AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF A FRESHMAN ORIENTATION COURSE UPON COLLEGE STUDENTS

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PREFACE

One of the most interesting aspects of the writer's professional expression as a dean of students has been the opportunity to plan and implement freshmen orientation programs. He has labored long under the conviction that the first few weeks of a freshman's college experience were probably the most crucial he would encounter in his entire collegiate career. Freshmen orientation is a vital vehicle through which the student can be helped in his adjustment to college life.

A study of the impact of freshmen orientation was chosen for two reasons. First, the strong conviction relative to the importance of orientation in the lives of the students needed to be tested on a more empirical basis. Secondly, the writer's interest led to the realization that there was little in the research literature which substantiated the importance of orientation courses in the success of college students. Thus, he entered into this study with the hope that he might make a contribution to the literature concerning the importance of freshmen orientation programs.

The writer wishes to acknowledge his debt to Dr. Hallie Gantz, president of Phillips University, who gave permission for the study to take place at Phillips with Phillips' students.

Appreciation is expressed also for the special assistnace rendered by four faculty colleagues, Dr. Kenneth Sorey, Mr. Don Heath, Mr. Joe Shelton, and Mrs. Carole Gray, who participated in the study by teaching one of the experimental groups utilized in the investigation.

Sincere thanks are extended to the members of the writer's committee, Dr. William D. Frazier, Dr. Dan Wesley, and Dr. Frank McFarland. The committee chairman, Dr. W. Price Ewens, has been more helpful and considerate than can be described adequately. On so many occasions he has gone the "second mile" in giving assistance and encouragement. Deep appreciation is extended for his many expressions of kindness and encouragement.

Finally, acknowledgment of the inspiration and steadfast confidence demonstrated by the writer's wife, Patsy, throughout his involvement in the doctoral program is made. Also, the steady work of his secretary, Mrs. Annabelle Russell and student assistant, Jana Stevenson, was appreciated greatly.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

An attempt is made at colleges and universities to help incoming students to adjust to the facts of campus life; to put themselves into an effective relationship with the university, through a process of acquainting them with the new situation.

"To orient," according to Webster is:

> To set right by adjusting to facts or principles; to put oneself into correct position or relation; to acquaint oneself with the existing situation.[1]

This process would appear, therefore, to be aptly called "orientation." Orientation practices as a part of the student personnel movement developed as a reaction to the void created by the changed nature of the faculty-student relationship after the middle of the nineteenth century.

In brief, before the great changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, the colleges were intimate institutions, personal relationships between students and faculty being one of the most important characteristics of all colleges. The weakening of these relationships seemed to create the need for different programs in order to meet the needs of the students.

Cowley feels that the loss of an intimate campus environment was the major contributor to the need for student personnel programs. The changed setting required trained personnel in order to effectively serve students.[2]

As institutions of higher learning grew larger and more complex and as philosophies of education placed greater stress upon the growth of individual students, the transition from one level of education to the next became a matter of great concern. An early attempt of institutions of higher education to cope in an organized manner with the problems of student articulation between educational institutions was the adoption of a freshmen orientation course at Boston University in 1883.[3] The Boston University innovation generated sufficient interest among educators to lead eventually to the day when freshmen orientation became a regular part of student personnel programs on most college and university campuses.

It is apparent that, since the turn of the century, institutions of higher learning have been devoting considerable attention to orienting new students to the experiences offered at colleges and universities. Fahrbach notes that interest in this process grew because research pertaining to new student orientation pointed to the need for adjustment. Students were asking for assistance in the more complex environments which had developed. Faculty were having difficulty providing for the more personal needs which students were presenting.[4]

Since the needs of college students are subject to change, the objectives of an orientation program must be considered as constantly evolving and therefore always subject to change. It is the dynamic quality of the program objectives which need the attention of directors rather than making sure "traditional" services are provided. Consequently, those persons responsible for student personnel practices need to evaluate existing services constantly.

Traditional orientation practices appear to be in serioud trouble. This indictment is substantiated by the number of colleges and universities reportedly considering orientation changes.[5]

In trying to explain the current desire for modification of traditional orientation practices, Mueller[6] cites changes which have taken place in the size and composition of college populations in the past century.

> The tremendous expansion in the size of campus groups and especially the increasing heterogeneousness have also strained the effectiveness of all the older methods and ideologies of education.
>
> From 1850 to 1950, the general population multiplied by three, but the high school population has increased thirty-fold and the college population ninty-fold. Association between teacher and student is neither as close nor as frequent as it used to be. The student group is no longer homogeneous with similar interests, similar objectives, and similar backgrounds. In most colleges the factors which formerly made teaching easy and informal and individualized are now lacking.

Traditionally orientation programs have been geared to making all first time students "feel at home." The majority of variously stated purposes have two thrusts.

The first effort is to inform students of their immediate relationship to the resourecs of the institution. The second thrust is designed to aid students in their adjustment to the collegiate community. Recent literature stresses a third thrust: to increase the student's receptivity to the total higher educational experience.[7]

These three aims have been commonly implemented in a two-phased program. The first phase, pre-registration orientation, is implemented in a variety of ways. Some colleges and universities subscribe to summer orientation sessions where September students are invited to the campus for a few days during the summer months. Often their parents are invited also. During this period the students will be introduced to campus personnel, hear lectures relative to academic procedures, and learn of the social regulations. Some institutions will begin enrollment procedures during this summer orientation period. Other institutions will have their students arrive early in September for a week of orientation to college life just prior to the beginning of academic classes.

The second phase, or post registration orienation, is a first term freshmen orientation course. The course is usually taught by student personnel staff. At times the teaching faculty are involved. More recently some institutions have begun to utilize trained upperclass students as leaders of the orientation course.

Hoffman and Plutchik[8] indicated that nearly one half of the colleges and universities in the United States conduct an orientation course for their beginning students. Most of these courses are of one semester's duration.

These courses usually cover the content of the pre-registration orientation programs in depth, as well as personality and social development. Some courses give attention to the discussion of the meaning of higher education, necessity for academic skills, and current campus and societal concerns.

Recently writers have questioned the effectiveness of the current format of the orientation course as a vehicle for orienting contemporary students to the realities of the changing higher educational and societal scene. Riesman[9] describes a typical orientation course as "disorientation," a time when administrators attempt to manipulate students' attitudes for the sake of institutional tranquillity.

Caple[10] feels that freshmen orientation courses are on the verge of being dropped from the curriculum unless more useful purposes for having the course can be demonstrated. In his opinion the present format of the courses being offered affords little educational value.

In the face of these indictments institutions are being pushed to evaluate both the content and operation of their orientation courses. There seems to exist a need for new programs emphasizing different content and approaches to the teaching of the course.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if students who participated in a semester long orientation course would demonstrate more success in college than students who did not receive any instruction from an orientation course. A secondary purpose was to determine the effectiveness of utilizing trained upperclass students as instructors for the orientation course.

Theoretical Framework

Definition of Concepts

1. Orientation: An institution's structured efforts designed to enhance the new college student's educational and social experiences. It is a process designed to break down the barriers that stand between the opportunities that colleges offer and the ability of the student to benefit from the opportunities.[11]

2. Orientation course: A semester long course designed to give freshmen students opportunities to explore their attitudes and values relative to the meaning of college, vocational goals, values, and life styles.[12]

3. Success in college:

   (a) Achievement: The achievement of the student as measured by his grade point average.

