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ABSTRACT

This study examines the reasons some Los Angeles City College (LACC), California, applicants did not complete registration after taking the college's Guidance Examination (used for course placement and counseling). Of 2,320 applicants, 489 failed to register for the spring 1970 semester after taking the examination; of these, 239 returned questionnaires that sought reasons for failing to register. Data received were analyzed from several aspects, including sex and ethnic distribution, recommended course placement, previous college experience, and difficulties with registration procedures. Analysis of data led to the conclusion that financial problems, acceptance by another school, procedural problems in registration, and temporary deferment of entrance were the most important reasons for not completing registration. The Guidance Examination, recently instituted, was found to have no significant effect by itself in discouraging registrants. [Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (J0)

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LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

'AN INVESTIGATION INTO REASONS WHY STUDENTS FAIL TO
REGISTER AFTER TAKING THE GUIDANCE EXAMINATION'

Research Study #70-4

Ben K. Gold
Research Office
May, 1970

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

MAY 22 1970

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"AN INVESTIGATION INTO REASONS WHY STUDENTS FAIL TO REGISTER AFTER TAKING THE GUIDANCE EXAMINATION"

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Entering day students at L.A.C.C. are required to take the College Guidance Examination before being permitted to register. The examination requires no appointment, and no application or other form need be shown for admittance to the examination. Although students are informed at the time of the examination that they must file an application and transcript of record with the Admissions Office before they will receive a registration appointment, large numbers of students who take the examination do not complete registration procedures. Reasons for this inaction have been postulated by various members of the L.A.C.C. community. The purpose of this study is to find out from the students involved why they did not complete their L.A.C.C. registration.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

Names of the students who took the Guidance Examination for the Spring, 1970 semester were checked against the list of students registered for that semester. A questionnaire* was prepared and, together with a covering letter* and stamped return envelope, mailed to all those who took the Guidance Examination but whose name was not on the registration list. Returned questionnaires were analyzed as indicated in the next section.

FINDINGS

2,320 students took the Guidance Examination for the Spring, 1970 semester. After a search of the registration list, 489 names were identified as having taken the examination but not registering. Questionnaires were

* copy appended to this report

FINDINGS (continued)

mailed to these 489 students. After 3 weeks, 46 had been returned as non-deliverable and 239 completed questionnaires were received in the Research Office. Returns, then, constituted 54% of those (presumably) delivered.

Although students' names were not indicated on the questionnaires, response envelopes were coded so that identification could be made for the purpose of determining scores on the examination. A few respondents removed the code identification, others failed to complete questions on the instrument designed to identify their age, sex or ethnic background. 227 students could be identified as to sex, age, ethnic background and test scores.

Tables 1-4 summarize numbers of responses according to characteristics of respondents. Table 1 indicates sex and ethnic distribution. Table 2 shows numbers of responses by ethnic background, sex, and English recommendation. Table 3 indicates ethnic distribution (in percent, "other" category omitted), and presents for comparison a head count estimate made at the time of the Guidance examination and an overall L.A.C.C. estimate obtained during the Spring, 1970 registration period. Table 4 indicates responses to questions relating to age, previous college, filing application forms, and appearance for scheduled appointments, according to sex and ethnic background. Tables 5-8 summarize stated reasons for not completing registration, subgrouped as indicated.

TABLE 1 - Sex and Ethnic Distribution of Respondents

Ethnic Background	Male	Female	Total	Respondents	Ethnic Dist. Head count at Exams	All LACC (1970 Estimate)
Black	31 (40%)	47 (60%)	78 (100%)	35%	30%	27%
Caucasian	54 (57%)	41 (43%)	95 (100%)	43%	57%	43%
Mexican-American	18 (58%)	13 (42%)	31 (100%)	14%	59%	12%
Oriental	7 (41%)	10 (59%)	17 (100%)	8%	11%	18%
Other	2	4	6			
TOTAL	112 (49%)	115 (51%)	227 (100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)
All Entrants (N=2320)	56%	44%	(100%)			
All "No-shows" (N=489)	57%	48%	(100%)			

TABLE 2 - Number of Completed Questionnaires Returned by Ethnic Background, Sex and English Recommendation

	Sex	English 1	English 21	English 40	Comm. 20	Total
Black	M	5	5	11	10	31
	F	8	11	15	13	47
	T	13 (17%)	16 (21%)	26 (33%)	23 (30%)	78 (100%)
Caucasian	M	33	11	8	2	54
	F	34	5	1	1	41
	T	67 (71%)	16 (17%)	9 (9%)	3 (3%)	95 (100%)
Mexican-American	M	9	5	2	2	18
	F	5	4	1	3	13
	T	14 (45)	9 (29%)	3 (10%)	5 (16%)	31 (100%)
Oriental	M	4	0	2	1	7
	F	2	3	4	1	10
	T	6 (35%)	3 (18%)	6 (35%)	2 (12%)	17 (100%)
Other	M	1	0	0	1	2
	F	1	0	2	1	4
	T	2	0	2	2	6
TOTAL	M	52 (46%)	21 (19%)	23 (21%)	16 (14%)	112 (100%)
	F	50 (43%)	23 (20%)	23 (20%)	19 (17%)	115 (100%)
	T	102 (45%)	44 (19%)	46 (20%)	35 (15%)	227 (100%)

