

WESTERN CO-OPERATIVE COLLEGE

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I WHY A COLLEGE?

It is recognized that some education and training can and should be done at the local level. But it is also recognized that much of the needed education and training requires specially trained staff and special facilities. It is not feasible for each cooperative and credit union to provide these necessary facilities. Therefore, they have jointly set up a separate organization, Western Co-operative College.

II WHEN ORGANIZED?

Western Co-operative College was incorporated in December, 1959. It is, however, very difficult to say when and where the idea for such a College originated. The Rochdale Pioneers established the principle of "continuous education" in 1844. Cooperative Colleges were established in Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries in the late 1800's.

In Western Canada, the education programs of the Wheat Pools and the training programs of the Co-operative Wholesales pave the way for the establishment of more formal education and training programs.

In the early 1950's a group of cooperators in Manitoba developed the idea of an "International Co-operative Institute" and subscribed funds in the amount of approximately \$4000.

In 1955, by mutual agreement, the Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan became the sponsor of the Institute, the name was changed to "Co-operative Institute," and actual training operations began in the fall of that year.

III LOCATION

During the first two years, classes were conducted in facilities provided by Federated Co-operatives in Saskatoon, plus rented rooms when necessary.

Since 1957, rented premises in Saskatoon have supplied office and classroom accommodation. About two years ago, plans were started for a residential college and a site of approximately 3 1/4 acres of land has been purchased in Saskatoon. It is expected that construction will begin in the summer of 1961.

IV ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL

Western Co-operative College is incorporated under the Societies Act in Saskatchewan and it has been registered in Manitoba and Alberta.

Membership is open to organizations which, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, are bona-fide cooperatives. At the time of writing 25 coopera-

tives, mainly central organizations in the three provinces, had been accepted as members of the College. Those members are entitled to elect the trustees from their own members who act on behalf of the members between membership meetings.

V PROGRAM

The objects of Western Co-operative College are "to provide on a non-profit basis, education and training in cooperative principles and methods and their application to economic and social needs." The programs of the College are aimed at meeting these objectives. The main programs are as follows:

(a) Courses

A major part of the program consists of short courses for employees and elected officials of cooperatives and credit unions. These are sponsored by central cooperatives. Details of each course are worked out with a committee representing the organization sponsoring each course.

Since training for consumer (retail) cooperative personnel has been carried on for quite a number of years, this part of the program has been developed to the greatest extent. A series of courses had now been established covering types of knowledge a person should gradually acquire in order to carry out his responsibilities more effectively. The series of courses are:

1. Cooperative Information
2. Cooperative Merchandising
3. Basic Management
4. Management of Finances
5. Management of Personnel
6. Management of Merchandising
7. Communications and Human Relations
8. Fundamentals of Management

It is suggested that a person might take approximately one course per year. Specialized courses, apart from this series, have been developed in Accounting and Petroleum Sales Management for retail personnel.

There were 29 courses held with over 600 retail personnel attending in 1960-61.

The Credit Union League of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Credit Society have jointly sponsored 3 courses per year for credit union employees since 1957. A committee, consisting of representatives from these two organizations plus the Department of Co-operation and Western Co-operative College reviewed the training program for credit union employees early in 1961, and have established three levels of courses to be conducted by the College:

1. Credit Union Introductory Course - for any employee of a Credit Union who has not previously attended a course.

2. Basic Management Course - for any employee who has attended at least one previous credit union course or has a minimum of three years credit union employment.
3. Advanced Management Course - for any employee who has attended at least two previous credit union courses or has a minimum of five years credit union employment.

The first two courses were held in April and June with an attendance of 34 at each. The advanced management course will be held in September. It is anticipated that these courses will be repeated each year provided there are sufficient applicants. A course on Management of Personnel will be held for employees of a variety of cooperatives and it is expected that some credit union employees will attend.

A variety of other courses are held at the request of cooperative organizations. Some of these are:

1. Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
 - (a) for employees at country elevators primarily to develop cooperative understanding.
 - (b) for newly elected delegates to familiarize them with the Wheat Pool organization and their duties and responsibilities as delegates.
2. Federated Co-operatives - supervisory and management courses.
3. Interprovincial Co-operatives - a supervisory and management course for their own employees plus some from other cooperatives.
4. United Co-operatives of Ontario - two management courses in June, 1961.
5. Joint sponsors - courses for cooperative fieldstaff covering such topics as cooperative information, program planning, human relations, communications, principles of adult learning, etc.

Short courses for elected officials are a part of the program of the college. These courses are sponsored by educational cooperative organizations (example Co-operative Union of Saskatchewan).

Other training activities last year included a Co-operative Labor Seminar and programs for Colombo Plan students. These activities are expected to continue. A new development this summer is a 5-day cooperative information course for school teachers.

The role of the College is to plan and conduct the courses. The staff of the College lecture at many sessions themselves. Resource people are obtained from the organization sponsoring the course and from outside organizations. Personnel from the University of Saskatchewan and people such as Professor Russell Jenkins (Michigan State University) and Dr. W. Davidson (Columbus) have lectured at courses.

The staff assists resource people through conducting discussion group sessions and planning for the use of visual aids, working assignments, etc.

(b) Courses at Which Assistance is Provided

The staff of the college are engaged as resource people for a number of other courses and conferences.

(c) Correspondence Courses

1. A correspondence course on the cooperative movement has been developed by the Co-op Union of Canada. The College will correct lessons and tutor students from Western Canada who enroll for this course.
2. Courses from several correspondence course institutions such as I.A.S. and I.C.S. have been selected for employees of cooperatives. Employees are offered guidance in selecting courses to meet their needs on topics such as accounting, merchandising, management, as well as specialized courses. Approximately 125 people enrolled for such courses last year.

(d) Staff Training Materials

Guides were prepared two years ago to assist fieldstaff and managers in carrying out staff training on a local level. These guides were used extensively in some areas and the program is under revision.

(e) Library

The College is gradually developing a library. A number of books are available on loan to those attending classes, and a number are sold at cost to students.

(f) Committees

Members of the College staff serve on a number of committees dealing with cooperative research, and training, and adult education generally.

VI FINANCING

Several of the large central cooperatives make annual grants to the College which provide about one half of the income. Tuition fees (usually \$20 for participants of 5-day courses who are employed by organizations which do not pay grants) supply about one third. The remainder comes from a variety of

of sources but primarily from fees for education services. The budget is approximately \$50,000.

VII STAFF

The teaching staff consists of three instructors and the principal. The services of a number of other resource people are used. Stenographic services are provided by a full-time stenographer with part-time assistance when required.

VIII THE FUTURE

The program of Western Co-operative College has progressed steadily since H.E. Chapman was employed as a one-man training "Department" in 1955. A residential building, carefully designed to facilitate adult education, will make the present program more effective and permit the development of additional programs to achieve the objectives for which the College was established. It is expected that the College building, located near the University of Saskatchewan will be completed early in 1962.

A major concern of the College is to develop and conduct programs in a manner which will permit maximum learning. The plans for the new building and the training of the college staff are designed with a view to promoting learning. The learning process is very complex and there are no easy "gimmicks" or "package deals." Although we feel we are making progress, we believe there is a great need for research on methods and training techniques that will make our program of cooperative adult education more effective.

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the methods used in the study.

3. The third part of the report is a discussion of the results of the study.

4. The fourth part of the report is a conclusion and a list of references.

5. The fifth part of the report is a list of appendices.