course offerings. Twenty academies offer their students an advanced subject above the general listing; two academies teach a college-credit course, one in biology, the other in anatomy and physiology. Sixteen academies specify that the science requirement is valid only if it has a regular laboratory period when each student receives

"hands-on" instruction and experience.

Business Education

The subjects in business and business education, their corresponding units of credit, and the number of academies teaching each are listed in Table 2. These subjects are all electives, but seem to be well patronized by the students. Shorthand appears to still be popular despite the prevalence of electronic dictating devices. Notice also that Typing I is taught in all of the schools, with many schools having to open two or even three sections to accommodate the demand. The usefulness of such a course is surely beyond question.

Psychology

Two academies offer an elective course in general psychology; one confers college credit, while students who take the other course must pass an external examination before the college credit is granted. Psychology is usually offered only for seniors.

Physical Education

Physical education (PE) is mandated for each year in attendance by only 13 of the academies. Twenty-six schools sponsor a tumbling team or a gymnastics class. A one-semester course in health is included in the graduation requirements in this area in 31 of the academies; three require two semesters, two require only a half-semester. Three academies waive courses in PE in lieu of industrial work experience. There is a direct correlation between the size of school and the number of courses in PE.

Music

The music curricula in SDA residence academies is important to the church. Thirty-seven academies have a concert choir; 29 give instruction in voice

Table 2
Business Education Courses

Subject	Units	Number of Schools
Accounting	2	2
	1	32
	½	2
Business Education Seminar	1	1
Business Machines	1	5
	½	4
Consumer Economics	1	4
	½	6
General Business	1	6
	½	2
Office Practice	1	22
	½	5
Record Keeping	1	4
	½	3
Shorthand	1	33
	½	3
Typing I	1	40
Typing II	1	26
	½	6

culture. All but five of the schools have a concert band, and 33 give instrumental lessons. Organ instruction is offered in 27 academies; piano lessons in 31.

Nursing

Nursing is a subject primarily reserved for higher education. However, six academies offer a course in the survey of nursing or nurse's aid training. Table 4 lists two campuses close enough to hospitals so that students may obtain employment there. This kind of arrangement should be more broadly utilized in the training of SDA youth.

Vocations and Industries

For ease of reference, vocational subjects are listed in Table 3. Courses in home economics and auto mechanics are prominent entries.

Next in consideration are school industries at residence academies. These are also listed in Table 4. Although these are included under the topic of vocations, only 12 of the schools grant academic credit for employment in the work program. Granting credit and grading performance can be work incentives. Usually, the credit offered is half a unit per

Table 3
Vocational Courses

Subject Title	Units	Number of Schools
Agriculture	1 ½	6 1
Architectural Drawing	1 ½	3 4
Art	4 3 2½ 2 1	2 7 1 10 29
Auto Body	2 1 ½	2 9 3
career experience	1½	1
Auto Mechanics	3 2 1½ 1 ½	2 15 3 30 2
career experience	1½	1
Ceramics	2 1 ½	1 6 1
Crafts	2 1 ½	1 9 4
Electricity, Wiring		4
Electronics	2 1 ½	1 2 1
Flying	1	7
General Shop	1 ½	28 3
Greenhouse Management	1	1
Ground School		11
Ham Radio		1
Home Economics	4 3 2 1	3 16 33 40
Machine Shop		2
Meal Management		3
Mechanical Drawing	2 1 ½	1 12 7
Metals		6
Nursing Survey		6
Painting	college level	1
Photography	3 2 1 ¼-½ college level	1 2 8 7 1
Plumbing		2
Power Mechanics	1	1
Printing	2 1 ¼-½	7 13 2
Refrigeration		1
Textiles	2 1	1 1
Welding	2 1 ½	3 10 7
Woods	2 1 ½	7 21 5

school year. Work is important in helping the student balance his educational achievements, as well as in helping defray the expenses of school attendance.

As in the music and physical-education departments, only two academic credits for work-experience education may be applied toward graduation. Work may easily be evaluated with letter grades by work supervisors, and the next step, that of granting credit on the transcript, should also be done.

At least one industry is located on or near each academy campus.

Summary and Recommendations

Though the number of units required for a diploma varies, the basics are taken from the following departments: religion, English, mathematics, science, and history. Students in the 40 residence academies are expected to earn credit from each of these areas as a part of graduation requirements. Voca-

tional credit is mandated in 35 academies, thus making it a basic area of study. The other five schools should also require a course in this discipline.

The departments of music and business education appear to be doing well on each campus, as indicated by the number and variety of course offerings and the number of staff who teach in these two fields. However, the private music lesson costs set by many of the academies might be a detriment to the student's receiving instruction. The author did not find any extra charge for typewriter rental. Perhaps music lesson charges could be included in an increased tuition package cost that would also act as an umbrella for science and vocational laboratory expenses.