   (b) Values: Preferences, criteria or choices as measured by the Study of Values.

   (c) Perception of campus environment: As measured by the College and University Environment Scales.

   (d) Philosophy of Human Nature: As measured by the Philosophy of Human Nature Scales.

   (e) Attrition: As measured by the student dropout record.

Assumptions

The initial introduction and orientation to the intricacies of an institution's demands and opportunities is accepted widely as having an effect on student adjustment. Student personnel research data demonstrate that a relationship exists between student adjustment and later college success. It has been assumed that a college or university has the obligation to provide experiences which have the possibility of enhancing the chances of success of the students that it accepts for admission.[13]

Phillips University is committed, consequently, to providing services for students who have been admitted which are designed to increase their chances of success and to a continuing endeavor to improve the effectiveness of these services.

To assume a need for a service is not sufficient. The service must be researched in order to demonstrate its usefulness. Such authorities as Fahrbach[14], Guthrie[15], Rackham[16], and Dressel[17] point disparagingly to the lack of institutional research evaluating student personnel programs and their impact upon the students involved in such programs. Guthrie[18] points without pride to his own institution when he writes:

> We have not done enough in the way of formal research to study the results of our personnel efforts. Also, it is of little consolation to find that little research is being carried on elsewhere in the entire field of student personnel.

On this basis the following assumptions are made:

1. An institutional orientation program can be evaluated.

2. The evaluation can be accomplished in terms of those factors which are considered to be indicies of college success.

3. The factors affected by the program can be identified by comparing the groups involved in the program with a third group differing from the experimental groups primarily on the factor of program participation.

4. The groups utilized for this investigation did not change primarily through merely lapsed time.

Rationale for Hypotheses

Jacobs[19] created a real stir in higher education circles when he made the assertion that colleges and universities made little or no impact on the lives of its student body members. He described the college student of the fifties as being gloriously contented, unabashedly self-centered, and dutifully responsive towards the government.

Recent research data report findings which reflect a more positive point of view relative to the impact of college upon students. However, the research may have its limitations as much of it is being generated from campus environments with atypical student bodies.

Feldman and Newcomb[20] indicate conclusions which reflect conditions under which colleges have made impacts upon their students, and not the least of which was impact upon student values. Moreover, the consequences of these impacts appear to have persisted even beyond the college years.

The emerging view of development in the college years is one of a dynamic interaction between stability and change. As Nevitt Sanford[21] expressed it:

> We have to say that in order to induce desirable change toward further growth or development or toward greater health we have to think in terms of what would upset the existing equilibrium, produce instability, set in motion activity leading to stabilization on a higher level.

Katz[22] reports findings which reflect partial changes during the college years. He questioned whether or not one could expect dramatic change during the age span represented by the college population.

Many writers say that the basic developmental task of the college student is to achieve identity. Factors in the collegiate environment either enhance or deter this process. The college years bring many difficult tasks and problems, all of which must be coped with if identity is to be achieved. Separation from home and parents, confrontation with a wide variety of peers, and high standards of academic achievement create insecurities and a questioning of one's identity on the part of the beginning college student.

One of the major goals of higher education is to prepare a mature, open person who can contribute to the good of society on a world-wide scope. Therefore, all of the experiences in the academic community either add to or detract from the realization of the overall goal. This study will seek to test hypotheses which have been generated from a program designed to bring the student into a creative relationship with his collegiate environment.

Hypotheses

1. There are no significant differences in achievement among the experimental groups and the control group when compared at the end of the first semester and second semester.

2. There are no significant differences in values among the experimental groups and the control group when compared at the end of the first semester.

3. There are no significant differences in the philosophical orientations among the experimental groups and the control group when compared at the end of the first semester.

4. There are no significant differences in the perception of the campus environment among the experimental groups and the control group when compared at the end of the first semester.

5. There are no significant differences in the attrition among the experimental groups and the control group when compared at the beginning of the third semester of enrollment.

Limitations of the Study

1. The student's participation in the freshmen faculty advisor program is not being controlled.

2. The student's utilization of the university counseling service is not being controlled.

3. The impact of the student's living unit is not being controlled.

4. The impact of the interaction between freshmen and upper division students is not being controlled.

5. The involvement of freshmen students in the informal and formal activity program of the institution is not being controlled.

6. The Study of Values instrument utilized for measuring student values measures the relative importance of the values to the individual, rather than the "absolute" importance of each value. Therefore, it is impossible to score highly on all six value areas.

7. The generalizations drawn from this study should be limited to the population utilized.

Significance

Freshmen orientation has long been a major concern for the student personnel staff at Phillips University, as well as at most other colleges and universities in the United States. It is viewed as one of the major efforts designed to assist students in their adjustment to the college community. In light of the changing nature of the contemporary college student and the role which institutions of higher learning are being asked to assume it becomes mandatory that institutions search for effective ways through which students' needs can be more nearly met.

Also, most student personnel staffs are undermanned. A source for additional workers may be upperclass students. The extent to which students may be used as leaders in the orientation courses effectively needs to be demonstrated by research.

Summary

As the nature of higher education changed, freshmen orientation programs were developed to assist in the movement of students from high school to the college setting. From the beginning the emphasis has been placed on introducing the new student to the ways of the campus community.

Current orientation practices are being challenged by contemporary researchers. The view is presented that the heterogeneous campus cannot be molded into the intimate

group which once characterized higher education. Therefore orientation goals must be developed in light of today's scene.

Institutions vary in their approach to orientation. Some place the primary emphasis during the summer sessions, others have an intensive week of orientation during the beginning of the fall semester.

The first semester orientation course continues to be a popular means of orienting new students. The question is does it actually do what it is supposed to do?

FOOTNOTES

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[2]W. H. Cowley, "A Preface to the Principles of Student Counseling", Educational Record, XXII (1937), p. 219.

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[12]Ibid, pp. 36-38.

[13]Arthur L. Asslum and Sidney J. Levy, "A Comparative Study of Academic Ability and Adjustment of Two Groups of College Students", Journal of Educational Psychology, (May, 1947), pp. 307-310.

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[21]Joseph Katz, No Time for Youth, (San Francisco, 1969) p. 104.

[22]Ibid, p. 4

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies of the content, goals, and outcomes of orientation programs began to appear in the literature during the early 1900's. Freshmen orientation, as an educational activity, appears to have created interest and concern for most student personnel workers.

Fitts and Swift[1] reported that freshmen orientation practices could be traced to two historical beginnings. The first program was developed at Boston University in 1888. In 1918 the concern for students to discuss the "war issues" added greater impetus to this new educational activity.

The success with these early programs caused many colleges and universities to initiate similar programs. Wrenn[2] reports that on the basis of available surveys, by 1930 better than one half of all colleges and universities in the United States were conducting orientation programs. He further reported that more than three-fourths of the courses emphasized individual orientation to self and the college. He predicted that the number of institutions conducting orientation programs would increase in the immediate future.

Kamm and Wrenn[3], from a North Central Association survey, reported that of one hundred and twenty-six institutions which were surveyed, all either had orientation programs or were planning to begin one by the opening of the next academic year. The influx of veterans from the Second World War was given as the basic motivation for starting an orientation program.

