

DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
COLLEGE OF THE CITY OF DETROIT  
4841 CASS AVENUE  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF  
PSYCHOLOGY

February 22, 1930.

Dean Coffey,  
Inasmuch as I have submitted to you a budget somewhat larger than is usually the case and since we regard the obtaining of the equipment as very important, I would like to state to you just why we have placed the various larger articles on our list.

Our department has grown and is growing. We are unable to take care of more people in our laboratory (experimental) courses because of lack of equipment. Unfortunately apparatus, especially that used in psychology and physiology, is expensive, hence one cannot buy many good, standard pieces without considerable investment. On the other hand I wish to call your attention to one important fact, once we have these standard (and expensive) pieces we have them for years and years to come. Psychology apparatus does not wear out quickly.

We have used crude, home-made pieces in our laboratory in place of instruments of precision. Always confronted by drastic reductions in my requests for equipment (which requests have always been carefully considered and held down to very necessary items) I have substituted, time and again, a cheap piece for a better or more expensive piece. This is not a wise policy but it seemed necessary in the beginning in order to get our work organized and started. The present budget contains no cheap, inferior material. Some pieces could be purchased for less money but we would get a very inferior apparatus which would soon go to pieces and so cost more in the long run.

I will concern myself chiefly with the large items in my budget.

Request for a Kymograph, precision type. Cost \$101.25.

We have nothing but cheap kymographs in our laboratory. None can be used in a horizontal position and they are not reliable for precision work. This kymograph will be used by the laboratory courses for certain work and several advanced classes will use it. It is badly needed.

Request for special recording drum, for fine graphic records. This drum is used for work which necessitates a very rapid turning where fine times (tuning fork time-lines for reaction experiments) are needed. This piece will be used regularly, as in the case of the above-mentioned kymograph.

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(Cost \$38)

Request for a half-second pendulum. This pendulum is needed in our general work for making time-lines on our records. We have no half-second pendulum of this type-one that can be taken from room to room. We have needed this piece for a long time.

Request for a card-exposure apparatus. To be made by the University of Michigan Shops. Cost \$100. This is to take the place of an old, home-made, wood piece which is both unsightly and subject to much error. In other words we are substituting this piece of apparatus for a poor piece. A carpenter can do good work only if he has good tools. This notion lies behind the request for every item.

(Cost \$125)

Burroughs Adding Machine Company Adding Machine. I wish that I could drive home the need for this adding machine. The student of psychology must work with averages, mean variations, probable errors, and the like constantly. The students and the members of the department would make constant use of this machine.

Request for the Smedley dynamometer. Cost \$50. This apparatus is desired chiefly for use in the work of the course on Work, Fatigue and Efficiency, an advanced course. Other uses would be found for it in the elementary courses.

Request for Jaquest graphic Chronometer. Cost \$75. This is a precision time marker for work in the advanced courses in psychology, particularly the course in Work and Fatigue and the course in Attention and Association. A precision piece.

Request for Microscope. (Cost \$82). The psychologist must concern himself with the physical basis of mental and behavior phenomena. A study of morphology of nerve, muscle, gland, or receptor organ is necessary. We have use for a microscope in all our beginning courses so that we can show slides to our students.

(Cost \$32)

Request for Freeman's Mirror drawing apparatus. This is a standard piece of apparatus which we would use regularly in our beginning courses and the work on learning and memory.

Request for the so-called "complication clock". (Cost \$45) To be used in place of a home-made and inadequate piece. This is a standard laboratory piece for an experiment on attention and mental-set.

Request for Two steel filing cabinets. Cost, total, \$106. We have no filing cabinets in our department. The need is obvious.

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Request for book-cases. Cost \$60. We have no cases for books and pamphlets in our department. Again the need is obvious.

Request for models of nervous system, sense organs, etc., from Ward's Natural Science Company.

These models are needed for demonstration in all of our beginning courses. Their cost is \$85. They will last indefinitely.

Regarding other, smaller items. The various other items mentioned in the equipment budget are all needed for regular beginning work.

Our equipment budget amounts to approximately \$1082. It will not be so large actually because of discounts given. This equipment will give us one of the most complete psychology laboratories in the country. Our ideal is to have a psychology laboratory which will give to our students the very best. We want them to work with precision instruments instead of make-shift, crude apparatus. We want to buy good material even if it costs considerably more than another, inferior, material.

With this equipment our later budgets should be very ~~small~~ small. The items have been thought over very carefully and we have not forgotten the matter of economy. Sometimes economy and efficiency clash. We believe that our request is within the bounds of reason in the light of what we said in the beginning.

Truly yours,

*E. B. Skaggs*

E. B. Skaggs,  
Department Head.