English Distribution for all entrants (N=2320)

	45%	19%	20%	16%	100%
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English Distribution for all no-shows (N=489)

	38%	19%	27%	16%	100%
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TABLE 3 - Ethnic Distribution (In %) by Sex and English Recommendations ("Other" category excluded)

	Sex	No.	% Black	% Caucasian	% Mexican-American	% Oriental	% Total
English 1	M	51	10	64	18	8	100
	F	49	16	70	10	4	100
	T	100	13	67	14	6	100
English 21	M	21	24	52	24	0	100
	F	23	48	22	17	13	100
	T	44	36	36	20	7	100
English 40	M	23	48	34	9	9	100
	F	21	71	5	5	19	100
	T	44	59	20	7	14	100
Communications 20	M	15	67	13	13	7	100
	F	18	71	17	6	6	100
	T	33	70	9	15	6	100
TOTAL	M	110	28	49	17	6	100
	F	111	42	37	12	9	100
	T	221	35	43	14	8	100

TABLE 4 - Summary of Respondent Characteristics

Ethnic Background	Sex	A G E		Have you ever attended a college?		Did you file application forms?		Did you appear for your registration appt.?	
		Under 21	21 or over	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Black	M	16	15	10	21	25	2	8	15
	F	33	14	14	30	35	10	8	27
	T	49	29	24	51	60	12	16	42
Caucasian	M	30	24	27	27	41	11	7	27
	F	29	12	18	23	20	18	4	19
	T	59	36	45	50	61	29	11	46
Mexican-American	M	15	3	4	14	10	7	5	7
	F	12	1	1	12	10	3	2	7
	T	27	4	5	26	20	10	7	14
Oriental	M	7	0	1	6	7	0	3	4
	F	8	2	3	7	7	3	3	7
	T	15	2	4	13	14	3	6	11
Other	M	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
	F	3	1	0	4	4	0	0	4
	T	5	1	1	5	5	0	0	5
TOTAL	M	70	42	43	69	84	20	22	55
	F	85	30	36	77	76	34	17	64
	T	155	72	79	146	160	54	39	119

TABLE 5 - Stated Reasons for not Completing LACC Registration. (in rank order, all respondents) (N=239)

Reason #	Reason	Number Checking	% Checking (N=239)	Rank
7	I just couldn't afford to go to college right now	41	17.2	1
2	I was admitted to another college and preferred to go there	39	16.3	2
6	I obtained a full-time job	25	10.5	3
9	Transportation problems	17	7.1	4
5	Illness or personal emergency	17	7.1	4
1	I did not file the necessary application forms on time	16	6.7	6
8	Too many classes were closed when I tried to enroll	15	6.3	7
11	I moved out of the area	9	3.8	8
3	I decided to attend Adult High School	5	2.1	9
4	I was discouraged by the Guidance Examination	5	2.1	9
10	I entered (or am about to enter) the Armed Services	5	2.1	9
	Other*	143	59.8	

*Other see Table 6 for analysis of "other" reasons

TABLE 6 - "Other" (write-in) Reasons for not Completing L.A.C.C. Registration

<u>REASON</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>% (N=239)</u>
Registration Problems	41	17.2
Plan to attend later - took exam. early*	40	16.7
Attend Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital Nursing School	22	9.2
Denied admission (prior college record)	6	2.5
Attending occupational training school	5	2.1
Conflict with work schedule	4	1.7
Desired classes not offered	2	0.8
High School Honors - schedule conflict	1	0.4
Heard second year LACC not transferable	1	0.4
	<u>122</u>	<u>51.0</u>

Others (21) made comments either reinforcing other checked item or irrelevant (e.g., comments regarding questionnaire)

* 22 still in high school

TABLE 6A - Breakdown of "Write-in" Registration Problems

Transcripts not filed	16
Student's fault	3
LACC's fault	8
Appointment card	11
Came too late	6
Did not receive	5
Confusion about procedures	8
Non-resident problems	6
	<u>41</u>

