

A STUDY  
OF  
STUDENT MORTALITY IN HOME ECONOMICS  
AT  
OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

By  
EMMA CATHERINE HULSE LAWSON  
Bachelor of Science  
University of Missouri  
Columbia, Missouri

1940

Submitted to the faculty of the Graduate School of  
the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

July, 1954

OKLAHOMA  
AGRICULTURAL & MECHANICAL COLLEGE  
LIBRARY  
AUG 9 1955

A STUDY  
OF  
STUDENT MORTALITY IN HOME ECONOMICS  
AT  
OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

THESIS APPROVED:

*Elsa B. Bate*

---

Thesis Adviser

*Millie Pearson*

*Robert Mawhin*

---

Dean of the Graduate School

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In appreciation for the kindly, skillful guidance manifested throughout the three years of this study acknowledgment is expressed to Dr. Elsa B. Bate, under whose supervision the study was conducted. Acknowledgment is also expressed to Dr. Millie V. Pearson for her assistance in getting the study underway and in helping with the final editing of the writing and to Dean Lela O'Toole for her interest and encouragement.

A special note of appreciation is given to those secretaries in the office of the Dean of Home Economics whose assistance was helpful in obtaining the records necessary to the successful completion of the study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. Introduction . . . . .	1
II. Purpose . . . . .	19
III. Procedure . . . . .	21
Limitations of Study . . . . .	23
Subjects . . . . .	23
IV. Analysis of Data . . . . .	25
V. Findings . . . . .	46
VI. Implications and Recommendations . . . . .	49
Recommendations . . . . .	50
Bibliography . . . . .	52
Appendix . . . . .	54
Data Summary Chart . . . . .	55
First Questionnaire . . . . .	59
Second Questionnaire . . . . .	62

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Subjects in the Study of Drop-outs, Division of Home Economics, Oklahoma A & M College . . . . .	24
II. Student Mortality by Years 1950 through 1953 . . . . .	26
III. Student Mortality by Semesters . . . . .	27
IV. Classification Upon Entering Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College . . . . .	29
V. Reasons Given for Taking Home Economics . . . . .	30
VI. High School and 4-H Club Homemaking Experiences . . . . .	31
VII. Science Subjects Taken in High School . . . . .	32
VIII. Extent to Which Students Stayed in College As Long As They Had Planned . . . . .	32
IX. Number of Semesters Attended . . . . .	33
X. Mortality of Transfer Students . . . . .	34
XI. General Reasons Given by 301 Students for Dropping Out of Home Economics at Oklahoma A & M College, 1950-1953	36
XII. Reactions to the Home Economics Curriculum of the Students Who Dropped Out of Home Economics . . . . .	37
XIII. Information Concerning Students Who Transferred from Oklahoma A & M College to Some Other College . . . . .	39
XIV. Present Occupational Status of Drop-outs . . . . .	40
XV. A Comparison of Causes of Withdrawal Among Home Economics Students in Several Colleges and Universities	42
XVI. A Comparison of Items Relating to the Home Economics Curriculum Between the University of California Study and the Oklahoma A & M Study . . . . .	44
XVII. A Comparison of Items Relating to Home Economics Instruction Between the University of California Study and the Oklahoma A & M Study . . . . .	45

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		Page
I.	Student Mortality by Academic Classification and Year . . . . .	23
II.	Students' Reactions to Home Economics Course Work Compared with Reactions to Course Work in Other Fields	38

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

At a time when technological growth is taking place through the development of atomic power and through the many avenues opening as outlets for this great and awe-inspiring power, Americans are prone to wonder where they fit into the future, what part the democratic form of government is to play, and how they as individuals as well as a nation are to maintain their democratic ideals. They wonder, too, how they can demonstrate to the world that the fundamental basis of all power is still within the individual; and that it is only as the true worth of each person, as an individual, is recognized and utilized that a nation forges ahead; attains, and maintains world leadership.

Our nation's leaders have recognized for some time that higher education must play a continuing and important role in helping to hold and advance the American ideals of human worth which our ancestors held so dear. The educational opportunities offered the veterans of World War II, and later those of the Korean war, pointed up the fact that our political leaders are becoming aware of the importance of higher education. Although in this country of individual freedom there is still a place for the intelligent individual with ambition and perseverance, formal education is becoming more and more the necessary background for that person who wishes to attain success. As high school education for all becomes more nearly a reality, higher education for those who are capable of being leaders becomes more urgent. The strength of a nation now lies in the numbers of those

highly skilled and trained workers who can handle the mechanics of modern technology, who can advance with it and yet not lose sight of the worth and rights of individuals. Even the most brilliant of persons will likely profit from formal training leading toward the attainment of such skills and insights. It is for the faculties of the institutions of higher learning in our country to visualize the great task ahead of them, to realize that the existence of their institutions depends to a great extent upon how well they can instill these skills and insights into those potential leaders who come to them for training.

Some foreign countries have recognized the great need for masses of highly trained technicians and are turning them out by the thousands. It is the feeling of some that if our country is to keep pace, then we too, must increase the number of students who graduate from our colleges and universities--well-trained technicians with well-grounded democratic ideals. Such an obligation on the part of the institutions of higher learning becomes a great one when it is realized that, of the numbers who enroll in these institutions, approximately one-third do not remain to graduate. Would it not be revealing to find out why this is so? Perhaps there is need for faculties of colleges and universities to evaluate their programs in terms of the extent to which they are meeting the needs of students. It may be that through such an evaluation it can be determined wherein their holding power can be increased so that more of those who come in quest of technical knowledge and skills can be trained, and that those seeking only a cultural background may be satisfied. The importance of periodic evaluations are pointed up in the statement:



One important purpose of evaluation is to make a periodic check on the effectiveness of the educational institution, and thus to indicate the points at which improvements in the program are necessary. In a business enterprise the monthly balance sheet serves to identify those departments in which profits have been low and those products which have not sold well. This serves as a stimulus to a re-examination and a revision of practices in the retail establishment. In a similar fashion, a periodic evaluation of the school or college, if comprehensively undertaken, should reveal points of strength which ought to be continued and points where practices need modification. This is helpful to all schools, not just to schools which are experimenting.<sup>1</sup>

Russell says that all who have the ability and incentive should go to college.<sup>2</sup> If we accept this general concept of education for all, and of higher education for all who have the ability and incentive, then there probably should be some accounting for the vast numbers who enter our higher educational institutions as freshmen but who do not remain to complete the four year program.

Few questions can be more important to a college than the area of inquiry concerning student separations. The student separating from college poses questions relating both to his own resulting reaction and to the effectiveness of the college program.

To the student his separation may create an emotional upset. If he is dropped for low grades, he may lose self-confidence. If he leaves because of inability to cope with the responsibilities of unfamiliar living conditions and a strange environment, he may become dangerously introvert. To the student and to his parents, separation from college may bring severe psychic wounds.

To the college, a knowledge of why students drop out would be valuable in many ways. A careful analysis of student separations would reveal institutional weaknesses wherever they might exist--in the college's admissions policy, its orientation program, its advisory system, its health service, its financial aid program or the effectiveness of its classroom instruction. Moreover, such a study would

---

<sup>1</sup>Eugene B. Smith and Ralph W. Tyler, Appraising and Recording Student Progress (New York, 1942), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>J. D. Russell, "Who Should Go To College?", National Education Association Journal, XXXVII (October, 1948), p. 448.

give to the college a penetrating insight into the behavior of those borderline students whose barely passing performances indicate that they, too, are having difficulties. Indeed, a college could expose itself to no probe more searching nor rewarding than one which sought to account for its student withdrawals.

In providing a searching self-survey, a study of student separations enables a college to ascertain to what degree it is achieving its goals. The objectives of a college can be realized only in terms of its human product. Hence, in proportion to the number of those who withdraw from the school, to that extent do its objectives remain only partly fulfilled.

One final reason for the college being concerned about withdrawals is the practical one of keeping enrolment up. The 1948 National Conference on Higher Education points out that "experienced college men from all parts of the nation agree not only that previous estimates have been high, but also that college enrolments of the future may be materially affected by any of several variables." To arrest a threatened enrolment drop by reducing the withdrawals is one obvious safeguard against adverse variables.<sup>3</sup>

Other authorities agree on the importance of periodically studying those students who drop out of college.

Students and their parents so often fix their attention on the business of gaining admission to college that they fall into the easy error of thinking that a degree will automatically follow after the allotted time spent there. College administrators know better, but even they are prone to forget what actually happens to a class between the beginning of the freshman year and Commencement Day. The shocking fact is that, on the average, half the class will have fallen by the wayside. In many cases these withdrawals are unavoidable; with the majority, however, foresight and more careful planning would have prevented this waste. It is high time that attention be given to an aspect of education which is so costly to all concerned.<sup>4</sup>

One of the primary essentials to an intelligent appraisal of the success of higher education is an analysis of college student mortality. By student mortality is meant the failure of students to remain in college until graduation.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>B. Quarles, "Student Separations From College: Overview," Association of American Colleges Bulletin, XXXV (October, 1949), p. 404-405.

<sup>4</sup>Archibald MacIntosh, Behind The Academic Curtain (New York, 1948), p. vii.

<sup>5</sup>John H. McNeely, College Student Mortality U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin 1937, No. 11 (Washington, 1938), p. 1.

In 1938 McNeely published an investigation in which twenty-five universities (public, private, schools for males only, and co-educational) located in various sections throughout the United States participated. The history of those who registered for a degree as freshmen in 1931 and 1932 was traced to discover who left the universities over a regular four year period and who graduated with degrees. Information was obtained from college records in the offices of the Registrar, Dean of Students, and Personnel Director, and questionnaires which were sent to former students. Analyses of the student mortality were made for (a) the universities as a whole, (b) the individual universities, and (c) several colleges and schools within the universities.<sup>6</sup>

For the universities as a whole, a little less than one out of every three students succeeded in obtaining degrees . . . A higher percentage of students obtained degrees in the privately controlled than in the publicly controlled universities.<sup>7</sup>

There were eight institutions having an enrollment of over 4,000 students in the McNeely study. From these institutions the records of 7,611 students were studied and it was found that 58.7% left during or at the end of the four year period with no degree, 32.9% obtained degrees, 8.4% continued beyond the four year period without leaving the university, 7.7% transferred to some other institution when they left, 4.0% returned at a later date and 47.0% left completely.<sup>8</sup>

The study showed that "the higher percentage of the students left in the freshman year with a progressive decline in the percentage for the sophomore, junior, and senior year."<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 2-4.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

McNeely's findings also showed that the highest net mortality (students who are permanent drop-outs) existed in the colleges or schools of home economics with 57.5% of these students leaving the universities permanently.<sup>10</sup>

In the universities and colleges as a whole McNeely found that larger percentages of those left who did not participate in extra-curricular activities. A much higher mortality was found among students residing in rooming houses or college dormitories than among those residing with their parents or in sorority or fraternity houses. Far larger percentages of those making low academic marks left than of those making high marks. Larger percentages who did not engage in part time work left than of those who worked part time.<sup>11</sup>

Hilton and Carpenter, in an investigation of 3,023 students who entered selected colleges in 1936-1937, representing each of five types of institutions, (1) two-year private, (2) two-year public, (3) four-year private, (4) four-year public, and (5) teachers colleges, found that 40% either transferred to some other institution or dropped out the first year. They also found that only 14% of those entering remained to obtain the Bachelor's degree.

Their study pointed up four significant functions of education at the junior college level:

1. The preparatory function as justified by the fact that from 33 to 47% who entered the four-year colleges returned during their junior year.
2. The fact that terminal education is needed--to meet the needs

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 106.

of the 53 to 67% who entered the four-year colleges and failed to return their junior year.

