

A NATIONAL COMPARISON OF COMMUNITY/JUNIOR COLLEGES
COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD
MANDATORY TESTING AND PLACEMENT IN THE
AREA OF FRESHMAN COMPOSITION I

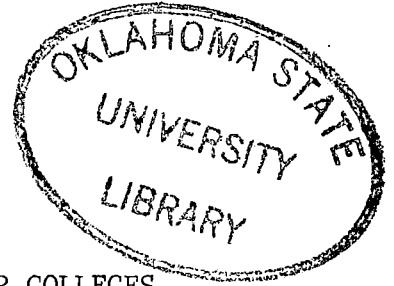
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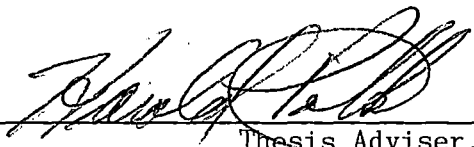
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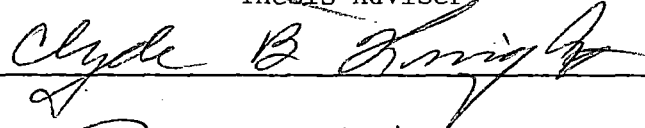


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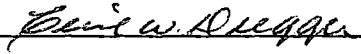
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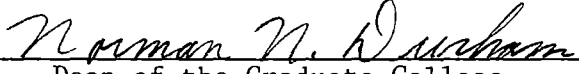
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Statement of the Problem	4
Purpose of the Study	4
Scope and Limitations.	5
Assumptions.	6
Definitions.	6
Organization of the Study.	7
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.	9
Introduction	9
Meaning of Mandatory Testing and Placement	9
Teachers' Attitudes Toward Students Not Meeting Institutional Standards.	10
Effect of Test Anxiety on Placement Testing.	13
Similar Studies.	14
Summary.	19
III. METHODOLOGY	20
Selection of the Subjects.	20
Instrument	20
Scoring.	21
Design	21
Collection of Data	22
Analysis of the Data	22
Summary.	23
IV. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	25
Introduction	25
Survey Instrument Responses.	25
Descriptive Statistics: Frequencies.	26
Descriptive Statistics: Condescriptive	31
Inferential Statistics: Crosstabulation.	32
Inferential Statistics: OneWay-Anova	33
Research Questions	33
Summary.	35

Chapter	Page
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.	37
Introduction.	37
Summary of the Study.	37
Summary of the Findings	38
Conclusions	39
Recommendations	39
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	41
APPENDIXES.	43
APPENDIX A - LETTER ACCOMPANYING SURVEY.	44
APPENDIX B - THE SURVEY.	47
APPENDIX C - FOLLOW-UP LETTER.	49
APPENDIX D - PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS.	52
APPENDIX E - LETTER GIVING PERMISSION TO USE AND REPRODUCE INSTRUMENT.	55
APPENDIX F - ADDITIONAL COMMENTS MADE BY COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTORS	57

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	Page
I. English Numerical Achievement Scores of Options A and B Students (%)	16
II. Distribution by Sex	26
III. Distribution by Age	27
IV. Distribution by Degree.	27
V. Distribution by Years Instructed.	28
VI. Distribution by Region.	29
VII. Favorable/Unfavorable Attitudes Toward Mandatory Testing	30
VIII. Favorable/Unfavorable Attitudes Toward Mandatory Placement	30
IX. Means and Standard Deviation for Mandatory Testing and Placement Scales.	31
X. Significant Relationships Between Levels of Education (Degree) and Favoring Mandatory Testing . .	32

FIGURE

Figure	Page
1. Criteria for Placing Tulsa Junior College Students into English Classes According to Results on the College Skills Assessment	3

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The basic skills needed to perform adequately in entry level courses such as English and Mathematics have become a major concern of colleges nationwide. Therefore, many institutions of higher education are utilizing various testing instruments as means of determining the skill levels of the students in order to provide the necessary remedial reading and writing courses to their curriculum (Lederman, Rebaudo, and Ryzewic, 1982).

The survey conducted by Lederman, Rebaudo, and Ryzewic (1982) of 2,800 institutions of higher education in the United States, yielded a 45 percent response rate. The result showed 85 percent of the institutions perceived poor academic preparation among entering freshmen to be a major problem. The institution's method of assessment was by a standardized scholastic test or a locally developed test. It was reported that the most common method of meeting the need for help in basic skills was through remedial reading, writing, and mathematics courses. The institutions involved in the study revealed 82 percent offered reading, 90 percent offered basic writing, and 86 percent offered basic mathematics courses. Lederman, Rebaudo, and Ryzewic (1982) stated that in their review of numerous reports, books, and seminars, the lack of basic skills of entering freshmen was a nationwide problem.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics Bulletin (1985), the survey of 3,238 colleges and universities showed the need for remedial education was reflected in the number of colleges and universities offering such help. It also showed in 1983-84, 82 percent of all institutions offered at least one course in mathematics, reading, or writing. And, in the majority of schools offering remedial programs, students not meeting institutional standards were required to take remedial courses.

Tulsa Junior College (TJC) has also experienced having students with poor academic preparation. In 1980 the college met the challenge by administering the College Skills Assessment test to all students prior to their enrollment into Freshman Composition I. The College Skills Assessment test is utilized as a screening tool to determine the skill level of the student as well as indicating what remedial courses would enhance the students' skill level. Since 1980, all students are required to take the College Skills Assessment test. One campus has gone one step further by not allowing enrollment into Freshman Composition I without an appropriate score, while the other campuses leave the decision of enrollment up to the student. Figure 1 (pg. 3) illustrates the criteria for placing TJC students into English classes according to their results on the College Skills Assessment Test. Much controversy has evolved concerning this situation creating the following concerns:

1. By letting a student enroll in Freshman Composition I without proper skills, are we setting the student up for failure?
2. Is it not the responsibility of the college to guide the student in reaching his/her goals?
3. Is it the right of the individual to enroll in whatever he/she wants?

