

R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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INTERACTION ANALYSIS OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND NEGRO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO COLLEGE ORIENTATION.

BY- WARD, ROBERT HEDLEY, CAROLYN

CALIFORNIA UNIV., SANTA BARBARA

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DESCRIPTORS- \*NONCOLLEGE PREPARATORY STUDENTS, \*NEGROES, \*MEXICAN AMERICANS, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, \*ORIENTATION, DISADVANTAGED YOUTH, INTERACTION PROCESS ANALYSIS, \*COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL COOPERATION, GROUP DYNAMICS,

NON-COLLEGE BOUND MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND NEGRO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN AN OVERNIGHT COLLEGE ORIENTATION CONFERENCE STAFFED BY STUDENT VOLUNTEERS TO DISCOVER THE NATURE OF THE INTERACTION PROCESS BETWEEN THE HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS. NONE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WERE ELIGIBLE WITH RESPECT TO GRADES FOR ADMITTANCE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA. GROUPS OF SIX TO EIGHT STUDENTS WERE LED BY A MALE AND FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENT COUNSELOR. DISCUSSION SESSIONS WERE TAPED AND ANALYZED, AND THE INTERACTION WAS JUDGED BY THREE JUDGES. STUDENT REACTION WAS MEASURED. THE EMOTIVE NATURE OF THE INTERACTION SEEMED TO SUGGEST FLIGHT, OR LACK OF COMMITMENT. NEGROES WERE MORE VERBAL THAN MEXICAN-AMERICANS, WITH OVERALL INTERACTION BEING MODERATE. COUNSELORS DID NOT REJECT STUDENT BEHAVIOR, AND STUDENTS SOLICITED MUCH INFORMATION FROM COUNSELORS. STUDENT REACTION TO THE CONFERENCE WAS NOT EXTREME IN TERMS OF THE REACTIONS POSSIBLE. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE GROUP, THE HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH SEEMED PLEASED WITH THE COLLEGE CONFERENCE. (FH)

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Interaction Analysis of Mexican-American and Negro  
High School Students to College Orientation

. Robert Ward

Carolyn Hedley

University of California, Santa Barbara

During spring recess of 1967, a group of thirty-eight able, non-college-bound Mexican-American and Negro High School students ranging in grade from freshmen to seniors, were brought to the University of California at Santa Barbara for an overnight college orientation conference. Counselors, who were non-paid college student volunteers, agreed to give these youngsters a tour of the campus, to work with them in small groups, and to chaperon them during the night, on a twenty-four hour a day basis for the two days, in order to interest them in attending college. Although with one exception none of the high school students attending the conference were eligible with respect to grades for admittance to the university, the dean of students at the university agreed that those who were interested in attending university might be accommodated under the 2% rule which allows some youngsters of disadvantaged background to attend university in spite of their low performance in high school.

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Purpose: The purpose of this study was to discover the nature of the interaction process between college student counselors and Negro and Mexican-American youth during an orientation-to-college conference in the university environment. The interaction process is described in terms of Flander's Interaction Analysis as utilized by Amidon and Hunter<sup>1</sup> and in terms of Bion's Categories<sup>2</sup> differentiating the emotional qualities of interaction. Following analysis of interaction, a reaction of the high school students to the conference is reported to suggest the manner in which youngsters respond to the defined interaction characteristics.

Procedure: A group of able, but non-college bound Mexican-American and Negro high school students were brought to the University of California, Santa Barbara for a two-day college orientation. The group of thirty-eight high school students was divided into five smaller groups of six to eight students per group headed by two (male and female) college student counselors, pretrained in the use of simulated college orientation materials, called Discussion Media for College Savvy (DMCS). (See Appendix I) Each group except one had Negro and Mexican-American students.

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<sup>1</sup>Amidon, Edmund and Hunter, Elizabeth, Improving Teaching, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1966.

<sup>2</sup>Bion, W. R., "Experiences in Groups," Human Relations, I, 1948, pp. 314-329; 487-496.

but the Mexican-Americans numbered 29 and the Negroes only 9.

Discussion sessions during the second day of the conference were taped and analyzed using Flander's Interaction Analysis as utilized by Amidon and Hunter<sup>3</sup> and Bion's Categories.<sup>4</sup> The nature of the interaction was judged independently by three different judges. (Two judges have PhD's in education; the other judge has an MA in sociology.)

After analysis of student interaction within groups was done, student reaction to each group, including perceptions of the conference, the counselors and himself was assessed in terms of the average length of the response of each group, general satisfaction (versus dissatisfaction) of the group and general creative response (versus socially acceptable response) of the answers within each group. Student reaction was measured to lend support to the notion that the nature of the ways in which persons within a group relate to one another may be a correspondent factor to the way in which they perceive themselves and others in a situation following the interaction encounter.