The impact of the changing nature of higher education provided fertile soil for institutions to justify the need for programs which introduced the student to his new collegiate environment. Knode[4] surveyed one hundred and twenty-five institutions seeking information relative to the rationale for conducting orientation programs. Several factors were identified as crucial for orientation directors. Factors most frequently identified were: (1) large enrollments, (2) lack of homogeneity in the student bodies, (3) the growing complexities of the college curriculum, and (4) the student conflict and confusion concerning their educational objectives. Orientation courses were designed to meet student needs reflected in these concerns.

Goals of Orientation

The goals of orientation programs appear to have emphasized personal and social skills from the beginning. Strang[5] feels that orientation programs should acquaint students with matters which are personal. Students need to become familar with the institution, and develop study skills which will enable them to become effective students.

Hardee[6] reports a similar list of orientation course goals from a survey of selected institutions. Syllabi or manuals typically included the following desired outcomes: knowing the college or university; understanding college standards, traditions, and regulations; adjusting to college life; seeking academic achievement through improved study skills; understanding of self goals, attitudes, and interests; considering vocational choice; developing skills in human relations; understanding principles of human development; and building a philosophy of life.

Some writers feel that orientation goals need to go deeper than merely providing information about the offerings provided in a college community. Students coming to college today appear to be better prepared to handle a more intellectual emphasis in the orientation programs.

Crow[7] feels that college orientation courses are covering ground for which high schools can and should assume responsibility. The college should stress academic orientation and leave social orientation to the high schools. Crow emphasized the need for more effective articulation between high schools and colleges.

Schaffer[8] builds upon the expressed need for a more extensive orientation course which will be more congruent with the needs of the contemporary college student. Chief among the goals he sees as relevant for the orientation course is the need to emphasize the intellectual aspect of college life. He also states that institutions need to

come clean with students and spell out in clear terms the standards by which their achievement will be measured. The students also need to know the personal qualities and values which the institution expects the student to develop as a result of his college experience.

Schaffer's position is supported by Caple[9] in his identification of four broad areas from which the goals of orientation courses should emerge. The four areas which were identified by Caple were: a view of the college as a social institution; the process of learning; the various aspects of personal and extracurricular living, and a personal self-evaluation by each student as to his strengths and weaknesses. Caple goes so far as to predict that unless changes are made in the goals of orientation courses they will pass from the curriculum of most colleges and universities. He questions their validity in an academic climate in their current state of confusion relative to their purpose.

The goals of the typical orientation course can possibly be understood best if they are considered in light of the stated purposes of specific college and university orientation courses.

> A Southern University: This syllabus was written to help you to understand the body of traditions, regulations, activities, educational and vocational opportunities, here and abroad, and the counseling and other special services that make up this university's potentiality for you.

> A South Central State Teacher's College: The purpose of this course is to assist freshmen students toward making further adjustments in college life experiences and in human relations.
>
> A Private College: The purpose of orientation as we see it is to increase the student's receptivity to the total college experience.[10]

There appears to be a growing concern relative to the goals of orientation courses. Former practices are being questioned in light of the contemporary college student and the complexities of the higher education scene. Much of this same concern is found in the evaluations of the content of orientation courses.

Content of Orientation

The content of orientation courses has been developed to meet the goals of orientation which directors have considered important. The primary emphasis has been upon providing students information which can aid them in learning "the ropes" in his new situation.

This surface approach to providing orientation is being questioned rather extensively. Fitzgerald and Busch[11] point out that the student entering college today, unlike those in the past, desires, but is not given, an effective introduction to academic life. They strongly urge that the entire faculty be involved in the planning and implementing of orientation. Their involvement will elicit more support from the faculty which in turn will aid greatly in keeping the focus upon appropriate scholarly and intellectual development of each individual student.

A report of Davis and Ballard[12] gives support to Fitzgerald and Busch's criticism of a lack of emphasis on academic concerns in most orientation courses. Their investigation of the prevalent practices in orientation courses which deal with learning revealed a strong tendency to emphasize the simple and skill aspects of learning rather than the complex processes involved in college academic study.

Often the content of orientation courses becomes so extensive little or no attention is given to the degree to which the student is assimilating the material. Black[13] suggests that orientation courses will become more effective when student needs and orientation directors' aspirations are matched more consistently. Attempting too much and ignoring student needs are common pitfalls which orientation directors make. Directors need to examine their own philosophy of education and become more fully knowledgeable concerning student needs on their own campuses. Content of orientation courses which are undergirded with rationale based upon a creative relationship between these two concerns will have a greater chance of eliciting full support of the teaching faculty. Black feels that this will happen when the content of orientation courses is such that it will enable college students to become more self-directed.

Orientation directors must be aware of the impact of the changing nature of higher education on today's student. This is the challenge which faces all personnel workers.

McCann[14] sees much good in the current scene concerning the conflicts between the student and his institution. She encourages student personnel workers to incorporate the knowledge possessed concerning student characteristics with the content provided in orientation courses.

Outcomes of Orientation

A very small amount of published research on orientation outcomes is available. The results of the available research are inconclusive as to its effectiveness.

Bennett[15] reported evidence which lends significance to the importance of orientation courses. She found significant differences in the quality of thinking of students who had participated in a course in orientation when compared with students who had no formal orientation experience. The areas which reflected significant differences were adjustment to campus life, personal choices in academic and extracurricular decisions, and academic planning. However, no differences were found in the area of reasons for going to college.

The summary of existing studies relative to freshmen orientation in the 1941 edition of the Encyclopedia of Educational Research revealed that studies were of three types: (1) historical studies which identified the organization and development of most orientation programs, (2) surveys designed to determine the number of institutions conducting orientation programs, and (3) surveys

designed to have institutions provide evaluations of their orientation programs. Little experimental research was indicated from the summary.[16]

Greene[17] reports that the only basis of evaluation utilized by most institutions is the self report provided by students. Results of student evaluations seem to indicate that the courses were of benefit. Greene's study revealed the importance of orientation courses for small colleges. A large part of his sample was comprised of students from colleges with under 2000 enrollments. Students from these institutions rated the orientation courses as being most valuable.

The 1960 edition of the Encyclopedia of Educational Research reported little change in orientation research. The greatest need still is for more research where the outcomes of orientation are tested. Also, the area of selection and training of leaders for orientation courses is ripe for experimental research.[18]

Reiter[19] reported significant attitude changes for students who participated in a six month seminar type orientation course. The students in the experimental group were compared with a control group which did not receive any orientation. On the basis of the data provided inferences were made that such attitudes as importance of college, the development of a "mature" philosophy of life, and the development of effective interpersonal relations can be modified as a result of participation in an orientation course.

A similar study conducted by Rothman and Leonard[20] on a community college commuter campus reported no significant differences in the grade point averages and value orientations between experimental and control groups of freshmen students. The experimental group participated in a semester long orientation course taught by student personnel staff and the control group received chance orientation. They compared the grade point averages of the groups at the end of the first semester of their freshmen year. Also, changes in value orientations were compared at the end of the first semester. There was no significant difference in their achievement and value orientation at the end of the first semester.

The practice of utilizing students as instructors for the orientation course has increased in the past few years. Students do seek advice and information from their peers and student personnel workers are attempting to take advantage of this already established line of communication.

Hardee[21] surveyed institutions in an attempt to determine the extent to which students were being utilized as leaders in the orientation course. The reasoning most frequently stated to support the use of students as leaders was based on the peer group influence and relationship among students and the ensuing ease of communication and acceptance. The results of her survey indicated that most student personnel workers were being cautious in the extent to which students were used as major leaders.