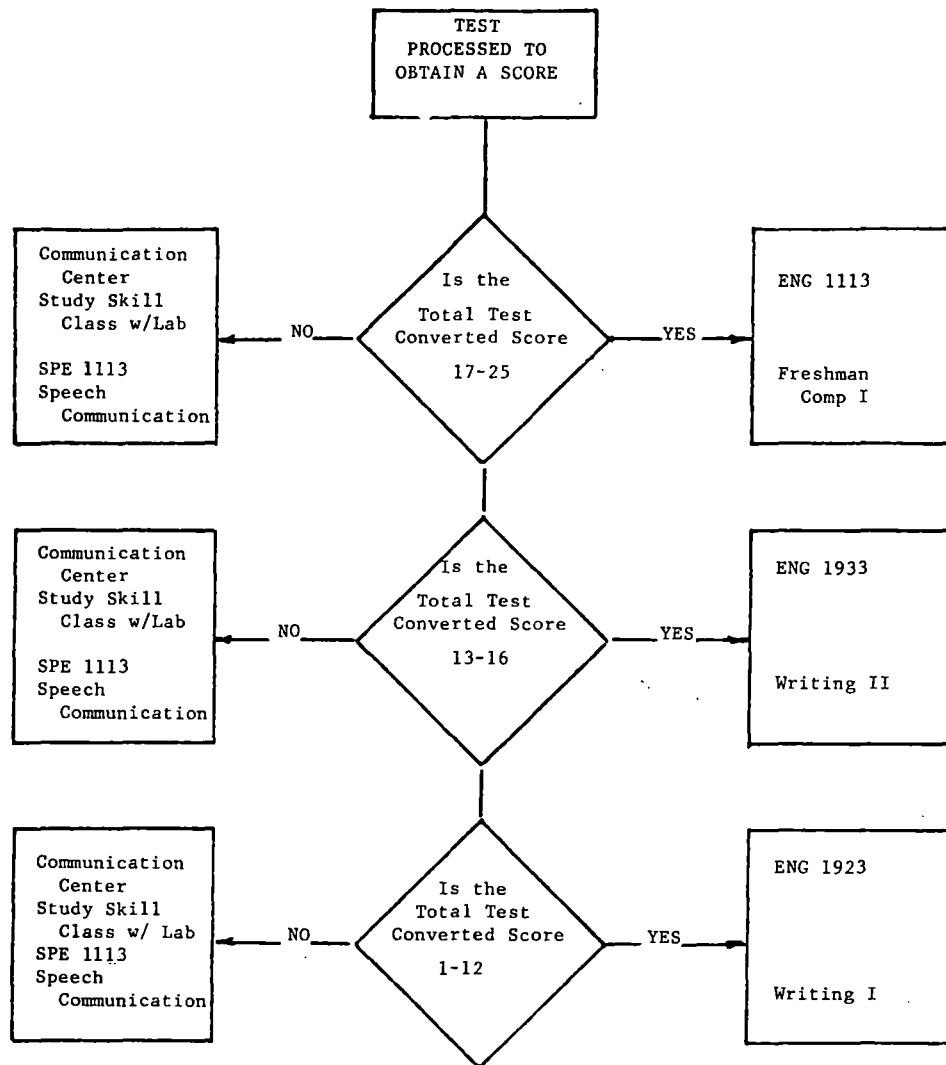


Figure 1. Criteria for Placing Tulsa Junior College Students into English Classes According to Results on the College Skills Assessment

4. Does testing create anxieties in many students, whereby their scores are not a good indicator of their abilities?

These concerns have been expressed through meetings with instructors. Because of the varying view points of the Provost, Academic Deans, and instructors, a study comparing other junior colleges comparable to Tulsa Junior College will be useful to other community/junior colleges as well as a decision making tool to assist Tulsa Junior College.

Statement of the Problem

It is apparent according to the aforementioned survey that many entry level college students lack the skills needed to succeed in college. As a means of adequately servicing the needs of these students mandatory testing and placement could be a possible answer. Clowes (1973) reported on Weingarten and Kroeger's national study which stated: "Obviously with many students needing much help, proper placement, both in remedial and regular English classes, is the first thing a staff must do for effective teaching" (p. 14). The need for mandatory testing and placement is apparent; however, there has been much controversy as to the various approaches utilized in assessment and placement of the underprepared students. Therefore, due to the lack of consistency, the researcher was prompted to conduct a study comparing the community/junior college communication instructors' attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to compare nationally the community

and junior college communication instructors' attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I. The study sought to answer the following questions.

1. What are the attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing?

2. What are the attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory placement?

3. Does the number of years an instructor has taught have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory testing and placement?

4. Does the geographical region in which the community/junior college is located relate to the attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement?

5. Is the age of the instructor a determining factor in his/her attitude toward mandatory testing and placement?

6. Does the level of education (degree) an instructor has have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory placement?

7. Does the level of education (degree) an instructor has have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory testing?

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study had the following limitations.

1. Selection of the colleges was in accordance with the characteristics of TJC in regard to: (a) Type of Institution, (b) Undergraduate Enrollment, (c) Control, Public and Private, and (d) Campus Life.

2. The study was limited to the constraints of ex post facto research design.

3. The number of communication instructors at each community/junior college was unknown.

Assumptions

The study was made using the following assumptions.

1. Accurate information was obtained from all response groups of the study.
2. All of the colleges are similar to Tulsa Junior College, based on demographical characteristics relating to type of institution, undergraduate enrollment, control, and campus life.

Definitions

The following are definitions of terms used in this study.

College Skills Assessment - Screening test utilized to determine the skill level of students for proper placement.

Freshman Composition I - Entry level English course which provides instruction in standard usage and essential expository writing skills (Tulsa Junior College Catalog, 1985).

Remedial Courses - Courses that are designed to develop a student's skills prior to enrollment into required courses.

Community College/Junior College - Are used interchangeably to designate institutions of higher education authorized to offer courses no higher than sophomore level. These two-year programs would normally include transfer, vocational, remedial, adult and continuing education (Price, 1981).

Student - Any person enrolled in one or more courses on a campus.

Instructor - Any person who has met the qualifications of his/her institutions for teaching and is teaching one or more campus courses.

Tulsa Junior College - Two year comprehensive junior college located in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Guidance Information System (GIS) - Is a computer based system which provides information about occupations (both civilian and military), two-year and four-year colleges, graduate and professional schools, and sources of scholarships and financial aid (User's Guide Edition 14, 1985).

Type of Institution - Junior or community college, and whether the college has branches at other locations.

Control: Public or Private - Public colleges are those which are supported by the public, usually through taxes. They often have lower tuition charges than private colleges. Most publicly controlled institutions give preference for admission to students living in the state or local district (User's Guide Edition 14, 1985). Private control means those colleges that are not supported by public taxes.

Undergraduate Enrollment Range - 16,000 to 22,000 students.

Campus Life - In selecting the population for the study, colleges with the following campus life characteristics were excluded: (1) the majority of the student body resides on campus; (2) there were no resident facilities available on campus; and (3) the freshmen were not required to live on campus (User's Guide Edition 14, 1985).