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<sup>3</sup>Amidon and Hunter, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Bion, loc. cit.

### Results

Bion's Categories: The analysis of the emotive quality of interaction for the five groups, utilizing Bion's Categories, reveals high inter-relationships of agreement among the three judges on the nature of the interaction. (See Table I.) The emotive nature of the interaction among all five groups was that of work-flight. Although judge three registers the bulk of his tabulations in the flight category, when asked what he meant by the entry, he stated that the work statements lacked commitment and therefore he judged them emotively as flight. The other two judges saw work without genuine commitment as still being task-oriented, and not disruptive, although not eliciting a great deal of comfortable interest. Hence, the three judges agree in essence on the nature of the interaction.

In Bion's statement, flight identifies the many different ways in which group members run away from or avoid the task for which they are organized. In this case, the students' lack of commitment to a work task indicates a kind of trying to escape into a work task (flight-work), in an environment totally foreign to them.

The other category which seemed to gain some play in Groups I, II, and IV was pairing, described by Bion as another modality in which members join each other, often without being aware of it, in order to cope with problems

or to increase personal satisfaction.

With regard to the participation ratio of the various ethnic groups, although the Negroes were in a minority (about one Negro to four Mexican-Americans) at the conference, their participation ratio is close to one-third of the interaction of the counselor-Negro-Mexican-American components. There was low Negro participation in Group IV, however. In Group II where there were no Negro participants, the counselors did almost two-thirds of the talking. Flander's Interaction Areas. Again, high agreement among the judges prevailed in assessing the kind of interaction which took place utilizing Flander's Interaction Categories to evaluate the functional nature of group relationships. (See Table II.) In this analysis, differences among groups occurred. (Any category which averaged over 9% of the total conversation was included as an interesting degree of interaction.) Group I indicated strength in Areas A, C, P, and U indicating prolonged counselor initiation, presenting information or opinion, no interaction; student talk, followed by counselor response; student response behavior followed by counselor initiated talk; student initiated behavior followed by counselor initiated behavior and silence or confusion. Hence, the interaction quality of Areas C and P is negated by the counselor's "holding forth" as well as silence and confusion engaged in by the group.



Group II indicated the presence of interaction Areas A, C, K, P and U. The syndrome of characteristics is not unlike that of Group I except for the addition of Area K indicating student response behavior followed by counselor initiated behavior, which seems to be a concomitant of Area P, and thus indicates much the same kind of behavior as in Group I.

Group III indicated strong percentages of interaction areas C, K, and U, indicating student talk following counselor initiated talk, student response behavior followed by counselor initiated talk and silence or confusion.

Group IV indicated the presence of interaction areas of A, C, K and U, indicating prolonged counselor initiation, student talk which follows counselor talk, pupil response behavior followed by counselor initiated behavior, and silence or confusion. Hence, the interaction was only moderate, due to the counselor's rather long initiating remarks and the silence or confusion.

Groups I to IV indicated much the same kind of interaction behavior. However, Group V showed some variation, possessing interaction qualities from Areas C, K, O and S-- suggesting student talk following counselor initiated talk, student response behavior followed by counselor initiated behavior, pupil response statements followed by student initiated statements and pupil initiated statements

followed by student response statements. Hence the nature of the interaction is high in terms of students reacting to counselors and to one another, without great counselor direction (present in the other groups) or silence and confusion (also present in the other groups).

The absence of certain interaction quality areas across the groups was noted. No rejection of ideas, feelings or behaviors was indulged in by the counselors. Also there was a great deal of talk directed by the students to their counselors. Moreover, the counselors did not talk to one another ignoring the students, nor did they ask questions and make statements in order to answer themselves. The absence of these interaction qualities may be as revealing as the presence of others.

Student Reaction. Students were asked to react to the conference utilizing an open-ended questionnaire. (See Appendix II.) Evaluation of these questionnaires on the basis of a word count revealed broad differences in the length of the average pupil response on the questionnaire. However, Group V averaged the lengthiest response per person, at 100 words each, which indicated a fairly high satisfaction with the conference score, and a predilection for giving socially expected answers rather than creative ones.

Group I indicated high satisfaction with the conference and a high predilection to give socially expected



answers on the questionnaire. Group II followed this same trend and was completely conforming in terms of socially expected answers. It was interesting to note that this group had no Negro participants. Group III was the least satisfied with the conference and among the most creative, in their responses, which served to negate the socially expected kind of response. Group IV was positive yet creative in their response reaction to the conference.

Conclusions: The most interesting finding to come from the study of interaction of Negro and Mexican-American high school students to college orientation was the close similarity in the descriptions of behaviors across the groups represented at the conference.

