



NEWSLETTER - October 1958. Whenever visitors have only a short time to see the school, we always encourage them to be at the school between 6:30 and 10:30 a.m. The students are in the field working at this time. We tell our visitors that the field work is the unique phase of our instruction. The afternoon classroom work is. . .well, classrooms are pretty much the same the world over.

Classrooms are pretty much the same the world over, but we would like to believe that ours have a certain uniqueness just the same.

For instance. . .

We have been reviewing some of our coursework recently to see if it cannot be better adapted to our needs. Naturally, something like a course in Beef Cattle Production automatically is coordinated with the third year work in animal husbandry. But courses like Zoology and Botany, taught in the traditional manner, do not possess such automatic adaptation.

In June, our new students will not find us teaching Zoology and Botany any more. In the place of these two subjects we will have a two semester, integrated course in the biological sciences, which will depart from the "classic" traditions of viewing all living things as being neatly separated into phylogenetic pigeonholes.

Instead, it will consider "life" as a phenomenon pervading the living world, equally in plants as in animals, and emphasizing the processes which produce this "life".

Since our students are neither going to be Botany majors nor Zoology majors, we have come to believe that it is more important for them to know what the processes are which they, as agriculturalists, will be controlling. For that, fundamentally, is what a farmer is doing, whether he is making a seed bed, grafting an orange tree or mixing feed for day old chicks. And these life processes are essentially the same whether they are to be found in a corn plant, the sow that eats the corn or the tapeworm in the sow.

We ordered the textbooks, aptly titled "Life", and microscopes for the laboratory this month. Dr. Thomas Furman (who has studied a similar course offered at Washington State by Drs. W. Hatch and H. K. Buechner) has begun preparing the classroom material. The lectures will be used to present factual material with the laboratory being used to confirm the authenticity of this factual material. Through classroom discussions the student will be encouraged to use this material to answer, for himself, the questions: What are organisms?

How do they function?

Why have they become what they are? How?

Come to think of it, after our visitors have seen the morning field work, perhaps they should stay around and see the classroom work too. Classrooms aren't the same the world over!