Organization of the Study

Chapter I introduces the study, presents the problem, purpose, limitations, assumptions, and definitions. Chapter II consists of a review of related literature concerning (1) meaning of mandatory testing and placement, (2) similar studies, (3) effect of test anxiety on placement testing, and (4) teachers' attitudes toward students not

meeting institutional standards. Chapter III reports the procedures utilized in this study including selection of population, research design, instrument, collection of data, and the data analysis. The findings of the study are stated in Chapter IV, while the summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations for research are in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Chapter II is composed of discussion relating to (1) meaning of mandatory testing and placement, (2) teachers' attitudes towards students not meeting institutional standards, (3) effect of test anxiety on placement testing, and (4) similar studies.

Meaning of Mandatory Testing and Placement

A meaning for the total concept of mandatory testing and placement was not available; therefore, the term mandatory was defined and applied to testing and placement. Barnhart and Barnhart (1981) defined mandatory as a means of giving a command or order. A concern with how best to address students' remedial and developmental needs in the 1980s has initiated the command or order for mandatory testing and placement in community/junior colleges. The results of Wood's (1985) survey indicated:

Academic skills testing for first-time entering students is more widely subscribed to by two-year colleges than it was in the past, and that such uses of tests will increase in the future.

Over 90 percent of the responding institutions indicate that they use tests for course placement for first-time entering students.

A majority of the institutions that use testing for course placement consider it a voluntary activity, but indicate that they will make it mandatory in the future (p. 7).

According to Rounds (1984) the American College Testing organization (ACT) and Educational Testing Services (ETS) recognized the concerns as well as the growing market to provide new tests, especially for community college students. Through this concern the demands and needs of the underprepared student are being met through mandatory testing and placement.

Teachers' Attitudes Toward Students Not Meeting Institutional Standards

Through the past years community/junior college instructors have encountered situations where the majority of their classes consisted of both underprepared and prepared students, which is becoming more prevalent as stated by Lederman, Rebaudo, and Ryzewic (1982).

A full 85 percent of the institutions perceive poor academic preparation among entering freshmen to be very much of a problem or somewhat of a problem. Only three percent of the institutions said that it was not a problem. While perceptions of both the existence and severity of a problem are always embedded in expectations and standards, these percentages illustrate a problem in post-secondary institutions nationwide (p. 11).

This has created a major concern in providing adequate instruction, proper courses, and trained faculty to meet the needs of the students. The instructor's attitudes toward this situation vary as follows.

1. Entry level standards would eventually result in mandatory placement.
2. Entrance assessment will enhance the cohesiveness of the classroom situation.

3. The daily performance of the underprepared students will affect teachers' strategies and/or course content.

Bencich's (1982) papers on "An Assessment of the Impact of Entry-Level Placement on the Climate of Teaching and Learning in Community Colleges in Florida" and Hecht's (1980) report on "Validation of the New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test" both indicate the attitudes of the instructors toward underprepared students.

Bencich presented three papers. His paper on "The Impact of Entry-Level Testing" consisted of three polls that attempted to measure the faculties' attitudes toward an act taken by the legislature which created the college-level academic skills test in Florida. The third poll gave credence to this study. The results, according to Bencich, showed almost two-thirds of the instructors responding (64 percent) felt that the establishment of entry-level standards in computation and communication would result in mandatory placement either at the present or in the future. In reference to whether or not they thought entrance assessment would improve classroom conditions, 82 percent of the instructors strongly agreed or agreed. However, in 1980, responding to the same question, eight percent had no opinion or disagreed. In 1982 no one disagreed. Bencich also stated when asked if there would be an impact on their grading policies as a result of requiring higher student achievement levels, 90 percent agreed or strongly agreed. No one dissented. While some 30 percent indicated that changes would occur in the area of course assignments, three-quarters of the respondents indicated that they had not come to a decision on what effects the performance standard would have on their teaching strategies or course content. In conclusion, the poll showed in 1980,

54 percent said that if the number of developmental students increase, the college should divert more of its resources to developmental students.

Hecht's (1980) report was concerned with evidence validating the New Jersey College Skills Placement Tests. The report consisted of two content-validity questionnaires which viewed the instructors' satisfaction toward proper placement of the students. Hecht stated:

If students are placed into courses according to a reasonable placement policy and on the basis of scores from a valid placement test, then instructors should find students in their courses to be appropriately prepared to deal with the demands of the course. Under ideal circumstances, the resulting composition of students should be fairly homogeneous with none overprepared for the course and none underprepared (p. 23).

The results of the survey suggested that most instructors are satisfied when the students are properly placed.

Rounds and Anderson's (1973) article "Placement in Remedial College Classes: Required vs. Recommended" was concerned with the back to basics (Reading, Writing, and Mathematics) movement for the purpose of enhancing underprepared students' abilities to achieve in community college. In this movement emphasis was placed on entrance assessment with a goal of early detection of students with deficiencies in mathematics and language arts.

Even though the need exists, educators are concerned about the validity of the remedial programs. Also contributing to the problem were the poorly trained and unenthusiastic instructors who had been drafted because they were the newest hired or because they were not full-time instructors. However, Rounds and Anderson (1973) reported that Grant and Hoerber (1978) argued that the common practice of staffing remedial courses with inexperienced or part-time instructors

was an obvious value judgment based on a misunderstanding of the basic skill concept: "Basic skills courses are undoubtedly education". Rounds and Anderson's (1973) article also reported the attitudes of other instructors toward teaching inadequately prepared students. Quoted were: Moore's (1978) statement of "too many teachers consider the task of teaching the high-risk student in the junior college to be academic social work" (p. 10), and Spickelmier's (1973) study of Texas Community College teachers who revealed a reluctant and non-responsive attitude toward teaching the low-ability and the unprepared student.

The purpose of Thompson's (1985) study was to:

1. Investigate current practices relating to mathematic placement.
2. Assess faculty and student attitudes toward mathematics placement procedures (p. 15).

In the study 94 faculty members and 733 students were surveyed.

A summary of the findings which related to the study revealed that over half (51 percent) of the mathematics instructors estimated that one or more of their students transferred or withdrew from their courses primarily because they were placed or enrolled in an appropriate course.

Effect of Test Anxiety on Placement Testing

A review of literature revealed one study in which reference was made to test anxiety as it affects placement. It was Immerman's (1980) study which consisted of two groups of Native American students entering the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, who were administered the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test. One group had a time restraint, while the other group did not. The results indicated that groups without a time restraint showed a significant difference statistically with

a mean increase (expressed in grade equivalency) of 0.3500. Immerman (1980) stated that the time restraints should be eliminated from the standardized test for the following reasons:

1. It would allow the student the additional time necessary for a second language speaker to interpret the question both in the specific Indian language and English.
2. It would minimize a group testing fault, which by its very nature, creates an aura of competition which is not encouraged in many Indian cultures.
3. It would allow an individual to be tested without constant monitoring by an instructor.
4. It would not emphasize 'time stress.'
5. It would remove the additional test anxiety created by time limits.