Emotively, the groups seemed to respond almost without variation to a kind of work-flight interaction behavior. The Negroes gave evidence of being more verbal than Mexican-American youngsters.

Functionally, the groups seemed to group themselves around counselor-student interaction, negotiated by the fact that there was often long counselor initiated explanation, and with the exception of Group V, high degree of silence and confusion. In no case were counselors rejecting of student behavior, and in all groups students solicited a great deal of information from counselors.

Finally, student reaction to the conference, while varied was not extreme in terms of the reactions possible.

One group composed entirely of Mexican-Americans gave only socially expected answers. With the exception of Group III the high school youth seemed quite pleased with the college conference. Group V where more positive and more diversified emotional functional interaction took place showed a greater response to the conference in terms of the length of written response with its socially acceptable yet creative quality.

Epilogue: Four persons have come to the University as a result of the spring conference, and three more have registered for entry in Fall of 1968. Two Negroes are attending from Group III; two Negroes are attending from Group IV and two Negroes and one Mexican-American are attending from Group V.

TABLE I

Bion's Categories of Emotive Quality of Conversation  
For the Five Mexican American, Negro Groups  
in Orientation Conference

Group I  
(Negro S = 2, Mexican American S = 6)

PARTICIPANTS

Judge	Counselor			Negro			Mexican American			Total		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
% of Fight	9	4	1	12	8	6	8	4	0	9	5	2
% of Flight	4	8	78	9	20	93	5	6	37	6	11	61
% of Pairing	12	7	0	14	1	0	7	2	30	11	3	15
% of Work	75	81	20	64	72	0	79	87	22	74	81	16
% of Dependency	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	6
% of Total Conversation	27	26	23	29	31	25	44	43	52			

Group II  
(Negro S = 0, Mexican American S = 5)

% of Fight	1	0	11	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	1	9
% of Flight	1	0	56	0	0	0	4	3	96	2	1	70
% of Pairing	6	13	6	0	0	0	6	23	1	6	17	4
% of Work	92	87	24	0	0	0	91	71	0	92	80	16
% of Dependency	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
% of Total Conversation	61	58	65	0	0	0	38	41	20			

Group III  
(Negro S = 3, Mexican American S = 5)

% of Fight	0	0	3	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	4
% of Flight	0	0	70	0	1	52	1	0	98	0	0	65
% of Pairing	7	14	5	10	5	36	2	8	0	7	9	18
% of Work	93	86	17	90	94	8	96	92	0	93	90	10
% of Dependency	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
% of Total Conversation	35	40	35	36	36	49	29	23	16			

TABLE I (Continued)

Group IV  
(Negro S = 2, Mexican American S = 5)

PARTICIPANTS

Judge	Counselor			Negro			Mexican American			Total		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
% of Fight	1	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	1	6
% of Flight	1	1	87	0	0	100	0	0	94	0	1	92
% of Pairing	2	1	0	17	0	0	5	2	1	5	3	1
% of Work	97	94	3	82	100	0	94	97	0	94	96	1
% of Dependency	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% of Total Conversation	35	35	33	7	4	3	58	61	64			

Group V  
(Negro S = 2, Mexican American S = 6)

% of Fight	0	0	13	4	3	6	4	6	4	2	3	8
% of Flight	0	4	34	0	0	60	0	4	83	0	2	59
% of Pairing	6	10	2	33	11	20	4	9	10	14	10	11
% of Work	94	86	43	63	86	5	92	81	0	84	85	15
% of Dependency	0	0	8	0	0	10	0	0	3	0	0	7
% of Total Conversation	40	29	31	31	53	39	29	18	30			

TABLE II

Interaction Table Using Flander's Analysis for  
the Five Mexican American, Negro Groups  
Participating in Orientation Conference

Group I				Group II			
Judge	1	2	3	Judge	1	2	3
Inter- action Areas	% in each area	% in each area	% in each area	Inter- action Areas	% in each area	% in each area	% in each area
A	3	2.5	1	*A	20	17	16
**B	0	0	1	**B	0	0	1
*C	25	17.8	19	*C	24	18	22
**D	0	1	4	D	5	5	3
**E	0	0	0	**E	0	0	0
**F	0	0	0	**F	0	0	0
G	5	3	4	G	4	3	4
**H	0	0	0	**H	0	0	0
**I	0	0	0	**I	0	0	0
J	2	2	1	**J	0	0	0
*K	15	12	9	*K	13	9	8
L	4	2	2	L	5	5	2
**M	0	1	1	**M	0	0	0
N	12	1	3	**N	0	0	1
O	3	10.5	6	O	5	3	4
P	9	4.3	6	*P	8	4	12
Q	1	2	2	Q	5	3	4
R	2	1.2	3	**R	0	0	0
S	4	14	2	**S	0	0	1
T	1	3.1	4	T	2	2	1
*U	12	23	32	*U	9	29	22