An extensive study of the effectiveness of students as orientation leaders has been made by Brown[22]. He reports significant results from orientation efforts which utilized upperclass students as leaders.

The academic counseling which was done by upperclass students included three sequential guidance activities: survival meetings held in residence halls, test interpretations, and study skill guidance. All three counseling activities incorporate the following characteristics: (1) utilization of the peer approach in which counseling is accomplished by carefully selected, trained, and supervised upperclassmen; (2) utilization of the group approach in that the counseling is done in small discussion groups; (3) utilization of the motivation approach in that each freshman's study behavior and academic values are systematically surveyed; and (4) utilization of the prevention approach in that emphasis is given to identifying potential academic problems and planning appropriate corrective action.

Two samples of freshmen students, individually matched on sex, high school quarter rank, high school ability, and study orientation were compared at the end of their first semester. The students who had participated in the academic survival program had a higher grade point average at the end of the first semester. From these data one could infer that the academic adjustment guidance program produced significant improvement in the scholastic achievement of

the counseled freshmen. Even though statistical significance was obtained between female students only, Brown reported success in terms of the number of students from the academically counseled group which made grade point averages higher than what had been predicted.

The chief conclusions which can be drawn from this review of the literature on freshmen orientation programs are:

1. The complex nature of higher education creates a need for some type of orientation for students.

2. Institutional approaches to providing orientation experiences vary considerably.

3. The majority of institutions of higher education in the United States offer some type of orientation experience for its new students.

4. There is considerable difference of opinion as to the emphasis which should be given in orientation programs. Some see a total academic orientation, while others see the necessity for providing experiences which emphasize self-development.

5. The need still exists for more experimental research on the desired outcomes of freshmen orientation.

6. Student evaluation of orientation courses tend to give some validity for their existence in the academic community.

7. The utilization of upperclassmen as leaders in orientation programs is fairly extensive.

FOOTNOTES

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[8]R. H. Schaffer, "New Look at Orientation", College and University, (Spring, 1962), pp. 273-275.

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[10]Hardee, p. 203.

[11]L. E. Fitzgerald and S. A. Busch, "Orientation Programs: Foundation and Framework", College and University, (March, 1963), pp. 270-275.

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of a freshmen orientation course on the success of students enrolling in college for the first time. Specifically, the investigation was conducted in order to determine if the orientation course was related significantly to student achievement as measured by grade point averages; direction of changes in value orientations; views of human nature; the extent to which student perceptions of the campus environment were congruent with their expectations of the environment when they first enrolled at the institution; and the tendency to continue their enrollment in the institution in subsequent semesters.

A secondary purpose of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of utilizing upperclass students as leaders in the orientation course. Specifically, does the peer relationship between upperclassmen and freshmen students contribute significantly to the success of achieving freshmen orientation goals when students are serving as leaders for an orientation course for freshmen students.

DESIGN

Selection of Population

The population for this investigation consisted of the entire freshmen class of the 1968-69 academic year at Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma. A total of 265 students enrolled at Phillips University at the beginning of the fall semester of the 1968-69 academic year as first time college students. Of this number 25 students were eliminated as subjects due to age, marital status, and work conflicts. A grand total of 240 students were utilized as subjects for the investigation.

Phillips University is a church-sponsored institution, related to the Board of Higher Education of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ). The university is comprised of the undergraduate colleges of Arts and Science and the Bible. A graduate program in Education is offered in the college of Arts and Science. A graduate seminary is also a part of the overall university structure. The total enrollment at Phillips University is 1,500 students. Forty-three states and 15 foreign countries are represented in the student body.

At this point it seems appropriate to provide some descriptive information concerning the population of this study and the institution where it was conducted. This is necessary in order to support decisions made concerning the variables investigated. The institution where the study was conducted receives significant financial support from the

Christian Churches in its geographical area. Even though the churches do not directly control the direction and nature of the institution, major decisions concerning student life are made in light of the positive relationship which exists between the institution and supporting local congregations. In addition, the overall educational mission of the institution is viewed from the perspective of the Christian Faith.

The majority of faculty and student on campus are members of the church body to which the institution is related. This ratio is even greater for the students as more than 75% of the full-time undergraduate students come from the local churches which support the institution.

It appears to the investigator that these conditions contribute to the need for the institution to project an image of the campus environment which in fact does not exist. This in turn conditions the emphasis made in the recruitment of new students.

Selection of Groups

Two hundred and forty students from the freshmen class of the 1968-69 academic year at Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma were randomly assigned to three freshmen orientation groups. These students were involved in a semester long orientation course during the first semester.

Experimental Group Number I participated in a freshmen orientation course led by senior students. The seniors had received training for their tasks as orientation leaders.

During the spring semester of the 1967-68 academic year the five senior counselors were enrolled in a three semester hour course in Principles of Guidance and Counseling. The content of the course emphasized "student to student counseling".

Eighty freshmen students were assigned to this experimental group. They were then assigned randomly to five small groups of sixteen each.

Experimental Group Number II participated in a freshmen orientation course taught by faculty members who volunteered to participate in the investigation. Eighty students were randomly assigned to this group.

The remaining eighty students of the population became the control group and did not receive any orientation experience. Their orientation was left to chance.

The purpose of the orientation course was to provide experiences which were designed to enhance the basic collegiate adjustment of the freshmen students. The experimental groups met for a fifty minute session each Thursday at 11:00 a.m. There were thirteen sessions held during the first semester.

The topics discussed during the sessions were:

1. "Learning more about my Campus Community"
2. "Developing Effective Study Habits in College"
3. "The Meaning of a Liberal Education"
4. "The Relationship of the Christian Faith to Learning"

5. "Exploring the whole Field of Relationships"
6. "What it means to Achieve Appropriate Identity"
7. "Developing Effective Interpersonal Relations"
8. "What is the Meaning of Vocation"
9. "Matching Interests and Abilities"
10. "Developing a Philosophy of Life"
11. "Approaches to a System of Ethics"
12. "A Basis for Making Ethical Decisions"
13. "A Time for Evaluation"

Experimental Group Number I met in seminar groups of 16 students each. They were led by a senior counselor. In addition to the weekly session with their seminar group each student counselor was available for individual sessions with students in their seminar group. They had a designated place on campus where they were available for individual conferences. Each counselor had two scheduled conferences with each student in their group. Additional contacts were initiated by the freshmen students. The student counselors had an average of two additional formal contacts with their students on an individual basis during the first semester.

Experimental Group Number II met as a group of eighty students each week. They were lectured to by members of the teaching faculty. Three faculty members took three sessions each and one faculty member did four sessions. The faculty members did not make any special effort to be available for individual sessions with the students in their group throughout the first semester.

A resource book, The College Student's Handbook, was made available for the two experimental groups. The student counselors and faculty instructors followed the same course outline for the sessions with their groups.

Collection of the Data

During the summer orientation sessions conducted by the university student personnel staff prior to the beginning of fall semester of the 1968-69 academic year the College and University Environment Scales, the Study of Values and the Philosophy of Human Nature instruments were administered to the incoming freshmen students. During the last week of the first semester of the 1968-69 school year, the same instruments were administered in order to obtain post treatment scores.