In reference to the aforementioned reasons in administering the test without restrictions, they point to a lessening of anxiety in placement testing, in that the additional time will allow those high anxiety students to become familiar with the types of questions. The psychological effect of wanting to finish quickly as the first students begin to leave would appear to lessen, because without the time restriction more students would be encouraged to take more time in test taking. In the regular testing session in community/junior college, minimizing the constant monitoring of many standardized tests would help. Also, not having the time limit would eliminate the stress and test anxiety created by the time limit.

Similar Studies

Linthicum (1980), Clowes (1973), and Wiener (1984-85) research

consisted of areas similar to the researcher's study.

The purpose of the Linthicum (1980) study on Dundalk Community College was to assess the procedures and instruments used for placement of students in the three options of Dundalk's development program: (a) courses for students with the lowest assessment scores, (b) courses for those with low assessment scores, and (c) regular development courses. Linthicum further stated, "It was obvious to the developmental faculty that combining students with diverse needs in the same classroom was detrimental. A system was designed to identify levels of skills and to guide students into appropriate programs" (p. 8).

There were eight research questions presented. The following three related to the researcher's study:

1. Did students and faculty agree with placement decisions?

The results showed an 80 percent response rate and of this percentage in the area of Freshman Composition I, 79.4 percent of the instructors and 96.1 percent of the students indicated that for the most part the placement decisions were right.

2. How successful were students who took placement recommendations?

In determining the success of students who took placement recommendations, Linthicum stated:

Many of the successes of developmental students cannot be defined by numbers or statistics. This is especially true of students in Option A and B who were told that the likelihood of completing any courses was small. However, to look at the academic achievement of developmental students, a numerical achievement score (NAS) can be used to measure individual success on a scale of zero to four (pp. 15-16).

Table I (pg. 16) presents the comparison of the NAS averages of groups A and B. A significant Chi-square was found, indicating Option C students are more likely to do better. According to Linthicum (1980)

part of this was due to the number of Option C student completing the course.

TABLE I
ENGLISH NUMERICAL ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF
OPTIONS A AND B STUDENTS (%)

Option*	0 Did not Attend	1 Poor Effort	2 Fair Effort	3 Good Effort	4 Passed
A and B	11.8%	41.2%	17.6%	29.4%	0%
C	7.9%	21.1%	18.4%	5.3%	47.4%

Chi-Square: 15.376 Sig. .001

* Option A: Courses for students with the lowest assessment scores

Option B: Courses for students with low assessment scores

Option C: Regular developmental courses

Source: Linthicum, Dorothy S. Dundalk Community College Development Education Research Project. Baltimore, MD: Dundalk Community College, 1980.

3. How successful were the students who did not follow placement recommendations for Options A and B? For those students who did not follow the recommendations of the counselor, the results revealed no significant difference as compared to those who followed the recommendations of the counselor for placement.

Clowes' (1973) study consisted of surveys eliciting descriptive information on English programs which were sent to the deans of instruction, department chairpersons, and faculty in 21 Alabama community colleges. Clowes' area of placement revealed that of the

18 responding institutions 14 used placement examinations and of the 14 only ten utilized the placement test score or made actual assignments to remedial English programs. The results revealed no common standard for entry into remedial programs, and apparently no systematic application of testing as an evaluative technique in determining entrance into English programs in Alabama. As stated by Clowes (1973, p. 13), "It is apparent that Alabama faces the same problems and has the same imperatives for future action that the nation at large faces."

According to Wiener's (1984-85) article on "Learning Basic Skills: Through The Cracks", 2.5 to three million students attending the community colleges throughout the nation cannot read at the college entry level. In Wiener's survey of Grossmont Community College, 92 students had taken an entrance examination and the lower achievers were allowed to continue. Sixty-seven percent of the group was reported to have withdrawn, failed, or dropped out. The students who voluntarily took remedial courses in basic English and reading usually were able to progress in their reading abilities within one semester. Those students also tended to stay on, either to complete their community college education or to transfer to upper-division universities.

In order to further understand the problem an historical account of testing and counseling at the Grossmont Community College district was required. The findings were that there was no firm mandatory testing.

In view of the unprepared student, a policy item was placed before the governing board of the college district in California. It

consisted of the following two paragraphs:

It is the policy of the Board to provide and support an institution-wide commitment to the improvement of basic skills, to reduce the problem of student unpreparedness, and to increase student academic persistence and success.

Provision of sufficient development skills courses, adequate testing to provide a base of objective data for preassessment of students' academic skills, writing exercises across appropriate disciplines, and faculty participation in learning skills activities are viewed as essential elements of this commitment (Weiner, 1984-85, p. 53).

Within the scope of the above policy item the counseling department of Grossmont Community College emphasized the importance of mandatory examinations of all entering students who would be taking nine credit hours or more.

As of Spring, 1984, under the mandatory program, 571 students at Grossmont Community College either were tested for English placement or had completed an English composition course. The attitudes of the administration and faculty has been enthusiastic in relation to the development of the program.

In quest for an answer to the problem it was stated that there was a tremendous disarray on the parts of all institutions in their answer to the problem.

Even though community colleges have different populations, a means of reducing the problem is to have an underlying base program that can be shared with all the schools for their common betterment.

Summary

The review of literature revealed a concern as how best to address students' remedial and development needs in the 1980s.

Mandatory testing and placement were considered possible means of meeting this need. Instructors' reaction towards this practice is that underprepared students will either transfer or withdraw from their classes. It was also stated that many instructors are not equipped to teach developmental courses, creating feelings of frustration which compounds the problem.

Even though testing for proper placement is needed to assist in the student's productivity, anxiety is a factor to consider when evaluating the true ability of the student.

The studies reviewed cited much controversy as to the various approaches utilized in assessment and placement of the underprepared students in Freshman Composition I. Therefore, due to the lack of consistency, the researcher was prompted to conduct a study comparing nationally the community/junior college communication instructors' attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to compare nationally, the attitudes of communication instructors at community and junior colleges toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I. This chapter discusses the selection of subjects, instrument, scoring, design, collection of data, and analysis of the data.

Selection of the Subjects

The study population of 33 community/junior colleges was selected by utilizing the Guidance Information System (GIS), a computer based system. The data base consisted of 3,400 colleges, universities, and technical institutions located nationwide, with its data being updated yearly. Characteristics utilized in the selections of the community/junior colleges to be used in the study were: type of institution, undergraduate enrollment, control, and campus life. The results showed the study population to be located in four of the nine GIS geographical areas: Southwest, Farwest, Southeast, and Great Lakes States.