\* = Interaction quality present at 10% level  
\*\* = Interaction quality absent

TABLE II (Continued)

Group III				Group IV			
Judge	1	2	3	Judge	1	2	3
Inter- action areas	% in each area	% in each area	% in each area	Inter- action areas	% in each area	% in each area	% in each area
A	6	7	7	*A	8	13	8
**B	0	0	0	**B	0	0	0
*C	26	19	22	*C	25	23	23
D	2	3	5	D	3	3	1
E	0	1	0	**E	0	0	0
**F	0	0	0	**F	0	0	0
G	3	5	2	G	0	5	2
**H	0	0	0	**H	0	0	0
**I	0	0	0	**I	0	0	0
**J	0	0	0	**J	0	0	0
*K	10	10	8	*K	14	14	15
L	1	3	5	L	1	6	1
**M	0	0	0	**M	0	0	0
N	11	2	3	N	6	1	2
O	6	5	4	O	6	7	3
P	9	5	7	P	8	7	6
Q	3	6	2	Q	2	3	2
**R	0	0	0	**R	0	0	0
S	8	6	2	S	4	8	1
T	5	3	2	T	4	2	1
*U	11	24	31	*U	18	17	36

\* = Interaction quality present at 10% level  
 \*\* = Interaction quality absent



TABLE II (Continued)

Group V

Judge	1	2	3
Inter- action area	% in each area	% in each area	% in each area
A	8	6	14
**B	0	0	3
*C	24	19	20
D	1	2	2
**E	0	0	0
**F	0	0	0
G	2	4	1
**H	0	0	0
**I	0	0	0
**J	0	0	0
*K	15	10	6
**L	0	3	1
**M	0	0	0
N	18	3	5
*O	8	14	11
P	8	7	10
Q	4	2	1
**R	0	0	0
*S	7	14	9
T	3	10	3
U	3	7	14

\* = Interaction quality present at 10% level  
 \*\* = Interaction quality absent

TABLE III

Student Reaction Scores to Group Activity  
at College Orientation Conference

Group I

Average number of words per reaction paper = 39.

	Reaction to			<u>Total**</u>
	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Counselors</u>	<u>Self</u>	
*Satisfaction vs. dissatisfaction score	1.5	2	2	5.5
*Creative vs. socially-expected response score	.5	.5	0	1

Group II

Average number of words per reaction paper = 58.

	Reaction to			<u>Total**</u>
	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Counselors</u>	<u>Self</u>	
*Satisfaction vs. dissatisfaction score	2	2	2	6
*Creative vs. socially-expected response score	0	0	0	0

Group III

Average number of words per reaction paper = 68.

	Reaction to			<u>Total**</u>
	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Counselors</u>	<u>Self</u>	
*Satisfaction vs. dissatisfaction score	1	1.5	1.4	2.9
*Creative vs. socially-expected response score	2	1.7	1.7	5.4

\* = 4 point scale: 3 (high) to 0 (low)  
\*\* = possible total of 9 points

TABLE III (Continued)

Group IV

Average number of words per reaction paper = 76.

	Reaction to			
	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Counselors</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Total**</u>
*Satisfaction vs. dissatisfaction score	2	1	2	5
*Creative vs. socially-expected response score	2	2	1.5	5.5

Group V

Average number of words per reaction paper = 100.

	Reaction to			
	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Counselors</u>	<u>Self</u>	<u>Total**</u>
*Satisfaction vs. dissatisfaction score	2	2	2	6
*Creative vs. socially-expected response score	1	1.3	1.2	3.5

\* = 4 point scale: 3 (high) to 0 (low)  
 \*\* = possible total of 9 points

## APPENDIX I

### Instructions for Discussion Media for College Savvy.

During the Ventura Counties Youth Opportunities program (after breakfast on the 2nd day of the conference) counselors are scheduled to hold small group sessions using Discussion Media for College Savvy--(DMCS).

The media is intended to be simulated activity--to elicit discussion--and to prepare the youngsters with concepts and a rationale for coping with (without necessarily approving) certain kinds of college behaviors--verbally, realistically, and logically.

Before explaining the games themselves, certain concepts should be kept in mind.

1. The Discussion Media for College Savvy (DMCS) are intended as a fast-moving motivational activity leading to discussion in small part of a total orientation program.

2. DMCS are to be part of a program to attitudinally equip youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds to meet the college milieu and to equip him to deal with home and neighborhood problems, as a change agent in the interim years between his present high school status and his entry into college.

3. These simulated activities are to be used by sophomores and juniors in high school (about 15 years old). The ideas contained in DMCS are stressed as much or more than gamesmanship and winning. The youngsters have probably played games similar to these before, although it is entirely possible that children from disadvantaged environments have played very few "boxed" games.

