SELECTED FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MARKS MADE BY STUDENTS

IN FRESHMAN COLLEGE ENGLISH

APPROVED:

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SELECTED FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MARKS MADE BY STUDENTS
IN FRESHMAN COLLEGE ENGLISH

DISSERTATION

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For the Degree of

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The marks of freshman English students in the colleges over the country have become a matter of increasing concern to parents, colleges, and the students. In addition, the colleges have been frequently criticized for failing to recognize those students who are most likely to have difficulty as well as those students of superior ability and to provide for proper guidance for both groups.

Many articles in professional and nonprofessional magazines have been written to express this growing concern, but many of these writings have been based upon subjective opinions rather than upon facts. Actual scientific research is needed if the problem is to be eventually resolved.

More and more young people are attending colleges every year, and the larger colleges and universities will increasingly turn more and more of these prospective students away due to a lack of facilities to provide for their education. Because of this tremendous increase in our college population, the enrollments of the smaller state colleges are also growing and will become even larger in the future. The
admission officers of these smaller colleges are interested in providing the best possible education for these young people.

The college where this study is being made is an example of the average small state college of approximately 2000 enrollment, and is thought to be representative of state-supported colleges with a nonselective enrollment both in the state and in the nation as a whole.

A comparative study of two groups, one of which is composed only of students who made superior marks in freshman college English and the other group composed only of students who made failing marks in freshman college English, should prove to be useful, not only to the college where the study is being made, but to other colleges of similar nature that are experiencing similar problems.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this investigation is to determine the factors that are associated with freshman students who make superior marks in freshman college English and with students who make failing marks in freshman college English.

Certainly admission personnel should, as college student bodies increase in number, have more information in order to recognize those prospective students of exceptional
ability in English as well as those students least likely
to succeed in freshman college English. Faculty members
also need to recognize those students currently enrolled
whose ability suggests more advanced work and those stu-
dents who are likely to fail freshman English.

To help solve the problem of recognition of both
groups in freshman college English, more information is
needed concerning reasons associated with superior marks
or failing marks.

The high school background, college entrance examina-
tions, reading tests, class grades, personal opinions of
teachers who taught these students freshman college English
as well as certain individual personal factors were used in
this study.

These factors were selected because it was necessary
to know whether the student came to college prepared or un-
prepared scholastically for freshman college English, where
the strengths and weaknesses of the student lay, and what
the teacher believed concerning the reasons for the stu-
dent's grades. If the student came to college unprepared,
was it the fault of the high school or was it a lack of
ability in the student himself? If he had adequate high
school preparation and his tests at entrance into college
showed no lack of ability, the college needs to know whether he has done the work which he is capable of doing and if not, why.

The problem, therefore, was to find factors that could be associated with two groups of freshman college English students—those who had made superior marks in their first attempt at freshman college English, and those who had failed in their first attempt.

Hypotheses

Seven hypotheses were investigated in this study. They are as follows:

**Hypothesis One**.—It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean scores on standardized entrance examinations of those students making superior marks in freshman college English will be significantly higher than the mean scores on standardized entrance examinations of those students failing freshman college English.

**Hypothesis Two**.—It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean over-all freshman grade-point average of those students making superior marks in freshman college English will be significantly higher than the mean over-all grade-point average of those students failing freshman college English.
Hypothesis Three.--It is an hypothesis of this study that certain personal factors, such as whether the student is married, whether he belongs to a fraternity, whether he lives in a dormitory, and whether his permanent home is rural, are significantly associated with superior marks made in college freshman English.

Hypothesis Four.--It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean number of college English hours held by the high school English teachers of those students making superior marks in freshman college English will be significantly higher than the mean number of hours held by the high school English teachers of those students failing freshman college English.

Hypothesis Five.--It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean size of the high schools from which those students making superior marks in freshman college English were graduated will be significantly greater than the mean size of the high schools from which those students failing freshman college English were graduated.

Hypothesis Six.--It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean of the marks made in high school English by those students making superior marks in freshman college English
will be significantly higher than the mean of the marks of those students failing freshman college English.

**Hypothesis Seven.**—It is an hypothesis of this study that students who have had four years of high school English make better marks in freshman college English than do those students who have had three years of high school English.

**Description of the Sample**

This study was limited to students who were on the campus during the academic year 1963-1964 of the small state college where the investigation was made.

The sample of students for this study was composed of two groups. One group was made up of students who had made superior marks in freshman college English. There were fifty-five students in this group selected at random by choosing every fourth student of the 220 students on the campus who had made an "A" in freshman college English. The other group was made up of fifty-two students chosen at random by selecting every other student from the 105 students on the campus who had made failing marks in freshman college English.

**Treatment of the Data**

The means were found for both the superior group and the failing group on college entrance examinations, freshman
grade-point averages, number of college English hours held by the high school teachers who taught these students high school English, the size of the high schools from which these students were graduated, the high school marks made by these students, and the number of years of high school English taken by them. These means were compared and the significance of the difference determined by the t test.

Percentages were computed on such personal factors as marital status, fraternity membership, possession of an automobile, whether living in college housing or off campus, and whether the permanent home is rural or urban. The significance of the differences between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference and the critical ratio determined.

Organization of the Study

The results of this study have been organized and will be presented in the following manner:

Chapter II presents a review of research and writings related to this study.

Chapter III describes the procedures for collecting the data and the procedures for treating the data.

Chapter IV is an analysis of the data.
Chapter V is a summary of the study, the conclusions drawn, and the recommendations made as a result of this study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

During the last several years a considerable amount of literature has been written on the subject of the factors involved in marks made by freshman college students in English. Much has been based on sound research, but a great deal has been the personal opinions of the writers.

It seems that much research in English is done in the field of literature and deals with writers and their works. There are, however, several studies of a research nature which are related to this study since they treat similar problems dealing with other college subjects as well as with English. Much valuable information may also be gained from research studies in marks and in personal factors involved in college work in general.

The United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in Cooperative Research, Monograph No. 11, May 5-7, 1962, Needed Research in the Teaching of English, points out that in recent years the Federal Government has sponsored programs to support the teaching of science and
foreign languages. A similar program to improve the teaching of English was started in the fall of 1961 with Project English. This program was begun in the hopes of "supporting basic and applied research studies, research planning and development, and a few curriculum study centers," in the words of the coordinator, J. N. Hook. It is felt that research is one of the four areas most needed in the field of English.¹

College Entrance Tests

A study was made at the University of Indiana by Chawal Paeratakul on entrance tests for freshman and the use of the results in the counseling and guidance programs. In this study some of the objectives were to find the maximum predictive validity of the test battery for various grade-point averages made by freshmen at Indiana University during the academic year 1959-1960; to determine the probability that a student will become a member of the attrition group or of the survivor group; to find the best estimate of the grade-point averages attained by the survivors; to determine the

predictive validity of the test scores for individual marks in selected courses at the university. The findings and conclusions included the fact that the present battery of tests as given did not prove sensitive enough to be used as an efficient predictor of survival or attrition groups.2

A dissertation by John Marshall Long of the University of Virginia was planned to obtain factual information on how well test data that was available at the time, as well as other obtainable information, could be used to forecast future success in college for a sample of freshmen at the university. The main conclusion of Long's study was that the high school quality point average is highly predictive of the college quality point average, but other variables which are mostly academic but which also include certain personality characteristics, serve to improve to a certain degree the prediction of college success.3


The High School Student

Ernest O. Melby in *The Journal of American Association of University Women* says that there is talk about the increased enrollments as if they were catastrophes, a deluge about to engulf the schools and colleges, when in reality this should be considered a glorious opportunity. The colleges and universities cannot afford to take only a select few of these many youngsters; they cannot afford to waste such potential; at least three fourths of the children of this country must be educated to higher levels. The schools cannot afford to play God and decide who shall be educated and who shall not, nor is it completely possible to determine creativity and who will be most valuable to society. Modern society needs many more educated people than ever before. When students fail, they are blamed because they did not study, they did not pay attention, they were not interested or they were problems. No questions were asked or answered about why these things happened. Melby feels that in secondary and higher education a thorough study should be made of the students first. When students fail or drop out, society is deprived of the social, economic, and political contributions which they might otherwise have offered.

