

UNIVERSITY 12

An Innovative Approach to Higher Education

A PROSPECTUS

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The Institute of Cultural Affairs
4750 North Sheridan Road
Chicago, Illinois 60640
312/769-5635

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This statement briefly describes UNIVERSITY 13, a program in higher education developed by The Institute of Cultural Affairs. The opening section shows how UNIVERSITY 13 is a response to critical human needs discerned through the Institute's work in community development. Following sections describe the ways in which UNIVERSITY 13 is designed to help students achieve intellectual and methodological prowess that is applicable to further education and social engagement, and the rationale for the unique residential format. A sketch is provided of the basic approach to education emphasized throughout the entire program. Finally, the statement outlines steps for developing a proposal to experiment with UNIVERSITY 13 as part of the academic program at The University of Illinois at Chicago Circle.

UNIVERSITY 13

An Innovative Approach to Higher Education

UNIVERSITY 13 is a new program of brief but intensive liberal education for adults. Its thirteen-week curriculum is an introduction to the intellectual disciplines and the practical methods essential for twentieth-century living. It is designed to prepare serious adults with or without other experience in higher education for effective engagement in society as well as for a life-long educational journey. The innovative residential format and methods of instruction make it possible for persons of different ages and diverse occupational and cultural backgrounds to obtain a working grasp of the areas of contemporary knowledge and to discover their own ways to participate significantly in building the future.

UNIVERSITY 13 is designed to provide a university-level introduction to liberal arts and sciences for adults who have developed the prerequisite skills for higher education, but do not see how it is possible for them to participate in its present forms. It is a rigorous examination of selected major contributions and future directions in the academic disciplines, with emphasis on how the wisdom of the disciplines can be used in meeting the challenges of increasing social change. For those struggling with vocational questions, UNIVERSITY 13 is a setting in which they can evaluate and define their particular needs for higher education. For those already vocationally engaged but concerned about finding new levels of significance in their work, UNIVERSITY 13 offers an expanded world view which allows participants to recover a sense of the import of their everyday activities. The retired elder citizen who is shut off from meaningful participation in society is given the opportunity to recover and apply his rich experience in his community. For those seeking ways to respond effectively to social problems, UNIVERSITY 13 provides methods for rebuilding local community in conjunction with constructive and formic trends. For international students perplexed by American academic life, it makes available tools for focusing their unique cultural heritage upon building the emerging forms of the post-industrial world. UNIVERSITY 13 is a new design for allowing adults to integrate knowledge about their world and its needs and their own potential for responding to those needs through higher education and within society.

ECA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

UNIVERSITY 13 has been developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs, a research, training and demonstration group concerned with the human factor in world development. The Institute is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation chartered by the state of Illinois. Though headquartered in Chicago, the Institute has over one hundred offices in major urban centers around the world. Fifty-two of these offices are in North America. Including area offices in New York City, Houston, San Francisco, and Chicago,

At the request of communities around the world and with financial support from IBM and foundations such as Ford and Rockefeller, the Institute has initiated and staffed a variety of educational and training programs that meet critical human needs in community development. The models and methods used by the Institute have been tested and refined in widely differing community settings. Among these programs has been a series of two and three-day seminars that deal with aspects of the massive changes occasioned by the twentieth century. The Institute has been concerned in these to overcome people's sense of helplessness in the face of change and to change them in disciplined study designed to expose creative and practical possibilities inherent within that change. Living Effectively in the New Society (LENS), a forty-four hour think tank that forges new models for responsible corporate enterprise, has been offered to executives of national and multinational corporations in over a dozen nations during the past three years. Extended adult education programs have been developed for residents of numerous local communities. These range from one on Chicago's West Side in cooperation with the Central YMCA College to one in Western Australia sponsored by the Australian government. The Institute, which has won high praise for its experimental programs in pre-school education in Chicago, has seen these programs adopted in locations as diverse as London and Hong Kong.

In 1968, the Institute began an eight-week residential Academy that includes university-level training in advanced educational and social methods. This program, designed primarily for churchmen of all denominations, combines intellectual, motivational and community leadership methods. It has been held regularly three times a year since 1968 and has been a forerunner and testing ground for much of the UNIVERSITY 13 design. University credit has been extended graduates of this Academy at their request by over forty colleges and universities in North America, and a number of its participants have continued their studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle.

All of the Institute's educational programs emphasize the mastery of methods adaptable to a wide variety of situations. These methods counteract self-images of impotence by restoring significance to ordinary tasks, releasing creativity in model-building and bringing practicality to the implementation of plans. Whether working with college-educated adults or with pre-school children, the Institute has been concerned with educational designs which demonstrate ways to use already-existing knowledge more fully and expand a person's understanding and self-confidence by adding to his repertoires of images and methods.