4. The DMCS are devices for changing attitudes about college and about themselves and their relationship to the college; they give terminology and a rationale for handling emotive areas of living without crushing frustration.

5. In approach, the discussion media present problems which are realistic, indeed almost cynical; sometimes the solutions offered border on the hostile and immoral. In these ways an appeal may be made to the sentiments felt by apathetic and/or angry youngster. Valuation in the positive social sense should derive from the interaction (small group) situations which follow, but reality prevails in the "game".

6. Few pat solutions are offered. One can win, but one does not win unequivocally. The possibility of "non-success" should be made plain to the players. In some games, it is possible for all the players to experience non-success. Frustration evolves a problem-solving situation for small groups.

7. In solving the problems, the "inquiry development method" is used. Rarely are there convergent answers in life or in the DMCS. Rather a broad possibility of reaction is allowed; the student learns that solutions are varied and have differing effects. Reward in the discussion is given by the counselor who leads the discussion by approbation when the youngster is hypothesizing, thinking through problematic situations, gathering data and information, and testing his theory rationally. A single right answer as the ultimate goal is not demanded, nor even wanted.

8. At the beginning and end of the session, attitude scales may be administered to the students to discover if, along with intermittent measures of their "social savvy" that they have, in fact, identified with the values and the attitudes of collegiate life.

9. The discussion sessions and the DMCS activity will be taped and used in later analytic sessions. However, even though the tapes may cause a degree of apprehension, please try not to feel that you are being "spied on" or judged in a punitive way. In a sense, the more variance of counselor style and the more "horrible examples" that occur, the better and broader the sampling.

Please try to learn the DMCS with your friends--instructions are included--before the conference. Although high schoolers should be allowed to help select the materials discussed, you should be aware of those with which you are most comfortable. Reaction to the various games is appreciated. The games should be used to motivate discussion, which is of primary importance.

The simulated activity materials include:

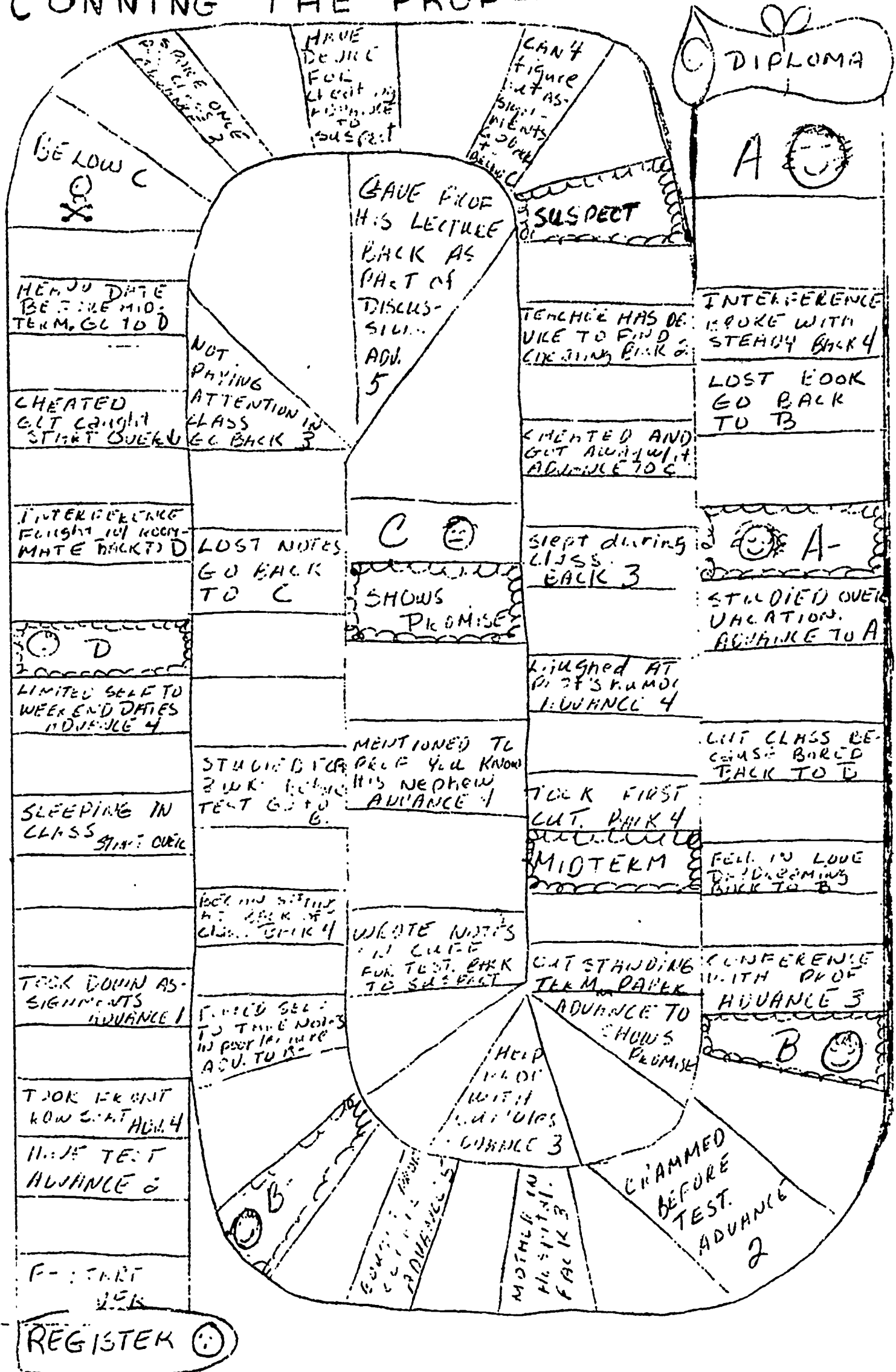
1. Earning Enough for School
2. Supporting the Car
3. Psyching out the Prof.
4. Conning the Prof.
5. Making the In-Group
6. Getting Around the Campus
7. Low Cost Dating
8. Eating on the Cheap
9. Cooling It with the Folks