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Thomas C. Dula of Florida State University says that the student who is having scholastic difficulties often faces more stringent requirements than does the student who is having no trouble with his work. Placing a student on probation constitutes a "freeze out" process since such students rarely remain to graduate. Dula says that students seldom do better work after being on probation even if they remain in school. Men students seem more likely to have academic difficulties than do women students, and more of the younger students have trouble than do those over twenty-one years of age.\footnote{Thomas C. Dula, "A Study of Academic Probation and Suspension Policies and Practices and the Outcomes of Those Policies and Practices in Representative Public Junior Colleges," unpublished doctoral dissertation, School of Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, 1961, pp. 1-41.}

High School English Programs

Fulmer has written that high school students who have had the opportunity of being in honors classes make better marks during their freshman college year than do those students of similar ability who have had no such opportunity. The more high school honors classes or courses taken the higher the college marks were of these students. Students
who took honors courses in high school also took more honors courses during their freshman year in college.\textsuperscript{6}

While many schools in the state are able to offer honors courses, there are many schools unable to offer even an adequate program. This situation has become a matter of concern and controversy in educational circles. Many districts, according to a recent newspaper editorial quoting a State Education Commissioner, operate substandard high schools. These high schools were called "weak" high schools. There are 418 separate school districts in the state and in two counties, for example, there are thirteen school districts. There are fifteen high schools in these thirteen districts. Eight of these high schools were rated as having too few pupils for an adequate program. These two counties are not the richest counties in the state, but neither are they the poorest. These proportions, projected over the whole of the state's 418 districts, would add up to many "weak" high schools.\textsuperscript{7}


\textsuperscript{7}Arkansas Gazette, "By Any Name . . .," editorial, March 13, 1964, p. 6A.
The High School English Teacher

Donald R. Tuttle says that consolidation of small high schools would help correct the problem of faulty teacher assignments. States have certificated, and school administrators have employed and assigned, unqualified people as teachers of English in many of our high schools. The National Council of Teachers of English estimates that 40 per cent to 60 per cent of the secondary school teachers of English are poorly prepared. Much of this is because administrators are required to have certificated teachers of home economics, physical education, and industrial arts on the faculty. They start hiring teachers for highest requirements and then fill in the rest of the faculty where the requirements are lowest. He says there are hundreds of high schools without a single teacher with a major in English (or even mathematics or science) on their faculties. Tuttle goes on to say that preparation practices and certification requirements should be brought into a reasonable balance between the academic and special fields. Many school administrators need specialized courses in effective teacher selection and assignments to aid them in this aspect of their work. 

English teachers and school administrators must share responsibility in seeing that professional vitality is nourished and sustained among English teachers. No other department teaches so many of the basic skills or so broad a body of subject matter. Teacher loads are heaviest in the English department, and the department always gets those teachers whose own specialities are not needed during that particular year. It seems to be the opinion that anybody can teach English. Normally, not more than 40 to 60 per cent of any English department faculty is composed of teachers possessing a major in English. Squire and Hogan suggest that supervision and consultation be provided. Secondary teachers should also have an opportunity to confer with college teachers about planning and curriculum. There should be more cooperation between high school and college English teachers. It is a fact that no matter how superior the students may be, the English programs in high schools will be no better than the teachers who teach them.9

William Evans of the University of Illinois says that college people are interested in the teaching of students

in high school but that the high school teacher is most interested in the problems concerning the teaching done there. Much needed research could be done by these high school English teachers since they have the freedom to work with the students themselves and are also free from some of the red tape which others must face who wish to do research in the classroom. English teachers would certainly make excellent research consultants. The fact that many high school English teachers do not know what is going on in the field of research may widen the gap between what is going on in the high school and what the colleges would like to have done to prepare students for acceptable work in freshman college English. 10

Mersand says that the results of his many visits to various parts of the country as a former president of the National Council of Teachers of English show some interesting trends. He thinks that greater importance will be assigned to English as one of the most vital subjects in the curriculum of the high school. More emphasis will be given to composition and to individual instruction, more exchange of knowledge and ideas among teachers of English,

greater use of paperback books in the teaching of literature, and a more extensive use of mass media. Other trends are an increased interest in language growth and development, greater attention to paid supervision of English, stress on greater teacher preparation, improvement in instruction, new curriculum procedures, and new importance of English as a second language.

Cooperation of High Schools and Colleges in Preparing Students for College Freshman English

Squire says that teachers, both secondary and college, need to know the sequences of steps which lead to the mastery of skills and to be able to recognize students who have succeeded in mastering the necessary skills for success in normal work in the study of English. He quotes William Riley Parker, Distinguished Service Professor of English at Indiana University as saying:

Without the least exaggeration, I can say that, as a teacher of graduate students in English, there is not one single assumption I can make about either knowledge or skill already acquired. I cannot assume knowledge of the simplest technical term or the

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simplest Bible story or myth or fairy tale or piece of children's literature.¹²

Such a statement by a leading educator is an indictment on the present state of teaching in both high school and the undergraduate college. What should high school students learn? What should English majors learn in their undergraduate years in college? What preparation should they have for graduate work? According to estimates of the National Council of Teachers of English, more than 800,000 of the country's 900,000 English teachers in elementary, secondary, and college classrooms are comparatively uninformed about the structure and nature of English.¹³

Shefer writes that it is still an important part of the duties of the high school to prepare students for college. With help and suggestions from the colleges, many schools are revising their work in English. However, in revising plans, the schools are still keeping in mind the varying abilities and varying goals of their students.

Many schools tend to have differentiation between programs


¹³Ibid.
for those students who plan to go on to college and those
students whose education will cease with a high school
diploma. All schools show a concern for strengthening the
total English program for all students whether college
bound or not. Some schools are offering three levels of
English instruction—basic, average, and advanced. Stu-
dents from both the average and advanced groups are admitted
to college. It is therefore possible for students coming
to college from the same high school to have had very dif-
ferent programs in high school English. The profession
should consider the academic consequences to good or excel-
lent students who may have had only the average program
rather than the advanced. One hundred and sixteen colleges
were checked as to what they expected of incoming freshmen.
The colleges agreed that freshmen should have read works
of literary merit in unabridged form. All agreed that
freshmen should have had a great deal of experience in
writing. The growth of language power rather than spe-
cific knowledge about language was generally agreed upon.
A program of cooperation between the high schools and col-
leges was the Advance Placement Program designed to more
effectively prepare students for college. More time is
being recommended for the study of classical literature for both advanced and average students.\(^\text{14}\)

Enzmann says that while some educators advocate segregated classes or even segregated schools for highly gifted students, other educators do not see the necessity for such schools or classes. Enzmann says that the effectiveness of special schools for gifted students should be carefully considered before they are accepted as a part of our educational system. If one looks closely at special classes for the gifted student it is usually noticed that it is the usual program with "enrichment" added. When outstanding results occur it is usually because of the same type of outstanding teacher who has been offering students the same kind of enrichment for years. Segregation of the gifted part of the student body does not necessarily result in greatly improved education. Certainly education of the gifted child can be improved, but it can be improved within the existing educational framework of the comprehensive high school and will thus contribute to the strengthening of educational opportunities for all students.\(^\text{15}\)


The preceding discussions of related research have considered the high school or some relation of the high school and the college. The following reports on research will deal with the college. Some may, of necessity, include the high school viewpoint. The size of college student bodies, the responsibility of the college to its gifted students as well as to its poor students will be included.

Size of College Student Bodies

Marten ten Hoor writes that between 1961 and 1970 the college population will almost double. Colleges have always faced the problem of increased enrollment but usually the increase has been small and expected. After World War II veterans flooded the colleges, but this was temporary and emergency measures could be taken. The new expected college boom is not temporary and educators are trying to do everything possible with the resources which they already have and to acquire new resources as fast as possible. College populations may reach 9,000,000 by 1970 and expenditures may reach $3,600,000,000 annually. At least twice as many teachers will be needed. Hoor thinks that colleges will become more selective. Already the colleges have as many freshmen as they can manage, but it will be in this classification that the increases will be most felt. This article
suggests that the colleges consider having classes in shifts, as does industry. It also recommends the use of lay persons to help in clerical work and in checking papers, and in other ways to help ease the load of the teacher. Fewer courses might be offered, more mechanical aids might be used, and perhaps more graduate students used as teachers. But one thing is clear, the article says, and that is the fact that the colleges must get ready for this increase of students or they may find unwelcome adaptations thrust upon them.¹⁶

Costs of College Educations

Cohen points out that college educations are the means whereby economic opportunity and other changes take place. One of the ways of estimating the demands for future educational facilities is by finding out just what the parents of today want in the way of education for their children. Cohen quotes a recent study by the Survey Research Center Institute for Social Research of the University of Michigan. Some of the points brought out in the survey indicate that today's parents plan on giving their children more opportunities than they themselves had, although to a certain degree

¹⁶Marten ten Hoor, "Before Us, the Deluge!" Liberal Education, XLVII (October, 1961), 421-436.
they are influenced by family income and the amount of education which they did receive. Many persons believe that more of the cost of higher education should be taken over by the government—in fact, more people who expect to send their children to college oppose government aid for education than do those people who do not expect to send their children to college. Some 52 per cent of the families asked were of the opinion that more aid should be given to education, and of these, about half felt that aid should be given all students, while the others felt that need, ability, or both should be the criteria for aid. The study showed that most people expected to send their children to public colleges. In cases where there was a college in the area most families expected their children to remain at home while attending classes. Over half the parents expected their children to help pay part of their college expenses. The higher the family income, the less parents expected children to contribute toward their college expenses. The number of children in the family also had some bearing on whether or not the child was expected to help pay his own college expenses. Eventually, perhaps, more parents will see the cultural, social, and humanistic advantages of education. Cohen points out that:
It is clear from the close relationship between the education of one generation and the education of the next in the same family that there is some perpetuation of poverty through low relative educational levels just as there is perpetuation of high status through continuation of high levels of education. As more and more people finish high school and go to college, though, these differences become narrowed and their importance decreases.\textsuperscript{17}

Taxes will not yet support colleges enough for all the children to attend whose parents have expressed such a desire. If parents want their children to have college educations, they must plan ahead. Many students of real ability may not be able to attend college since college costs are rising. Some measures should be taken to insure the education of these talented youngsters. Perhaps Federal scholarships could help; increased tax support for higher education might help, but financial barriers must not prevent their education.\textsuperscript{18}

Advantages of the Small College

Owen points out that the assets of the small college outweigh its liabilities. The small college, with its small plant, small faculty, and small student body is a place