3. The program of general education is needed to benefit a much larger group.
4. There is an urgent need for both vocational and educational guidance during the junior college years, particularly during the freshman year as shown by the transfers from one school to another within the university organization and the high rate of student loss.

They recommend that a degree or certificate be given to those who leave at the completion of two years of college work which should prepare students for some field. Also, recognizing that many students will transfer, colleges should attempt to give the necessary guidance and curricular offerings that will make possible satisfactory achievement in the school or college to which students transfer.<sup>12</sup>

Weintraub and Salley made a study of a select group of students with high A.C.E. scores who were admitted to Hunter College in 1940. They found that of this group 45.2% left because of poor scholarship and/or were asked to leave, 12.0% left because of financial need, 10.0% transferred to other schools, 8.5% left because of personal illness, 7.9% stated they left because of employment, and 3.1% left because of marriage. Over one-half of those who withdrew voluntarily left before completing the sophomore year.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup>Wallace A. Hilton and W. W. Carpenter, "Persistency of Students," Journal of Higher Education XIV (May, 1943), pp. 268-270.

<sup>13</sup>R. G. Weintraub and R. E. Salley, "Graduation Prospectus of An Entering Freshman," Journal of Educational Research XXXIX (October, 1946), pp. 116-126.

In studying college persistence in its relation to available measures of success at the time of graduation from high school, no single criterion can be relied upon to predict college achievement. It is obvious that factors other than high scores operate to influence college persistence. Some insight into those other factors may open the way for a radical reduction in the percentage of educational mortality.<sup>14</sup>

A report of a study which covered 1,389 freshmen men from Michigan State College for a period of three years listed reasons why these men failed to re-enroll. The reasons were obtained by conferences in the office of the Dean of Men and by personal letters. The reasons listed were:

- lack of money, took a job
- not interested in college, discouraged,
- low marks (divided into two groups, one with high entrance test scores, the other with low entrance test scores),
- illness or injury, and needed at home.

It was concluded that the factors causing drop-outs remained about the same each of the three years studied although changing economic and social conditions may have changed their relative importance.<sup>15</sup>

Mitchell compared his findings at Michigan State with those of McNeely and Ursinus:<sup>16</sup>

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Mich.</u>	<u>McNeely</u>	<u>Ursinus</u>
Lack of money	20.8%	22.4%	20.3%
Not interested - discouraged	15.6%	17.6%	6.3%
Transferred	8.1%	---	---
On trial & low marks	39.4%	44.4%	33.9%
Illness or injury	11.1%	7.6%	10.6%
Needed at home	2.5%	1.6%	---

In determining a profile of withdrawals from Los Angeles City College, Louise Snyder interviewed and gave questionnaires to approxi-

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 126

<sup>15</sup>F. T. Mitchell, "Why Freshmen Leave College," Journal of Higher Education XIII (February, 1942), pp. 95-100.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 98.

mately 3000 withdrawals over a five semester period. The average enrollment of the college was 5500, with 52% men and 48% women. Of the withdrawals, 56% were men and 44% were women. The proportion of the men of the college who withdrew was 15% as compared with 12% of the women withdrawing. She classified the reasons they gave for withdrawing as follows:

--change of residence	7%
--exclusion (asked to leave)	1%
--failure	11%
--illness	14%
--lack of interest	7%
--preferred other schools	6%
--unsuitable choice of courses	6%
--work	46%
--other reasons	2%

Of those who withdrew because of work, 80% found jobs before they withdrew. Illness was the next most often found reason for withdrawing, but Snyder felt it might be a blind for other actual causes. About 13% of the entire college enrollment withdrew before completing the semester. Outside work may have had some influence since the mean number of hours spent on outside work weekly for the withdrawal group was 23.3 as compared with 16.3 for the college as a whole.<sup>17</sup>

A study made at the Lincoln Junior College of Kansas City in 1949-'50 revealed the following reasons given for withdrawals:

--economic	21.7%
--lack of objective	16.2%
--other interests	13.5%
--lacked ability to do average work	10.8%
--difficulties in the home	8.1%
--personality difficulties	8.1%
--health	8.1%
--lack of funds	2.7%
--suspended	2.7%
--other	8.1%

---

<sup>17</sup>Louise M. Snyder, "Why Do They Leave?", Journal of Higher Education XI (January, 1940), pp. 26-31.

In this study it was found that of a total enrollment of 149, thirty-seven withdrew. Of those who withdrew 37.3% were freshmen and 16.1% were second year students. One-half dropped out because they did not know what they wanted to do with their college work. Also, half of those withdrawing were doing poor scholastic work.<sup>18</sup>

Cummings reported the causes of student withdrawals at De Pauw University to be low scholarship, change in curricular interests, poor finances, desire to be nearer home, and marriage.<sup>19</sup>

Wagner made a study in the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics at the University of Minnesota covering a three-year academic period from 1936 to 1939 to obtain information concerning student mortality. She attempted to find answers to the following questions:

1. What proportion of the students drop out and at what stage in their course?
2. What proportion of those who drop out return later?
3. What are the important causes for leaving school?
4. What is the relation of honor-point ratios to student mortality?
5. What happens to the students who drop out of home economics?

Information was obtained through conversation with those who withdrew and through letters from them. During the three years it was found that 33% of the freshman girls entering home economics dropped out. Of these 23% dropped out at the end of the first quarter, 33% at the end of the second quarter and 44% at the end of the third quarter. Thirty-

---

<sup>18</sup>Girard T. Bryant, "Why Our Students Leave School," Junior College Journal, XXI (December, 1950), pp. 217-220.

<sup>19</sup>E. C. Cummings, "Causes of Student Withdrawals at De Pauw University," School and Society, LXX (September 3, 1949), pp. 152-153.



four percent left who were interested in some other course. Thirty-two percent of these transferred to other courses at the University of Minnesota or elsewhere to continue study in some other field. About one-fifth reported they dropped out because of financial difficulty. This difficulty increased from quarter to quarter with 10% listing financial difficulty the first quarter, 17% the second quarter and 23% the third quarter. Eighteen percent obtained jobs and 7% were looking for work. Very few withdrew because of illness or moving away. All who said they dropped out because the courses were too difficult had an honor-point ratio which was very low. Of those who remained in school the honor point ratio was superior with a mean of 1.247 as compared with a mean of 0.814 for the group who dropped out.

Among those who dropped out and took employment, 17% were employed in offices, 5% were clerking; a smaller proportion were engaged in food service and dressmaking. Miscellaneous positions such as nursery school, first-grade teachers, picture tinter in a photographic studio, telephone operator, nursemaid, social worker, technician in a pathology laboratory, home missionary, maid, packer in a factory and owner of a commercial art studio were reported.

Of those who dropped out seventeen percent returned to continue their home economics work at a later date.

Wagner pointed out that the following needs should be considered:

1. A need for better vocational guidance in the secondary schools as shown by the fact that one-third of those who dropped out were interested in other courses; it was doubtful if some with an honor-point ratio below 0.5 should have been encouraged to enter home economics in college. Many

may not have realized the expense involved before they entered since 10% dropped out the first quarter for financial reasons.

2. A need for more individual guidance in budgeting for freshman girls as shown by the fact that more dropped out because of financial difficulty in the third quarter. It may have been that it was their first experience away from home, or their first experience in managing their own finances, or some may have come with sufficient funds to carry them through three quarters but because of unwise spending money only lasted through two quarters.
3. A need for terminal courses in the curriculum which would probably encourage girls to remain who desire work in preparation for homemaking and who do not see their way clear to completing a four-year course.<sup>20</sup>

A report of an anonymous study covers the records of 500 students who had withdrawn from a college over a five-year period without completing requirements for graduation. Besides examining their records, questionnaires were sent to them. These questionnaires listed 31 items, one-third of which dealt with the student's plans and intentions when entering college, the remainder with reasons influencing their withdrawals.

There were 280 responses to the questionnaires. The individuals who responded included equal numbers whose records showed no failures or conditions and those with from one to six failures or conditions. Their average scholarship was only slightly lower than the average of

---

<sup>20</sup>Gwendolyn Davis Wagner, "Student Mortality Among College Home Economics Freshmen," Journal of Home Economics, XXX (April, 1941), pp. 244-245.

other individuals in the Division of Home Economics and the University as a whole.

Responses to the questionnaire showed that three-fourths of those who entered as freshmen said they intended to graduate; 15% intended to stay only one or two years; 3% said plans were indefinite from the beginning; some intended to return to college later.

Through examining the records of those who answered questionnaires it was found that there was no significant difference between the scholarship index of those who appeared to be satisfied and those who indicated any dissatisfaction whatsoever. Both were well above the scholarship index required for graduation.

Almost half of those who withdrew indicated more than one personal reason for withdrawing. The personal reasons were given as having too great difficulty in adjusting to mass treatment, the necessity of after-school work for pay leaving too little time for study, the inflexibility of requirements for certificates or degrees in specific fields, severe competition from others with better training, feeling that their families were not justified in further sacrifice to provide them with an education under present economic conditions, inability to find stimulating experiences they had expected in college work, and failure to make satisfactory friendships. They had been out of school from four months to four years. There was no ill will expressed toward the college, rather many of them expressed gratitude for the opportunities they enjoyed while they were there. Many expressed the hope that the hurdles which were too difficult for them might be removed for students who may follow. Findings from this study indicate reasons students give for leaving college:

--economic reasons	32%
--dissatisfaction with the program	23%
--marriage	21%
--illness of self or family	21%
--not interested in home economics and preferred to carry on studies in other fields	20%
--discouraged with grades	18%
--desired courses not available at the university	13%
--removed from locality or accepted positions which removed them from the locality	10%
--not interested in continuing college education further	12% <sup>21</sup>

The students who entered New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell University as freshmen in 1939, 1940, and 1941 and who left without completing their college courses were studied to obtain data which might be beneficial to the college. Even though New York State College of Home Economics received six times as many applications as could be accepted in 1940 and four times as many as could be accepted in 1941, the data obtained from this study indicated that a typical student who left New York State College of Home Economics without receiving a degree may be described as a girl who on entrance is undecided on a vocation or whose choice is based upon inadequate information. Probably she had not taken an active part in high school activities and her regents grades (a state examination given to all graduating high school students in New York) were in the low eighties. The general picture was that of a group which in high school functioned at a much lower level than the group which became college honor students.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup>"Why Home Economics Students Leave College," Journal of Home Economics, XXXIII (February, 1941), pp. 103-105.

<sup>22</sup>M. Mercer, "Study of Student Mortality in a Home Economics College," Journal of Educational Research, XXXIV (March, 1941), pp. 531-537.

In September of 1953 Nelson published a study which considered the problem of drop-outs in 14 colleges in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Her subjects were those who entered as freshmen in the fall of 1943 through the spring of 1948 and who dropped out of home economics before the spring term of 1950. She found that:

About half of the freshmen entering home economics in the colleges studied during the years 1943 through 1945 dropped out before graduation. Mortality was greater in the large institutions (53 percent) than in the small colleges (32 percent). The percentage of students who dropped out of home economics in these colleges ranged from 19 to 55 percent.<sup>23</sup>

Nelson found that there were no significant differences between the large and small colleges in the majority of the comparisons made. Marriage was the chief reason given for withdrawal with more than half giving this as a reason. About a sixth of the students left because of financial difficulties and a similar proportion left because of lack of interest or scholastic difficulties. Many of those who transferred out of home economics went into a field which required less than a four-year program.<sup>24</sup>

When asked for the reasons they had enrolled in home economics about a third said they had taken it because they thought it would be practical; about a third wanted preparation for professional jobs in home economics; a sixth gave preparation for homemaking, and the others said that they had had no real interest in the field but had been persuaded to enroll by their parents or had enrolled because they could not get into the field of their first choice.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup>Helen Young Nelson, "Factors Related to the Extent of Mortality Among Home Economics Students in Certain Colleges of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa During 1943-'50," Journal of Experimental Education, XXII, no. 1 (September, 1953), p. 61.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

When their reactions to college courses were checked it was found that:

More than half of the respondents from large colleges regarded the prerequisite requirements (especially those in science) as unsatisfactory; significantly fewer from the small colleges expressed this reaction. More respondents criticized the quantity than the difficulty of the courses.