The first and second semester grade point averages were obtained from records in the registrar's office. Attrition was computed on the basis of a count of students who did not enroll for the third semester following the beginning of the student's first enrollment at college.

Instrumentation

1. Study of Values This instrument aims to measure the relative prominence of six basic interests or motives in personality. The design of the instrument is such that respondents are forced to indicate a choice of one value orientation over another. It is impossible to score high on all six basic value areas. The value classifications measured by the instrument are as follows:

Theoretical The dominant interest of the theoretical man is the discovery of truth. In the pursuit of this goal he characteristically takes a "cognitive" attitude, one that looks for identities and differences; one that divests itself of judgments regarding the beauty or utility of objects, and seeks only to observe and to reason. Since the interests of the theoretical man are empirical, critical, and rational, he is necessarily an intellectualist, frequently a scientist or philosopher. His chief aim in life is to order and systematize his knowledge.

Economic The economic man is characteristically interested in what is useful. Based originally upon the satisfaction of bodily needs, the interest in utilities develops to embrace the practical affairs of the business world--the production, marketing, and consumption of goods, the elaboration of credit, and the accumulation of tangible wealth. This type is thoroughly "practical" and conforms well to the stereotype of the average American businessman. In his relations with people he is more likely to be interested in surpassing them in wealth than in dominating them or in serving them. In some cases the economic man may be said to make his religion the worship of Mammon. In other instances, however, he may have regard for the traditional God, but inclines to consider Him as the giver of good gifts, of wealth, prosperity, and other tangible blessings.

Aesthetic The aesthetic man sees his highest value in form and harmony. Each single experience is judged from the standpoint of grace, symmetry, or fitness. He regards life as a procession of events; each single impression is enjoyed for its own sake. He need not be a creative artist, nor need he be effete; he is aesthetic if he but finds his chief interest in the artistic episodes of life. The aesthetic attitude is, in a sense, diametrically opposed to the theoretical; the former is concerned with diversity, and the latter with the identities of experience. Aesthetic man either chooses to consider truth as equivalent to beauty, or agrees to "make a thing charming".

Social The highest value for this type is the love of people. In the study of values it is the altruistic aspect of love that is measured. The social man prizes other persons as ends, and is therefore himself kind, sympathetic, and unselfish. He is likely to find the theoretical, economic, and aesthetic attitudes cold and inhuman. In contrast to the political type, the social man regards love as itself the only suitable form of human relationship.

Political The political man is interested primarily in power. His activities are not necessarily within the narrow field of politics; but whatever his vocation he betrays himself as a Machtmensch. Leaders in any field generally have high power value. Since competition and struggle play a large part in all life, many philosophers have seen power as the most universal and most fundamental of motives. There are, however, certain personalities in whom the desire for a direct expression of this motive is uppermost, who wish above all else for personal power, influence, and renown.

Religious The highest value of the religious man may be called unity. He is mystical, and seeks to comprehend the cosmos as a whole, to relate himself to its embracing totality. Spranger defines the religious man as one "whose Mental structure is permanently directed to the creation of the highest and absolutely satisying value experience". Some men of this type are "immanent mystics", that is, they find their religious experience in the affirmation of life and in active participation therein. A Faust with his zest and enthusiasm sees something divine in every event. The "transcendental mystic", on the other hand, seeks to unite himself with a higher reality by withdrawing from life; he is asetic, and, like the holy men of India, finds the experience of unity through self-denial and mediation. In many individuals the negation and affirmation of life alternate to yield the greatest satisfaction.

The inventory consists of a number of questions, based upon a variety of familiar situations to which two alternatives in Part I and four alternatives in Part II are provided. In all there are 120 questions, 20 of which refer to each of the six values.

The split-half correlation for each of the values, when corrected with the Spearman-Brown formula is: theoretical, .84; economic, .93; aesthetic, .89; social, .90; political, .87; and religious, .95.[1]

Validity was determined by comparing the scores of groups whose characteristics are known. For example, we expect women on the average to be more religious, social,

and aesthetic than men. We likewise expect students of engineering by and large to stand relatively high in the theoretical and economic values.

Several studies contribute to the validization of the Study of Values. Newcomb[2] found that college education of a special type changed value profiles in the expected direction. Postman, Bruner, and McGinnies[3] discovered that high personal values as measured by the scales correlated with the rapid perception of value related words.

2. Philosophy of Human Nature. This scale measures a person's beliefs about human nature and, specifically, his beliefs about the interpersonal aspects of human nature. An analysis of historical and contemporary writings of theologians, philosophers, and social scientists indicates that human nature is seen as being composed of several independent dimensions.[4]

The dimensions of human nature which are measured by the Philosophy of Human Nature are:

1. Trustworthiness: this subscale measures the extent to which one views people as trustworth, moral, and ethical.

2. Strength of Will and Rationality: this subscale measures the extent to which one sees people as being able to understand themselves and able to change their outcomes by their own will power.

3. Altruism: this subscale measures the extent to which one views people as being altruistic, unselfish, and sincerely interested in helping other people.

4. Independence: this subscale measures the extent to which one views people as being able to stand on their own feet uninfluenced by others.

5. Complex and Non-Understandable: this subscale measures the extent to which one views people as being complex and difficult to understand as opposed to people being simple and easy to understand.

The reliability for the Philosophy of Human Nature, utilizing the test-retest correlation for the scales as corrected by the Spearman-Brown formula is: trustworthiness, .74; altruism, .83; independence, .75; strength of will and rationality, .75; complexity, .52; and variation, .84. Scores of the first four subscales were summed to give a general favorableness of human nature score. The reliability of this score was .90. Scores on the two non-substantive dimensions were summed to give a general individual difference score. This scale has a reliability of .79.

The validity of the instrument was determined by pooling scores of 333 students from four colleges which were utilized for validation procedures. The results indicated that there was no important relationship between views of the comprehensibility of human nature and its various qualities. When the correlations of the variability and the four substantive scales were computed, none reached the .01 level of confidence, according to Wrightsman.[5]

3. The College and University Environment Scales

Behavior is typically conceived as being determined by an interaction between individual and environment. The characteristics of the stimulus are, consequently, as important as the characteristics of the individual.[6]

The college environment is the stimulus, consisting of professors, books, laboratories, students, a network of interpersonal relationships, of social and public events, of student organizations and extracurricular activities, of housing and feeding, of counseling, and other conditions which impinge upon the awareness of the students. The perception students have of a particular campus environment can be measured by the College and University Environment Scales. The student is asked to reflect his perception of the campus environment by answering the questions in terms of their being characteristic of the institution where he is enrolled.

The instrument consists of 150 questions. Five dimensions of the campus environment have 30 questions each. The five dimensions are:

1. Practicality: The 30 questions that contribute to the score of this scale describe an environment characterized by enterprise, organization, material benefits, and social activities. There are both collegiate and vocational emphases. The environment, though structured, is not repressive because it responds to entrepreneurial activities and is generally characterized by good fun and school spirit.

2. Community. The 30 items in this scale describe a friendly, cohesive, group-oriented campus. There is a feeling of group welfare and group loyalty that encompasses the college as a whole. The atmosphere is congenial; the campus is a community. Faculty members know the students, are interested in their problems, and go out of their way to be helpful. Student life is characterized by togetherness and haring rather than by privacy and cool detachment.