TABLE 7 - Stated Reasons, According to Ethnic Background and Sex

#	Reason	ETHNIC BACKGROUND						SEX		Recommended English				Total N-239 No. %
		Black N=76	Cauc. N=95	Mex-Am. N=31	Ort'l. N=17	Other N=6	Male N=112	Female N=115	Eng. 1 N=102	Eng. 21 N=44	Eng. 40 N=46	Com. 20 N=35		
		No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %	No. %		
1	Forms late	7 9	2 2	4 13	1 6	0 0	7 6	7 6	2 2	6 14	2 4	4 11	16 7	
2	Another College	7 9	14 15	7 23	8 47	1 17	19 17	18 16	18 18	8 18	6 13	5 14	39 16	
3	Adult High School	1 1	3 3	0 0	1 6	0 0	3 3	2 2	3 3	1 2	1 2	0 0	5 2	
4	Discouraged by Exam.	4 5	0 0	1 3	0 0	0 0	3 3	2 2	0 0	2 5	0 0	3 9	5 2	
5	Illness or Emergency	10 13	4 4	3 10	0 0	0 0	10 9	7 6	8 8	3 7	3 7	3 9	17 7	
6	Full-time Job	9 12	9 9	4 13	0 0	1 17	10 9	14 12	8 8	3 7	7 15	6 17	25 10	
7	Couldn't Afford	24 31	11 12	4 13	1 6	0 0	21 19	29 25	10 10	7 16	12 26	10 29	41 17	
8	Classes Closed	8 11	2 2	2 6	0 0	0 0	7 6	5 4	5 5	2 5	4 9	1 3	15 6	
9	Transportation	4 5	5 5	1 3	1 6	2 33	5 4	12 10	6 6	2 5	7 15	2 6	17 7	
10	Armed Services	3 4	0 0	1 3	0 0	0 0	4 4	0 0	1 1	0 0	1 2	2 6	5 2	
11	Moved Away	0 0	7 7	1 3	1 6	0 0	4 4	5 4	5 5	1 2	3 7	0 0	9 4	
	Other	14 56	70 74	11 35	7 41	3 50	67 60	70 61	67 66	28 64	24 52	19 54	143 60	

Total number of checks 121 127 38 20 7 160 171 133 63 70 55 337

Average number check per person 1.55 1.34 1.23 1.13 1.17 1.43 1.49 1.30 1.43 1.52 1.57 1.41



#	Reason	Black	Cauc.	Mex-Am.	Ort'l.	Male	Female	Engl. 1	Engl. 21	Engl. 40	Com. 20	All
	Forms late	5	8	8	2	5	5	9	3	8	4	4
2	Another college	5	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	4	3	2
3	Adult High School	10	7	7	2	10	9	8	9	9	10	9
4	Discouraged by Exams.	7	10	10	7	10	9	11	7	9	5	9
5	Illness or emergency	2	6	6	7	3	5	3	4	6	5	4
6	Full-time Job	3	3	2	7	3	3	3	4	2	2	3
7	Couldn't afford	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
8	Classes closed	4	8	8	7	5	7	6	7	5	9	7
9	Transportation	7	5	5	2	7	4	5	7	2	7	4
10	Armed Services	5	10	10	7	7	11	10	11	9	7	9
11	Moved away	11	4	4	2	7	7	6	9	6	10	8
N		78	95	31	17	112	115	102	44	45	35	239

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Some 20-25% of the students who take the L.A.C.C. Guidance Examination fail to complete registration for the semester following the taking of the examination. This study reports on a questionnaire survey mailed to such students (489 of 2320, or 21%) for the Spring, 1970 semester to find out why they failed to complete registration. About 54% of those who (presumably) received questionnaires completed and returned them.

49% of the respondents were male, as compared with 52% of the 489 "no-shows" and 56% of the 2,320 taking the examination. Ethnic distribution of the respondents paralleled fairly closely that observed at the examination administrations, except that the percent Black was a little high (35% to 30%) and the percent Oriental a little low (8% to 11%). Distribution of English recommendations (according to examination score) of respondents followed almost exactly that of all examinees, viz., English 1: 45%, English 21: 49%, English 40: 20%, Communications 20: 16%. Breakdowns by sex and ethnic background show wide differences (as expected) from these overall figures, however. For example, 71% of Caucasians and 17% of Blacks qualified for English 1; 3% of Caucasians and 30% of Blacks qualified for Communications 20. The overall figures, nevertheless, indicate that the respondents are a cross-sectional representation of all those taking the examination, as far as performance on the examination and ethnic distribution are concerned. Regarding age, 68% of respondents are under 21 years, compared to 64% of all those examined. 35% stated they had attended college prior to taking the examination, compared with 25% of all those examined, a statistically significant difference. Three fourths of the respondents claimed to have filed application forms, and about one in five said he appeared for a registration appointment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS (continued)