About half of the respondents from large colleges said that home economics courses had been taught in too theoretical a manner. Significantly fewer from the small colleges expressed this reaction.

Significantly more of the drop-outs from the small colleges (56 percent) cited an undesirable amount of repetition between high school and college courses; only about a third of the respondents from the large colleges who had had instruction in high school made this criticism.

Nearly half of the respondents who had attended small colleges believed that the practical courses had come too late in their curriculum; and nearly two-thirds of those from the large institutions expressed this reaction. The replies of both married and single respondents were similar on this point.<sup>26</sup>

Most of the studies reviewed thus far indicate concern for the student who drops out and imply that it would be to his advantage to have remained in college to the completion of his degree. However, it may be that many students who do not complete their college education are justified in dropping out. Students enrolling in colleges today have different purposes, values, and desires. In some instances it is possible that the students have attained the skills and knowledge which they need to carry forth into the fulfillment of their life purposes with only a year or two of college training. In many cases they may not have crystallized their goals in their own thinking before enrolling as freshmen, but the goals became evident as they progressed with their education and may have been attained before the four-year

---

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

program is completed. There is many a girl who enrolls in home economics in college, particularly a co-educational college, whose chief purpose is to find a husband who will fit into her dreams as a reality and help her make a home. Today some girls are more willing to admit this as their goal than were those of a few decades ago. But what higher goal could there be and where is one more likely to make contacts with men of high caliber than in a college? This is a very fine goal and should not be hidden behind "planning to prepare for homemaking and a career" which it often is. If it were faced openly as a goal, the way for faculties to plan curricula of greatest benefit to new homemakers would likely be clearer. As a result, these new homemakers would leave college feeling that not only was their goal of founding a home achieved, but also that the training received had a definite purpose and that they had benefitted. They would not leave feeling frustrated because they wanted to continue in college longer than it had been possible.

Then there are those, who drop out for reasons beyond their control, who perhaps would benefit greatly and who could go far in the profession of spreading knowledge in the ways of better home living in places where the need is great, if they could continue their college education through to completion and receive the college degree. There are, no doubt, many factors which might enter into causing students to drop out of college which could be handled quite satisfactorily if the faculty had any way of knowing what they are.

At the close of the 1950 meeting of the Home Economics Division of the Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities, a committee was appointed to make a survey of "Drop-Outs in Home Economics." It

was designed to explore this problem and to discover whether this group of students could throw some light on the curriculum needs of home economics. It was believed that each participating institution might find the results of such a study meaningful in evaluating its own program.

Thirty-two colleges cooperated with the Committee in collecting data, one being the University of California at Los Angeles where thirty-seven students were classified as withdrawals. They were sent a copy of the questionnaire devised by the Committee. (See appendix). When the returns were analyzed it was found that "Marriage ranked first when the entire list of possibilities was considered and as first among the nine factors which might have been considered psycho-social. No other reason was even a close second."<sup>27</sup> However, Leahy warned of the possibility that marriage might be an item which was used as a face-saving or a cover-up device for any number of other influences. Also, her study was made at the time a war emergency existed and marriage rates were accelerated.

Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College was another institution which agreed to cooperate with the Land-Grant College Committee. It was believed that the data obtained through such a study would be useful in evaluating the program in home economics and increasing the holding power of the Division of Home Economics. This thesis is a report of the findings of that study.

---

<sup>27</sup>Dorothy M. Leahy, "Why Drop-outs in College Home Economics?", Journal of Home Economics, XLV, no. 1 (November, 1953), p. 651.



## CHAPTER II

### PURPOSE

It was believed that when the reasons for students leaving college before graduation are known it will be possible for the administrators and faculty members to use this knowledge to increase the holding power of the institution.

With this assumption in mind this study was undertaken in an effort to find the specific reasons that students give for having dropped out of home economics. In making the study it was hoped that data could be obtained which would throw some light on whether or not the students who dropped out of college prior to completing their work were satisfied with what they had obtained in the time they were enrolled in school. It was also thought that the reasons they gave for having dropped out, and their reactions to some questions concerning course work, might be of some assistance to the advisers of future students. Some reasons given for having dropped out might be considered legitimate, or good, reasons. Others might point out problems which teachers and advisers could help solve and thus help some deserving students in the future to remain in school. Their reactions to specific questions concerning their stay on the Oklahoma A & M campus and concerning their course work, both in home economics and in other courses, might also throw some light on problems confronting students of which teachers and administrators are unaware. Also, the obtaining of information regarding a part of their high school background might help college teachers in analyzing

any difficulties with college work which this study might reveal.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

A period was chosen from September, 1950 through May, 1953, coinciding with the national study being conducted by the Home Economics Division of the Land-Grant College Association. By collecting data each semester a greater number of students who dropped out were likely to be contacted. Many students change addresses frequently and even a year after having dropped out of college it may be difficult to locate them with the addresses given when they were enrolled. Also, by receiving a questionnaire the first semester they failed to return to college, it was thought that their college experiences would still be remembered clearly, that they would be more willing to answer the questionnaire, and therefore their comments would be more meaningful. It was also believed that a three-year period would give a large enough sampling to obtain meaningful results.

At the beginning of each semester the list of students enrolled for that particular period was obtained from the office of the Dean of Home Economics, and compared with the list of students enrolled for the previous semester. Any name which appeared on the previous semester list that did not appear on the present semester list was assumed to have dropped out. The list was then checked against the file of recently married students in the office of the Dean of Home Economics because some names might appear there now and the student would be registered under her married name. Since there are students who attend one semester at another institution, for example, Merrill-Palmer, then

return to Oklahoma A & M to complete their college training, the secretary of students in the Dean's office checked the list of assumed drop-outs for any students who were known to fall in this category and their names were deleted.

When the list of actual drop-outs was completed the card file in the office of the Dean of Home Economics was used to obtain home addresses. By referring to the list of transfers which is kept in the office of the Dean of Home Economics those students who had transferred to another school on the campus were located and questionnaires mailed to them at their school addresses.

It was decided that the school year of 1952-'53 would be used to carry on a control study with students remaining in school. In order to carry on such a control study it was necessary to have a chart by which returned questionnaires could be identified with the names of the students who had dropped out. As the questionnaires were returned they were matched with the identification chart and a list made of those names who had responded.

Each semester after the questionnaires were returned they were summarized by items. A chart was kept so that the number and percent answering each question could be added when the returns for the semester were completed. (See Appendix).

Because the Division of Home Economics at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College was cooperating with the Home Economics Section of the Land-Grant College Association in surveying drop-outs, the same questionnaire and cover letter were used. However, a few additions were made on the Oklahoma questionnaire to obtain information on some points which were considered important to this particular college.

Statements were added to the questionnaire to determine if the students who dropped out felt they had sufficient training for their purpose at the time of leaving; if they found another field of study which was better suited to their needs; if the home economics courses they had taken had met their needs; if the home economics courses were a repetition of high school work; if the home economics courses were practical; and if they were, at the time of answering the questionnaire, married, a homemaker, and attending school at the same time.

In 1951 the Land-Grant College Committee added some statements to the questionnaire which were incorporated later into the Oklahoma questionnaire. (See copy of the second questionnaire in the appendix). The items which were added were for the purpose of determining what reasons students had for choosing the home economics curriculum as their major; if they had homemaking classes and activities in high school and/or 4-H Clubs, and what science subjects they had taken in high school.

#### Limitations of Study

This study was limited to students enrolled in the Division of Home Economics at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College who had dropped out during the three-year period 1950-'51, 1951-'52, and 1952-'53.

#### Subjects

The students at Oklahoma A & M College are representative of all of the State of Oklahoma--rural and urban. Many of them are from other states in the Union and some are from foreign countries. No attempt was made in this study of drop-outs to determine any points of interest concerning the residence of students; however, questionnaires were

mailed to widely scattered sections, some other states, and a few to foreign students whose names appeared on the list.

Students ranged in age from 18 or 19 years up through the middle-age years. Some were married at the time they enrolled; some were single at the time they enrolled. The majority of the students were female, however, there were a number of male students enrolled in the Division of Home Economics and almost every semester at least one questionnaire was returned by a male drop-out. However, no information was gathered concerning their ages, marital status at the time of enrollment, or their sex.

Table No. I. Subjects in the Study of Drop-Outs, Division of Home Economics, Oklahoma A & M College

Classi- fication	1950-1951		1951-1952		1952-1953		Total	
	No. drop- outs	No. re- plies*	No. drop- outs	No. re- plies*	No. drop- outs	No. re- plies*	No. drop- outs	No. re- plies*
Fresh.	107	26	100	27	136	23	343	76
Soph.	71	37	64	34	56	33	193	104
Junior	56	28	42	23	48	24	146	75
Senior	22	19	13	13	9	7	44	39

\* Classification which the student gave for himself or herself. It is believed that many students did not classify themselves correctly. Perhaps their reaction was that they had finished the freshman year, therefore, they were sophomores, and so on through the classifications.

Students who were studied as drop-outs had been enrolled in all four departments of the School of Home Economics--Home Economics Education, Home Life, Household Arts, and Household Science, and in the two departments of the School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration--Hotel Administration, and Restaurant Management. Returns were not classified by the departments in which students had been enrolled.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data obtained in this study were analyzed in terms of numbers and percentages of students who dropped out over the three-year period, in terms of their satisfactions or dissatisfactions with the course work while they were in attendance at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, and in terms of the reasons which they gave for having dropped out. Where it seemed significant to analyze data obtained from fall semester studies and that from spring semester studies separately and compare them, this method was used. In the majority of cases, however, the data were analyzed for each academic year, compared year by year and compared with the average percentage for the three-year period. Using the total number of students enrolled (without duplicating any from fall semesters to spring semesters) for each academic year, Table No. II was developed. The enrollment, without duplicates, is shown for each classification, (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) along with the numbers and percentages who dropped out at each classification. The totals in numbers and percentages are given for the three-year period. It was assumed in compiling the total figures for the three-year period that there were no duplicates from year to year (since those who were freshmen one year would be sophomores the next, and so on) and that those who dropped out did not return to drop out again. Using this basis, it was determined that approximately one-third of the students dropped out of the Division of Home Economics over the three-year period. In general, these findings

Table No. II. Student Mortality by Years 1950 through 1953.

Classification upon leaving	1950-1951			1951-1952			1952-1953			Total		
	No. enrolled	No. drop outs	Percent drop outs	No. enrolled	No. drop outs	Percent drop outs	No. enrolled	No. drop outs	Percent drop outs	No. enrolled	No. drop outs	Percent drop outs
Freshmen	229	107	46.72	237	100	42.19	298	136	45.63	764	343	44.89
Sophomores	216	71	32.86	179	64	35.75	169	56	33.13	564	191	34.21
Juniors	193	56	29.01	185	42	22.70	163	48	29.26	541	146	26.98
Seniors	214	22	10.28	176	13	7.38	193	9	4.66	588	44	7.52
Special	8	8	100.00	7	4	57.14	13	7	53.84	28	19	71.42
Total	860	265	30.81	784	223	28.44	841	258	30.67	2485	746	30.02



are in keeping with those of the previous studies cited.