3. Awareness. The 30 items in this scale seem to reflect a concern about three sorts of meanings-personal, poetic, and political. An emphasis upon

self-understanding, reflectiveness, and identity suggests the search for personal meaning. A wide range of opportunities for creative and appreciative relationships to painting, music, drama, poetry, sculpture, architecture, and the like suggests the search for poetic meaning. A concern about events around the world, the welfare of mankind, and the present and future condition of man suggests the search for political meaning and idealistic commitment. What seems to be evident in this sort of environment is a stress on awareness, an awareness of self, of society, and of aesthetic stimuli. Along with this push toward expansion, and perhaps as a necessary condition for it, there is an encouragement of questioning and dissent and a tolerance of non-conformity and personal expressiveness.

4. Propriety. The 30 items in this scale describe an environment characterized by politeness and consideration. Caution and thoughtfulness are evident. There is an absence of demonstrative assertive, argumentative, risk-taking activities. In general, the campus atmosphere is mannerly, considerate, polite, proper, and conventional.

5. Scholarship. The 30 items in this scale describe an environment characterized by intellectuality and scholarship. The emphasis is on competively high academic achievement and a serious interest in scholarship. The pursuit of knowledge is carried on rigorously and vigorously. Intellectual speculation, an interest in ideas, knowledge for its own sake, and intellectual discipline, all of these are characteristic of the environment.

The reliability for the College and University Environment Scales, utilizing the split-half correlation for the dimensions as corrected with the Spearman-Brown formula is: practicality, .77; community, .90, awareness, .91; propriety, .82; and scholarship, .95. The validity of the instrument was established by comparing the College and University Environment Scales with information about colleges reported in the American Council on Education's Directory of American Colleges and Universities.[7]

Analysis of the Data

A simple analysis of variance was computed for differences on grade point averages at the end of the first semester and for cumulative grade point averages for the total freshmen year.

A multiple classification analysis of variance was computed for each of the six scales on the Study of Values, for each of the six dimensions on the Philosophy of Human Nature, and for each of the five scales on the College and University Environment Scales.

The Chi Square statistic was utilized for comparison of the attrition rates of the experimental and control groups.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Gordon Allport, Phillip Vernon, and Gardner Lindzey, Study of Values, (Boston, 1960).

[2]T. M. Newcomb, Personality and Social Change: Attitude Formation in a Student Community, (New York, 1943) pp. 223-230.

[3]L. Poastman, J. S. Bruner, and E. McGinnies, "Personal Values as Selective Factors in Perception", Journal of Abnormal Psychology, XXIII (1948), pp. 142-145.

[4]L. S. Wrightsman, Jr., "The Measurement of Philosophies of Human Nature", Paper presented at the Midwestern Psychological Association, (May, 1963).

[5]Ibid.

[6]Robert Pace, College and University Environment Scales, (Princeton, 1963).

[7]Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the effectiveness of an orientation course as a means of making an impact upon the success of freshmen students. Success was defined in terms of academic achievement as measured by the cumulative grade point averages, value orientations, philosophies of human nature, relation of perception of campus environment to the expectation of campus environment, and attrition among the study groups. A secondary purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of differing means of implementing the course by using trained upperclass students as leaders for one of the experimental groups and faculty members as leaders for a comparable group. Specifically, do trained upperclass students used as leaders of freshmen orientation courses contribute more to the development of freshmen students?

Grade point averages have been given significant prominence in the academic community as indication of success in higher education. In fact, a student's relationship to the institution depends to a great extent on his maintaining a particular minimum grade point average.

It was hypothesized that there would be no differences in the achievement, as measured by the grade point averages, among the experimental groups and the control group at the end of the first and second semesters of their freshmen year. Table I presents the means and standard deviations for the first semester grade point averages for the experimental and control groups. Table II presents the treatment of achievement data from computing a single-classification analysis of variance.

An inspection of Table II reveals a statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. In order to discover where the significance occurred, and to avoid the possibility of making a Type I error, Duncan's Multiple-Range Test for comparing differences among several means was utilized.[1]

The application of Duncan's method of comparing two means at a time did not reveal any significant differences in the means of the experimental group led by student counselors when compared with the faculty led group or the control group, and the faculty led group when compared with the control group. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis as the achievement of the three groups, as defined by first semester grade point averages, appears to be equal among the groups. In fact, an inspection of Table I reveals that the highest mean grade point average for the first semester was achieved by the control group.

TABLE I

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF FIRST SEMESTER GRADE POINT AVERAGES FOR THREE GROUPS OF FRESHMEN

Groups	Mean G.P.A.	Standard Deviations
Counselor Led	2.62	.62
Faculty Led	2.57	.83
Control	2.67	.68

TABLE II

A SIMPLE-ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF FIRST SEMESTER GRADE POINT AVERAGES FOR THREE GROUPS OF FRESHMEN

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Square	F
Between groups	2	3.723	1.86	3.26*
Within groups	242	138.756	.57	
Total	244			

*Significant beyond the .05 level of confidence.

The investigator of this study has the impression that the first semester grade point averages of freshmen students at the institution where the study was conducted tend to be lower than the cumulative averages at the end of the freshman year. This impression has been borne out by comparing the first semester and end of the year averages of the freshmen classes for the past four years and discovering that more students were placed on academic probation during the first semester than at the conclusion of the second semester. Therefore, it was felt that in order to give an adequate treatment of the student's achievement as a variable of success in college it was necessary to compare the cumulative grade point averages among the three groups.

The means and standard deviations of the cumulative grade point averages at the end of the second semester for the experimental and control groups are presented in Table III. Table IV presents the treatment of the achievement data, compiled from the freshmen year grade point averages, by a single-classification analysis of variance.

An inspection of Table IV reveals a non-significant F score. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis as it appears that the achievement means as measured by the cumulative grade point averages at the end of the freshmen year for the three groups are equal. It does not appear that the freshmen orientation course contributed to the achievement of the students.

TABLE III

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF FINAL GRADE POINT AVERAGES FOR THREE GROUPS OF FRESHMEN

Groups	Mean G.P.A.	Standard Deviations
Counselor Led	2.44	.971
Faculty Led	2.42	.905
Control	2.40	.97

TABLE IV

A SIMPLE-ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF FINAL GRADE POINT AVERAGES FOR THREE GROUPS OF FRESHMEN

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sums of Squares	Mean Squares	F
Between groups	2	.189	.095	.11
Within groups	224	191.841	.8564	
Total	226			

›n-significant

A comparsion of the grade point averages obtained first semester, (Table I), with second semester grade point averages, (Table III), indicates that the students in all three groups achieved higher grade point averages for the first semester. This finding is inconsistent with the performance of former groups of freshmen at the institution as past experience indicates that freshmen do better in terms of academic achievement during their second semester.

A possible explanation for the difference in the performance of this group of freshmen could be that the intensive efforts put forth in the orientation groups to help the freshmen develop sound study habits during the first semester worked in reverse.

A possible explanation for the higher cumulative grade point average for the counselor led group is that most of the counselors had continuing relationships with their students throughout the second semester. The investigator kept records of the number of times the freshmen sought out their counselors during the second semester, even though no formal structure was provided for this kind of contact. A significant number of contacts were made by the freshmen students.

The results of the investigation however, tend to indicate that the utilization of trained upperclassmen as leaders in small groups for the orientation course does not enhance the achievement of freshmen students.