Each of the 40 academies in this study offered subject curricula in all of the 13 categories of Dr. Brown's list, with the exception of foreign languages, nursing, and psychology. Those students needing foreign language for college entrance who are attending an academy that does not provide for this need will be obliged to study the subject by correspondence or make it up during the first year of college. Spanish is the predominant second language taught in the academies. The areas of nursing and psychology are usually reserved for post-secondary training.

At least one industry is located either on or near the campuses of each of the schools. Their benefits to the student are twofold: They provide positive contact between the school and the public, and many of the industries also contribute significantly to the school's cash flow. Whether or not more industries are needed should receive additional research. Twenty-six academies ensure summer work for their students, although some schools employ only village students

Table 4
Student Work Opportunities

<i>On Campus</i> (all forty academies)			
Cafeteria		Maintenance building	
Custodial Grounds		vehicle	
Laundry (noncommercial)		Monitor, dormitory	
		Music department	
		Readers	
<i>Industries</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Industries</i>	<i>No.</i>
Auto Body	2	Housewares	1
Bake-N-Serve	4	Hydroponics	1
Bakery	2	Laundry	6
Bindery	2	Marble Shop	1
Broom Shop	6	Nursery	2
Concrete Products	1	Nursing Care Center	4
Dairy	4	Packaging	4
Farm	15	Plastics	4
Furniture Factory (not HPM)	2	Poultry	1
Garage	1	Press	4
Greenhouses	4	Special Foods	2
Harris Pine Mills	15	Sprouts	1
Harris Sewing Mill	2	Stove Making	1
Hospital	2	Truck Gardening	2
		Wood Products	5
<i>Each academy has at least one industry</i>			
Number of academies with			
one industry.....	10	four industries.....	3
two industries.....	7	five industries.....	3
three industries.....	17		

during that time.

As an economical time factor, the waiver of a PE class in lieu of industrial employment is appropriate. But if the work does not provide the student with full, vigorous exercise, then the waiver subtracts from the achievement of educational balance. Academies should also provide students with guidance in choosing proper leisure-time activities. The four academies that do not teach any health

Instruction in computer programming is available at 12 of the academies.

course should plan to do so promptly in fulfillment of their educational philosophy.

The granting of credit by examination could serve to reduce class loads and could confer credit for skills learned at home or on the job. Only six of the 40 academies provide for conferring such credit. This area deserves investigation by principals, guidance counselors, and curriculum committees.

The curricular programs in the SDA residence academies are strong and dynamic. The education supplied the youth of the church in the United States is Christian and Seventh-day Adventist. It is balanced, or close to it, in providing for the physical, mental, and moral aspects of the student's developmental needs. The total programs of these schools serve as good examples of Christian education and of the accomplishments of dedicated staff members in helping guide the high-school-age youth of the church.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Walton J. Brown, "What Is Balanced Education?" *THE JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION*, vol. 42, No. 4 (April-May, 1980), p. 46.

² Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Assn., 1903), p.13.

³ *Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd Ed. Unabridged (1959), s.v. "harmonious."

Boarding Academy Enrollment

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erably from the principal, should be made to students who are in their final year of attendance at their respective schools. It is not too early to discuss academy attendance with students who still have an additional year before they graduate from their respective schools.

5. An academy open house for parents can be an effective tool in soliciting enrollment. Invitations should be extended to parents whose children are already attending the academy as well as to those whose children are academy age or close to it. A forum encouraging open discussion and a question-and-answer session are basic to the success of the day.

6. The regular academy day, or a day set aside for all prospective students to attend, can be an effective recruitment option. However, its effectiveness is determined by the activities planned and the warmth of the welcome accorded the visitors.

7. The key to public evangelism is home visitation. The key to school enrollment is also home visitation. Christ's most effective means of communication was the "one-soul audience."⁶ The same is true today.

8. Students may be the most effective method of communicating with prospective enrollees. The degree to which students can be effectively used is limited only by the principal's imagination.

9. A careful record must be kept of every contact with parents and students. Every interest should be followed up at once. The only right time for decision-making is the time when the parent and student are ready to

make a decision. Usually July and August are too late for the school year that begins in September. However, a return call by the principal to a few select cases in late summer may be effective. I have found that if I visited a select list of perhaps 50 homes in August, approximately half of the students would attend who otherwise would not. This is economical and effective evangelism.

10. During the 15 years I was an academy principal, I personally visited 400 homes each year. I also planned to preach in at least 25 churches. This meant three Sabbaths out of four, December through May, and at least nine during the summer. As academy principal I was thus on campus and very visible for one of the four weeks. I retained personal responsibility for all Friday evening vesper programs and thus maintained visibility on the campus for the primary religious service that is the direct responsibility of the academy. Carefully organized school activity programs with delegated responsibility and understood authority provided for a smooth-running program during the Sabbath hours.

A personal contact should be made to students who are in their final year of attendance at their respective schools.

I have found that the conference is more than willing to provide additional funds for travel to churches if the principal is actually willing to preach and visit homes for regular church speaking appointments.

11. Effective promotion includes an accurate and realistic appraisal of the existing program. This means that unsupported claims are not made and "dirty linen is not washed in public."