Instrument

The instrument used in collecting the data was the "Purdue Master Attitude Scales Toward any Practice" (See Appendix B). The rationale

of the scaling procedure is the psychophysical principle that equally often observed differences are equal. It is often referred to as the Thurstone Attitude Scale. This scale has demonstrated validity both against Thurstone's specific scales with which it showed almost perfect correlation, and in differentiating among attitudes known to differ among various groups. The Purdue Master Attitude Scales stated that the reliability for various population samples ranged from .71 to .92 which is adequate for group measurement.

Scoring

The median scale value of the statements endorsed is the attitude score. For example, if three items are endorsed, numbers 2, 3, and 5, the score is the scale value of item 3, i.e. 9.2, a highly favorable attitude. The indifference point on all scales is 6.0. Scores above 6.0 indicate a favorable attitude (Purdue Research Foundation, 1960).

Design

The research design was ex post facto. This is a research design widely used in educational research, according to Isaac and Michael (1982). It affords the means of gathering information that describes the nature and extent of a specified set of data ranging from physical counts and frequencies to attitudes and opinions. The results can be used to solve problems that have been posed or observed, to assess needs and set goals, to determine whether or not specific objectives have been met, to establish baselines against which future comparisons can be made, to analyze trends across time, and generally to describe

what exists, in what amount, and in what context. Isaac and Michael (1982) stated the limitations were as follows:

- a. Surveys only tap respondents who are accessible and cooperative.
- b. Surveys often make the respondent feel special or unnatural and thus produce responses that are artificial or slanted.
- c. Surveys arouse 'response sets' such as acquiescence or a proneness to agree with positive statements or questions.
- d. Surveys are vulnerable to over-rater or under-rater bias the tendency for some respondents to give consistently high or low ratings (p. 53).

Collection of Data

The data were collected through the mailing of a cover letter attached to the Purdue Scales Measuring Attitudes Toward Any Practice. Both the letters and measuring scales were sent to the communication chairpersons, to be distributed to the communication instructors of the 33 community/junior colleges (See Appendix A). After three weeks a follow-up letter was sent to non-responding community/junior colleges (See Appendix C). The last step in the data collection phase was to utilize a computer for the analysis of data.

Analysis of the Data

The statistical package of the social sciences (SPSS) subprogram frequency was used to establish frequency tables for the demographic information (Nie, 1975). The condscriptive subprogram of the SPSS was used to determine descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) relative to the demographics and number of years instructing. Also, condscriptive generated descriptive statistics for the attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement were used.

To determine significant relationships between sex, age, level of education (degree), years instructing, and attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement, Chi-Square was used and the Cramer's V was used to determine its strength.

Inferential statistics were generated through the SPSS subprogram One-Way (One-Way Analysis of Variance) to determine existing mean differences in attitude toward mandatory testing and placement for:

- a. Differences between sexes
- b. Differences among ages
- c. Differences among holders of different degrees
- d. Differences among Freshman Composition I instructors in relation to years of instruction
- d. Differences among geographical regions

All statistical comparisons were tested at the .05 level of significance.

Summary

This chapter discussed the selection of the 33 community/junior colleges from a data base of 3,400 colleges. The characteristics used for the colleges were: type of institution, undergraduate enrollment, control, and campus life. The reliability of the instrument (the Purdue Master Attitude Scales Toward Any Practice) for various population samples ranged from .71 to .92. This, as stated in the Purdue Master Attitude Scales Manual, was adequate for group measurements. The ex post facto research design was used as a means of gathering information that describes the nature and extent of a specified set of data ranging from physical counts and frequencies to attitudes and opinions.

In collecting the data both letters and measuring scales were mailed to the communication chairpersons of the 33 community/junior colleges. To increase the return, after three weeks, a follow-up letter was sent to non-responding community/junior colleges. In the analysis of data both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The findings consist of both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics were used to establish demographic information through frequency tables, with respect to attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement. Possible relationships of the demographic data presented the inferential statistics which determined existing difference in attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement. The research questions were also addressed.

Survey Instrument Responses

The survey responses are presented in Tables II through X. Ten survey forms were mailed in August of 1986 to each of the division chairpersons of 33 community/junior colleges along with requests that the forms be distributed to their communication instructors. One-hundred twenty surveys were completed and returned. In accordance with the following characteristics: (a) Type of Institution, (b) Control, (c) Undergraduate Enrollment, and (d) Campus Life, 33 community/junior colleges were found to be located in four of the GIS nine geographical areas (Southwest, Farwest, Southeast, and Great Lakes). Twenty-nine of the 33 community/junior colleges responded to

the survey, yielding a return rate of 90.6 percent.

Descriptive Statistics: Frequencies

The frequency Tables II through X present the demographic data of the study.

As presented in Table II, 66 (55.0 percent) females and 49 (40.8 percent) males responded to the survey, while five had no response.

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

Sex	Number of Respondents	Percent
No Response	5	4.2
Male	49	40.8
Female	<u>66</u>	<u>55.0</u>
Total	120	100.0

As shown in Table III (pg. 27), the age range is shown to be 18 through 63 years. The results indicate the highest number of respondents were in the age range of 53-58 years, 22 or 18.3 percent, and two (1.7 percent) were in the lowest age range of 24-29.

The subjects' level of education (degree) is a part of the demographic data. The data presented in Table IV (pg. 27) shows the subjects with Masters degrees to have the highest response

TABLE III
DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

Age	Number of Respondents	Percent
No Response	16	13.3
18 - 23	0	0.0
24 - 29	2	1.7
30 - 35	12	10.0
36 - 41	21	17.5
42 - 47	18	15.0
48 - 52	13	10.8
53 - 58	22	18.3
59 - 63	<u>16</u>	<u>13.3</u>
Total	120	100.0

TABLE IV
DISTRIBUTION BY DEGREE

Degree	Number of Respondents	Percent
No Response	9	7.5
Bachelor's	5	4.2
Masters	81	67.5
Doctorate	<u>25</u>	<u>20.8</u>
Total	120	100.0

rate. Eighty-one of the respondents (67.5 percent) reported having acquired a Masters degree, 25 (20.8 percent) reported having acquired a doctorate, and five (4.5 percent) reported holding a Bachelors degree.

Information presented in Table V shows the respondents' years of teaching experience. The highest responses (25.0 percent) had 16-21 years of experience with two respondents each (1.7 percent) in the 34-39 and 40-45 years showing the lowest responses.