\textsuperscript{18}Ibid.
where real learning may take place. Learning takes place only in relation to good teaching, and good teaching may be done anywhere. In the small college the primary obligation of the teacher is to teach and it can be recognized as an art to be cultivated. Larger colleges insist upon research and publication by the members of the faculty. It is true that in many schools the teachers are burdened with heavy teaching loads, too many committee assignments and speaking engagements, but the faculty can more readily agree on common goals, especially when they help determine those goals. A small college can, in the general education program, provide for all students the background needed by every educated man and woman. Then, too, teachers do not have to deal with overwhelming numbers of students. Individual attention can be given to each student and older faculty members need contact with freshmen in classes. Small student bodies may be a liability as far as the finances of the school are concerned, but if finances are no problem it can be a source of satisfaction to faculty and students alike. Small faculties develop an informality which is creative and healthy as well as delightful. Not only do faculty members know each other personally but students are friendlier and more informal with each other.
Perhaps the outstanding asset of the small college is, and has always been, superior teaching. If superior teaching has anything to do with superior education then the small college has its role to play in educating the youth of the nation.¹⁹

McGrath writes that colleges of any size at the present time and in the years to come will probably have little difficulty in surviving. The increase in college-going populations will guarantee their survival. There will likely be more students than the colleges can accommodate. There is not much knowledge of the past admissions practices, but they must certainly have been quite flexible. There is also a lack of reliable studies of the relationships between academic ability and success in post-college life, but the evidence of men and women in our national history who have attained high places of honor can leave no doubt that even those with modest records of work in college can profit from a liberal undergraduate education. Present admission practices would not have admitted many of these.²⁰

¹⁹Mary Steele Owen, "The Small College: A Faculty Perspective," Liberal Education, XLIX (May, 1963), 258-267.

McMurrin states, however, that we have failed to educate students to their fullest capabilities and that in the matter of education there is a national feeling of guilt. The educational program has not had the quality which is necessary for the well-being of the individual and of the nation. The talents and capacities of the people have not been developed because the schools have not been structured to the needs of society nor have they been rigorous enough in their intellectual discipline. The education of more people would have been a great asset at a time when education is of vital importance to the nation and to the world. One of the responsibilities of education is to educate for world participation in the cultures and understanding of others than ourselves. If we expect to retain our place in world leadership, this must be an obligation. Knowledge continues to expand, education must do the same. In a sense, American education is the testing ground for democracy. It is a basic assumption that what is good for the individual is good for the nation as a whole. Educational standards must be set as high as it is possible to attain them. Our basic ideals are corrupted if we demand less than the individual
is capable of doing. Competent people must be attracted to the teaching profession. Many persons are not qualified who fill the classrooms as teachers. Others are not adequately prepared in the subject matter which they teach. Students of top quality should be encouraged to enter the teaching profession. There are too many teachers of questionable ability in the classrooms of the nation today.21

Erwin R. Steinberg reports on research discussion for Project English. The preparation of English teachers was of major concern to the group. One recommendation was that a Doctor of Philosophy degree in the teaching of English be awarded by the English departments rather than by the education departments. Under professional problems, the following suggestions were made:

1. Develop a professional examination in English.
2. Develop examinations that will predict good English teachers and candidates for graduate degrees in English.
3. Devise a plan for recruiting teachers of English at all levels.
4. Develop a new degree which would fall between the M.A. and the Ph.D.: the Graduate in Arts or Literature; or the Doctor of Arts or Literature.
5. Develop a new Ph.D. in the teaching of English to be offered by departments of English.22


Other parts of the discussion centered around what the college student should be required to do in the way of writing. A discussion of the ways of teaching writing and whether the teachers could teach writing better if they were better writers themselves was included in the discussion.23

Predictors of Academic Success

Bergeron made a study to find the relationships between certain characteristics of freshmen classes and the achievement of academic success. Some of the results of his study included the following: (1) age upon entering the university, which was found to have a slight negative relationship to academic success; (2) high school cumulative grade point, which can be accepted as a good predictor of academic success at the University of Arkansas; (3) scores on the American Council of Education Psychological Examination, which were found to be significant predictors of academic success; and (4) scores on the various parts of the Cooperative English Test, which were found to be significant factors in predicting academic success for entering freshman at the University of Arkansas.24

23Ibid.

Noyes writes that tests for college admission should have three characteristics:

First, it should measure a particular ability or field of knowledge in such a way as to differentiate with considerable accuracy among the candidates who take it. In other words, it should have validity; its scores should correlate reasonably well with school and college grades in English... A second desirable characteristic is that the test should be capable of reliable grading. While this requirement is necessary if the grades are to have any significance whatever, it is not in itself sufficient to make them significant...

Finally, such a test should require students to perform work essentially like that done in school or college in the subject tested. It should encourage those preparing for it to follow sound educational methods rather than artificial mnemonics, or cramming. The influence of admissions testing procedures on teaching in the secondary schools should never be underestimated...

French undertook a multivariable study to determine how useful pure-factor tests can be for the comparative prediction of success in college fields of study. The results indicated a reasonable conclusion that differential prediction is hardly favorable between history and English since they are similar in that both require mostly verbal abilities, but in such unlike fields as history and physical science differential prediction is quite promising. It

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is aptitude tests that contribute most to absolute prediction, but the interest tests contribute most to differential prediction. Both of them have a place in comparative prediction.  

Jones studied Arkansas high school students and compared test scores on those who entered college and those who did not go to college. He found that those who entered college were scholastically superior. There was much overlapping in that many of those who did not enroll were scholastically superior to a large number of those enrolled. Of those who were capable of entering college but who did not do so, 71 per cent studied the college preparatory, or general, curriculum while in high school. More students went to college when they lived in a community where a college existed. More than one out of five students who did go on to college went to colleges outside the state. Jones recommended an extensive statewide testing program, more adequate guidance programs to encourage capable students to go to

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college, and some system of scholarships for capable students who are financially unable to attend college.  

College Programs

Cadbury makes a report on a conference that discussed the problem of outstanding students in college. It is a matter of concern to colleges that because of increased enrollments it may not be possible to keep standards at high levels. Small schools do not seem to have made the effort to take care of outstanding students as have the larger schools. In selecting students for advanced or honors programs, it was noted that "able" and "effective" students are those with whom the programs are concerned, but attention should also be given to means of stimulating able but ineffective students. It was suggested that such programs begin with freshmen rather than waiting until the junior year. Freshmen are expectant and eager but if nothing is done to encourage them they may go into a slump before the junior year. Honors programs are not merely forms of independent study. Two important problems in such programs are

to identify outstanding students and the means by which they are identified. The conference agreed that outstanding students were "any and all students in our colleges who are not yet being stretched to their limit." No agreement was reached on means of making the identification of such students.  

Eddy writes that it is possible that colleges today are being taken by surprise, and are often dismayed, at the students who are arriving on the campuses. Not long ago colleges complained that students were self-centered, apathetic, and materialistic, but now they are being swamped with vital, alive, ardent young people and have not been able to change to meet the challenge presented by these youngsters. Many years ago, Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses on a Wittenberg church. Eddy says that there are at least six theses that college students may nail on the college gate. These are:

1. The students will say that the colleges themselves are guilty of prolonging adolescence. The colleges have fallen for the American desire to maintain youth in a state of perpetual puerility. If we are forced to say something nice about youngsters, we say it grudgingly. . . . The communications

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and entertainment media don't help. . . . It's more fun to think of college life in terms of wild fraternity parties, winter carnivals, prom queens and panty raids. . . . The serious minded student is interested in the business of learning. . . . It would be refreshing to find a college handbook or catalogue which cautioned a student to worry first about how knowledge gets into his head instead of how he gets into a fraternity. . . .

2. The students accuse the colleges of failing to keep pace with a rapidly changing high school curriculum. . . . The better high schools are moving far beyond us in many ways. . . .

3. The colleges are resisting student pressure to reform extracurricular life. Here, again, the heavy hand of tradition. . . . If we are honest, we will realize that all of campus life needs a thorough over-hauling.

4. The students claim that they are warned continually of the evils of conformity but are given little opportunity for true creativity. . . .

5. The college student says: "You have your expectations set too low." And he adds: "Though you talk continually of the superior student, your programs are aimed at the average who, conceivably, could be inspired to become superior."

6. At the top, in small letters, appears "For the Special Attention of Chaplains and Directors of Religious Life." The thesis warns: "You are going to have to work twice as hard with us. We are suspicious of your old methods and your pat answers." The student asks for completely open discussion of religious differences. . . .