It will be noted that the academic year mortality varied little over the three-year period, with the average being 33.02%, or a little less than one-third. Mortality among the freshman class averaged very nearly 45% for the three-year period studied. Average mortality for the sophomore class was a little over one-third and junior mortality was a little over one-fourth. The senior class mortality was less than one-tenth.

It can be noticed that the freshman, sophomore, and junior classes remained somewhat constant over the three-year period. However, the senior mortality decreased over the three-year period from 10.28% in 1950-51 to 4.66% in 1952-53. It is also noticeable that none of the special students enrolled in 1950-51 returned to college, while approximately half of those enrolled in the two subsequent years returned.

Table No. III. Student Mortality by Semesters.

Sem- ester	Number of Students enrolled				Number of students not returning				Percent of students not returning			
	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sr.	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sr.	Fr.	So.	Jr.	Sr.
F.'50	210	192	168	174	42	32	27	9	20.00	16.66	16.01	5.17
S.'51	191	152	164	159	65	39	13	13	34.03	25.66	17.60	8.17
F.'51	214	173	160	131	39	21	21	7	18.66	12.19	12.72	5.34
S.'52	192	149	130	149	61	43	21	6	31.60	16.15	16.53	4.02
F.'52	281	161	154	137	49	25	26	3	17.43	15.52	16.88	2.19
S.'53	255	146	133	126	87	33	22	6	34.11	22.60	16.54	4.76
Total Fall	705	526	482	442	130	78	74	19	18.44	14.81	15.35	4.29
Total Spring	638	447	427	434	213	115	56	25	33.22	25.72	16.86	5.76

In the preceding table enrollment losses are compared by semesters. It can be seen that losses of freshmen and sophomore students were much



Examination of the information contained in Table No. IV, Classification Upon Entering Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, reveals that of the 301 drop-outs who returned questionnaires during the three-year period, four-fifths stated that they had entered as freshmen in the Division of Home Economics, the remaining one-fifth having transferred from some other college.

Table No. IV. Classification Upon Entering Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College

Classification Upon Entering	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
Freshmen	89	80.90	85	87.63	75	79.78	249	80.06
Sophomores	15	12.72	8	8.25	12	12.76	35	11.22
Juniors	5	4.54	3	3.09	4	4.25	12	2.96
Seniors	2	1.81	0	0.00	1	1.06	3	0.99

Each academic year the percent of drop-outs who entered the freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classifications respectively remained approximately the same.

At the beginning of the second semester of the study additional statements were inserted in the questionnaire for the purpose of obtaining reactions from former students contacted as to why they had chosen the Division of Home Economics when they enrolled. In the analysis of the answers to these questions it was found that almost one-half of the drop-outs said they took home economics so that they might prepare themselves for both homemaking and a career. Almost one-fifth said they took home economics as preparation for homemaking only, and did not consider it as a career, while less than one-eighth of them

took home economics as preparation for a career. Over one-half of those responding had come to college with the intention of preparing for a

Table No. V. Reasons Given for Taking Home Economics

Preparation for:	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
Homemaking, not career	14*	19.18	25	25.77	13	13.19	52	19.69**
Homemaking and career	38*	52.05	50	51.54	29	30.85	117	44.35**
Career	12*	16.45	13	13.40	5	5.32	30	11.36**
Other	10*	13.15	8	8.24	13	3.19	31	11.70**

\*Questions not included in questionnaire first semester of study.

\*\*Totals obtained from 264 replies (no replies first semester, first year).

career other than homemaking. However, if the assumption is made that those who stated they enrolled in home economics to train for homemaking and a career actually were planning to find a husband and become homemakers but were "face-saving" by checking both, then the proportion who wanted training for homemaking becomes nearly two-thirds.

During the second semester statements concerning the high school backgrounds of those who dropped out in relation to their homemaking experiences, 4-H Club work, and science subjects also were added to the questionnaire. Table No. VI. reveals that the majority of those who dropped out of the Division of Home Economics at Oklahoma A & M College had had a high school background in homemaking instruction.

Nelson, in her study of causes of home economics drop-outs in selected colleges in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa during 1943 through 1950 found that 56% of those from small colleges cited an undesirable amount of repetition between high school and college courses and that about a third of the respondents from the large colleges made this

criticism. In the study reported here it was found that 18.27% of the drop-outs made this same criticism of the home economics curriculum.

Table No. VI. High School and 4-H Club Homemaking Experiences

High School Experiences	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
Had homemaking in high school	50*	68.49	77	79.38	12	44.67	169	64.01**
Did not have homemaking in high school	22*	30.13	20	20.61	7	7.44	47	17.80**
Enjoyed homemaking activities in high school	52*	71.23	65	68.04	37	39.36	154	58.32**
Did not enjoy homemaking activities in high school	6*	8.21	7	7.21	3	3.05	16	6.07**
Member of 4-H Club	15*	20.55	20	20.61	15	15.95	50	18.94**
Not member of 4-H Club	10*	13.69	11	11.34	3	3.05	24	9.09**

\*Questions not included in questionnaire first semester of study.

\*\*Totals obtained from 264 replies.

Does this mean that girls who have already enjoyed a rich background in home economics are not challenged by the present college program at Oklahoma A & M College? It will be noted from Table No. VI. that almost two-thirds of those who dropped out of college said that they had had homemaking instruction in high school, while almost one-fifth said they had participated in 4-H Club activities. Almost three-fifths of the group reporting previous instruction said they had enjoyed their high school homemaking activities. Could this be another indication that those who had done well in and enjoyed their high school home economics work were not satisfied with the content of the college courses taken?

Table No. VII is a compilation of information concerning the science subjects which the drop-outs took while they were in high

school. This table reveals that almost one-half of those who dropped out of college had had biology in high school and only a few less had had general science. Almost one-fifth had had chemistry in high

Table No. VII. Science Subjects Taken in High School

Science subject	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
General Science	45*	89.04	48	30.49	26	26.38	119	45.45**
Biology	39*	53.42	57	26.00	30	31.91	126	47.72**
Chemistry	21*	28.76	23	23.71	9	9.47	53	20.07**
Physics	6*	8.21	5	5.15	1	1.06	10	8.78**
Other science	3*	4.11	9	9.28	8	8.51	20	7.50**

\*Questions not included in questionnaire first semester of study.

\*\*Totals obtained from 264 replies.

school. The numbers who had had physics and other science courses were small.

Information contained in Table No. VIII reveals the extent to which students stayed in college as long as they had planned to stay.

Table No. VIII. Extent to Which Students Stayed in College as Long as They Had Planned

	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
Yes	23	20.90	20	20.61	16	17.02	59	19.60
No	80	72.72	62	63.91	63	67.02	205	68.01

From this table it can be noted that approximately two-thirds did not stay in college as long as they had planned. This might indicate that many students were disappointed at having to leave college and would perhaps welcome being enabled to remain. In the anonymous study "Why Home Economics Students Leave College" reviewed previously, it was

found that three-fourths of those who entered as freshmen said they intended to graduate, 15% intended to stay only one or two years, while only 3% said their plans were indefinite from the beginning.<sup>28</sup>

Could this be an indication that a terminal course in homemaking would more nearly meet their needs and therefore might have influenced them to have stayed in college longer?

It must be kept in mind when reviewing Table No. IX that some of the students answering these questions were transfer students to Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College and may have attended this institution only one semester, yet they have been classified as upper classmen by the official count which is shown in Table No. II.

Table No. IX. Number of Semesters Attended

Number of semesters attended	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent
One	26	23.63	20	20.61	14	14.89	60	17.94
Two	33	30.00	24	24.74	35	37.23	92	30.56
Three	10	00.09	9	9.28	14	14.89	33	10.96
Four	19	17.27	20	20.61	14	14.89	53	16.94
Five	9	8.18	7	7.21	3	3.05	19	6.31
Six	9	8.18	4	4.12	3	3.05	16	3.32
Seven	1	0.90	4	4.12	1	1.06	6	1.99
Eight	3	2.72	2	2.06	0	0.00	5	1.66

Almost one-third of those who dropped out said they had attended Oklahoma A & M College for two semesters. About one-fifth had attended for one semester only. About one-tenth of those who dropped out did so

<sup>28</sup>"Why Home Economics Students Leave College." Journal of Home Economics, XXXIII (February, 1941), pp. 103-105.

at the end of their third semester and about one-seventh at the end of their fourth semester, making a total of approximately one-fourth who dropped out during or at the end of their second year. About one-tenth of those who dropped out did so during their third year and only about 3% of the total group of drop-outs were in their fourth year of attendance at Oklahoma A & M College.

Table No. X is a compilation of the items on the questionnaire which concerned those students who transferred to the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College from other institutions. Examination

Table No. X. Mortality of Transfer Students

Information	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
Number of transfer students	26	23.63	21	21.65	17	18.08	64	21.26
Transferred from institutions within the state	15	13.64	16	16.49	12	12.76	43	14.28
Transferred from institutions out of the state	11	10.00	5	5.15	5	5.32	21	6.97

of the data in this table shows that less than one-fourth of the students who dropped out were students who had transferred to this college. Less than one-sixth had transferred from institutions within the state and less than one-thirteenth had transferred from institutions out of the state. This may or may not be meaningful because the number of transfer students enrolled each semester was not ascertained and therefore it is not known what proportion of the transfer student body these drop-outs represent.

The reasons given by students for leaving college are reported in Table XI. Many students checked more than one reason. It is possible



Table No. XI. General Reasons Given by 301 Students for Dropping Out of Home Economics at Oklahoma A &amp; M College, 1950-1953.

Reason Given	1950-51	1951-52	1952-53	1950-1953
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Marriage	45.45	42.26	52.12	46.51
Found another field of study better suited to needs	22.72	24.74	21.27	22.92
Insufficient funds	17.27	20.61	18.08	18.60
Lack of interest in home economics	23.63	17.52	8.51	16.94
Opportunity for employment	11.81	11.34	13.19	12.29
Unsatisfactory grades	12.72	7.21	4.25	8.30
Inadequate counseling	10.00	4.12	9.57	7.97
Moved	10.00	8.24	4.25	7.64
Ill health	6.36	10.31	5.32	7.30
Needed at home	5.45	6.18	6.11	5.98
Had sufficient training for my purpose	4.54	5.15	7.44	5.64
Urged by others to leave	3.63	2.06	3.05	2.99
Unsatisfactory living conditions	0.90	3.09	2.13	1.99
Unsatisfactory social activities	0.90	2.06	3.05	1.99
Home economics lacks prestige	1.81	1.03	0.00	0.99

that some of these items were used as a "cover-up" for other reasons which the students did not want to reveal. For example, in several cases "marriage" was checked as a reason for not returning, yet the student wrote on her questionnaire that she was not married but was working and expected to be married within the near future. It could be, however, that knowing she would be married soon, she was working to earn money for her personal and future needs. Also, ill health, needed at

home, and lack of interest in home economics, might be used as "face-saving" measures and even the student herself might not have recognized them as such at the time she checked the questionnaire. However, it is believed that in general, these reasons which the drop-outs have checked are as nearly correct as it was possible to ascertain under the circumstances. The data contained in Table No. XI reveal that almost half of the students who dropped out of home economics from 1950 through 1953 gave marriage as a contributing factor. The second highest general reason checked was "found another field of study better suited to my needs," which was checked by less than one-fourth. Nearly one-fifth of the drop-outs said they had insufficient funds, yet only about one-eighth said they had had opportunity for employment. Less than one-fifth said they lacked interest in home economics. Less than one-tenth said their grades were unsatisfactory, and that there was inadequate counseling. Less than one-fifth moved to another locality, and the same number gave ill health as a factor. About one-twentieth said they were needed at home and the same number said that they had had sufficient training for their purpose. Only a minor percentage said their living conditions were unsatisfactory, their social activities were unsatisfactory, that home economics lacked prestige, or that they were urged by others to leave.