TABLE V
DISTRIBUTION BY YEARS INSTRUCTED

Years Instructed	Number of Respondents	Percent
No Response	5	4.2
0 - 5	16	13.3
6 - 11	19	15.8
12 - 15	22	18.3
16 - 21	30	25.0
22 - 27	16	13.3
28 - 33	8	6.7
34 - 39	2	1.7
40 - 45	<u>2</u>	<u>1.7</u>
Total	120	100.0

The number of respondents from the four geographic regions are presented in Table VI. Forty-eight of the respondents (40.0 percent) were from the Southeast region; 24 (20.0 percent) from the Farwest; 20 (16.7 percent) from the Southwest; and 15 (12.5 percent) from the Great Lakes.

TABLE VI
DISTRIBUTION BY REGION

Region	Number of Respondents	Percent
Region Not Indicated	13	10.8
Southwest	20	16.7
Farwest	24	20.0
Southeast	48	40.0
Great Lakes States	<u>15</u>	<u>12.5</u>
Total	120	100.0

As shown in Table VII (pg. 30), of the 120 respondents, 112 or 98.3 percent, were in favor of mandatory testing with three or 2.5 percent not favoring it, and five or 4.2 percent not responding.

Table VIII (pg. 30) enumerates the respondents favoring, as well as those not favoring mandatory placement. The results show that 82.5 percent of the respondents favored mandatory placement.

TABLE VII
 FAVORABLE/UNFAVORABLE ATTITUDES
 TOWARD MANDATORY TESTING

Attitude	Number of Respondents	Percent
No Response	5	4.2
Favorable	112	93.3
Unfavorable	<u>3</u>	<u>2.5</u>
Total	120	100.0

TABLE VIII
 FAVORABLE/UNFAVORABLE ATTITUDES
 TOWARD MANDATORY PLACEMENT

Attitude	Number of Respondents	Percent
No Response	5	4.2
Favorable	99	82.5
Unfavorable	<u>16</u>	<u>13.3</u>
Total	120	100.0

Descriptive Statistics: Condescriptive

To further define the study population, the statistical data presented in Table IX show a mean of 8.2 and a standard deviation of 1.9 for mandatory testing and a 7.6 mean with a 2.4 standard deviation for mandatory placement. The mandatory testing and placement means as related to the study's instrument: (Purdue Master Attitude Scale Toward Any Practice) median score of 6.0 show both means were above the median, indicating that the communication instructors' attitudes were favorable toward mandatory testing and placement.

TABLE IX
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR MANDATORY
TESTING AND PLACEMENT SCALES

	\bar{X}	S
Test	8.2	1.9
Placement	7.6	2.4

The Chi-Square of 0.149 (with a significant level of .05) presented in Table X (pg. 32) indicates that there was a significant relationship between the level of education (degree) the communication instructors had achieved and his/her favorable attitude toward mandatory testing. The Cramer's V of 0.208130 showed the strength of the relationship which is also presented in Table X.

TABLE X
SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LEVELS OF EDUCATION
(DEGREE) AND FAVORING MANDATORY TESTING

Demographic	χ^2 *	Cramer's V
Level of Degree	0.0149	0.28130

*Significant at the .05 level

Inferential Statistics: Crosstabulation

The SPSS subprogram Crosstabulations (Nie, 1975) were utilized to generate crosstabulations. The demographic data were crosstabulated with each other and in relationship to mandatory testing and placement. The statistics were then analyzed using Chi Square to determine if the variables were statistically independent. Cramer's V (Nie, 1975) was used for each category to determine strength of relationship.

Crosstabulations were made for each of the following demographic data: (1) sex, (2) age, (3) degree, (4) years instructing, (5) regions, (6) attitudes toward mandatory testing, and (7) attitudes toward mandatory placement.

"Sex" and "Age" as related to mandatory testing and placement yield no significant relationships.

A significant relationship between the level of education (degree) and favoring mandatory testing was reported, while there was no

significant relationship between "degree" and mandatory placement.

"Years instructing" and "regions" as related to mandatory testing and placement showed no significant relationships.

Inferential Statistics: OneWay-Anova

The SPSS subprogram OneWay Analysis of Variance was used to determine existing mean differences in attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement for:

- a. Differences between sexes
- b. Differences among ages
- c. Differences among holders of different degrees
- d. Differences among Freshman Composition I instructors in relation to years of instruction
- e. Differences among geographical regions.

The results of the study show no existing mean differences in any of the above characteristics A through E. Therefore, these characteristics have no influence on the need for mandatory testing and placement of Freshman Composition I students.

The Research Questions

Research questions one and two were answered in Tables VII and VIII. The questions and results were:

1. What are the attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing?

The information in Table VII showed 112 (93.3 percent) communication instructors in favor of mandatory testing and three (2.5 percent)

were not in favor of the procedure.

2. What are the attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory placement?

In Table VIII, it is indicated that 99 (82.5 percent) were in favor of mandatory placement while 16 (13.3 percent) were not in favor.

Questions three through seven of this study were:

3. Does the number of years an instructor has taught have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory testing and placement?

4. Does the geographical region in which the community/junior college is located relate to the attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement?

5. Is the age of the instructor a determining factor in his/her attitude toward mandatory testing and placement?

6. Does the level of education (degree) an instructor has have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory placement?

7. Does the level of education (degree) an instructor has have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory testing?

The SPSS subprogram Crosstabulations (Nie, 1975) in which the demographic data were crosstabulated dealt with questions three through seven. The results in relation to questions three, four, five, and six indicate there were no significant relationships. The number of years instructors had taught had no bearing on their attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement. The geographic region in which the community/junior college is located had no bearing on attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement. The age of the instructors is not a determining factor in his/her attitude toward mandatory testing and placement. The level of education (degree) the

communication instructors have shows no relationship to their attitudes toward mandatory placement. However, the level of education (degree) a communication instructor has (question seven) is significant in regard to mandatory testing, as reported through Chi-Square and Cramer's V shown in Table X.

Summary

This chapter dealt with the responses made on the instrument. The analyses of descriptive statistics through frequency tables and condescriptives determined which descriptive statistics were relative to the demographic items. The condescriptive program also generated descriptive statistics for communication instructors' attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement. Also, incorporated in the chapter were inferential statistics as related to crosstabulations which determine possible relationships of the demographics and OneWay analysis that determined existing mean differences in communication instructors' attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement. The calculation of the statistical data dealt with the research questions.

In view of the statistical data, the attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement were positive. The number of years instructing and geographic region in which the community/junior colleges were located had no bearing on the communication instructors' attitude toward mandatory testing and placement. The older the instructor was, the more favorable they were toward the practice. The level of education (degree) instructors have achieved has no bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory placement; however, it did affect his/her

attitude toward mandatory testing. The data also showed a higher percentage of females (55 percent female to 40.8 percent male) were in favor of mandatory testing and placement.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter is composed of: (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of findings, (3) conclusions, and (4) recommendations for further study. The conclusions were reached through the analyses of the findings, and recommendations were made based upon these conclusions.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to compare nationally the community and junior college communication instructors' attitudes towards mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing?
2. What are the attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory placement?
3. Does the number of years an instructor has taught have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory testing and placement?
4. Does the geographical region in which the community/junior college is located relate to the attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement?