Dickerson made a study of 637 freshmen at the University of Arkansas to see if the size of the high school from which they graduated was related to academic success in

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their first year at the university. His conclusions indicated that students from the small high schools of Arkansas withdrew at a higher rate than those from the larger schools; that students coming from the larger high schools had significantly greater scholastic ability than those from the small schools; and that when mental ability was held constant, the size of the preparatory high school had little, if any, influence on the academic achievement of the student once he reaches the college.30

Problems of the Below-Average Student

Snow writes that colleges do not give a great deal of attention to the average student. The minority with high academic aptitude have always occupied the favor and attention of the school. The idea of an education for the elite, Snow says, is fundamentally vicious. Such an idea is a way to excuse irresponsible conduct on the part of those responsible for the education of all who are enrolled. It allows a convenient pretext for not formulating appropriate plans of education for the less capable. Gifted,

30Elbert Lee Dickerson, "An Analysis of the Relationship of Size of Arkansas High Schools to Academic Success of Graduates in the First Year at the University of Arkansas," unpublished doctoral dissertation, School of Education, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas, 1956, pp. 53-54.
perceptive students are easier to teach. They understand material more quickly, they grasp ideas without explanation, they are attentive, polite and able to take care of themselves. In short, gifted students do not require much in the way of teaching as it is considered in the usual sense. They make progress on their own and the college receives the credit. Teaching highly talented students gives the teacher a feeling of satisfaction and a feeling of academic dignity. Poor students, on the other hand, are difficult to teach. They have harder times in understanding, they do not pay attention, they are easily distracted, and often they have a poor cultural background and are not really interested in study. It is extremely difficult for a student of poor ability to overcome obstacles in the large classes which are customary in the freshman class. It would seem that the attitudes of the colleges indicate that they want only the very bright students and do not care to be bothered with the poor or even the average student. The average student, whose grades are C's with an occasional B is not exactly rejected, but neither is he wholly accepted. He may eventually graduate, but the faculty is never really interested in him. These students, however, are those most in need of encouragement
and good teaching. He should not meet indifference. Any student who has been accepted into an institution of higher learning is entitled to all of the privileges.\textsuperscript{31}

Diener studied seventy-four over-achieving and sixty-four under-achieving students for differences in scholastic aptitude, cumulative grade average, and reading ability among other factors. He found few appreciable differences between them in the characteristics studied. Differences which favored the over-achieving students were high school and university marks. Those that favored the under-achieving students were scholastic ability and reading ability. Most under-achievers lived in fraternity houses. In the tests that were given no significant differences were found except in artistic interest, which favored the under-achievers.\textsuperscript{32}

Brueckman writes that a reading laboratory should be provided for the less able student. It will, however, be only through the efforts and determination of the student himself that improvement will be made. The pupil must accept


the responsibility of active participation and be willing to devote as much energy as that required in any work in the gymnasium. Persistence and self-reliance, not mechanization, will determine his improvement. Thorough analysis and self-evaluation plus daily effort are needed.³³

Whiteis reports a test with two groups of poor college students. There were twenty-five students in one group and twenty-four students in the other. All had a poor background. The problem was brought about by the fact that there are various types of poor scholastic records. Some students rank high in pre-admission tests and are later asked to withdraw from college because of failure. Some get satisfactory grades in most areas of the curriculum but get failing grades in certain subject-matter areas. Still others do good work up to a certain semester and then make a failing grade. They may continue making failing grades until asked to leave or they may be able to stay in school but with work which will barely graduate them. The summary of this experiment is best given in the words of Whiteis:

The problem in this study originated from the observation that there is a need to improve the quality of

of scholarship in higher education. According to observers, this need is widespread. The incidence of probation and compulsory withdrawal for reasons of scholastic failure is excessively high in colleges and universities throughout the United States. The perspective led the questions: Do students obtain poor scholastic records because maladjustive behavior interferes with thought and the attainment of academic goals? Or do they show a poor quality of performance because the power to think is absent, or seriously lacking? An experimental test was conducted with two groups of first-semester undergraduate students. The conditions of higher education were the same except that the factor of therapy was employed as a corrective for the maladjustive behavior in one but not in the other of the two groups. The results sustained a prediction that the students in the therapeutic situation would become freer from the interference of maladjustive behavior and hence would obtain a significantly superior scholastic record than that of students in the nontherapeutic situation. The evidence raised a doubt about the generality and tenability of the assumption that the students lacked the power to think, although some were observed to lack the tools of thought. The outcomes were interpreted to refute the conjectures of critics who say that the effects of therapy would be abortive or make the school the worse.³⁴

In the group given the therapy, none dropped out the first semester, but in the no-therapy group of twenty-four students, six dropped out. At the end of the first semester only six in the therapy group were potential dropouts, but only one of these had been asked to leave by the midpoint of the sophomore year, and only two had been asked to withdraw in the four-year period. Of the no-therapy group,

only eighteen remained at the end of the first year and two of these were potential dropouts. Seven of the ten were asked to leave college before the midpoint of their sophomore year. Two more dropped out before the end of the four-year period.\textsuperscript{35}

Davis has written of the losses suffered when students drop out of college. Besides the human losses and the resource losses, there are also financial losses. One half of all students who enroll drop out of college before the end of the four years. The average cost of recruiting, screening, accepting, and fitting a college student for life on the campus in general, costs over $500 per student. This is a loss if he drops out. The tuition which he would have paid during the remaining years had he remained in college, is also a loss. This is a problem which the trustees of the colleges might do something to ease. The policies of the college are set by the trustees. The retention rate of the college depends upon whether the trustees have a policy of indifference or a policy of concern toward attrition.\textsuperscript{36}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36} Paul H. Davis, "Trustees, Take Heed of Attrition!" \textit{Liberal Education}, XLVIII (December, 1962), 479-486.
\end{footnotesize}
Stroup has written of the disadvantages of the grade-point average in determining which students will become the academic casualties at the end of the school year. Today's students, even though they have arrived in much larger numbers than ever before, are the best taken care of physically than any before them. But for the student who has difficulty the grade-point average can, and does, determine whether or not he remains in school although it is not really an accurate method of deciding his true ability or even his true accomplishment. The Grade-Point Average is the only widely accepted system of computing in which 71 and 81 add up to more than 78 and 79. Colleges should develop and use the most precise instruments possible.37

A book on motivation by David McClelland and others included a report on a test to see how success or failure influenced motivation. The results were interpreted as showing that the affective state of subjects following success was more positive than that following failure. Individual differences will complicate such a test to a certain degree. The person who is very capable and is always able to accomplish a great deal, who is accustomed

to success, may have anticipations of more success. The person who is accustomed always to failure will anticipate failure. The reports have been consistent in showing that college students with high achievement motivation perceive their parents as distant rather than close and themselves as independent to all types of conformity and authority. Students who rate low in achievement are just the opposite.38

The Freshman College English Program

The freshman English program at North Texas State University, as reported by Ballard in a paper on the English Language program there, is much like freshman programs in both large and small colleges over the nation. It is presented here because of the similarity of other college English programs to it, although there are many variations. When entering examinations have so indicated, about 10 percent of entering freshmen have been put into special high sections. These are continued into the second semester, with changes in enrollment determined by first semester work. There is no remedial course at North Texas State University. Special second semester courses are set aside

for students with a special interest in creative writing and a recommendation from their first semester instructor. These writing classes are taught by specialists. Themes are written weekly in freshman English courses during the first semester. Longer but fewer papers, including a research paper, are written the second semester. Grades are determined largely by the quality of written composition and this is done primarily in class. The freshman course remains conventional in content.

Eberly of North Texas State University wrote that there is something the matter with college freshman English—it is too unpopular. He says that "it attempts too much." Freshman English should consist of rhetorical types but too much time is needed, so only writing is left. The course should consist of the term paper itself and should include additional writing. He suggests the possibility of a second paper, with students who averaged a B plus or higher being exempt from the second. He suggests nine written assignments to be devoted to one term paper or twelve to two term papers.

A study by Braddock and Kraus at the State University of Iowa in accelerating the vocabulary growth of remedial students concludes that acceleration in vocabulary development is dependent upon mental ability; the more intelligent the student, the more his vocabulary development can be accelerated; the less intelligent the student, the less his vocabulary development can be accelerated. If the vocabulary growth of remedial college students cannot be accelerated by any special study, then special vocabulary study is wasted on the lowest 10 per cent or so of entering freshmen in colleges with nonselective admission policies, and probably on the lower 50 per cent or so of pupils in an average secondary school class. 41

Sawey of Harding College says that freshman composition cannot be taught as efficiently in large classes as in small classes. Learning to write requires much student activity and teacher time and effort. The large class makes it difficult for both. Harding College did a two-year experiment in teaching freshmen in large classes in composition. The experiment was carried on with a large class and a small

41 Richard Braddock and Sidney Kraus, "An Experiment in Accelerating the Vocabulary Growth of Remedial Students," College Composition and Communication, IX (December, 1958), 216-220.
class. The results showed that in the small class 82.4 per cent of the class improved the level of writing at least one letter grade, while only 52.4 per cent of the larger class showed that much improvement. This comparison of a large and a small class taught under similar conditions is evidence, he says, that teaching freshmen in large classes is not practical if students are to be taught to write. Classes must be kept small and teacher loads reasonable. In large classes both students and teachers suffer.\textsuperscript{42}

Belcher of North Texas State University was the second speaker on a panel discussion of "The Uses and Limitations of Entrance and Achievement Examinations in English" at the Conference on College Composition and Communications. He described a program, in use since 1955, in which a placement theme and a final examination are used to measure a student's competence in composition. The themes are graded numerically from 0 to 100 by teams of three instructors for each 150 themes. He says that there is surprising accord in these grades. Some of the advantages of the impromptu

\textsuperscript{42}Orlan Sawey, "Are Large Classes Just as Efficient?" College Composition and Communication, X (February, 1959), p. 32.
themes graded in this manner included these: the system is simple to administer and to grade, it is economical, it protects the student by providing several judges of his work. The first, or placement theme, lets the instructor know in advance the quality of his students and the help which they will need. Themes such as these are good evidence to outsiders of the student's work. The system promotes departmental uniformity in grading. The final examination has additional value in that it puts the instructor on the side of the student since the student's paper, whether good or poor, reflects on the instructor's ability as a teacher. It places the emphasis for the course on composition. If the grade on the final theme is between 50 and 60 it is considered a failure, but the instructor may decide. If the grade is below 50 the student must fail.43

Report Number Nine, taken from the Workshops Reports of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, says that the separate remedial course appears to be in a transitional state. Although some institutions are doing

43William Belcher, "The Uses and Limitations of Entrance and Achievement Examinations in English," College Composition and Communication, X (October, 1959), 184-186.
more remedial work than before, others are reducing or eliminating it. The arguments that the remedial class is unjustifiably expensive, that it is a means of giving the poorer student another chance and that such a student is better not admitted to the university, and that he unduly slows the pace of the standard class, all are arguments that find supporters. Probably the trend is toward elimination of the remedial course, but one cannot yet say that such a step will also eliminate the problems the course was planned to solve. It does seem, however, that the high schools welcome rather than oppose a strong stand on the admission to college of the poorly prepared student.