When asked to give their reactions to the home economics curriculum, almost one-fourth of those who dropped out said there were too many courses with long laboratory periods. This information is reported in Table No. XII. Almost one-fifth said their home economics courses were a repetition of high school work and nearly

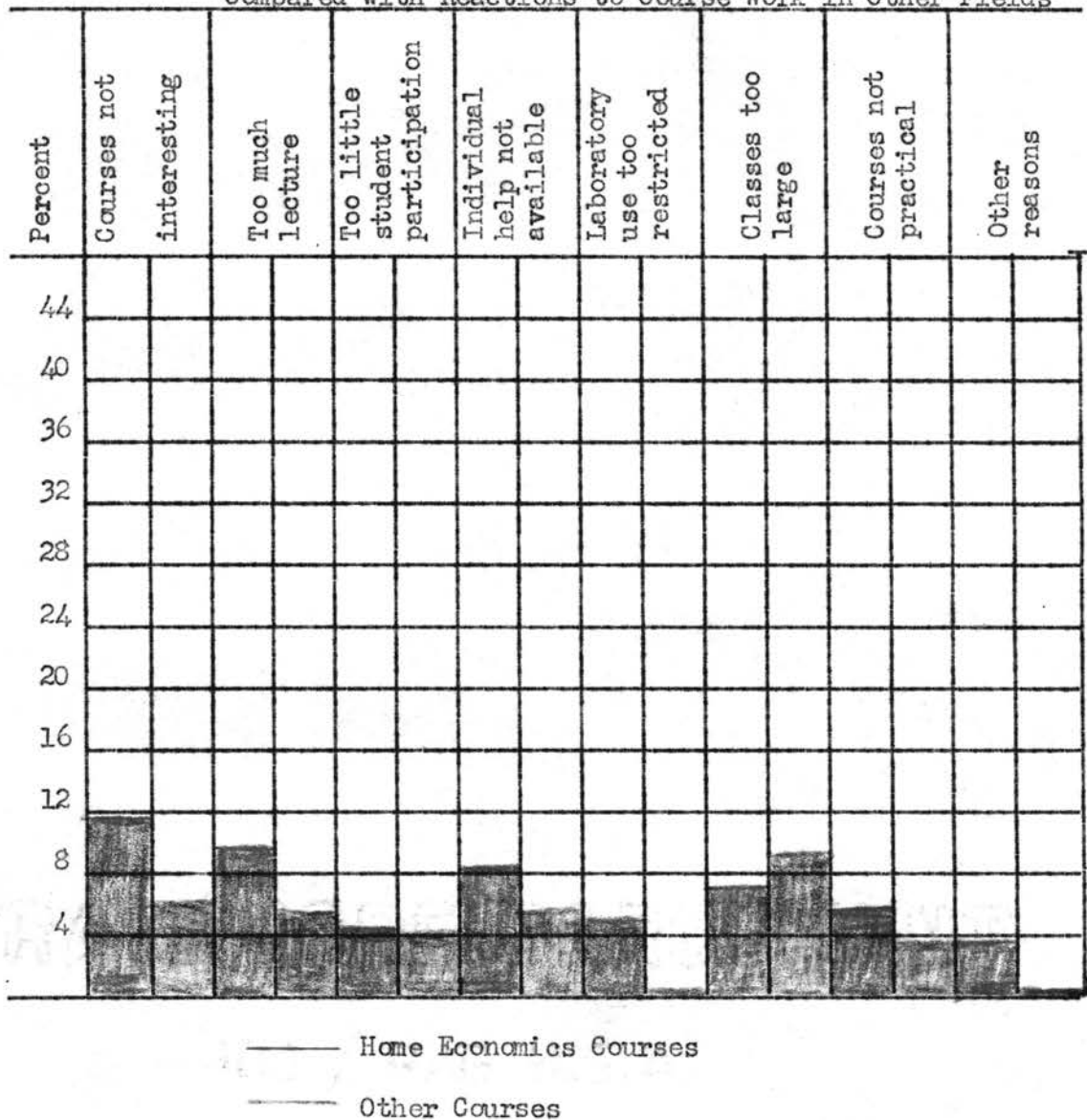
Table No. XII. Reactions to the Home Economics Curriculum of the Students Who Dropped Out of Home Economics

Reaction	1950-1951 Percent	1951-1952 Percent	1952-1953 Percent	1950-1953 Percent
Too many courses with long laboratory periods	21.81	24.74	26.38	24.58
Home economics courses were a repetition of high school work taken	14.54	20.61	20.21	18.27
Home economics courses did not meet needs	18.18	16.49	17.02	17.27
Too many science courses	17.27	18.55	12.76	16.27
Too few electives in home economics field	10.90	7.21	9.57	9.30
Other courses were too difficult	9.09	5.15	4.25	6.31
Too few home economics courses the freshman year	2.72	6.18	8.51	5.64
Too many difficult courses the freshman year	1.81	5.15	3.05	3.32
Too heavy credit load each term	4.54	1.03	2.13	2.65
Home economics courses too difficult	2.72	0.00	1.06	1.32

as many said home economics courses did not meet their needs. About one-sixth said there were too many science courses required. Less than one-tenth said there were too few electives in the home economics field. Over one-sixteenth said there were too few electives in other fields and that other courses were too difficult. Over one-twentieth said there were too few home economics courses the freshman year. A very small number said there were too many difficult courses the freshman year, that there was too heavy a credit load each term, and that home economics courses were too difficult.

Figure No. II portrays in graph form the comparisons which the drop-outs made of course work in home economics and other fields at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College.

Fig. No. II. Students' Reactions to Home Economics Course Work Compared with Reactions to Course Work in Other Fields



Almost three times as many said home economics courses were not interesting as said other courses were not interesting. Almost twice as many said there was too much lecture in home economics courses as said there was too much lecture in other courses. Over 8% criticized

home economics classes because individual help was not available, whereas less than 6% said the same of other classes. About 10% said other classes were too large and about 7% said the same of home economics classes. Almost 5% said laboratory use was too restricted in home economics, whereas about 1% said the same of other classes. Almost 10% complained of other classes being too large and about 7% said the same of home economics classes. About 6% said home economics courses were not practical and about 4% said the same of other classes. A little over 4% complained of too little student participation in both home economics and other classes.

Information concerning students who dropped out of Home Economics at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College and transferred to some other department on the campus or to another institution is compiled in Table No. XIII. This table reveals that less than one-fifth

Table No. XIII. Information Concerning Students Who Transferred From Oklahoma A & M College to Some Other College

Information	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
Transferred to another department, O.A.M.C.	16	14.54	17	17.52	15	15.95	48	15.94
Transferred to another institution	17	15.45	19	19.53	17	18.08	53	17.60
Transferred to another institution within the state	11	10.00	12	12.37	12	12.76	35	11.62
Transferred to another institution out of the state	6	5.45	7	7.21	5	5.32	18	5.98
Other institution met needs more satisfactorily	13	11.81	16	16.59	7	7.44	36	11.96
Continued to major in home economics	8	7.27	8	8.24	11	11.70	27	8.97

of those who dropped out transferred to another institution and less than one-sixth transferred to another department on the Oklahoma A & M

campus. A little over one-tenth transferred to another institution within the state and about one-twentieth transferred to another institution out of the state. Over one-tenth thought the other institution met their needs more satisfactorily than did the Division of Home Economics at Oklahoma A & M College. Less than one-tenth continued to major in home economics. The percentages answering the questions on this portion of the questionnaire differed very little through each of the three years of the study with one exception. During the third year of the study less than one-tenth of the persons contacted said the institution to which they had transferred met their needs more satisfactorily. This was a decrease in numbers for during the second year about one-sixth made this statement.

Questions concerning the occupational status of the drop-outs at the time they answered the questionnaire were included. Answers to these questions are reported in Table XIV. This table shows that over

Table No. XIV. Present Occupational Status of Drop-outs

Occupation	1950-51		1951-52		1952-53		Total	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
Married and a homemaker	34	30.90	24	24.74	25	26.80	83	27.24
Married and employed	14	12.72	12	12.37	14	14.89	40	13.25
Single and employed	33	30.00	16	16.59	19	20.21	68	22.59
Single and unemployed	11	10.00	20	20.61	9	9.57	40	13.25
Attending school	20	18.18	34	35.05	27	28.72	81	26.91
Married, homemaker and attending school	4	5.46	3	3.09	0	0.00	7	2.32

one-fourth of the students who dropped out were married and were homemakers at the time they answered the questionnaires. Almost the same

proportion said they were attending school. However, only a little over 2% said they were married, keeping a home, and attending school. Almost one-fourth of those who answered questionnaires said they were single and employed. Less than one-seventh were single and unemployed while an equal number were married and employed. When the percentages of the three occupations relating to marriage were totaled (42.81%) there was a close correlation with the percentage of those who checked marriage as one of the general reasons for withdrawal (46.51%).

During the first year of the study less than one-fifth were attending school after they had dropped out of home economics. However, the second year this number increased to over one-third and in the third year dropped to nearly one-fourth.

During the three years of the study the proportion of those who were married and homemakers remained fairly constant, ranging from one-fourth to less than one-third. The percentages of those who were married and employed remained nearly the same during the three-year period of the study. The numbers of those who were single and employed varied from under one-third the first year to about one-sixth the second year and up to one-fifth the third year. The ones who were single and unemployed ranged from one-tenth the first year to one-fifth the second year and back to less than one-tenth the third year. Those who were married, homemakers, and attending school were the least group. They ranged from none the third year of the study to about one-twentieth the first year.

A comparison has been made among six institutions studied and set forth in Table No. XV. In checking the data obtained from the Oklahoma

Table No. XV. A Comparison of Causes of Withdrawal Among Home Economics Students in Several Colleges and Universities

Causes Contributing to Withdrawal	OAMC 1950- 1953 Percent	Leahy 1951 Percent	Nelson 1943- 1948 Percent over	Anon. 1941 Percent	Wagner 1936- 1939 Percent	McNeely 1931- 1932 Percent
Marriage	46.51	21.00	50.00	21.00	18.00	—
Lack of interest	16.94	12.00	16.66	20.00	—	—
Another field of study better suited	22.92	—	covered in above item		34.00	—
Insufficient funds	18.60	—	16.66	32.00	20.00	14.4
Illness	7.30	—	few	21.00	few	6.4
Needed at home	5.98	—	—	above item "Illness of self or family"	—	2.9
Moved	7.64	—	—	10.00	few	—
Inadequate counseling	7.97	12.00	—	—	—	—

study against that from previous studies made on the same subject it was found that marriage was the highest ranking factor among the drop-outs in all of the later studies. Some of the earlier studies did not report on marriage as a factor. Leahy<sup>29</sup> in her study at the University of California reported that it ranked first (21%) with no other factor even a close second. Nelson's study covered selected colleges in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa and she reported that more than half of

<sup>29</sup>Dorothy M. Leahy, "Why Drop-outs in College Home Economics?", Journal of Home Economics, XIV, no. 1 (November, 1953), p. 651.



her subjects gave marriage as the chief reason for withdrawal.<sup>30</sup>

Wagner, in her study conducted at the University of Minnesota in 1936-1939 found marriage given by 21% and ranking third among the reasons given.<sup>31</sup> The data obtained from former students of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College shows marriage to be the chief factor, with 46.51% checking it as a reason for withdrawal, more than twice as many as checked any other factor.