5. Is the age of the instructor a determining factor in his/her attitude toward mandatory testing and placement?

6. Does the level of education (degree) an instructor has have a bearing on his/her attitude toward mandatory placement?

7. Does the level of education (degree) of instructors have a bearing on their attitude toward mandatory testing?

The study population consisted of 33 community/junior colleges selected from the Guidance Information System (GIS) representing 3,400 colleges nationwide. Twenty-nine or 90.6 percent of the 33 community/junior colleges responded. The criteria used in the selection was: (1) type of institution, (2) undergraduate enrollment, (3) control, and (4) campus life. The results showed the study population to be located in four of the nine GIS geographical areas: Southwest, Farwest, Southeast and Great Lakes.

The Purdue Master Attitude Scales Toward Any Practice were used for the study. The analysis of data were done through frequency distributions, condescriptive, crosstabulations, Chi-Square, Cramer's V, and OneWay Anova.

Summary of the Findings

Research questions one and two were concerned with the attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing and placement.

The frequency distribution tables showed the communication instructors to be in favor of both mandatory testing and placement, and the statistical data revealed 112 (93.3 percent) were in favor of mandatory testing and 99 (82.5 percent) were in favor of mandatory placement.

Utilizing the SPSS subprogram Crosstabulations, the cross-tabulation with the demographic data indicated through Chi-Square and

Cramer's V respectively the significant relationships and the strength of relationships for research questions three through eight. The findings of the study were (in respect to mandatory testing and placement) that there are no significant relationships among the following:

1. Number of years an instructor has taught;
2. Region in which the community/junior college is located;
3. Level of education (degree) of the instructor as related to mandatory placement.

The level of education (degree) of the instructors in respect to attitudes toward mandatory testing showed a Chi-Square of 0.0149 and the Cramer's V of 0.028130 which indicated that as a level of education (degree) increased so did the attitude in favor of the practice. This had a significant relationship.

The findings of the data also revealed no mean differences between demographic data; indicating that regardless of the age, sex, geographical location, number of years instructing, or level of education (degree) the communication instructors' attitudes are favorable toward mandatory testing and placement and should be a means of meeting the need of the underprepared Freshman Composition I students.

Conclusions

The findings of the study lead the researcher to conclude that every community/junior college should have mandatory testing and placement for applicants entering Freshman Composition I.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

1. The review of literature indicated a limitation of studies in this area. Replication of this study is needed for comparison purposes in other academic areas.

2. Replication of this study in other populations (e.g. four-year colleges) is needed.

3. A survey should be made of community/junior colleges which use mandatory testing and placement, for their opinions of the value of the practice.

4. A survey should be made of the students' attitudes toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I.

5. It is recommended that all of the Tulsa Junior College campuses institute mandatory placement resulting from the present testing procedures.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER ACCOMPANYING SURVEY

2301 W. Newton Place
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127
August 21, 1986

Tulsa Junior College
6111 East Skelly Drive
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74135

Attention: Communication Department

Dear Division Chairman:

My name is Jilda D. Motley, Coordinator of Testing at Tulsa Junior College, Northeast Campus, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I am currently conducting a national study to compare attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I.

Your college has been chosen as a participant in the study and I am asking for your assistance by giving communication instructors a survey that they will mail back themselves.

Your cooperation is sincerely appreciated and I thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Jilda D. Motley
Coordinator of Testing

2301 W. Newton Place
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127
August 21, 1986

Attention: Communication Instructors

My name is Jilda D. Motley, Coordinator of Testing at Tulsa Junior College, Northeast Campus, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I am currently conducting a national study to compare attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I.

Various studies show that 2.5 to 3 million students cannot read at the college entry level. Also, between 60% and 70% of all community college students must take remedial courses. In view of this statement, HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE...VOICE YOUR OPINION by filling out the survey and return it in the postage-paid return envelope by September 4, 1986.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jilda D. Motley
Coordinator of Testing

APPENDIX B

THE SURVEY

A SCALE FOR MEASURING ATTITUDES TOWARD ANY PRACTICE

Form A

Edited by H. H. Remmers 47

Date _____

Name (optional) _____ Sex M F Age _____

BA Master PhD

Number of Years Instructing _____
College _____ Campus _____

Directions: Following is a list of statements about practices. Place a plus sign (+) before each statement with which you agree with reference to the practice or practices listed at the left of the statements.

Practice	Mandatory Testing in Entry College English	Mandatory Placement in Entry College English

1. Has an irresistible attraction for me.
2. I like this practice too well to give it up.
3. Serves a good purpose.
4. Develops cooperation.
5. Should be appreciated by more people.
6. Has advantages.
7. There is no reason for stopping this practice.
8. Is all right in a few cases.
9. My likes and dislikes for this practice are balanced.
10. I dislike this practice but I do not object to others liking it.
11. Isn't so bad but it is very boring.
12. Has several undesirable features.
13. Should not be tolerated when there are so many better ones.
14. Life would be happier without this practice.
15. Is a waste of time and money.
16. Accomplishes nothing worthwhile either for the individual or society.
17. Is the worst thing I know.

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP LETTER

2301 W. Newton Place
Tulsa, Oklahoma 73127
September 12, 1986

Tulsa Junior College
6111 East Skelly Drive
Tulsa, OK 73135

Attention: Communication Department

Dear Division Chairman:

My name is Jilda Motley, Coordinator of Testing at Tulsa Junior College, Northeast Campus in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In reference to your college being chosen as a participant in the study comparing attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I, I have not received a response from your college.

Please help by giving the enclosed surveys to your communication instructors. I would also appreciate your encouragement to the instructors to represent their college by filling out the survey.

Your cooperation is sincerely appreciated and I thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Jilda D. Motley
Coordinator of Testing

2301 W. Newton Place
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127
September 12, 1986

Attention: Communication Instructors

My name is Jilda D. Motley, Coordinator of Testing at Tulsa Junior College, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I am currently conducting a national study to compare attitudes of communication instructors toward mandatory testing and placement in the area of Freshman Composition I.