APPENDIX I

Example of Discussion Media for Developing College Savvy

CONNING THE PROF -

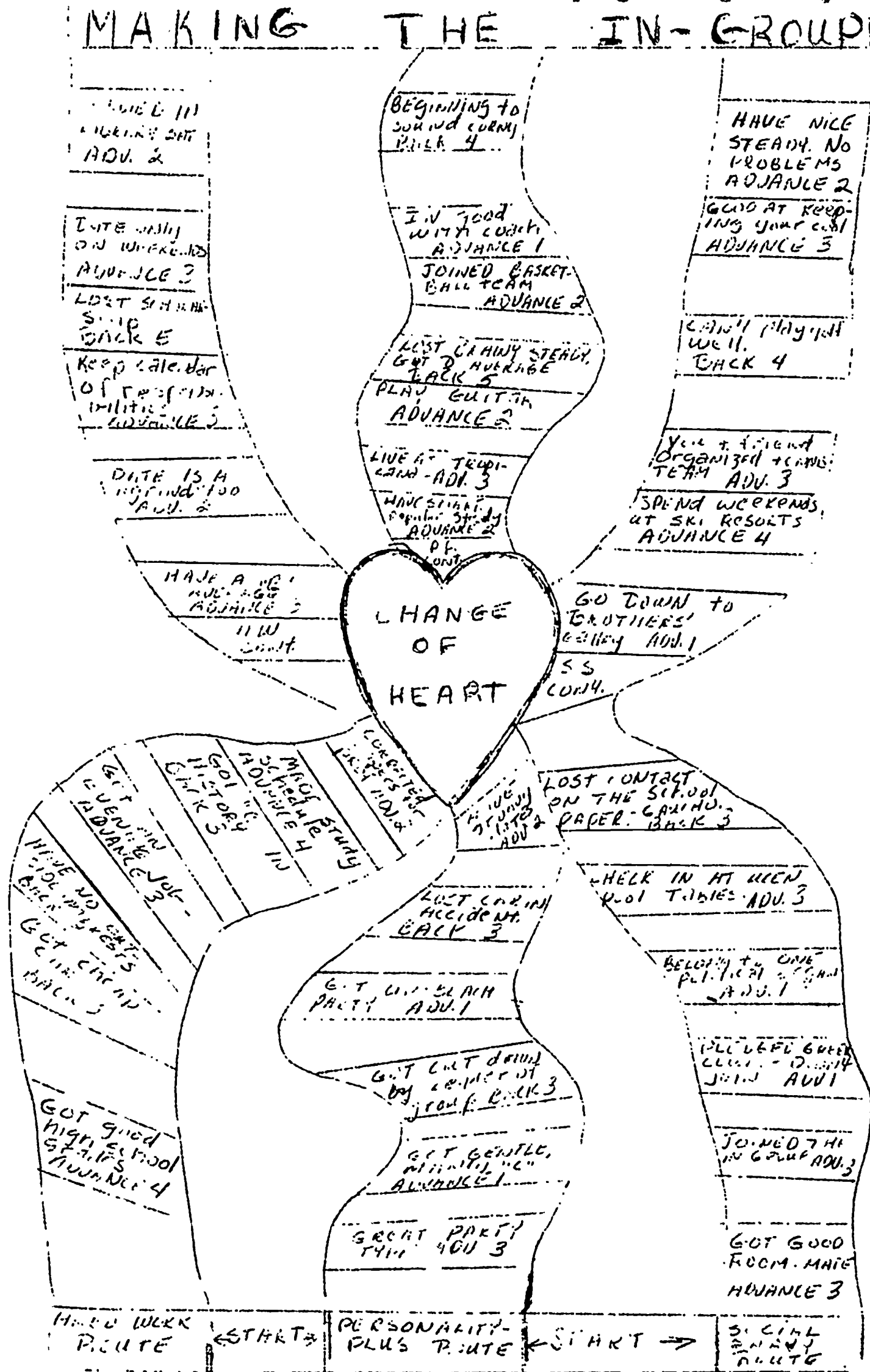


Conning the Prof is played with die and markers to denote progress