When McNeely made his study of student mortality among those who registered as freshmen in 1931-32 the figures he obtained from the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College indicated that at that time 10.7% left because of lack of interest in home economics.<sup>32</sup> His figures for all the home economics schools and colleges studied showed that 4.1% left because of lack of interest.<sup>33</sup> Leahy found that lack of interest in home economics ranked third among the items that she considered descriptive of home economics<sup>34</sup> and Nelson found that about one-sixth of her respondents showed lack of interest or scholastic difficulty. In the study "Why Home Economics Students Leave College" lack of interest was combined with preference for another field of study and 20% listed this combined factor as a cause. This present

---

<sup>30</sup>Helen Young Nelson, "Factors Related to the Extent of Mortality Among Home Economics Students in Certain Colleges of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa During 1943-'50," Journal of Experimental Education, XXII, no. 1 (September, 1953), p. 59.

<sup>31</sup>Gwendolyn Davis Wagner, "Student Mortality Among College Home Economics Freshmen," Journal of Home Economics, XXX (April, 1941), p. 244.

<sup>32</sup>John H. McNeely, College Student Mortality U.S. Office of Education, Bulletin 1937, No. 11 (Washington, 1938), p. 59.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>34</sup>Dorothy M. Leahy, "Why Drop-outs in College Home Economics?," Journal of Home Economics, XLV, no. 1 (November, 1953), p. 653.

Oklahoma A & M College study reveals that 16.94% left because of lack of interest in home economics, this reason ranking fourth among factors classed as general reasons given for dropping out. However, this study also had an item "found another field of study better suited to my needs" which ranked second among the factors with 22.92% checking it.

Lack of funds to continue a college education has remained quite high, but strangely enough these studies show that it ranks as high or higher in the present days of inflation than it did during the 1930's and the depression. Illness, needed at home, and moved were other items on which returns were similar in the various studies, the results being well under 10% in most cases. Inadequate counseling was listed on only two of the reports (which studies used the same questionnaire). It was found to be a factor among 7.97% of the drop-outs at the Oklahoma A & M College and 12.00% among those who dropped out of the University of California at Los Angeles.

Because the same questionnaire was used in Leahy's study at the University of California in Los Angeles as was used in this study Tables XVI and XVII were devised to compare findings. The reader will

Table No. XVI. A Comparison of Items Relating to Home Economics Curriculum Between the University of California Study and the Oklahoma A & M Study

Category of Home Economics Curriculum	UCLA rank	OAMC rank
Too many science courses	1	2
Too few home economics courses in the freshman year	2	6
Too many long laboratory periods	3	1
Too few electives in home economics	4	3
Other courses too difficult	5	5
Too few electives in other fields	No report	4

note that the rankings from the two studies are very nearly the same with one exception. The University of California study shows "too few home economics courses in the freshman year" as ranking second among criticisms of the home economics curriculum, whereas the Oklahoma A & M study shows it as ranking sixth.

In Table No. XVII it is seen that the rankings concerning reactions to college instruction in home economics are very nearly alike

Table No. XVII. A Comparison of Items Relating to Home Economics Instruction Between the University of California Study and the Oklahoma A & M Study

Category of Home Economics Instruction	UCLA rank	OAMC rank
Home economics not interesting	1	1
No individual help	2	3
Too much lecture	3	2
Classes too large	4	4

in the two studies. Leahy reports that the items checked regarding instruction in other courses were principally those of "no individual help; classes too large; and too little student participation."<sup>35</sup> These same items ranked among the highest checked in that area in the Oklahoma A & M study. However, along with them was added the item that the courses were not interesting.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 652.

## CHAPTER V

### FINDINGS

Some of the findings from the study of students who dropped out of home economics at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College may have particular significance for the college administrators, the teachers, and/or the advisers.

Approximately one-third of the students who entered the Division of Home Economics did not remain to graduate. The highest student mortality was in the freshman class where almost one-half dropped out. Sophomore mortality remained high with over one-third dropping out. Junior mortality was a little over one-fourth and Senior mortality took a sharp drop to below one-tenth.

Spring semester losses were considerably greater than fall semester losses.

Very few transfer students dropped out of home economics. Approximately four-fifths of those who dropped out had entered home economics at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College as freshmen and less than one-fourth had transferred to Oklahoma A & M from another college.

Almost one-half of those who dropped out had enrolled in home economics for the purpose of preparing themselves for both homemaking and a career and one-fifth took it as preparation for marriage only. Over one-tenth took home economics as preparation for a career.

Almost two-thirds of those who withdrew had homemaking instruction in high school and almost one-fifth were 4-H Club members.

Of those who dropped out almost one-half had taken biology in high school and a few less had taken general science.

Over two-thirds of those who withdrew had planned to remain in college longer than they did.

Marriage was the chief reason given by the students for withdrawing from home economics. Almost one-half of those who withdrew gave this reason.

About one-fourth found another field of study better suited to their needs and one-sixth lacked interest in home economics. Nearly one-fifth said they had insufficient funds to continue their college education.

The chief criticisms of the home economics curriculum were that there were too many courses with long laboratory periods (with approximately one-fourth making such statements), that home economics courses were a repetition of high school work and that home economics courses did not meet their needs. Approximately one-fifth checked each of the latter two statements.

In comparing the reactions of the drop-outs to the home economics courses with their reactions to other courses, it was revealed that nearly three times as many said that home economics courses were not interesting as said the same thing of other courses. Home economics courses were criticized almost twice as much as the other courses for having too much lecture. Over 8% were of the opinion that individual help was not available in home economics whereas only 6% held that opinion of the other classes.

Less than one-fifth of those who dropped out transferred to another institution and less than one-sixth transferred to another

department on the Oklahoma A & M campus.

Less than one-tenth of those who dropped out continued to major in home economics after they had transferred to another institution.

Of those who withdrew, at the time they responded to the questionnaire over one-fourth were married and homemakers and over one-fourth were attending school. Less than one-fourth were single and employed. Less than one-sixth were married and employed and the same number were single and employed.

CHAPTER VI  
IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is to be expected that a certain number of student withdrawals will occur each year in almost any college. However, a loss of almost half of those who enter the college as freshmen, and a total loss of one-third of all students enrolled would seem to merit thoughtful consideration.

Inasmuch as almost one-half of the drop-outs enrolled in home economics to obtain preparation for both homemaking and a career and only a little over five percent said they had sufficient training for their purpose when they left, it would seem that the curriculum might be examined with the purpose of finding ways of meeting the needs which seem to have not been met.

The facts that three-fourths of the drop-outs occurred during the first two years of the students' college experience, and that almost half of them did so because of marriage, would seem to imply a need for a two-year terminal course in home economics based upon the practical needs of the first and second year students.

One of the chief complaints against the home economics curriculum was that of long laboratory periods, implying a need for a reconsideration of course content and learning activities in some home economics courses. Shorter laboratory periods with practical experiences that the student can easily transfer to her home life might eliminate the complaints of the group who said the course was not practical, as well as those of the group who said the laboratory periods were too long.

Nearly two-thirds of the drop-outs had homemaking in high school and one-fifth in 4-H Club; and almost one-fifth said that their college homemaking classes were a repetition of high school work. These findings would seem to indicate that students are entering college with a much broader background in home economics than formerly.

Other implications which the data seem to indicate are that:

1. students are not always aware of what academic field they are most interested in, and best suited for, when they come to college;
2. some home economics classes may not be as interesting as they might be;
3. the science courses required may not be appropriately related to home economics subject matter and that more are required than necessary; and
4. many students are forced to drop out because of insufficient funds, who might otherwise have continued on to graduation.

#### Recommendations

After consideration of the implications which the data appear to justify, the following recommendations are made:

1. That the home economics program be appraised in the light of the needs of students who can only remain in college two years, or desire to remain for only that length of time (many of whom marry during or at the end of that time); after which a two-year terminal course be evolved and experimented with. Such an effort might involve a reorganization of, or a change of sequence of, the present courses; the development of new courses; or both.



2. That measures be taken at the beginning of, or early in, the students' college programs to learn the extent of their home economics understandings, skills and experiences; and that steps be taken to make it possible for them to enroll in courses which will not be unduly repetitive of earlier training.
3. That students be helped, through a counseling program, either in high school or early in the freshman year, to enter the field of study best suited to their needs and interests.
4. That individual teachers examine their courses for effectiveness of teaching and for interest and student appeal; and that, where feasible, the length of laboratory periods be reduced.
5. That the number and content of the required science courses be evaluated, and that steps be taken to bring about a modification of the science requirements, if deemed desirable and found to be feasible.
6. That efforts be made to increase scholarships and loans for worthy students; and to enable such students to find employment, both while attending college and during vacations.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bryant, Girard T. "Why Our Students Leave School," Junior College Journal, XXI (December, 1950), 217-220.
- Cummings, E. C. "Causes of Student Withdrawals at De Pauw University," School and Society, LXX (September 3, 1949), 152-153.
- Hilton, Wallace A. and W. W. Carpenter. "Persistency of Students," Journal of Higher Education, XIV (May, 1943), 268-270.
- Leahy, Dorothy M. "Why Drop-Outs in College Home Economics?" Journal of Home Economics, XLV (November, 1953), 651-653.
- MacIntosh, Archibald. Behind the Academic Curtain. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948.
- McNeely, John H. College Student Mortality. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin 1937, No. 11, Washington, D. C.: United States Printing Office, 1938.
- Mercer, M. "Study of Student Mortality in a Home Economics College," Journal of Educational Research, XXXIV (March, 1941), 531-537.
- Mitchell, F. T. "Why Freshmen Leave College," Journal of Higher Education, XIII (February, 1942), 95-100.
- Nelson, Helen Y. "Factors Related to the Extent of Mortality Among Home Economics Students in Certain Colleges of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa During 1943-50," Journal of Experimental Education, XXII, No. 1 (September, 1953), 59-63.
- Quarles, B. "Student Separations From College: Overview," Association of American Colleges Bulletin, XXXV (October, 1949), 404-409.
- Russell, J. D. "Who Should Go To College?" National Education Association Journal, XXXVII (October, 1948), 448-449.
- Smith, Eugene B. and Ralph W. Tyler, Appraising and Recording Student Progress. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948.
- Snyder, Louise M. "Why Do They Leave?" Journal of Higher Education, XI (January, 1940), 26-32.
- Wagner, Gwendolyn D. "Student Mortality Among College Home Economics Freshmen," Journal of Home Economics, XXXIII (April, 1941), 244-245.

Weintraub, R. G. and R. E. Salley, "Graduation Prospectus of An Entering Freshman," Journal of Educational Research, XXXIX (October, 1946); 116-126.

"Why Home Economics Students Leave College," Journal of Home Economics, XXXIII (February, 1941), 103-105.