OBJECTIVES OF UNIVERSITY 13

This experience has convinced The Institute of Cultural Affairs that there is need for a brief but intensive introduction to higher education for the growing number of persons who do not see themselves "going to college" for two or four years. Such people nonetheless experience the lack of an operational understanding of key intellectual concepts and methods which have created and are shaping twentieth-century consciousness. Some people have dropped out of traditional institutions of higher education in despair or anger; others are in the process of working out their decision to begin or to continue such a program; still others have never seriously entertained the idea of beginning such studies. In general, they have had little or no experience in integrating the major disciplines or seeing the practical power such integration has for coping creatively with the current upheavals within society. Nor do they possess methods for discerning the kinds of societal engagement that are most critical for the future or for determining those that are realistic possibilities for themselves. It is anticipated that a significant proportion of UNIVERSITY 13 graduates will begin or continue a university program of study with more practical intellectual methods and a greater sense of purpose.

1. Encounter Intellectual Disciplines

UNIVERSITY 13 may be seen therefore to have three overarching objectives. The first is to provide students with ways to comprehend relatively quickly the scope of an intellectual discipline and models by means of which to grasp its internal dynamics and external relationships. The curricular modules in this arena explore the basic tensions within a field such as that between the economic, the political and the cultural dimensions of society; sketch out a discipline's development and significant contributions to civilization through history and within different cultures; and inquire into the broad future implications of its present directions. A series of nine modules, each two and one-half days in length, focuses on the intellectual disciplines. Each module consists of four one-hour lectures; six periods for individual study and analysis of several essays drawn from major works in the field; and four seminar sessions, each three hours in length, during which the assigned readings and the students' analyses of them are subjected to intensive examination. The fifth session opens with a time for students to raise questions about the discipline with individual faculty members and closes with an assigned writing project which requires the student to demonstrate his grasp of the field. The overall emphasis in the study of the intellectual disciplines is upon searching out the relatedness of particular fields of knowledge to one another and the underlying human issues which have existential significance for every person.

2. Develop Practical Methods

A second objective of UNIVERSITY 13 is the developing of student understanding and competence in the use of a battery of intellectual, sociological and leadership methods. A series of nine workshop and laboratory modules emphasize the mastery of procedures for analyzing complex situations, building rational and imaginative models, and designing and implementing relevant and practical plans of action. Three modules in this series are concerned with intellectual methods and focus on developing the student's ability to scan and discern rapidly the key points of an intellectual text; to organize these in such a way that broader interrelationships are revealed; and to determine the significance of the material by relating it to the student's personal experience. A second set of three modules examines the emerging forms of nations in an interdependent world, of human community within an urban complex, and of individual selfhood within the shifting patterns of the family. A third set of three modules deals with the understanding and application of methods for effecting responsible societal change, for encouraging individual and group creativity and for inventing appropriate styles of leadership for various situations. The overall emphasis on methods in UNIVERSITY 13 goes beyond the mastery of basic skills and is designed to make it possible for students, in the midst of present-day complexity and the barrage of information, to define and achieve their own objectives.

3. Experience Personal Motivation

A third objective of UNIVERSITY 13, within and beneath these more formal competencies is that of bringing fresh courage into the lives of its participants. Lack of motivation is found in youth overwhelmed by the immensity of global needs, in adults whose clarity on the problems of society exceeds their skills for dealing with them, and in older citizens whose customary ways of relating to the flow of real life are no longer adequate. Res motivation for such people comes with the discovery of authentic roles and concrete tasks to be performed within society. It comes with the shock of recognizing one's own actual leadership capabilities. It comes with the discovery of personal freedom within overwhelming responsibility. It comes with the reassurance, through the experiences of group planning and disciplined follow-through, that significant results are possible.

COMMUNITY OF LEARNING

To accomplish these objectives, UNIVERSITY 13 is constructed to develop and sustain a deep collegiality among its students and between students and faculty. Meals are eaten together in different groupings with formats which allow them to be occasions for serious conversation. Responsibility for leading meal activities is shared by students and faculty. The common struggle to understand one another's attempts to integrate and appropriate basic components of knowledge helps each participant to broaden, deepen and sharpen his own understanding. Daily use of the intellectual and communal methods in cooperation with others of different ages and backgrounds demonstrates to participants practical ways in which they can work with others to accomplish major tasks effectively and meaningfully. An extensive cultural life, including serious encounters with non-Western as well as Western art, generates individual and group creativity and a deepened sense of community.

UNIVERSITY 13 intends to be a serious experiment in the creation of a community of learning within the university. It is therefore deemed essential that all students and faculty reside in the program facility for the full thirteen weeks. Faculty and students are organized into residential colleges of twenty to thirty persons, which are in turn divided into teams of five or six. The community gathers as colleges in the early evening and as teams during the latter part of the evening. Team members provide tutorial assistance for one another as needed and work together in providing services such as maintenance of the facility and meal preparation for the entire community. The team is the basic unit of UNIVERSITY 13 life and the point at which the special needs of each person are cared for. Each team member understands himself to be totally responsible for his own work in the university and also for providing the assistance necessary for every member of his team to achieve the objectives of the program.