in game. Students discuss what is helpful in "winning" the professor.



Appendix I (cont.)

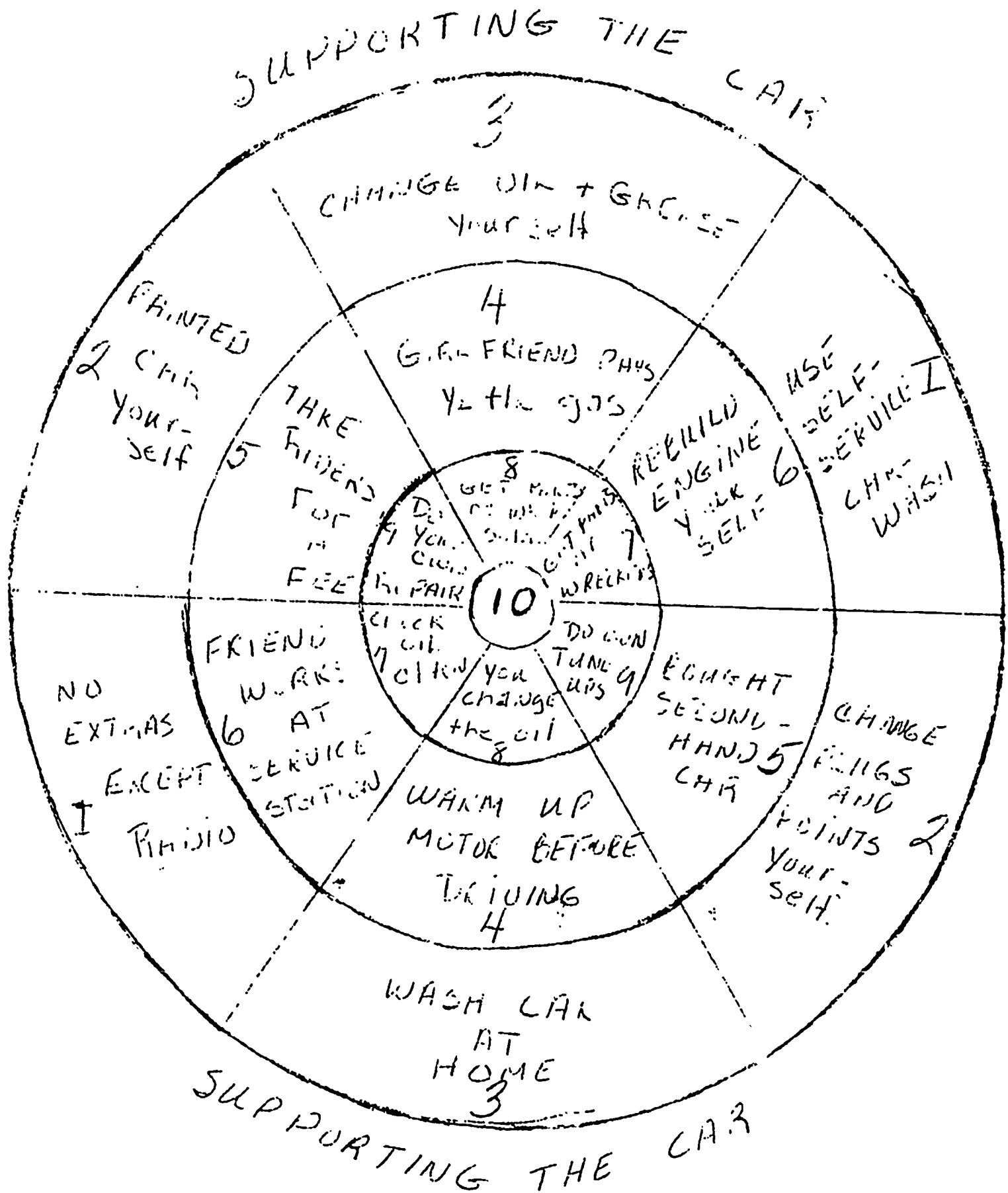
Example of Discussion Media for Developing College Savvy