Of the eleven reasons for not completing registration that were suggested on the questionnaire, "I just couldn't afford to go to college right now" was checked most often (17%), followed closely by "I was admitted to another college and preferred to go there" (16%). Other responses checked by 5% or more respondents were "I obtained a full-time job" (10%), "Transportation problems" (7%), "Illness or personal emergency" (7%), "I did not file the necessary application forms on time" (7%), and "Too many classes were closed when I tried to enroll" (6%). "I moved out of the area" was checked by 4%, while 2% each checked "I decided to attend Adult High School," "I was discouraged by the Guidance Examination," and "I entered (or am about to enter) the Armed Services." Apparently the eleven reasons suggested were not enough, as 60% of the respondents checked the "other" category and offered a "write-in" reason. Two reasons were each mentioned by 17% of the respondents: problems with registration, and plans to attend at a later date. Registration problems included transcripts not filed (blame for this was accepted by about half those so indicated, the College blamed for the remainder), appointment card arriving too late or not at all, confusion about procedures, and non-resident problems. Of those planning to attend later, over half were still in high school at the time of the questionnaire mailing. Almost one tenth of the respondents said they were Nursing students at Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital. A variety of other reasons were offered, none by over 3% of the total responding.

A comparison of reasons stated by males and females shows little difference, although females checked "transportation problems" more than males, and all "Armed Forces" responses were by males. Comparing responses by ethnic

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS (continued)

backgrounds reveals that almost half of the Orientals checked "another college," Black students checked "couldn't afford" more often and "another college" less often than other groups.

One of the reasons for undertaking this study was to investigate assertions made in the college Human Concerns Committee that the Guidance Examination discourages students from attending college. In order to check this carefully, responses of the 5 students who checked "I was discouraged by the Guidance Examination" were examined individually. Following is a description of these five respondents:

- (1) Black male, age over 21, recommended for English 21, also checked "other," explained he was denied admission due to poor record at another college.
- (2) Black male, age 18, recommended for Communications 20, stated "I decided to wait until the Fall, 1970 semester."
- (3) Black female, over 40, recommended for English 21. Also checked "illness or personal emergency" and wrote "I would prefer a 4 year college and a Sociology major, but lack sufficient funds."
- (4) Black female, 21, recommended for Communications 20. Also checked "I obtained a full-time job" and "I just couldn't afford to go to college right now."
- (5) Mexican-American male, age 18, recommended for Communications 20. Also checked "I did not file the necessary application forms on time" and "I just couldn't afford to go to college right now" and wrote "I consider getting in the Armed Forces."

Twenty-nine of the respondents raised questions relating to procedures necessary for completing their registration at a later semester. All twenty-nine have been sent replies from the Research Office.

There are apparently a variety of reasons why students take the Guidance Examination and fail to register. Most prominent among these are financial problems, being prepared to enter L.A.C.C. in case another preferred college is unavailable, difficulties in registration procedures, and early taking of the examination to assure later admission. There is no evidence to support the assertion that the Guidance Examination itself is a deterrent to students attending L.A.C.C.

A P P E N D I X

LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE
855 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90029

Dear Student:

We note that you took the Los Angeles City College Guidance Examination for the Spring, 1970 semester but that you did not complete registration as a student at Los Angeles City College.

Frankly, we are wondering why a student gives up several hours of time to take an examination and then fails to attend the college.

Will you help us in our future planning by returning the brief questionnaire in the stamped addressed envelope, both enclosed?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ben K. Gold

Ben K. Gold
Director of Research

BKG/e
Enclosures

P.S. Please respond promptly and honestly.
You need not identify yourself on the questionnaire.

L.A.C.C. GUIDANCE EXAM SURVEY, SPRING, 1970

Sex: Male _____ Age: 17 _____ 18 _____ 19 _____ 20 _____ 21 _____
Female _____ 26-30 _____ 31-40 _____ 41-50 _____ Over 50 _____

Ethnic background: Black _____ Caucasian _____ Mexican-American _____
Oriental _____ Other _____

Have you ever attended a college? Yes _____ No _____

Did you file admission application forms required by the L.A.C.C.
Admissions Office? Yes _____ No _____

Did you appear for your registration appointment (if you got one)?
Yes _____ No _____

The reason I did not complete registration at LACC is: (check as many
as apply)

- _____ I did not file the necessary application forms on time
- _____ I was admitted to another college and preferred to go there
- _____ I decided to attend adult high school
- _____ I was discouraged by the Guidance Examination
- _____ Illness or personal emergency
- _____ I obtained a full-time job
- _____ I just couldn't afford to go to college right now
- _____ Too many classes were closed when I tried to enroll
- _____ Transportation problems
- _____ I entered (or am about to enter) the Armed Services
- _____ I moved out of the area
- _____ other (please describe) _____

Please return this form to:

Research Office
Los Angeles City College
855 N. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles 90029