EXPECTATIONS AND REALIZATIONS

A series of articles by students
- past, present and future -
viewing college biology courses.

I. A Future Fine Arts Major

What do I, as a person who intends to go into the area of Fine Arts, expect to gain from my required college biology course?

Firstly, I would like to come away with an understanding as to what my place is in the cosmos. The knowledge of how man fits into the structure and chain of all living things is a common theme among writers, playwrights and artists. To be able to more fully interpret works of this nature, an insight into the scientific bases would be most helpful.

Secondly, I feel I need a thorough background of the principles upon which this earth operates so as to facilitate my decision-making on such issues as strip mining in my community, the construction of power plants on the banks of streams, and other such judgements that must be made. I would like to gain from my course the tools with which to comprehend the present as well as the future advances in medicine. The social as well as the scientific effects of such breakthroughs as genetic engineering and cloning may well become realities in my life time. I would like to be able to deal with them on an informed level.

I believe that a strong understanding of biology is essential for anyone going into the Fine Arts, for the arts hold a mirror on the scientific and cultural world around us. But without knowledge of the prime image, the reflection has no significance.

II. A Future Biology Major

A college biology curriculum should prepare students to explore and scientifically investigate life and its processes. Further, students should be equipped, by these biology courses, to effectively communicate the results of an investigation.

Students planning a career in the sciences need to be mentally outfitted to learn more of their world. Supplying discovered facts for their memory will not equip a student for a rewarding study of life. Career scientists must also learn, and learn to teach, the ways in which science relates to man and affects society.

It is obviously beyond the capabilities of the best biology instructors to teach all the concepts governing the complex nature, varied forms, and numerous functions of life. Thus, courses for majors in life sciences should go beyond the conveyance of mere fact. Students, after a brief introduction to the complex nature, skills, basic philosophy, and methods of science, will benefit greatly from a chance to learn research skills. While it is true that no course can cover all facts of science, an effective course can help the student personally uncover both new and previously known principles.

Basic biology curricula should include introductions to many disciplines or branches of biology. If students are presented a view of the principles and concerns of a number of areas, they can then decide which they would like to study further. They may also discover at this time that they do not wish to limit their intake to knowledge to a specific area.
If any biology study is to enable the future scientist to discover facts of biology, it must aid in the use of many methods of discovery and research. Field work, laboratory research and instruction, and library research all must be employed for students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to investigate life and communicate findings to both the community and the scientist.

The future scientist should be prepared to act as a useful citizen of a community. The study of life should include the humanities, as well a pure analysis of life.

What is the appearance, then, of an effective college biology curriculum? It should include instruction in various methods of exploring life. Moreover, it should prepare the student to find biological principles and communicate them to the scientist and the community. But it must also enable the scientist to become a participating member of the broader community.

W E' L L  S H A R E

Correspondence concerning these items should be addressed to the individual

RUSSELL WAGNER, University of Wisconsin - Platteville, Platteville, WI 53818, is conducting a road kill census. Information is available to any one who is not familiar with this project concerning what is trying to be learned and the progress after about a year and one-half of collecting data. Additional road kill cards are available for those who have been or wish to cooperate in a census of the effect of highway types on animal life mortality.

C O V E R  P O E T R Y

Rita Kohn, source of the thoughts on the cover page, is Public Relations Consultant, Corn Belt Library Systems, Bloomington, IL. She is editor of "Sum and Substance" and "Junior Opinions." The editor asked that she tell the members a little bit about herself - why she writes poetry and why nature is one of her chosen subjects.

I write poetry to preserve my sanity and there's no profit in that. (I am a writer and earn my keep as such.)

Why do I write of nature? Because it is here and speaks its piece, because a comment needs to be made and the setting of nature is the best one in which to make it, because I am a child of the mountains and miss them, so try to find companionship with other aspects of natural phenomena.

Midnight
is my mountain
in this place
of plains
that stretch beyond tomorrow.

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AMCBT 19TH ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 17-18
INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, TERRE HAUTE, IN

"BRING A COLLEAGUE"