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A Study of Transfer Students on Academic Probation

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A STUDY OF TRANSFER STUDENTS
ON ACADEMIC PROBATION

Special Studies
H491
Dr. Weldon E. Vogt

Marty McDonald

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#281

This is a continued study of transfer students begun by an Honors Seminar for the Fall semester, 1969. The transfers entered Ouachita on academic probation or suspension from other schools. The study covers the years from Fall, 1966-August, 1969. It was suggested that a study be conducted to determine whether Ouachita's acceptance scale helped the probationary students to achieve an acceptable grade average.

In another study of colleges and universities in a state, the experimenter stated this conclusion. "Different type of environments, larger classes, and changes in teaching methods are explanations that have been advanced to explain the lower grade point averages achieved by junior college students after they transfer to state universities. The results of this study indicate the chief cause of 'transfer shock' is the higher level of competition not accompanied by a higher grading distribution found at the state university as compared with the state and junior colleges."¹

During the years of this study the policy was to drop all failing grades (F) and allow only six hours of passing grades for D to be transferred. This policy raised the grade point as the student entered Ouachita, but the student lost many hours credit. In many cases a junior classification was dropped to sophomore and sophomore to freshman.

Of the eighty students in the group only nine graduated; sixteen were dismissed by either academic or, in a few instances, disciplinary probation. Fifty students dropped, that is they withdrew during the year or did not return to complete their degree requirements. This represents 62.5% of the total in this study.

In comparing the grade point averages there is a definite shift upward upon entering Ouachita. The cumulative grade average represents a wider range, though there is still indication of higher grades than the transferred grade average.

There has been some discussion of the value of Ouachita's rather lenient acceptance policy. Few, if any, schools in Arkansas will accept students with as low grade average as Ouachita does. In research conducted by Lunneborg and Lunneborg they found that the grade point average of high school grades was a better criterion for estimated success in transferring than the grade average in college. Using only the grade point average of college credits the correlation to achievement in the transferred school was .14. The best indicators of academic success were the high school grade point average plus the results of a comprehensive aptitude test. The one used in this research was the Washington Pre-College Test, which tested verbal and mathematical ability. The conclusion stated that the

high school scores reflect more uniformity in pre-college curriculum than the courses taken by the transfer students at other colleges.²

There are some merits to the admission policy for transfer students, because many of the students would be unable to continue their education at other institutions. The raising of the grade point does give somewhat of an incentive and a second chance to make better grades. It does, however, seem rather unfair to currently enrolled students with poor grades, for these are not dropped. It is difficult to make a fair estimate of the program on the basis of the information available. It is suggested that further investigations be conducted for more depth survey of the policy.

Table I. Sex and Place of Transfer

Sex		
Male	73	91.25%
Female	7	8.75%
Place of Transfer		
State school	59	73.75%
Out of state	18	22.50%
Not known	3	3.75%

Table II. Classification

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
Other School	27 (33.75%)	30 (37.50%)	21 (26.25%)	2 (2.5%)
Ouachita	48 (60.00%)	30 (37.50%)	2 (2.50%)	- -

Table III. Amount of Requirements Completed

Graduated	9	11.25%
Dropped Out	50	62.50%
Suspended (academic or disciplinary)	16	20.00%
Unknown	5	6.25%

Table IV. Comparison of Grade Point Averages

Grade Point Average	Transferred	Entering	Cumulative
0.00 - 0.50	3		1
0.51 - 0.75	10	1	1
0.76 - 1.00	10	1	2
1.01 - 1.25	13	8	6
1.26 - 1.50	13	18	11
1.51 - 1.75	20	28	14
1.76 - 2.00	9	13	20
2.01 - 2.25	1	6	11
2.26 - 2.50		2	3
2.51 - 2.75		2	3
2.76 - 3.00		2	3
3.00 - 4.00		1	
	N = 79	N = 80	N = 75
			(5 students withdrew during a semester)

FOOTNOTES

¹A.B. Hood, "Method of Comparing Student Achievement Levels at Different Colleges," Personel and Guidance Journal, XLV (April, 1967), 803.

²P.W. Lunneborg and C.E. Lunneborg, "Improving Prediction of Academic Achievement for Transfer Students," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLV (June, 1967), 994.

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