As with remedial work, no single pattern prevails in the treatment of the superior student. He may be exempted from some or all of the regularly required freshman work, placed in an enriched and more demanding program, or permitted to substitute another course. Whatever the pattern, recognition of the preparation of a superior student is important both to the student himself and to the high school from which he comes. Indeed, there was general agreement that, whether in relation to standards or curriculum closer articulation between the high school and the college is mutually advantageous. It may lead to improved
high school teaching because of greater awareness of college standards, to less need for remedial work, to improved counseling, and to more realistical appraisal by the individual of his chances of success in college.  

College Fraternities

President Edward D. Eddy, Jr., of Pittsburgh's Chatham College said before a meeting of the United States State-University presidents at Washington, D. C., that:

Isn't it time that the American university prepare a decent, respectable burial for the traditional American college fraternity? They have served an historical purpose and served it well. But we've given up banjo clubs and minstrels. Now it's time to face courageously the task of replacing the alumni-dominated fraternal system. Time has run out for the national fraternity system. It has failed to adapt itself to the demands of the new student and to a changing social pattern. The system can and should be replaced—not with more Hiltons and Statlers but with intellectual centers that keep the best of fraternity house living without fraternities.  

The Married Student on the College Campus

Aller writes that the present trend among young people is to combine marriage with pursuit of higher education if

44 Conference on College Composition and Communication, "Report Number Nine from Workshops Reports," College Composition and Communication, X (October, 1959), 184-186.

the numbers of married students arriving on the college campus is any indication. Before World War II there were not too many married students in college, but these seemed well adjusted to married life and determined to make the most of their opportunities. Their emotional adjustment to each other seems to have been affected favorably. In a study at the University of Wisconsin it was reported that married veterans made higher grades than single veterans and those married and having children made the highest grades of all. Veterans, whether married or single, did better work than they had done formerly. In a study of 100 couples where one member at least was enrolled at the University of Idaho, it was noted that all had been married less than eleven years. It was also noted that parents of the couples provided at least some financial assistance. There were 46 per cent of the wives and 53 per cent of the husbands who were working while attending school. More men than women had scholarships and GI incomes. According to frequency of mention, the five greatest advantages in being single while in college (as given to be the opinions of the married couples studied) were: fewer financial problems, fewer responsibilities, more freedom, more social
life, and more time for study. The five most frequently mentioned advantages of being married while attending college were given as: increased emotional security, greater incentive to success, superiority of home comforts, fewer social pressures, and a more settled life. Findings in this study indicated the following:

1. Financial problems and other areas of serious difficulty affected marital adjustment.

2. Those subjects who had children felt worry and guilt over possible neglect.

3. Marital adjustment was positively and significantly related to academic achievement for husbands.

4. Self-control and responsibility were positively and significantly related to marital adjustment.

Since it is not always possible for both the husband and wife to remain in college, some suggestions were made in Aller's study which might help to remedy this situation, namely (a) a family-type financial plan where tuition and other expenses would be reduced for husband and wife teams; (b) more scholarships, fellowships, and long-time, low-interest loans to be made available; (c) more financial help from parents of such married offspring. It was also suggested that not only should provisions be made so that
both husband and wife could continue in college, but that they should postpone the arrival of children while attempting to attend school, and that more marriage counseling should be made available on campus for such students.46

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES FOR THE COLLECTION AND TREATMENT
OF DATA

One hundred and seven students were chosen from the student body of a small state college. They were chosen at random from all the students on the campus who had made an "A" or an "F" in freshman college English. From the 220 students on the campus who had made A's, every fourth was chosen to make up the first group of fifty-five students having made superior marks in freshman college English. From the 105 students on the campus who had failed freshman college English, every other one was chosen to make up the second group of fifty-two students. All had taken their freshman college English at this particular college.

Responses were secured from all of the original group. The data collected on each individual included the following: the size of the high school from which he graduated, the number of years (whether three or four) of high school English taken, grades made in high school English, and the
college English background of the student's last high school English teacher. Also included are the scores from the student's college entrance examination—the Nelson-Denny Reading Test and the American College Test, his grade in freshman college English (whether an A or an F), and his freshman grade-point average.

Personal data secured on each individual included: residence—whether town or rural, marital status, fraternity membership, whether he was in school on a scholarship, whether he lived in a dormitory or off the campus, whether he commuted from his home to the college, and whether he had an automobile on the campus.

After the names of the students to be used in the study were chosen at random, notes (see Appendix) were mailed to each student asking him to come in for an interview (see Appendix). Responses were obtained from sixty-three students following the first note. The same note was again mailed to those students who had not appeared for an interview. Twenty-eight students responded to this note. A third note with slightly different wording was sent to the remaining students who had not responded and ten of them came in. Personal telephone calls brought in the rest of the students for interviews.
The teachers who taught these students freshman college English were interviewed (see Appendix) and their opinions and class records noted as to reasons why these students made either an A or an F.

The name of the student's high school English teacher for his last year of high school English was secured in the interview with him. An English conference was held at the college for English teachers of high schools and at this conference the teachers were asked to fill out registration forms giving their names, name and size of their high schools, years of service, degree held and name of college, their majors, and the number of English hours held (see Appendix). The English hours of the high school teachers of ninety-four of the students used in this study were secured from these forms. The information on eight teachers, two of whom no longer teach, was secured from English supervisors. The information on the remaining five was secured by telephone calls.

The high school English marks and the number of years of English taken by the student in high school were obtained from the Student Personnel Office. Whether or not the student kept a car on the campus was obtained from the personal interview with him and then verified from student automobile registration lists in the Student Personnel Office.
The location of the student's permanent home and whether it is rural or urban, whether he lived in a college dormitory or off campus, or whether he lived at home and commuted were obtained from a student directory for faculty members.

Whether the student was married or single was obtained from the interview. He was also asked whether he was in school on a scholarship and this information was verified in the Student Personnel Office. Fraternity membership was checked from lists in the Dean of Students' Office.

All entering freshmen are given the Nelson-Denny Reading Test as a part of the entrance examinations. A list of the names of the students and the scores made by them is mailed to all freshman college English teachers. The reading scores used for the students in this study were taken from this list.

Entering freshmen are given the American College Test if they did not take it in high school and request the high school to send a copy to the college. These scores are available in the Office of the Dean of Students as well as in the files of the advisers of each freshman. Most of the scores were taken from the Office of the Dean
of Students, the rest from advisers. The Predicted English Scores used in the study were also taken from these American College Test cards if the cards contained the information. If the cards did not have the predicted scores they were figured from the information on the cards.

Grade-point averages for the freshman year were obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

The means were found for the following factors and compared for the two groups. The \( t \) test was used to determine the significance of the difference. The \( t \) ratio or critical ratio is the test for checking the significance of the difference between two independent means. The formula used for \( t \) in this study is as follows:

\[
t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum x_1^2}{K_1(K_1-1)} + \frac{\sum x_2^2}{K_2(K_2-1)}}}
\]

The \( \sum x^2 \) is the sum of the squared deviations of the scores in a sample group away from the mean in that group, and the \( \sum x^2 \) for each group is obtained as usual from the formula:

\[
\sum x^2 = \sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{K} \quad 1
\]

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The 5 per cent level of significance was accepted for this study. Common practice has been to use the 1 per cent or the 5 per cent level, but the 5 per cent level is most generally used and is usually referred to as the significant difference. When the 5 per cent level of significance is accepted, there is the risk of being wrong once in twenty times, or five chances in 100 of being wrong.²

High School Background of Students

The mean averages of the size of the high schools from which these students were graduated were found for both the A and the F groups and were compared. The t test was used to determine the significance of the difference.

The mean number of years of high school English taken by members of both groups was compared and the t test was used to determine the significance of the difference.

The mean of the high school marks made by both the superior and the failing groups was compared and the t test was used to determine the significance of the difference.

College English Background of Students' High School English Teachers

The mean numbers of college English hours taken by the high school English teachers of both the A group and

²Ibid.
the F group were compared and the $t$ test was used to determine the significance of the difference.

College Entrance Examinations

The mean numbers of the American College Test predicted English scores for both groups were compared and the $t$ test was used to determine the significance of the difference.

The mean numbers of the Nelson-Denny Reading scores for both the A and the F groups were compared and the $t$ test was used to determine the significance of the difference.