STATE OF

NEW YORK

APPENDIX

STATE OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE

DROP-OUTS FROM THE DIVISION OF HOME ECONOMICS, OKLAHOMA A & M COLLEGE  
DATA SUMMARY SHEET

Questionnaire Item	1950 - 1951						1951 - 1952						1952 - 1953						Total	
	Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		No.	Per-cent
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent		
Total number of majors in Home Economics	750		672		860*		677		628		784*		741		668		841*		2485	
Total number of drop-outs	115	15.33	150	22.32	265	30.81	90	13.14	133	21.21	223	28.44	107	14.44	151	22.60	258	30.67	746	30.02
Total number of questionnaires sent	115		150		265		90		133		223		107		151		258		746	
Total number of questionnaires returned	37	32.17	73	48.66	110	41.50	37	41.10	60	45.11	97	43.49	41	38.31	53	34.37	94	36.43	301	40.35
Classification upon entering																				
Freshman	32	86.48	57	78.08	89	80.90	32	86.48	53	88.33	85	87.63	28	68.29	47	88.88	75	79.78	249	80.06
Sophomore	2	5.40	12	16.45	14	12.72	5	13.51	3	5.00	8	8.25	7	17.07	5	9.43	12	12.76	34	11.22
Junior	3	8.10	2	2.74	5	4.54	0	---	3	5.00	3	3.09	4	9.75	0	---	4	4.25	12	3.96
Senior	0	---	2	2.74	2	1.81	0	---	0	---	0	---	0	---	1	1.88	1	1.06	3	0.99
Reason for taking Home Economics																				
Preparation for home-making--not career	**		14	19.18	14	19.18	8	21.62	17	28.33	25	25.77	9	21.95	4	7.54	13	13.19	52	19.69
Preparation for home-making and career	**		38	52.05	38	52.05	16	43.24	34	56.66	50	51.54	21	51.22	8	15.09	29	30.85	117	44.35
Preparation for career	**		12	16.45	12	16.45	9	24.32	4	6.66	13	13.40	4	9.75	1	1.88	5	5.32	30	11.36
Other	**		10	13.15	10	13.15	4	10.81	4	6.66	8	8.24	3	7.31	0	---	3	3.05	31	11.70
Had homemaking in high school																				
Yes	**		50	68.49	50	68.49	32	86.48	45	75.00	77	79.38	32	78.04	10	18.86	42	44.67	169	64.01
No	**		22	30.13	22	30.13	5	13.51	15	25.00	20	20.61	6	14.63	1	1.88	7	7.44	49	18.56
Enjoyed homemaking activities in:																				
High School																				
Yes	**		52	71.23	52	71.23	28	75.67	37	61.66	65	68.04	29	70.73	8	15.09	37	39.36	154	58.33
No	**		6	8.21	6	8.21	3	8.10	4	6.66	7	7.21	3	7.31	0	---	3	3.05	16	6.07
4-H Club																				
Yes	**		15	20.55	15	20.55	9	24.32	11	18.33	20	20.61	12	29.51	3	5.66	15	15.95	50	18.94
No	**		10	13.69	10	13.69	6	16.21	5	8.33	11	11.34	2	4.88	1	1.88	3	3.05	24	9.09
Subjects taken in high school																				
general science	**		65	89.04	65	89.04	28	75.67	40	66.66	68	70.49	23	56.09	3	5.66	26	26.38	119	45.45
biology	**		39	53.42	39	53.42	20	54.04	37	61.66	57	59.00	22	53.66	8	15.09	30	31.91	126	47.72
chemistry	**		21	28.76	21	28.76	7	18.91	16	26.66	23	23.71	7	17.07	2	3.77	9	9.57	53	20.07
physics	**		6	8.21	6	8.21	3	8.10	2	3.33	5	5.15	1	2.44	0	---	1	1.06	10	3.78
other science	**		3	4.11	3	4.11	3	8.10	6	10.00	9	9.28	5	12.12	3	5.66	8	8.51	20	7.50

\*Enrollment without duplicates.

\*\*Questions not on first questionnaire.

Questionnaire Item	1950 - 1951						1951 - 1952						1952 - 1953						Total		
	Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		No.	Per-cent	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent			
Classification upon leaving																					
Freshman	15	40.54	11	15.07	26	23.63	16	43.24	11	18.33	27	27.83	14	34.14	9	16.98	23	24.46	76	25.25	
Sophomore	9	24.32	28	38.35	37	33.63	11	29.72	23	38.33	34	35.05	10	24.39	23	43.39	33	35.10	104	31.22	
Junior	8	21.62	20	27.39	28	25.45	4	10.81	19	31.66	23	23.71	8	19.51	16	30.18	24	25.52	75	24.91	
Senior	5	13.51	14	19.17	19	17.27	6	16.21	7	11.66	13	13.40	4	9.75	3	5.66	7	7.44	39	12.95	
Stayed in college as long as planned																					
Yes	5	13.51	18	24.65	23	20.90	6	16.21	14	23.33	20	20.61	7	17.07	9	16.98	16	17.02	59	19.60	
No	31	83.78	49	67.12	80	72.72	28	75.67	34	56.66	62	63.91	25	60.97	38	71.69	63	67.02	205	68.01	
Number of semesters attended at this college																					
One	13	35.13	7	9.59	20	23.63	13	35.13	7	11.66	20	20.61	10	24.39	4	7.54	14	14.89	54	17.94	
Two	7	18.91	26	35.61	33	30.00	3	8.10	21	35.00	24	24.74	8	19.51	27	50.94	35	37.23	92	30.56	
Three	6	16.21	4	5.46	10	9.09	4	10.81	5	8.33	9	9.28	10	24.39	4	7.54	14	14.89	33	10.96	
Four	3	8.18	16	21.91	19	17.27	1	2.70	17	28.33	18	18.55	2	4.88	12	22.64	14	14.89	51	16.94	
Five	4	10.81	5	6.84	9	8.18	4	10.81	3	5.00	7	7.21	2	4.88	1	1.88	3	3.05	19	6.31	
Six	3	8.18	6	8.21	9	8.18	2	5.40	2	3.33	4	4.12	0	---	3	5.66	3	3.05	10	3.32	
Seven	0	---	1	1.30	1	0.90	2	5.40	2	3.33	4	4.12	1	2.44	0	---	1	1.06	6	1.99	
Eight	0	---	3	4.11	3	2.72	1	2.70	1	1.66	2	2.06	0	---	0	---	0	---	5	1.66	
Number of transfer students	7	17.80	19	26.02	26	23.63	11	29.72	10	16.66	21	21.65	12	29.51	5	9.43	17	18.08	64	21.26	
From institutions within the state	4	10.81	11	15.07	15	13.64	10	27.02	6	10.00	16	16.49	10	24.39	2	3.77	12	12.76	43	14.28	
From institutions out of the state	3	8.18	8	10.96	11	10.00	1	2.70	4	6.66	5	5.15	2	4.88	3	5.66	5	5.32	21	6.97	
General reasons for leaving Home Economics																					
Marriage	20	54.05	30	41.09	50	45.45	12	32.43	29	48.33	41	42.26	18	43.92	31	57.92	49	52.15	140	46.51	
Insufficient funds	8	21.62	11	15.07	19	17.27	8	21.62	12	20.00	20	20.61	5	12.12	12	22.64	17	18.08	56	18.60	
Ill health	3	8.10	4	5.46	7	6.36	4	10.81	6	10.00	10	10.31	3	7.31	2	3.77	5	5.32	22	7.30	
Moved	2	5.40	9	12.31	11	10.00	2	5.40	6	10.00	8	8.24	3	7.31	1	1.88	4	4.25	23	7.64	
Unsatisfactory grades	4	10.81	10	13.69	14	12.72	4	10.81	3	5.00	7	7.21	1	2.44	3	5.66	4	4.25	25	8.30	
Unsatisfactory living conditions	1	2.70	0	---	1	0.90	2	5.40	1	1.66	3	3.09	1	2.44	1	1.88	2	2.13	6	1.99	
Inadequate counseling	5	13.51	6	8.21	11	10.00	3	8.10	1	1.66	4	4.12	6	14.63	3	5.66	9	9.57	24	7.97	
Needed at home	4	10.81	2	2.74	6	5.45	1	2.70	5	8.33	6	6.18	2	4.88	4	7.54	6	6.11	18	5.98	
Unsatisfactory social activities	1	2.70	0	---	1	0.90	1	2.70	1	1.66	2	2.06	3	7.31	0	---	3	3.05	6	1.99	
Urged by others to leave	2	5.40	2	2.74	4	3.63	0	---	2	3.33	2	2.06	0	---	3	5.66	3	3.05	9	2.99	
Lack of interest in home economics	11	29.73	15	20.55	26	23.63	8	21.62	9	15.00	17	17.52	5	12.12	3	5.66	8	8.51	51	16.94	
Found employment	3	8.10	10	13.69	13	11.81	3	8.10	8	13.33	11	11.34	3	7.31	10	18.86	13	13.19	37	12.29	
Home Economics lacks prestige	1	2.70	1	1.37	2	1.81	1	2.70	0	---	1	1.03	0	---	0	---	0	---	3	0.99	
Had sufficient training for purpose	2	5.40	3	4.10	5	4.54	2	5.40	3	5.00	5	5.15	5	12.12	2	3.77	7	7.44	17	5.64	

Questionnaire Item	1950 - 1951						1951 - 1952						1952 - 1953						Total	
	Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		No.	Per-cent
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent		
General reasons (continued)																				
Another field of study better suited to needs	10	27.03	15	20.55	25	22.72	11	29.72	13	23.33	24	24.74	12	29.51	8	15.09	20	21.27	69	22.92
Reasons relating to the Home Economics curriculum																				
Home Economics courses were too difficult	1	2.70	2	2.74	3	2.72	0	—	0	—	0	—	1	2.44	0	—	1	1.06	4	1.32
Other courses were too difficult	2	5.40	8	10.96	10	9.09	3	8.10	2	3.33	5	5.15	2	4.88	2	3.77	4	4.25	19	6.31
Too many science courses	6	16.21	13	17.80	19	17.27	10	27.03	8	13.33	18	18.55	7	17.07	5	9.43	12	12.76	49	16.27
Too few Home Economics electives	1	2.70	11	15.07	12	10.90	5	13.51	2	3.33	7	7.21	4	9.75	5	9.43	9	9.57	28	9.30
Too few electives in other courses	1	2.70	6	8.21	7	6.36	2	5.40	7	11.66	9	9.28	2	4.88	2	3.77	4	4.25	20	6.64
Too few Home Economics courses the freshman year	1	2.70	2	2.74	3	2.72	1	2.70	5	8.33	6	6.18	2	4.88	6	11.32	8	8.51	17	5.64
Too many difficult courses the freshman year	1	2.70	1	1.37	2	1.81	1	2.70	0	—	5	5.15	2	4.88	1	1.88	3	3.05	10	3.32
Too heavy a credit load	3	8.10	2	2.74	5	4.54	1	2.70	0	—	1	1.03	1	2.44	1	1.88	2	2.13	8	2.65
Laboratory periods too long	7	17.80	17	23.28	24	21.81	8	21.62	16	26.66	24	24.74	10	24.39	16	30.18	26	26.38	74	24.58
Home Economics courses did not meet needs	6	16.21	14	19.77	20	18.18	5	13.51	11	18.33	16	16.49	9	21.95	7	13.20	16	17.02	52	17.27
Home Economics courses were a repetition of high school work taken	6	16.21	10	13.19	16	14.54	10	27.02	10	16.66	20	20.61	9	21.95	10	18.86	19	20.21	55	18.27
Reasons relating to instruction in Home Economics																				
Courses not interesting	5	13.51	9	12.31	14	12.72	6	16.20	5	8.33	11	11.34	6	14.63	5	9.43	11	11.70	36	11.96
Too much lecture	5	13.51	6	8.21	11	10.00	6	16.20	4	6.66	10	10.31	3	7.31	4	7.54	7	7.44	28	9.30
Too little student participation	1	2.70	4	5.46	5	4.54	3	8.10	2	3.33	5	5.15	1	2.44	3	5.66	4	4.25	14	4.65
Individual help not available	4	10.81	6	8.21	10	9.09	4	10.81	4	6.66	8	8.24	3	7.31	4	7.54	7	7.44	25	8.30
Laboratory use too restricted	2	5.40	3	4.10	5	4.54	3	8.10	2	3.33	5	5.15	2	4.88	2	3.77	4	4.25	14	4.65
Classes too large	0	—	5	6.84	5	4.54	3	8.10	6	10.00	9	9.28	3	7.31	5	9.43	8	8.51	22	7.30
Instruction not practical	0	—	3	4.10	3	2.72	2	5.40	6	10.00	8	8.24	3	7.31	4	7.54	7	7.44	18	5.98
Other	0	—	3	4.10	3	2.72	3	8.10	3	5.00	6	6.18	2	4.88	1	1.88	3	3.05	12	3.98
Reasons relating to instruction in other courses																				
Courses not interesting	2	5.40	6	8.21	8	7.27	1	2.70	5	8.33	6	6.18	1	2.44	3	5.66	4	4.25	18	5.98
Too much lecture	2	5.40	3	4.10	5	4.54	2	5.40	4	6.66	6	6.18	1	2.44	5	9.43	6	6.11	17	5.64
Too little student participation	1	2.70	4	5.46	5	4.54	1	2.70	3	5.00	4	4.12	1	2.44	3	5.66	4	4.25	13	4.31