TABLE V

CHANGE SCORES ON EACH OF SIX STUDY OF VALUE SCALES
FOR THREE GROUPS OF FRESHMEN
BY ORIENTATION EXPERIENCE

		Scales					
		Theoretical	Economical	Aesthetic	Social	Political	Religious
Group	N	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Student Led	78	.433	1.42	.57	.07	.16	4.17*
Faculty Led	74	.521	.73*	2.46	.31*	.95*	3.27*
Control	77	2.43*	.06*	.01	2.26	.50	2.33*

*Indicates a lower mean score on the post-test administration.

Hypothesis two stated that there would be no significant differences in the changes in the value orientations among the three groups of freshmen. For the purposes of this study a value was considered to be a cluster of attitudes organized around a conception of the desirable. This concept has been operationalized by the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of values.

Table V presents the mean changes on the pre-test and post-test administrations of the Study of Values. Data in Table V reveal some change in the value orientations which are deemed desirable in terms of the goals of the institution where the study was conducted. The counselor led group maintained higher scores on all six value areas, while the faculty led group changed in four areas. The control group changed in three areas.

The changes in the scores are so small that it appears to the investigator that it is appropriate to make some comparison of the study population with the population utilized in the process of standardizing the instrument used for measuring values. The mean scores of the study population on the two administrations of the instrument are higher in the value areas of theoretical, aesthetic, social, and religious than are the mean scores of the standardization sample. The fact that the majority of the study population come to the institution with a highly idealistic view of life could support the inference that this population is atypical.

A multiple classification of analysis of variance was computed for the six values; theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious. This treatment was applied in order to determine differences in change scores related to the type of orientation experience the groups encountered.

TABLE VI

A MULTIPLE-ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR RELIGIOUS SCALE ON STUDY OF VALUES FOR THREE GROUPS

Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F
Value Scores	1	1192.45	1192.45	15.02*
Orientation Groups	2	105.43	52.72	.66
Interaction	2	56.168	28.08	.353
Within	436	34613.957	79.389	
Total	438	35968.01		

*Significant beyond the .01 level of confidence.

On the first five Study of Values scales, theoretical, economical, aesthetic, social, and political, none of the F values related to variance of orientation experience and none of the interactions attained statistical significance.

On Scale 6, Religious Value, the F value for variance was significant beyond the .01 level of confidence. Table VI presents the data as treated.

An analysis of the data in Table VI reveals that the significance has resulted from changes in the administrations of the instrument utilized to measure student value orientations. Utilization of Duncan's method of comparing multiple means revealed no significant differences among the means of the three groups.[2] Therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected as the means of the three groups appear to be equal.

The significant change in the religious scale of this population could become a source of concern for the institution where the study was conducted due to the religious perspective from which it views its educational mission. This is especially true because of the lower score on the religious value scale.

It appears to the writer that the heavy emphasis that the institution gives in creating a public image of being a "Christian" campus creates a mind set in its students which could cause beginning students to respond to the instrument in the direction that the institution desires at the beginning of their school career. Many students come to the campus with the view that the campus environment is an extension of their church experience.

Another factor which could be related to the significant change on the religious scale is that all freshmen students are required to take two semesters of religion during their freshmen year. The emphasis in these courses is characterized by critical analysis of the Christian

and its sources such as the Church, the Bible, and Christian Tradition. For many of the freshmen this is a new experience and tends to add to the multiplicity of adjustments which have to be made during their first year of college.

A basic tenet of our democratic value system is that all persons have worth and dignity. Therefore, one of the major goals of higher education is to contribute to the development in its students a view of human nature which will enable this tenet to become more of a reality in our culture.

Hypothesis number three stated that there would be no significant differences in the philosophies of human nature among the three groups at the end of the first semester.

The student philosophies of human nature were measured by the Philosophy of Human Nature. This instrument was designed by Wrightsman (1964)[3] to measure a person's beliefs concerning human nature.

The scale is comprised of six subscales with fourteen items on each scale. Scores on the first four dimensions (Altruism, Strength of Will, Independence, and Trustworthiness) may be summed to give a general Favorability of Human Nature. Scores are obtained for each subscale with a possible range from -42 to +42, with a score between -14 and +14 indicating a neutral view of the dimension. Scores falling between -14 and -42 indicate a negative view on a particular subscale, while scores falling between +14 and

TABLE VII

A COMPARISON OF PRE AND POST MEAN SCORES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN NATURE SCALES FOR THREE FRESHMEN GROUPS

	Student Led			Faculty Led			Control		
Dimension	PreTest Means	PostTest Means	Diff	PreTest Means	PostTest Means	Diff	PreTest Means	PostTest Means	Diff
Altruism	6.7	10.12	3.42	8.1	10.85	2.75	8.2	12.09	3.89
Strength of Will	13.32	12.19	1.13*	13.34	12.78	.56*	14.4	13.11	1.29*
Independence	2.80	5.91	3.11	2.21	7.61	5.40	2.45	7.22	4.77
Trustworthy	1.95	7.78	5.83	4.90	9.21	4.31	3.45	7.74	4.29
Complex	10.32	8.22	2.10*	9.88	8.28	1.69*	11.58	9.12	2.46*
Variability	18.68	17.17	1.51*	18.93	14.54	4.39*	18.12	15.01	3.11*

*Indicates a lower mean score on the post test administration

+42 are indicative of a positive view of human nature.[4] It is not possible to score high on all of the scales.

Table VII presents a comparison of the Pre-Test and Post-Test administrations of the instrument according to orientation groups. An examination of Table VII reveals that this total population tends to have a fairly neutral view of human nature with the exception of the dimension of variability. This dimension measures the extent to which one views people as being primarily similar or different from each other. This group tends to think in terms of people as being similar.

A multiple classification of analysis of variance was computed for each of the six dimensions; altruism, strength of will, independence, trustworthiness, complexity, and variability. This treatment was applied in order to determine differences in the change scores related to the type of orientation experience the groups received.

On the six dimensions for the three groups on the Philosophy of Human Nature none of the F values related to the variance of the orientation experience, change scores, and interaction attained statistical significance at or beyond the .05 level of confidence.

On the dimensions of altruism, independence, trustworthiness, and variability the magnitude of the change in scores was noteworthy if not significant. However, little inference can be made as the change in scores are insufficient to make a difference in the rank order according to

the scoring method utilized for the instrument used for measuring philosophies of human nature. One can only note that all three groups moved in the direction of a positive view of human nature from a neutral view on the dimensions of altruism, independence, and trustworthiness. Yet on the dimensions of strength of will, complexity, and variability all three groups moved more in the direction of a neutral view after approaching a positive view.

On the basis of the data the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. The means of the experimental and control groups do not differ significantly.

In comparing the findings of this investigation on this particular variable with the research on which the instrument was developed the writer was led to question the validity of the Philosophy of Human Nature instrument for freshmen students. The underlying rationale of the instrument seem to require a philosophical understanding of man that the freshman student may not have attained.

The perception one has of a given situation is reality for him. Even though this perception may differ from what is real most of his decisions will be based upon his perception of the situation or factors. Much interest has been demonstrated in recent years concerning the congruence of campus environments and the students' perception of them. Where incongruence exists the student experiences press which may in turn effect his ability to effectively cope with his immediate life situations.