Freshman Grade-Point Averages

The mean numbers of the freshman grade-point averages for students making superior marks and those making failing marks were compared and the significance of the difference was determined by the $t$ test.

Personal Factors

Percentages were computed on the personal factors and the significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio ($t$) was determined.
The formula for the standard error of a percentage difference is:

\[ SE_{D\%} = \sqrt{PQ \left( \frac{1}{N_1} + \frac{1}{N_2} \right)} \]

SE of the difference between two independent or unrelated percentages, in which

- \( P \) = mean of the percentages in the two groups
- \( Q = (1 - P) \)
- \( N_1 \) = number of cases in Group 1
- \( N_2 \) = number of cases in Group 2
- \( D \) = the difference between the two per cents
- \( t = D / SE_{D\%} \)

The percentages were computed and the significance of the differences tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference and the critical ratio determined since in a considerable number of research problems it is possible to compute percentages when it is not feasible to measure the factors in terms of test scores. This is especially true of personal factors.\(^4\)

Percentages were computed for both the students making superior marks in college freshman English and those making failing marks on the numbers who live in rural homes. The significance of the difference between the percentages of


\[^4\text{Ibid.}\]
the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio (t) determined.

Percentages for both the A and the F groups were computed on the number of married students. The formula for the standard error of a percentage difference was used to determine the significance of the difference and the critical ratio determined.

Percentages for both groups were computed on the number of students attending college on scholarships. The significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined.

Percentages for the A and F groups were computed on the number of students belonging to fraternities and sororities. The significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined.

Percentages for the two groups were computed on the number of students having automobiles. The formula for the standard error of a percentage difference was used to determine the significance of the difference and the critical ratio determined.
Percentages were computed for both the A and F groups on the numbers of students living in college dormitories. The significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined.

Percentages were computed for both groups on the numbers of students rooming off the campus. The formula for the standard error of a percentage difference was used to determine the significance of the difference between the two groups, and the critical ratio determined.

Percentages were computed for both the A and F groups on the numbers of students living at home in other towns and rural areas and commuting daily to their classes at the college. The significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present an analysis of the data obtained in this study.

A comparison was made of two groups for this investigation. The first group was made up of fifty-five students who had made superior grades in freshman college English. They were chosen at random by taking every fourth name from the 220 students on the campus who had made A's in freshman college English. The second group was made up of students who had failed freshman college English. Fifty-two students were chosen by selecting every other name from the 105 students on the campus who had made F's in freshman college English.

Entrance Examinations

The American College Test scores for both groups of students were obtained from the Student Personnel Office and from the student's adviser. The predicted English scores were taken from the score cards where available. Since this is a rather recent service of the American
College Testing Service, it was necessary to compute the predicted scores of the juniors and seniors used in this study. This was done from information on the cards and a formula furnished by the testing program in a booklet explaining the program and its uses. Table I gives the comparison of the *American College Test* predicted freshman college English scores for the A and F groups of students in this study.

**TABLE I**

**COMPARISON OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE TEST PREDICTED FRESHMAN COLLEGE ENGLISH SCORES FOR A AND F GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>11.349*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This $t$ value is highly significant at the .001 level of significance.

The predicted scores translated into grade points ranged from 0.0 to 2.5 for the F group. The mean for the group was 1.33. The predicted scores for the A group ranged from 1.7 to 3.2 with a mean of 2.34. The $t$ test was used to determine the significance of the difference
between these means. The difference was highly significant as noted in Table I. Hypothesis one is accepted in part.

The composite score for the Nelson-Denny Reading Test which is given to all entering freshmen was taken from the list of scores mailed to all freshman college English teachers. Table II shows the comparison of the composite scores on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test for the A and F groups of students in this investigation.

**TABLE II**

**COMPARISON OF THE COMPOSITE SCORES ON NELSON-DENNY READING TESTS FOR A AND F GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>79.67</td>
<td>42.19196</td>
<td>8.33253*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>37.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This $t$ value is significant at the .001 level of significance.

The composite scores for the A group ranged from 33 to 145 with a mean of 79.67. The composite scores for the F group ranged from 00 to 95 with a mean of 37.48. The $t$ test was used to determine the significance of the difference between these means as shown in Table II, above. The
difference was highly significant. Hypothesis one is accepted in full.

Freshman Grade-Point Averages

The cumulative grade-point averages for the freshman year were obtained from the Office of the Registrar. The grade-point averages of members making superior marks in freshman college English ranged from 2.00 to 4.00. The mean of this group was 3.3929. The grade-point averages of members of the F group ranged from .00 to 2.95. The mean of this group was 1.2215. These data are shown in Table III.

**TABLE III**

COMPARISON OF THE CUMULATIVE GRADE-POINT AVERAGES OF A AND F GROUPS FOR THE FRESHMAN YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.3929</td>
<td>2.1714</td>
<td>18.20117*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1.2215</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This $t$ value is significant at the .001 level of significance.

The $t$ test was used to determine the significance between these means. A real difference at the .001 level
of significance was found, as noted in Table III, and hypothesis two is accepted.

Rural Students

The Student directory for faculty members gave the home addresses of the students. Eleven of the F group were listed as having rural addresses. Five of the A group were listed as having rural homes. The significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined. This information is tabulated in Table IV. There was a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>SE D%</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>12.063</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>1.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.153</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is not significant at the 5 per cent level of significance.

difference in favor of the F group but was not significant at the 5 per cent level as noted above. This part of hypothesis three is therefore rejected.
Married Students on the College Campus

A comparison of the percentages of students in the A and the F groups in this investigation who are married is shown in Table V below.

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS IN THE A AND F GROUPS WHO ARE MARRIED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>SE_{D%}</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>1.295</td>
<td>5.873</td>
<td>.22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.615</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is not significant at the 5 per cent level.

In the interviews with students it was learned that six of the A group were married and five of the F group. Percentages were computed and a difference of 1.295 per cent was found to exist. The formula for the standard error of a percentage difference was used to determine the significance of this difference. When the critical ratio was determined it was found not to be significant at the 5 per cent level, as noted in Table V. This portion of hypothesis three is therefore rejected.
Scholarships held by Students

The student furnished information in the interview on whether or not he was in college on a scholarship and the information was verified in the Office of Student Personnel. Table VI presents a comparison of the percentages of the students in this investigation in the A and F groups who were on scholarships.

**TABLE VI**

**COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS IN A AND F GROUPS WHO ARE ON SCHOLARSHIPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>47.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.846</td>
<td>43.424</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>5.11*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is significant at the .001 level of significance.

As noted in the above table, of the F group, only two were on scholarships. One of these was a music scholarship and the other an athletic scholarship. In the A group of fifty-five students there were thirty-seven scholarships divided among twenty-six students, some students having two or even three scholarships. When percentages were
computed a difference of 43.424 per cent was found to exist. The formula for the standard error of a percentage difference was used to determine the significance of this difference. When the critical ratio was determined it was found to be highly significant at the .001 level of significance (see Table VI). This portion of hypothesis three is accepted.

Fraternity Membership

In the group of students making superior marks in college freshman English, seventeen belong to fraternities or sororities. Only four in the F group are members. There are no sorority houses for girls, therefore all live in the regular college dormitories. Only two of the fraternities have houses, the others live in college dormitories. When percentages were computed a difference of 23.22 per cent was found, as shown in Table VII on the following page. The significance of the difference was determined by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference. When the critical ratio was determined it was found to be significant at the 1 per cent level of significance, also noted in Table VII. A part, therefore, of hypothesis three is accepted.
TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS IN A AND F GROUPS HOLDING MEMBERSHIPS IN FRATERNITIES & SORORITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>SE D%</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.692</td>
<td>23.218</td>
<td>7.54</td>
<td>3.08*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is significant at the 1 per cent level of significance.

Students Having Automobiles

Table VIII shows the comparison of the percentages of the number of students in the A and F groups having full-time use of automobiles.

TABLE VIII

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS IN THE A AND F GROUPS HAVING FULL-TIME USE OF AUTOMOBILES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>SE D%</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32.72</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.29</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is not significant at the 5 per cent level.
Eighteen of the fifty-five students in the A group have full-time use of an automobile. Twenty-six of the fifty-two members of the F group have automobiles. When percentages were computed a difference of 17.29 per cent was observed. The significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference and the critical ratio determined. See Table VIII on the preceding page. The results were found not to be significant at the 5 per cent level of significance; therefore this portion of hypothesis three is rejected.

Students Living in College Housing

Table IX presents a comparison of percentages of the students in the A and F groups who live in college dormitories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>SE_D%</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>65.45</td>
<td>-5.066</td>
<td>9.65</td>
<td>2.5975*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40.36%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is significant at the 1 per cent level.
Twenty-one of the fifty-two students who made failing marks in freshman college English live in college dormitories. Of the fifty-five students who made superior marks in freshman college English, thirty-six live in the dormitories. When the percentages were compared, a difference of 25.66 per cent was found to exist. The significance of the difference was determined by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference. When the critical ratio was determined it was found to be significant at the 1 per cent level, shown in Table IX, in favor of the A group. This part of hypothesis three is therefore accepted.

Students Living Off Campus

A number of students do not live in college dormitories but choose to live off campus. For the purpose of this study, a comparison was made of the percentages of those students in the A and F groups who resided off the campus. Table X gives this comparison.

