Opening New Opportunities for High School Teachers

—A Course in Driver Education and Training

A recent survey was highly significant in indicating the field in which intensive safety educational efforts should be concentrated. This showed that automobile drivers 16 years of age had a driving record nine times worse, in terms of fatalities, than persons 45-50 years old, who had the best record. This ratio takes account of miles driven by each group.

Qualified, enthusiastic high school teachers in the new field of Driver Education and Training are facing an interesting and productive career. High interest among administrators and parents, in providing this instruction for high school students, has brought opportunity to teachers who have prepared themselves for this eventuality.

This course is designed to acquaint teachers with procedures peculiar to teaching both classroom and behind-the-wheel phases of high school instruction. Methods and techniques have had practical application, with marked success, in many high schools.

Content of Course

Following are some of the subjects to be considered in the course: "The Driver," "Driver and Pedestrian Responsibilities," "Sound Driving Practices," "Society's Responsibilities," "How to Drive."

During the presentation of the text materials in the classroom and the road training in the car, the following important characteristics of drivers and how they affect sound and safe driving habits will be presented: (1) mental, physical and emotional characteristics; (2) knowledge; (3) driving skills; and (4) attitudes and appreciations.

Plan of Course

Sessions will be held in a campus classroom and will be devoted to lectures and discussion. The practicum sessions, arranged according to the student-teacher's schedule, will be devoted to laboratory and road work, including teaching a new driver from "scratch," projects and demonstrations.

Requirements for the successful completion of this course are: (1) to instruct a new driver so that he will successfully pass a test on the information found in the text pamphlets as well as rigorous road tests; (2) to complete an approved project in driver education and training; (3) to participate actively in classroom discussion; and (4) to complete all classroom and field work assignments.

It may be possible to have part of the classroom period used as a demonstration school; that is, the beginners being taught to drive by the student-teachers will attend the first part of the classroom sessions. This will give an opportunity to the student-teachers to observe how the college instructor conducts a high school course for beginners. The remainder of the classroom period will be devoted to discussion and to special projects.

Text Pamphlets

A series of five text pamphlets, suitable as a comprehensive basis for classroom instruction and discussion, will be used. These pamphlets have been developed through the collaboration of two types of persons: (a) traffic specialists, and (b) teachers of broad experience.

In addition, valuable suggestions have been secured from a number of high school teachers as to the best methods of presenting these materials effectively to high school boys and girls.

Teaching Aids

Recommendations will be presented concerning a number of valuable teaching aids, including motion pictures, classroom charts, lantern slides, film strips, and sound records. Blueprints are available for construction, in school shops, of various devices to test drivers.

Selected Traffic Bibliography

A selected bibliography of reference material on traffic and safety will be made available to students. Many of the pamphlets and publications mentioned in this bibliography will be available for reference work in the Library.

Dual-Control Driver Training Cars

It has been found that the use of dual-control driver training cars is extremely valuable in teaching beginners to drive. The dual-control consists of auxiliary clutch and brake pedals which enable the instructor to assume control if necessary. Through the cooperation of the Pontiac Motor Division of General Motors, the American Automobile Association has made 35 such cars available to high schools during the past year. It is hoped that the college will be able to arrange to have such a car available. Information will be furnished on a practical method of installing dual-control for cars to be used by the student-teachers in their high schools.

Record Forms

Suggested forms will be provided for the maintenance of proper records in connection with driver training schools which student-teachers may later conduct. Such forms have been developed through years of experience in this field, and are now actively used in several places.

Driver Training Areas

General layout plans will be available for two types of driver training areas: (a) areas involving the use of quiet streets in a community, and (b) off-street training areas. Information will be furnished for the marking of streets, for direction signs, and on the type of stanchions and other devices to aid the training process.

Plans for Inaugurating Driver Training Courses

Student-teachers will be provided with information on how to set up driver training in high schools and communities. This information will include objectives of the general plan, standards found through experience to be desirable and advice on how to fit such a course into a high school program.

Certificates

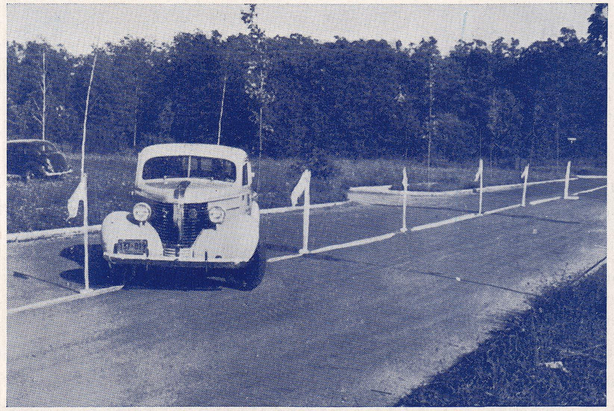
Suitable certificates have been designed and will be available for the following purposes:

(a) For student-teachers satisfactorily completing the summer session course.

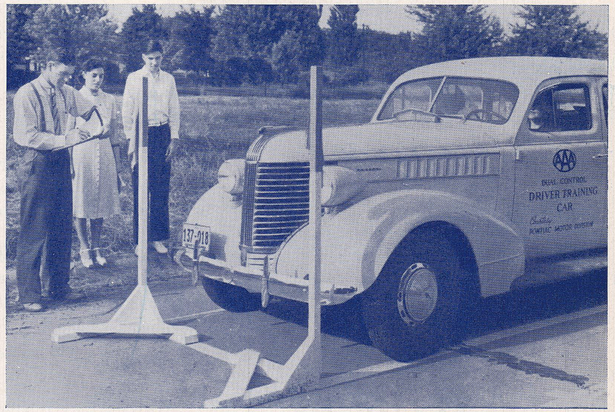
(b) For students satisfactorily completing a driver training course in high school.

One of the important activities of the course is the development of a manual of instructional material. The work of the various groups, into which the class is divided, is consolidated at the end of the course and mimeographed so that each teacher has a copy.

Through the use of auxiliary clutch and brake pedals in dual-controlled driver training cars, smoothness of operation is developed and the danger of mishap is minimized. Methods of installing dual-control will be explained.



A quiet, well-marked practice street is used for the road instruction. Beginners' early driving habits thus are formed in lifelike situations. The photograph shows a typical use of stanchions and center line in developing steering skill.



Each teacher enrolled in the summer session course in Driver Education and Training is required to teach, under supervision, at least one student of high school age, how to drive. The teacher in the above photograph is giving one of the several tests for driving skill.