



The Learning Systems Institute: *Abstract of Charter*¹

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The Learning Systems Institute (LSI) is conceived as the instrumentation and curriculum design portion of a two-part activity intended to shift the implementation of learning research to the center of educational practice. LSI is designed to serve (and to be served by) its companion institute, the Human Learning Research Institute. The major activity of the Learning Systems Institute will be the development of plans and experimental settings for evidence-based instructional systems. The plans and experiments will employ the best that is known about human learning.

A major interest of the Learning Systems Institute will be the development of models which employ the facts about learning to structure learning experiences. The models will be the product of theoretical and applied projects which attempt to place the pieces of evidence in proper relationship to one another and to the whole phenomenon of human learning. The construction of these models will simultaneously suggest ways to implement learning environments and indicate gaps and errors in the evidence. An adequate model of human learning which is evidence-based and represents an increasingly reliable organization of facts about learning can become the basis for a detailed instructional system design.

The expectation of the Learning Systems Institute is that through the rigorous process of system development, a highly objective-oriented instruction program for students can be created. Techniques of instruction toward detailed and specific objectives will be designed, consistently utilizing the organized research evidence in human learning. Thus, the emphasis will be upon establishing a new concept of instructional planning, not on the propagation of a particular set of educational objectives.

Even in the paper-design stages, certain kinds of evaluation will be required. It is expected that there will be considerable modification of the learning-model base as research gaps are identified, referred to the Human Learning Research Institute and subsequently re-entered in the system specifications.

Establishment of the system designs as real schools at a future date will provide for an examination of their effectiveness in actual practice. A project in evaluation techniques will furnish a procedure, terminology, concepts and instrumentation capable

¹ Ted Ward. The Learning Systems Institute: Abstract of the Charter. College of Education, Michigan State University, October 10, 1963

of describing a contemporary school in system analysis terms. Thus the comparative evaluations of the realized model (referred to as the *School of Tomorrow*) and the contemporary school will indicate the inputs, modifiers, components, interactions, and outputs in terms of relative achievement of educational objectives and in terms of relative economics.

The next task will quickly follow in the designing of an operational plan for deliberately changing a contemporary school into the *School of Tomorrow* model. The premise here is that the realized *School of Tomorrow* will provide illustration and evidences upon which to make decisions about change. Communities would have an objective to examine and knowingly accept or reject, and if accepted, toward which they could, through their educational leadership, deliberately move.

A significant part of this project to establish a guide for *Transitional Schools* will be concerned with strategies of innovation in a given community. The forces which relate to potential for change are to be subjected to study; subsequently, the guidelines for change can be more highly specified in each peculiar school-community. The Institute is designed to pursue a strictly delimited sequence of activities, largely through regional and national support outside the resources of Michigan State University. The many interrelated projects will provide numerous opportunities for faculty and graduate students to associate on short- or long-term assignments in LSI. The Institute will provide significant outlets for scholarly activity of many kinds and will stimulate a higher level of inter-college cooperation on the difficult and significant problems of public education.

Summary

The basic purposes of the Learning Systems Institute are as follows:

1. To enhance the science of education through the establishment of objective-oriented and evidence-based instructional systems.
2. To develop a process of deliberate and controlled change for the nation's schools.