It can be observed in Table X that twelve of the fifty-two students in the F group and eight of the fifty-five students in the A group live off campus. Percentages were computed and a difference of 8.526 per cent was observed. As usual, the formula for the standard error of a percentage
**TABLE X**

**COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS IN THE A AND F GROUPS WHO LIVE OFF THE CAMPUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>$SE_{D%}$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.076</td>
<td>8.526</td>
<td>7.54</td>
<td>1.3*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This $t$ value is not significant at the 5 per cent level.

The 5 per cent level of significance. This part of hypothesis three is therefore rejected.

**Students Who Commute**

A large number of students attending college at this small state college live at home in surrounding areas and commute to classes each day. Table XI shows a comparison of the students in the A and the F group in this investigation who commute daily from their homes to college classes.
TABLE XI

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS IN THE A AND F GROUPS WHO COMMUTE DAILY FROM THEIR HOMES TO COLLEGE CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Percentage Difference</th>
<th>SE(_{D%})</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>16.538</td>
<td>8.688</td>
<td>1.903*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36.538</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is not significant at the 5 per cent level.

Eleven of the fifty-five students in the A group commuted daily from their homes to their college classes. Of the fifty-two students in the F group, nineteen commuted. Percentages were computed and a difference of 16.538 per cent was found to exist, as shown in the above table. The significance of the difference was determined by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference. When the critical ratio was determined, it was found to be not quite significant at the 5 per cent level of significance, being only 1.903. This portion of hypothesis three is rejected.
The number of semester hours of college English taken by the high school English teachers of both the A and the F students was obtained. A comparison of the preparation of high school English teachers of the students in this study is presented in Table XII. The number of semester hours held by the teachers of the A group ranged from 12 to 45. The mean number of semester hours held by these teachers was 29.72727. The number of semester English hours held by the teachers of the F group also ranged from 12 to 45. The mean number of semester hours held by the teachers of the F group was 26.36538. The means were compared and the t test used to determine the significance of the difference between the means. The results were found to be significant at the 5 per cent level of significance, as shown on Table XII. Therefore hypothesis four is accepted.

TABLE XII

COMPARISON OF PREPARATION OF HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS OF STUDENTS IN THE STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$\overline{X}_1 - \overline{X}_2$</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>29.72727</td>
<td>3.36189</td>
<td>1.97122*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>26.36538</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This t value is significant at the 5 per cent level.
Size of High Schools from which Students Were Graduated

The number of students in each group and the size of the high schools from which they were graduated are shown in Table XIII. The high schools from which the A group

TABLE XIII

THE SIZE OF THE HIGH SCHOOLS FROM WHICH THE STUDENTS GRADUATED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of High School</th>
<th>A Students</th>
<th>F Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>275</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>330</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>350</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>530</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>976</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2100</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of students were graduated varied in size from student bodies of 72 to 2100. The mean of the A group was 634.6. The high schools from which the failing group of students were graduated ranged in size from student bodies of 124 to student bodies of 2500. As indicated in Table XIV, the mean size of the high schools for the F group was 637.175.

**TABLE XIV**

**COMPARISON OF SIZE OF THE HIGH SCHOOLS FROM WHICH A STUDENTS AND F STUDENTS IN FRESHMAN COLLEGE ENGLISH GRADUATED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>634.6</td>
<td>2.573</td>
<td>0.02543*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>637.173</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This $t$ value is not significant at the 5 per cent level.

The means of the two groups were compared and the significance of these means determined by the $t$ test. They were found to be not significant at the 5 per cent level, as noted in Table XIV. Thus it was found that the size of the high school from which the students of this college graduated is not significant in whether he is an A or an F student in freshman college English and hypothesis five is rejected.
High School English Grades of Students

Table XV presents information concerning the high school English grades made by both groups of students. These grades were obtained from the Student Personnel Office from records sent to the college from the high schools. It was noted that students in the A group made only A's and B's in high school English. Assigning the number four for an A, the number three for a B, number two for a C, and the number one for D, the mean of the A group was 3.5818. The marks for the failing group ranged from D's to B's, without a single A. Assigning the same numbers as those used for the superior group, the mean of the failing group was 1.75 as indicated in Table XV above. The t test was used to determine the significance of the difference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.5818</td>
<td>1.8318</td>
<td>17.93*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.8318</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This $t$ value is highly significant at the .001 level.
between these means. The difference was highly significant at the .001 level of significance; therefore, hypothesis six is accepted.

Years of High School English Taken by Students

The number of years of high school English taken by both the A and the F groups of students, the means of those years, the difference between the means, and the significance of the difference are shown on Table XVI. The mean number of years of high school English taken by the A group was 4. The mean number of years of high school English taken by the F group was 3.9. The means of the two groups were compared and the significance of these means determined by the $t$ test. They were found to be significant at the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$X_1 - X_2$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>2.04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This $t$ value is significant at the 5 per cent level.
5 per cent level of significance as mentioned in the preceding table. Thus it was found that the number of years of high school English taken by these students is significant for the grades they make in college freshman English and hypothesis seven is accepted.

Opinions of Freshman College English Teachers

When the answers given by the freshman college English teachers were checked, it was found not possible to compare percentages since the answers for the students making A's were completely opposite from the reasons why the F students made failing grades. The opinions of the teachers are shown in Tables XVII and XVIII. Opinions of the teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good High School Background</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>83.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Study Habits</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptionally Intelligent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Motivated</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Attendance</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>90.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent Daily Work</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>94.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Test Grades</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>81.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XVIII

REASONS GIVEN BY TEACHERS OF FRESHMAN COLLEGE ENGLISH
FOR MARKS MADE BY F GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor Preparation for College</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Intellect</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disinterest</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Attendance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent Daily Work</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>73.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Test Grades</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>88.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Reading Ability</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of these students are considered to be of valid importance and it will be noted how closely the opinions of the teachers agree with information obtained from high school and college records. Thirteen of the fifty-two students in the F group were said by the teachers to be poorly prepared for college (Table XVIII) and this agrees closely with the American College Test Predicted English Scores in which fourteen of the fifty-two ranked below a score of 1.0. Eighteen of the fifty-two students were said by the teachers to be unable to read and understand what they had read. This
agrees closely with the seventeen out of the fifty-two who fell below 20 on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. Both agree with the high school record of sixteen of the F group who came into college with a D average in high school English.

In the A group of fifty-five students (Table XVII), forty-six were listed by teachers as having a good high school background. This agrees with high school records that no one in the A group had a high school English grade below B. Four were mentioned as being exceptionally intelligent; however, on the American College Test Predicted English Scores, seven ranked 218 or better, and two of that seven ranked 3.0, 3.1 and 3.2.

The above tables list other reasons given by the teachers for the success or failure of the students in the two groups. It will be noted that more than one reason may apply to a single student.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this investigation was to make a comparative study of selected factors that are associated with superior or failing marks in freshman college English.

The subjects of this study were two groups of students chosen from the present student body of a small state college. An A group of fifty-five members was chosen at random from the 220 students on the campus who had made superior marks in freshman college English. An F group of fifty-two members was chosen at random from the 105 students on the campus who had failed in a first attempt at college freshman English.

The hypotheses investigated and the results obtained in the study are as follows:

Hypothesis One.--It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean scores on standardized entrance examinations of those students making superior marks in freshman college English will be significantly higher than the mean scores
on standardized entrance examinations of those students failing freshman English.

The means of the predicted English scores on the American College Test and on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test composite scores were compared and the significance of the difference determined by the \( t \) test. When the difference of the means of the American College Test Predicted English Scores was determined, the difference was in favor of the A group and was highly significant at the .001 level of significance. When the difference of the means of the Nelson-Denny Reading Test composite scores was determined, the difference was also in favor of the A group and was highly significant at the .001 level of significance. This hypothesis is therefore accepted.

**Hypothesis Two.**—It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean freshman grade-point average of those students making superior marks in freshman college English will be significantly higher than the mean freshman grade-point average of those students failing freshman college English.

The means of the freshman grade-point averages of the members of the A and F groups were compared and the significance of the difference determined by the \( t \) test. The difference was in favor of the A group and was significant at
the .001 level of significance. This hypothesis is therefore accepted.

**Hypothesis Three.**—It is an hypothesis of this study that certain personal factors, such as whether the student is married, whether he belongs to a fraternity, whether he has possession of a car on the campus, whether he lives in a dormitory or off the campus, and whether his permanent home is rural, are associated with superior marks made by freshman college English students.

Percentages were computed on the number of married students in both the A and F groups, the differences found, and the significance of the differences between the percentages of the two groups tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined. It was found to be not significant at the 5 per cent level of significance. This portion of hypothesis three is therefore rejected.

Percentages were computed on the number of students in both groups belonging to fraternities and sororities and the difference between the percentages tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference. The critical ratio was significant at the 1 per cent level of significance in favor of the A group; therefore, this part of hypothesis three is accepted.
Percentages were computed on the number of students in both the A and F groups who had full-time use of automobiles. The significance of the difference between the percentages of the two groups was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and a critical ratio determined which was not significant at the 5 per cent level. This part of hypothesis three is therefore rejected.

The significance of the difference of the percentages computed on the number of students in both groups who lived in college dormitories was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined. A difference which was significant at the 1 per cent level favored the A group; therefore, this part of hypothesis three is accepted.