Various studies show that 2.5 to 3 million students cannot read at the college entry level. Also, between 60% and 70% of all community college students must take remedial courses. In view of this statement, HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE...VOICE YOUR OPINION by filling out the survey and return it in the postage-paid return envelope by October 3, 1986.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jilda D. Motley
Coordinator of Testing

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

Austin Community College
P.O. Box 2285
Austin, TX 78768

Ceeritos College
11110 East Alondna Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650

Chabot College
25555 Hesperian Boulevard
Hayward, CA 94545

City College of Chicago
Chicago City-Wide College
30 East Lake Street
Chicago, IL 60601

Coastline Community College
11460 Warner Avenue
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

College of San Mateo
1700 West Hillsdale Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94402

El Paso Community College
P.O. Box 20500
El Paso, TX 78284

Florida Junior College - Jacksonville
501 West State Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Foothill College
12345 El Monte Road
Las Altos, CA 94022

Fullerton College
321 East Chopman Ave.
Fullerton, CA 92634

Golden West College
15744 Golden West Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Henry Ford Community College
5101 Evergreen
Dearborn, MI 48128

Hillsborough Community College
P.O. Box 22127
Tampa, FL 33622

Illinois Central College
East Peoria, IL 61635

Los Angeles City College
855 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
400 West Washington Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Macomb Community College
South Campus
14500 East 12 Mile Road
Warren, MI 48093

Madison Area Technical College
211 North Carroll Street
Madison, WI 53703

Mesa Community College
1833 West Southern Avenue
Mesa, Arizona 85202

Milwaukee Area Technical College
1015 North 6th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Mount San Antonio College
1100 North Grand Avenue
Walnut, CA 91789

Palomas College
1140 West Mission Road
San Marcos, CA 92069

Pasadena City College
1570 E. Colorado Boulevard
Pasadena, CA 91106

Pima Community College
P.O. Box 3010-200 North Stone Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85709

San Antonio College
1300 San Pedro Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78284

San Diego City College
1313 Twelfth Street
San Diego, CA 92101

San Diego Mesa College
7250 Mesa College Drive
San Diego, CA 92111

San Joaquin Delta College
5151 Pacific Avenue
Stockton, CA 95208

Santa Monica College
1900 Pico Boulevard
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Sinclair Community College
444 West Third Street
Dayton, OH 45402

St. Petersburg Junior College
P.O. Box 13489
St. Petersburg, FL 33733

Tulsa Junior College
6111 East Skelly Drive
Tulsa, OK 74135

William Rainey Harper College
Algonguin and Roselle Roads
Palatine, IL 60067

APPENDIX E

LETTER GIVING PERMISSION TO USE
AND REPRODUCE INSTRUMENT

PURDUE RESEARCH FOUNDATION

DIVISION OF SPONSORED PROGRAMS
HOVDE HALL
WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA 47907

August 21, 1984

Ms. Jilda D. Motley
2301 West Newton Place
Tulsa, OK 74127

Dear Ms. Motley:

Your letter of August 14, 1984 addressed to Mr. William D. Griggs regarding the Purdue Master Attitude Scales has been referred to our office for reply.

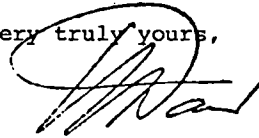
Purdue University and the Purdue Research Foundation has no objection to your reproducing 75 copies of each of the following scales for use in gathering data for your dissertation as long as the appropriate copyright marking is carried thereon. The following is the scales to be reproduced:

1. A scale for measuring attitudes toward any institution.
2. A scale for measuring attitudes toward any school subject.
3. A scale for measuring attitudes toward any practice.

With respect to the difference between Form A and B, you should contact the creators directly. They will also be able to answer your question with respect to the reliability of the Purdue Master Attitude Scales.

If you have any questions or comments, I can be reached at (317) 494-2609.

Very truly yours,



R. L. Davis, Associate Director
Division of Sponsored Programs

KKC

APPENDIX F

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS MADE BY
COMMUNICATION INSTRUCTORS

1. Were not doing it too well, but are revamping our placement test next fall.
2. My opinion of testing and placement is stronger than I reveal on this form. But statements 1 and 2 are too extreme for me to accept. Maybe #2 is good for an expression of my stand now, but it suggests that there are alternatives (give it up for what?) that I haven't considered. Frankly, I can't imagine ways of getting students into the appropriate English courses without requiring testing, and having counselors or advisors then pointing out the classes.
3. Good luck with your study.
4. Thanks Jilda.
5. I must add that mandatory testing and placement, when competently done, can save the student much time, frustration, and money. There is, however, no specific statement here addressing this issue.
6. I believe that both have great advantages for the student.
7. Every student coming into the community college should be tested automatically and then put into the proper class, a remedial class if this is necessary. I've had too many students who were ill-prepared to remain in my classes, however, because the placement test given at Harper do not include an essay of some sort, or even paragraphs. The English test given is thus inadequate for what the students know in theory is not necessarily what they know in practice.
8. This scale is unnecessarily confusing and quite silly. I cannot understand how these responses would have any validity in statistics. Let me say however, that I strongly agree with mandatory testing and placement.
9. All this depends on the testing instrument we use and the personnel in assessment/placement but here goes! Good Luck!
10. It has been my experience based upon teaching at both a four year university and a community college that there are serious problems with students writing and reading abilities. Decisive action needs to be taken immediately to halt this problem. I've had many students that were college seniors that did not know a complete sentence had to contain both a verb and noun. I'm very upset at students lacking these basic skills. I hope your research sheds light on this serious problem.
11. I believe the standards should be the same for all students. I believe in mandatory testing for all students.
12. I would very much appreciate a copy of your findings. Thank you very much and great success with your study.
13. I must qualify my responses: mandatory testing in entry isn't going to solve the problem of almost illiterate writers and speakers in this country. Perhaps the entire society needs to read, think, and care more in order for there to be a positive change in reading and writing levels of students.
14. If we had mandatory testing I would not want to give it up. But, testing would be more worthwhile if we had mandatory placement.
15. It is a necessary practice.
16. I have answered your questionnaire though I find it gives an incomplete range of responses. For example, "reflects demands of tax-paying public for competency test."

2
VITA

JILDA D. MOTLEY

Candidate for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Thesis: A NATIONAL COMPARISON OF THE COMMUNITY/JUNIOR COMMUNICATION
INSTRUCTORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MANDATORY TESTING AND PLACEMENT
IN THE AREA OF FRESHMAN COMPOSITION I

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Flint, Michigan, September 11, 1946.

Education: Graduated from Southwestern High School, Flint,
Michigan, in May, 1967; received Bachelor of Arts degree
from Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma in 1967;
received Master of Science degree from Northeastern Oklahoma
State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma in 1981; completed the
requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma
State University in December, 1986.

Professional Experience: Substitute teacher for Tulsa Public
Schools, 1967-1968; Senior Credit Assistant, Shell Oil
Company, 1968-75; Specialist for Project Development, Tulsa
Junior College, 1982-1985; Counselor, Tulsa Junior College,
1985 to present.