Questionnaire Item	1950 - 1951						1951 - 1952						1952 - 1953						Total		
	Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		Fall		Spring		Total		No.	Per-cent	
	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent	No.	Per-cent			
Reasons relating to instruction in other courses (continued)																					
Individual help not available	1	2.70	8	10.96	9	8.18	2	5.40	2	3.33	4	4.12	1	2.44	4	7.54	5	5.32	18	5.98	
Laboratory use too restricted	0	—	1	1.36	1	0.90	1	2.70	2	3.33	3	3.09	1	2.44	0	—	1	1.06	5	1.49	
Classes too large	3	8.10	11	15.07	14	12.72	3	8.10	4	6.66	7	7.21	2	4.88	5	9.43	7	7.44	28	9.30	
Instruction not practical	2	5.40	2	2.74	4	3.63	1	2.70	4	6.66	5	5.15	0	—	3	5.66	3	3.05	12	3.98	
Other	0	—	1	1.36	1	0.90	0	—	0	—	0	—	0	—	1	1.88	1	1.06	2	0.66	
Number of other reasons	16	43.24	34	46.57	50	45.45	17	45.94	19	31.66	36	37.11	14	34.14	20	37.73	34	36.17	120	39.86	
Transferred to another department in this school																					
Yes	4	10.81	12	16.45	16	14.54	10	27.02	7	11.66	17	17.52	13	31.70	2	3.77	15	15.95	48	15.94	
No	29	74.59	58	79.45	87	79.09	24	64.86	49	81.66	73	75.28	19	46.34	42	79.24	61	64.91	221	73.42	
Transferred to another institution																					
Yes	4	10.81	13	17.80	17	15.45	8	21.62	11	18.33	19	19.58	9	21.95	8	15.09	17	18.08	53	17.60	
No	0	—	54	73.97	54	49.09	23	61.86	44	73.33	65	67.01	20	48.78	39	73.58	59	60.82	180	59.80	
Transferred to another institution within the state	3	8.10	8	10.96	11	10.00	6	16.20	6	10.00	12	12.37	8	19.51	4	7.54	12	12.76	35	11.62	
Transferred to another institution out of the state	1	2.70	5	6.84	6	5.45	2	5.40	5	8.33	7	7.21	1	2.44	4	7.54	5	5.32	18	5.98	
Other institution met needs more satisfactorily																					
Yes	3	8.10	10	13.69	13	11.81	7	18.91	9	15.00	16	16.59	5	12.12	2	3.77	7	7.44	36	11.96	
No	1	2.70	4	5.46	5	4.54	1	2.70	1	1.66	2	2.16	3	7.31	5	9.43	8	8.51	15	4.98	
Continued to major in Home Economics																					
Yes	2	5.40	6	8.21	8	7.27	3	8.10	5	8.33	8	8.24	7	17.07	4	7.54	11	11.70	27	8.97	
No	2	5.40	8	10.96	10	9.09	5	13.51	6	10.00	11	11.34	2	4.88	4	7.54	6	6.11	27	8.97	
Present occupational status																					
Married and a homemaker	12	32.43	22	30.13	34	30.90	6	16.20	18	30.00	24	24.74	9	21.95	16	30.18	25	26.80	83	27.24	
Married and employed	5	13.51	9	12.31	14	12.72	5	13.51	7	11.66	12	12.37	4	9.75	10	18.86	14	14.89	40	13.25	
Single and employed	10	27.03	23	31.50	33	30.00	5	13.51	11	18.33	16	16.59	3	7.31	16	30.18	19	20.21	68	22.59	
Single and unemployed	4	10.81	7	9.58	11	10.00	9	24.32	11	18.33	20	20.61	5	12.12	4	7.54	9	9.57	40	13.25	
Attending school	5	13.51	15	20.55	20	18.18	16	43.24	18	30.00	34	35.05	19	46.34	8	15.09	27	28.72	81	26.91	
Married, a homemaker, and attending school	0	—	4	5.46	4	3.63	1	2.70	2	3.33	3	3.09	0	—	0	—	0	—	7	2.32	





## B. Home Economics Curriculum

- (1) Home Economics courses too difficult  
 (2) Other courses too difficult  
 (3) Too many science courses  
 (4) Too few electives in home economics field  
 (5) Too few electives in other fields  
 (6) Too few Home Economics courses in freshman year  
 (7) Too many difficult courses in freshman year  
 (8) Too heavy credit load each semester  
 (9) Too many courses with long laboratory periods  
 (10) Home Economics courses did not meet my needs  
 (11) Home Economics courses were a repetition of high school work taken

## C. Instruction in

- | Home Economics               | Other courses   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Not interesting                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Too much lecture                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) | <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Too little student participation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (4) | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Individual help not available    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (5) | <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Laboratory use too restricted    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (6) | <input type="checkbox"/> (6) Classes too large                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (7) | <input type="checkbox"/> (7) Not practical                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (8) | <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Other                            |

D. Other reasons \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Did you transfer to another department in this institution?  
Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
9. Did you transfer to another institution? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
10. If your answer to question 9 is yes, please answer the following:
- a. (name of institution) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Did it meet your needs more satisfactorily? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- c. Did you continue to major in Home Economics? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

## 11. Present occupational status:

- a. married and a homemaker
- b. married and employed
- c. single and employed
- d. single and unemployed
- e. attending school

## (Second Questionnaire)

STUDY ON REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME ECONOMICS AND/OR COLLEGE  
BEFORE GRADUATION

We are interested in your reasons for not finishing the home economics curriculum in college. A study of these reasons may give sound clues to college student problems. Your response will be a distinct contribution to this study. Please be frank. All replies will be treated anonymously and confidentially.

1. What was your classification on entering this institution?  
 freshman     sophomore     junior     senior
  
2. Check (X) reason for choosing home economics as a major in college.  
 (1) preparation for homemaking and not a career  
 (2) preparation for homemaking and a career  
 (3) preparation for a career  
 (4) other. State reason \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Did you take homemaking in high school? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Did you enjoy homemaking activities  
 (a) in high school? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) in 4-H Club? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Check (X) any of the following subjects taken in high school.  
 (1) general science                       (4) physics  
 (2) biology                                       (5) other science  
 (3) chemistry                                      (name it) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. What was your classification upon leaving home economics and/or this institution?  
 freshman     sophomore     junior     senior
  
7. Did you stay in college as long as you planned? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. How many terms did you attend this institution? \_\_\_\_\_(a) quarters  
 \_\_\_\_\_(b) semesters.
  
9. If you were a transfer student, name previous institution and/or department attended.  
 Institution \_\_\_\_\_ Major Dept. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location \_\_\_\_\_  
 (City and State)

10. REASON OR REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME ECONOMICS AND/OR THIS INSTITUTION

Mark (X) the reasons which definitely entered into your decision.

A. General

- (1) marriage
- (2) insufficient funds
- (3) ill health
- (4) moved
- (5) unsatisfactory grades
- (6) unsatisfactory living conditions
- (7) inadequate counseling
- (8) needed at home
- (9) unsatisfactory social activities
- (10) urged by others to leave
- (11) lack of interest in home economics
- (12) opportunity for employment
- (13) home economics lacks prestige
- (14) had sufficient training for my particular purpose
- (15) found another field of study was better suited to my needs

B. Home Economics Curriculum

- (1) home economics courses too difficult
- (2) other courses too difficult
- (3) too many science courses
- (4) too few electives in home economics field
- (5) too few electives in other fields
- (6) too few home economics courses in freshman year
- (7) too many difficult courses in freshman year
- (8) too heavy credit load each term
- (9) too many courses with long laboratory periods
- (10) home economics courses did not meet my needs
- (11) home economics courses were a repetition of high school work taken

C. Instruction in

- | Home Economics  | Other courses                |
|---|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) not interesting                  | <input type="checkbox"/> (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (2) too much lecture                 | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (3) too little student participation | <input type="checkbox"/> (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (4) individual help not available    | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (5) laboratory use too restricted    | <input type="checkbox"/> (5) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (6) classes too large                | <input type="checkbox"/> (6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (7) not practical                    | <input type="checkbox"/> (7) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (8) other                            | <input type="checkbox"/> (8) |

D. Other reasons \_\_\_\_\_

---

8. Did you transfer to another department in this institution?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
9. Did you transfer to another institution? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
10. If your answer to question 9 is yes, please answer the following:
- a. (name of institution) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Did it meet your needs more satisfactorily? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Did you continue to major in home economics? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
11. Present occupational status:
- \_\_\_\_\_ a. married and a homemaker  
\_\_\_\_\_ b. married and employed  
\_\_\_\_\_ c. single and employed  
\_\_\_\_\_ d. single and unemployed  
\_\_\_\_\_ e. attending school  
\_\_\_\_\_ f. married, homemaker, and attending school

## VITA

Emma Catherine Hulse Lawson

Candidate for the degree of

Master of Science

THESIS: A STUDY OF STUDENT MORTALITY IN HOME ECONOMICS AT OKLAHOMA  
AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

MAJOR: Home Economics Education

BIOGRAPHICAL:

Born: February 7, 1917 at Center, Missouri.

Undergraduate Study: The University of Missouri, 1936-1940.

Graduate Study: Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College,  
1950-1955.

Experiences: Taught in rural school, Ralls County, Missouri,  
1934-1936.

Taught in Shelbina, Missouri high school, 1940-1943.

Secretary to the Division of Home Economics, Okla-  
homa Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1943-1952.

Taught in Sumner, Oklahoma high school, 1953-.

Member of Phi Upsilon Omicron, National Professional Honorary Fraternity  
for women in Home Economics and of Pi Lambda Theta, National Education  
Society for Women.

Date of Final Examination:

THESIS TITLE: A STUDY OF STUDENT MORTALITY IN HOME ECONOMICS AT  
OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE

AUTHOR: Emma Catherine Hulse Lawson

THESIS ADVISER: Dr. Elsa B. Bate

The content and form have been checked and approved by the author and thesis adviser. The Graduate School Office assumes no responsibility for errors either in form or content. The copies are sent to the bindery just as they are approved by the author and faculty adviser.

TYPIST: Emma Catherine Hulse Lawson