It is intended that the faculty likewise embody the collegial style, continually reexamining its own understanding of the disciplines, and applying in its own work the methods that comprise the UNIVERSITY 13 curriculum. Through regular faculty meetings, an operating consensus is maintained regarding overall aims, teaching methods, and stylistic guidelines. Each faculty member is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the teaching in the areas of his special competency and for becoming increasingly knowledgeable in the other areas of the curriculum. His own inquiry and learning are modeled by the same procedures being taught the students, thereby serving as models for them. Teaching schedules for faculty will vary according to their degree of experience with the program, but all members share equally in the daily staff briefings and the regular evaluations of each part of the curriculum.

BASIC EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

The daily, weekly and program rhythms are carefully designed to help both faculty and students remain fully involved throughout the intensive program. The breakfast colloquy sets a context for serious and relevant thinking for the day for every member of the community, but in a relaxed oral setting. The two basic curriculum sessions on weekdays are separated by a team luncheon in which informal conversation provides a respite from direct grappling with foundational concepts and methods. The evening college meeting is a celebrative time, "a freshening up" after a day of rigorous intellectual activity, yet also an opportunity for pushing insights deeper. Nine of the thirteen weeks begin with the encountering of an intellectual discipline, followed by a methods workshop or laboratory. The weekend is a shift from a learning mode to a teaching mode, as students work with different aspects of helping others learn. Discontinuous but relevant activities are scheduled throughout the week which provide a "change of pace" without losing sight of program objectives. The thirteen-week period begins with an orientation and concludes with an extended evaluation and projection, thereby marking the completion of this curriculum and the commencement of new directions.

Finally, UNIVERSITY 13 is a serious experiment in what it means to be an educated person. Each day, for example, the community gathers to review the major news events of the past day and to project their significance for the future of the globe. Alongside this increased awareness of the contemporary situation, the community also hears and reflects upon readings from major world mythologies. This brings participants to understand something of the network of global relationships which define them and sensitizes them to the inner experiences of other human beings. Such an educational program carries within it the implicit invitation to think through and create the human style appropriate to this complex set of relationships. UNIVERSITY 13 is an exploration into predicting these new forms of life-style and leadership called for by the emerging patterns of human civilization. It is a venture toward higher education for global citizenship.

IMPLEMENTING UNIVERSITY 13

The Institute of Cultural Affairs proposes a one-year experiment, during which UNIVERSITY 13 would be designated an accredited program of the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. The Institute would assume responsibility for scheduling the program during at least two of the ensuing four quarters, for the designation and remuneration of qualified faculty, for coordination of student enrollment. It would further assume responsibility for producing the basic curricular materials, for providing and maintaining the program facilities, including all housing and food services and the necessary supporting staff.

UICC would provide UNIVERSITY 13 students and faculty access to its library resources and special cultural activities, oversee the issuance of credits and the maintenance of student records and transcripts, and provide consultative assistance to the UNIVERSITY 13 staff in such areas as student aid and scholarship programs. The UICC and the Institute would agree on student tuition on an agreed-upon basis. The Institute intends that the program not entail unreimbursed expenses for UICC and that all costs be covered by student fees, public scholarship resources and additional program funding developed by the Institute.

It would be desirable to design a number of occasions on which UICC faculty might be invited on an individual basis to be guest lecturers within the program, dinner speakers at UNIVERSITY 13 college gatherings and participants in special events. As part of the Evaluative Symposium during the final week of the program, conversations are scheduled between faculty and students which will gauge both the individual student's achievement within the program and the success of the program itself. The Institute would anticipate the participation of designated representatives of the UICC faculty and administration in these sessions. Finally, subsequent to each offering of the program, the Institute would assume the responsibility for providing the appropriate officers of UICC a written report and evaluation of the program, which in turn would constitute the basis for a joint review of its operation and any recommendations for its revision. At the end of the year's experiment, a re-examination of the overall program and the accreditation relationship would be held to determine its continuation on a regular basis or its termination.

The Institute therefore proposes the following as the immediate next steps:

1. An initial review of this Prospectus and the more detailed program materials by the appropriate members of the UICC faculty and administration;
2. A letter indicating interest in the preparation of a full proposal for such a program to be drawn up by specified representatives of the UICC and the Institute; and
3. A more detailed response to this Prospectus, defining the questions or issues to be resolved by the formal proposal and any suggested modifications to the components of the program as outlined above.

The Institute believes the need for UNIVERSITY 13 to be apparent and serious. Universities and society at large need and stand to benefit from a program which equips adults to make and to sustain responsible decisions regarding their participation in higher education and in society. It seems appropriate that such an innovative approach to higher education be undertaken together by the Institute of Cultural Affairs and the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. Many of the Institute's educational programs designed to deal with particular urban problems have been initiated in the Garfield Park and Uptown areas of Chicago. The University of Illinois at Chicago Circle has clearly demonstrated its commitment to serving the Chicago metropolitan area with quality higher education for many who would otherwise have no access to it. The Institute of Cultural Affairs therefore believes the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle will be interested in a proposal for including UNIVERSITY 13 in its academic program.