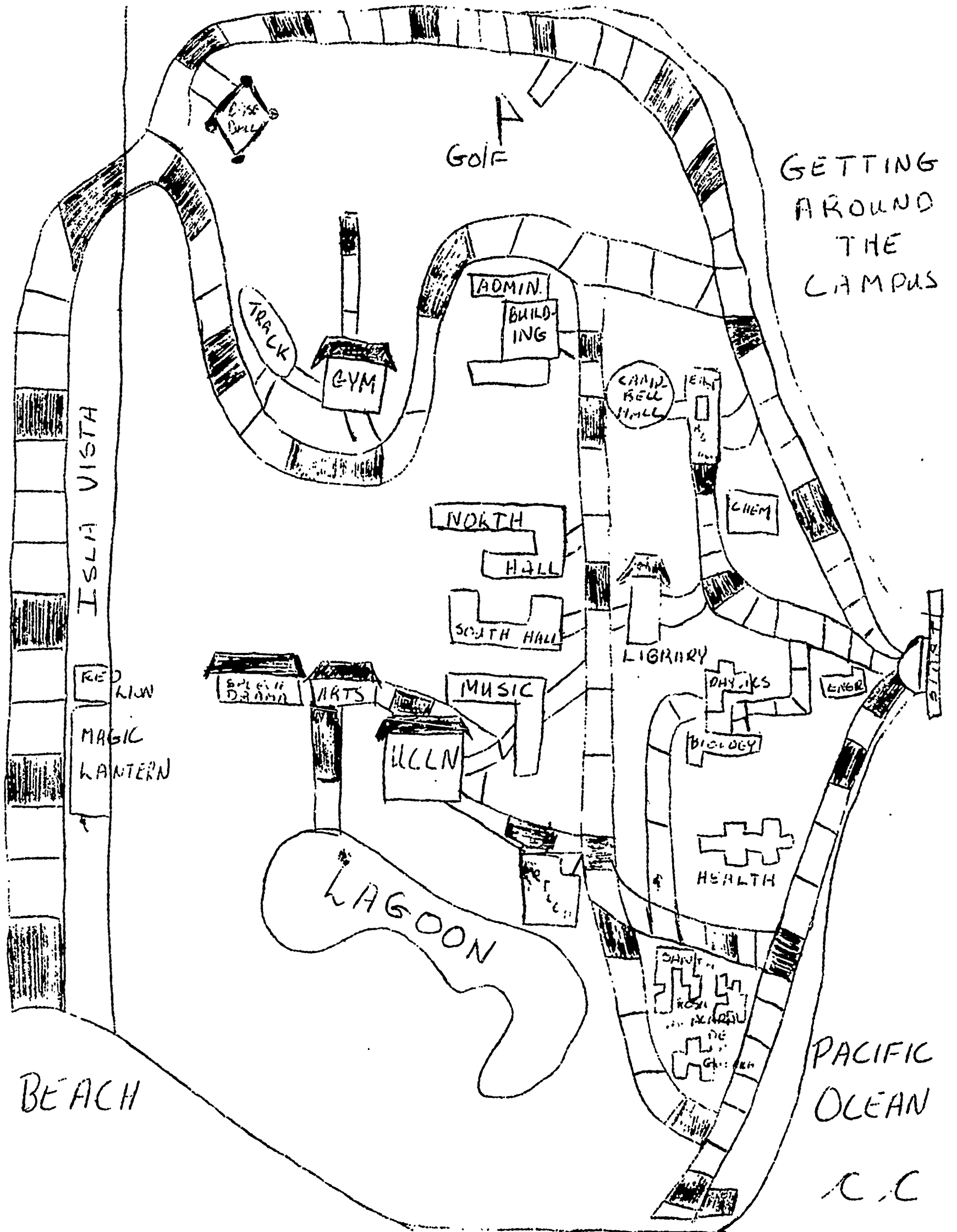
Making the In-group is played with dice and markers to denote progress in game. Students discuss the methods of advancement and retardation in the process.

Appendix 1 (cont.)

Example of Discussion Media for Developing College Savvy.



Dart board game for developing knowledge of how to solve transportation problems--Supporting the Car.



Monopoly-like game for negotiating campus during a short stay here-- Getting Around the Campus.

Appendix II

Sample of Student Evaluation Form

VENTURA COUNTY YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES CONFERENCE  
March 20-21, 1967

EVALUATION FORM

Group No. \_\_\_\_\_

Put down the most significant or outstanding statements  
that you can think of about:

(1) The Conference -

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(2) The Counselors -

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(3) One Member -

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(4) I -

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_