Hypothesis four stated that there would be no significant differences in the changes in the perception of the campus environment among the three groups after one semester of college. For the purposes of this study the perception of the campus environment was considered to be responses made to environmental questions which constituted the College and University Environment Scales.

The pre-test administration of the instrument should be viewed from the perspective of the expectations that the students held for the campus environment prior to actual registration and enrollment at the institution. The expectations could have been developed from information gained from a variety of sources; institutional publications, visits to the campus, talks with current students, and sessions with campus personnel.

Table VIII presents the mean scores on the pre-test and post-test administrations of the instrument. Also included in Table VIII are differences in the mean scores according to orientation group. The indicies used in the analysis of the data consisted of change scores obtained by subtracting the retest(perception) score from the original test (expectation) score. For each group the mean perception score was lower than the original score so all of the mean change scores reported in Table VIII are positive scores. The larger the change score, the greater the decline from the original expectation to the later perception score.

TABLE VIII

A COMPARISON OF PRE AND POST MEAN SCORES ON THE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT SCALES FOR THREE FRESHMEN GROUPS

	Student Led			Faculty Led			Control		
Dimension	PreTest Means	PostTest Means	Diff	PreTest Means	PostTest Means	Diff	PreTest	PostTest	Diff
Practical	16.25	14.55	1.70*	17.05	14.91	2.14*	16.10	15.37	.73*
Community	20.62	18.78	1.84*	21.32	18.48	2.84*	19.75	17.63	2.12*
Awareness	17.25	19.15	1.90	16.28	19.04	2.76	17.75	19.46	1.71
Propriety	17.35	18.68	1.33	17.55	20.72	3.17	18.02	19.70	1.68
Scholarship	24.22	22.74	1.58*	24.50	22.19	2.31*	25.20	22.91	2.29*

*Indicates a lower mean score on the post test administration.

For each of the College and University Environment Scales a multiple classification of analysis of variance was computed in order to determine differences in change scores related to the orientation experience encountered. On all five scales, Practicality, Community, Awareness, Propriety, and Scholarship, none of the F values related to variance of orientation experience and none of the interactions attained statistical significance at or beyond the .05 level of confidence.

These results suggest that, for this population, changes in College and University Environment Scales scores during the first semester in the University were not related to the orientation experience received. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis as the means of the three groups appear to be equal.

Even though not statistically significant, it is noteworthy to point out the loss in perception of the institution as emphasizing scholarship heavily and a gain in the perception of the campus as a very proper place where doing the right thing is important. Both of these changes reflect perceptions which are not consistent with the way in which the faculty and administration view the campus environment. On an administration of the CUES to the faculty and administration in September, 1967 both groups ranked scholarship high and propriety low. A change in perception which was consistent with the institution was on the awareness dimension.

Recent statistics indicate that nearly 50% of students who begin college fail to return at the conclusion of their freshmen year. Approximately 10 to 15% of those who leave college at the end of their freshmen year eventually return and graduate. The large number of students who never return continues to be a concern to educators.

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences in the attrition of students among the experimental and control groups at the beginning of the third semester of college following their initial enrollment. Table IX presents the attrition data for the three groups.

TABLE IX

ATTRITION FIGURES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD SEMESTER FOR THREE GROUPS

Groups	Number Enrolled	Number Remaining	Number Withdrawn	X^2
Student Led	86	49	37	.9178
Faculty Led	82	48	34	
Control	77	44	33	

n-significant X^2

These results suggest, that, for this population, attrition rates for three semesters in the University were not related to the orientation experience. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. One could also infer that the student led group had the least impact.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Bunning and Kintz, pp. 107-110.

[2]Ibid

[3]Wrightsman, p. 5.

[4]Ibid

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Freshmen orientation courses began to appear on college campuses early in the 20th century. The need for students to be oriented to the campus community seemed to emerge from a campus life characterized by impersonal settings.

Since the inception of orientation programs differences in approach and desired outcomes for the efforts of orientation have prevailed. The extent to which orientation makes a difference in the development of students is an unanswered question. The research tends to reflect more of an interest in goals and activities relative to orientation with little hard data which measure actual differences made in the development of students.

This study was conducted as an attempt to empirically study the impact of a specific orientation program on the subsequent development of freshmen students. It was hoped that the results of this study might contribute to the research concerning this important aspect of student personnel work in higher education.

Two hundred and forty students of the 1968-69 freshmen class at Phillips University constituted the population for this study. Phillips is a church related institution.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of a semester long orientation course on the subsequent development of students. A secondary purpose was to investigate the effectiveness of utilizing trained upperclass students as leaders for orientation courses.

The students were randomly assigned to three orientation groups. Experimental Group Number I was further randomly assigned to five small groups of sixteen each with an upperclass counselor designated as the leader. The upperclass counselors had received training for the tasks they assumed as orientation group leaders. Experimental Group Number II was led by faculty members who had volunteered to participate in the study. The two experimental groups met for one fifty minute session per week for thirteen weeks during the first semester. In addition to the weekly meetings, students in Experimental Group I had at least two individual conferences with their upperclass counselor during the first semester. The third group in the study served as the control group and did not receive any formal orientation instruction. Their orientation was left to chance.

It was hypothesized that: (1) at the end of the first and second semesters of the freshmen year there would be no significant differences in the achievement as measured by grade point averages among the three groups; (2) at the end of the first semester of the freshmen year there would be no significant differences in the value orientations as

measured by the Study of Values among the three groups; (3) at the end of the first semester of the freshmen year there would be no significant differences in the philosophies of human nature as measured by the Philosophy of Human Nature Scales among the three groups; (4) at the end of the first semester of the freshmen year there would be no significant differences in the perception of the campus environment as measured by the College and University Environment Scales among the three groups; and (5) at the beginning of the third semester there would be no significant differences in the attrition among the three groups.

The results of the study do not allow for the rejection of any of the null hypotheses.

Conclusions

The major conclusions drawn from this study are:

(1) Participation in a structured freshmen orientation course does not seem to contribute to a significant change in earned grade point averages. The control group in this study equalled the achievement of the two experimental groups.

(2) Participation in a structured freshmen orientation does not seem to contribute to a significant change in value attitudes in a desirable direction. The only significance obtained on this variable was on the religious scale. In fact all three groups lowered the value they placed on a religious orientation following one semester of college.

(3) Students who participated in a structured

orientation course did not change their philosophies of human nature significantly different from students who received chance orientation. The students in all three groups clustered around the neutral attitude toward human nature.

(4) Participation in a structured freshmen orientation course did not change significantly the perception of the campus environment of the three groups.

(5) The experiences in the orientation course did not contribute significantly to a lower attrition rate for the experimental groups. In fact the control group had a lower attrition rate for the period of time covered by the study.

(6) Utilization of upperclass students as leaders of the orientation groups did not make any significant differences in the outcomes of this study.

The overall conclusion is that in terms of success in college as defined by this study the structured freshmen orientation course appears to make little impact upon the development of the college student during his freshman year. Students whose orientation was left to chance were as successful as students who received orientation in small groups led by upperclass counselors and students who met in one large group led by members of the teaching faculty.

Recommendations for further Study

Subsequent studies of the problem confronted by this study might compare differences in resident and commuting students. In this study the distinction between these two

groups of students was not made. It is possible that the program designed to make the kind of impact which would contribute to differences in students was oriented toward resident students even though the groups utilized in this study had at least fifty percent commuting students in their makeup.

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