Percentages were computed on the number of students in both the A and the F groups who live off the campus. The difference between the percentages was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference. The critical ratio was determined but was found to be not significant at the 5 per cent level; therefore, this portion of hypothesis three is rejected.
Percentages were computed for the number of students in both groups who commute daily from their homes to their college classes. The difference between the percentages was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined. It was found to be not significant at the 5 per cent level of significance, and this part of hypothesis three is rejected.

The significance of the difference of the percentages computed on the students in both groups who are in college on scholarships was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined. A difference which was significant at the .001 level favored the A group; therefore, this portion of hypothesis three is accepted.

Percentages were computed for the number of students in both groups whose permanent homes are in rural areas. The difference between the percentages was tested by the formula for the standard error of a percentage difference, and the critical ratio determined. It was found to be not significant at the 5 per cent level of significance. This portion of hypothesis three is rejected.

Hypothesis Four.—It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean number of college English hours held by the
high school English teachers of those students making superior marks in freshman college English will be significantly higher than the mean number of hours held by the high school English teachers of those students failing freshman college English.

The means of the numbers of semester college English hours held by the high school English teachers of both the A and the F groups were compared and the significance of the difference determined by the t test. There was a difference in favor of the A group which was significant at the 5 per cent level of significance. Hypothesis number four is accepted.

**Hypothesis Five.**—It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean size of the high schools from which those students making superior marks in freshman college English were graduated will be significantly higher than the mean size of the high schools from which those students failing freshman college English were graduated.

The means of the numbers in size of the high schools from which the A and F groups were graduated were compared and the significance of the difference determined by the t test. The difference was found to be not significant at the 5 per cent level; therefore hypothesis five is rejected.
Hypothesis Six.—It is an hypothesis of this study that the mean of the marks made in high school English by those students making superior marks in freshman college English will be significantly higher than the mean of the marks of those students failing freshman college English.

The means of the marks made in high school English by both the A and the F groups of students were compared and the significance of the difference determined by the t test. The difference was in favor of the A group and was highly significant at the .001 level. Hypothesis six is accepted.

Hypothesis Seven.—It is an hypothesis of this study that students who have had four years of high school English make better marks in freshman college English than do those students who have had three years of high school English.

The means of the years of high school English taken by the A and the F groups were compared and the significance of the difference determined by the t test. A difference which was significant at the 5 per cent level favored the A group, and hypothesis seven is accepted.
Conclusions Applying to the College Studied

As a result of this study the following conclusions were drawn applying to the small state college used in this study.

1. Students who make A's in freshman college English made significantly higher scores on standardized entrance examinations such as The American College Test and The Nelson-Denny Reading Test than did the students who make F's in freshman college English.

2. Students who make A's in freshman college English make higher cumulative grade-point averages for the freshman year than do those students who make F's in freshman college English.

3. Some personal factors are associated with students who make A's in freshman college English and these include fraternity membership, scholarships, and residence in the college dormitories. Other personal factors, such as whether the student's home is rural, whether he is married, whether he lives off campus, or whether he commutes from his home, and whether he has the full-time use of an automobile, do not prove to be significant in whether he makes an A or an F in freshman college English.
4. Students who make A's in freshman college English have had better prepared high school English teachers than have those students who failed freshman college English.

5. The size of the high school from which a student is graduated has no bearing on whether he makes an A or an F in freshman college English. There is no significant difference between large high schools and small high schools in determining whether the student makes superior or failing marks.

6. Students who make superior marks in high school English are more successful in freshman college English than are those students who did poorly in high school English.

7. Students who have four years of English in high school make better marks in freshman college English than do those students who have only three years.

**General Conclusions**

Obviously, the conclusions above apply only to those students who attend this particular small state college, but the following general conclusions appear to be possible.

1. Students who make high scores on college entrance examinations are more likely to make superior marks in
freshman college English than are students who make poor scores.

2. The cumulative grade-point averages of freshmen who make superior marks in freshman college English are higher than those of students who fail freshman college English.

3. Such personal factors as scholarships, fraternity membership, and residence in college dormitories are associated with students who make superior marks in freshman college English rather than with students who make failing marks in freshman college English. Other factors, such as permanent residence, marital status, living off campus, commuting from his home, and use of automobiles, do not seem to be associated with superior or failing marks.

4. Students with better prepared high school English teachers can perform academically at higher levels in freshman college English courses than can students with teachers less well prepared.

5. As far as freshman college English marks are concerned, it does not seem to matter whether the student was graduated from a very large high school, an average-size high school, or a very small one.
6. Students who make good high school English marks also make good marks in freshman college English, while students who make poor marks in high school English continue to make poor marks when they take freshman college English and usually make even poorer marks than in high school.

7. Students who have taken four years of high school English make better marks in freshman college English than do students who have only three years of high school English, although four years of high school English do not guarantee superior freshman college English grades since many of the failing students had also had four years of high school English.

It will be noted, generally, that the factors associated with success or failure in freshman college English are factors related to the experiences of the students prior to entering college.

Recommendations

On the basis of the results of this research study, the following recommendations are made:

1. It is recommended that further study of the preparation of the high school English teacher be made to determine
the number of college hours in English necessary for adequate teaching of high school English.

2. It is recommended that other similar research studies be done using the B, C, and D students in freshman college English.

3. The findings of this study should be used by college admission officers in order to counsel beginning students more adequately.
APPENDIX

COPY OF NOTE SENT TO STUDENTS ASKING THAT THEY
COME IN FOR AN INTERVIEW

Dear ____________,

I would appreciate it if you would come by my office
some time during the next week. I have chosen one hundred
and seven students to interview in connection with informa-
tion for my Doctoral Dissertation. You are among those
chosen.

My office hours are:
Monday------9---10---1---2---3---4
Tuesday------10---1---2---3---4
Wednesday----9---10---1---2---3---4
Thursday-----8---10---11---1---2---3---4
Friday-------9---1---2---3---4
My office is in College Hall, Room 325.

Sincerely,

Irene W. Rowlette
INTERVIEW FOR STUDENTS

1. What is your opinion concerning your high school English courses as preparing you for college freshman English?
   - Good: 3
   - Average: 2
   - Poor: 1

2. In your college freshman English work, have you found grammar
   - Easy: 3
   - Average: 2
   - Poor: 1

3. In your college freshman English work, have you found the themes and other writing
   - Easy: 3
   - Average: 2
   - Poor: 1

4. In your college freshman English work, have you found the speeches
   - Easy: 3
   - Average: 2
   - Poor: 1

5. If you were married when you took college freshman English, did you find this to be, as far as work was concerned
   - An advantage: 3
   - No difference: 2
   - A disadvantage: 1

6. Do you consider your study habits
   - Very good: 3
   - Average: 2
   - Poor: 1

7. If you belonged to a fraternity or sorority when you were taking freshman English, would you consider this
   - An advantage: 3
   - No difference: 2
   - A disadvantage: 1

8. If you were in school on a scholarship when you took freshman English, did you find that, as far as time was concerned, it took
   - Little time: 3
   - No difference: 2
   - Much time: 1
9. If you lived in a college dormitory when you were taking freshman English, did you find that, as far as study was concerned, it was
   An advantage  No difference  A disadvantage
   3  2  1

10. If you lived off campus while taking freshman English, did you find that, as far as study was concerned, it was
   An advantage  No difference  A disadvantage
   3  2  1

11. If you lived at home and commuted while taking freshman English, did you find that, as far as study was concerned, it was
   An advantage  No difference  A disadvantage
   3  2  1

12. If you kept a car at school while taking freshman English, do you think as far as study was concerned it was
   An advantage  No difference  A disadvantage
   3  2  1

13. Do you feel that you deserve the passing or failing grade which you received?
   Completely  Partially  Not at all
   3  2  1
INTERVIEW FOR TEACHERS

1. Was student absent from class

   never  seldom  often
   3       2       1

2. Was student's attitude

   good  average  poor
   3       2       1

3. Were student's work habits

   good  average  poor
   3       2       1

4. Was student's work prepared and handed in on time

   always  usually  seldom
   3       2       1

5. Were student's papers and tests consistent as far as work and grades were concerned

   always  usually  seldom
   3       2       1

6. From your observation, was student's high school background in English

   good  average  poor
   3       2       1

7. From your observation, was student's knowledge of well known literature

   good  average  poor
   3       2       1

8. Would you consider student's personal maturity

   good  average  poor
   3       2       1

9. Did student's capabilities for doing freshman college English seem

   good  average  poor
   3       2       1
10. Considering student's capabilities, would you say that his work was better than could be expected
   Average less than could be expected
   
   | 3 | 2 | 1 |

11. Regarding the student's ACT score, would you say his grade was better than could be expected
   Average did not check
   
   | 3 | 2 | 1 |

12. Regarding the student's Nelson-Denny Reading score, would you say his grade was better than should be expected poorer did not check
   
   | 3 | 2 | 1 |
COPY OF FORMS FILLED OUT BY HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS

Name ________________________________________________

Name of high school where you teach________________________

Length of service there______________________________

Size of high school______________________________

Do you teach (please check X for any or all)

   Freshman English___
   Sophomore English___
   Junior English____
   Senior English____

College degree held______________________________________

Name of college attended________________________________

Number of semester English hours held_______________________

Major______________________________________________

Minor______________________________________________
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