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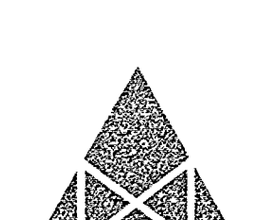
ABSTRACT

This document is the first of three reports designed to provide information on the student at Stony Brook. The academic and nonacademic student life at Stony Brook is discussed in relationship to the entering students; academic life; the social and psychological dimensions; the residences; the services and peer helping; women undergraduates; student participation, communication, and integrated education; commuters; minority students; and preparation for a new life style. Related documents are HE 004 269 and HE 004 268. (MJM)



ACADEMIC
AND NONACADEMIC
STUDENT LIFE
AT STONY BROOK

StonyBrook

ACADEMIC AND NONACADEMIC STUDENT LIFE AT STONY BROOK

Report No. 1

Group for Research on

Human Development and Educational Policy

State University of New York at Stony Brook

1973

The Group for Research on Human Development and Educational Policy was formed in 1971 to conduct studies of Stony Brook students, faculty, and services as a base for planning improvements in the programs and the overall quality of life at the University. In 1971-72 the Group conducted studies of the academic, psychological, and social characteristics of Stony Brook students, student services, the residential program, policies and practices of faculty and student affairs staff. These studies will be reported in three papers of which this is the first. During 1972-73 the Group is continuing its studies of student characteristics and the residential program and has added studies of commuters, transfer students, minority students, graduate education, and classroom communication

The senior staff consists of Joseph Katz, Director, James Bess, and David Tilley.

Graduate sutdents who are currently associated with the Group are. Andrew Baum, Denise Cronin, Paul Hopstock, Richard LaFemina, Jack Pogany, Robert Sell and Ross Vasta. Richard Kinane, a recent graduate of Stony Brook, also is associated with the Group currently. During the summer of 1972 the following students were associated with the Group Michael Graham, Paul Hopstock, Scott Klippel, Leonard Rubin and Raymond Westwater. Anthony Frosolone has served as computer programmer. Andris Grunde joined the Group in November 1972 as a staff associate Many undergraduates assisted in the work of the Group, with special help having been given by Ann Crawford, Angela Fasano, Lynda Lieberman, and Susan Morse.

The following members of the faculty and professional staff helped in the collection of interview data in 1971-72 Donald Bybee, Edward Feldman, Ingrid Tiegel.

Contents

Introduction

The following report is based on an extensive array of data collected by the Group for Research on Human Development and Educational Policy in 1971-72. These data derive from (1) questionnaire instruments developed by the Group and administered to Stony Brook students, faculty, and student services staff, (2) two series of interviews with students, (3) the administration of two standardized national instruments, one of which measures student cognitive interests and psychological dispositions and the other, student perception of the academic and social environment of the institution. In addition we have used (4) other available data, among them the annual survey of entering freshmen conducted by the American Council on Education.

The purpose of our continuing investigations is to obtain a more accurate picture of the Stony Brook environment with emphasis in this report on the student body at Stony Brook, its many different subgroups, and the attitudes, desires, and needs of Stony Brook students. Above all we are interested in how well the university serves its students. The ultimate purpose of our investigations is the improvement of that service. For this reason we have included recommendations and interspersed them throughout our report. We wish it to be understood that we offer these recommendations in the hope of stimulating campus-wide discussion of issues we feel are basic to the quality of life at Stony Brook. Others might derive more or less different recommendations from the data we present. In our judgement a fundamental need at Stony Brook is for informed discussion and a more cooperative effort by all segments of the university to recognize existing shortcomings and to translate ideas into actions. We need a climate of hope, a sense that effort can lead to results. This paper as well as others by the Group that will follow are meant as one step in that direction. Two other papers will be issued within the next few weeks. They will embody the results of investigations regarding faculty and professional staff, their roles and attitudes.

The Entering Student

Recent research has stressed that many of the characteristics of a college are determined by the kind of students it enrolls. In several ways Stony Brook freshmen are like most college students elsewhere. Like them they come to college expecting that it will help them to shape their own identity and to develop a workable philosophy of life. For instance, eighty-two percent of the freshmen at Stony Brook say that it is of major importance to them to develop a meaningful philosophy of life. Seventy-three percent of entering university students say so nationwide. No other goal for the college experience is as universally endorsed.

In their quest for self-definition students at Stony Brook and elsewhere regard it as very important to develop close friendships. They anticipate that college will help them in this by bringing them together with people with backgrounds and interests different from their own. Facilitating friendships therefore, is seen as a paramount function of the institution. Students hope in college to find a community that will help them develop their dormant potentialities while giving them a sense of affiliation and being understood. Even though the freshman stage in life includes a certain degree of self-centeredness, an overwhelming majority of freshmen see helping other people and being helped as a primary element of college life.

While the desire for personal development, the achievement of a sense of worth, of closeness with other people have the highest priority for freshmen, a second objective is nearly as important: being equipped for an occupation, achieving a satisfactory income, moving upwards on the income and occupational ladder beyond what was achieved by one's parents. Recent research has shown that these goals are held not only by freshmen, but that alumni looking back upon their college years also say they value their college experience not only for what it contributed to their own growth and development but also for the vocational preparation it provided.

Upward mobility is a general characteristic of students everywhere in the nation. Only a third of the fathers and a quarter of the mothers of freshmen entering American universities completed college themselves. Freshmen typically aspire to occupations with status considerably beyond that of their parents. Most college students in this sense are educational pioneers. This means, however, that many students can expect in their homes only partial understanding of the cognitive processes, moral values, and esthetic tastes implied in the pursuit of higher education. The college student's rise in status and change in intellectual and social preferences often can bring about a psychological burden of alienation and distance from one's parents.

Part of the intergenerational difference is the greater liberalism and social idealism of college students. On such issues as the status of women, preservation of the environment, consumer protection, students at Stony Brook and elsewhere overwhelmingly come out on the liberal side. Ninety-six percent of the Stony Brook freshmen want job equality for women and they are joined by ninety-one percent of the students in all other universities. Legalized abortion is favored by eighty-nine percent of the university students and in general a much more liberal code is found governing the sexual behavior of this generation than was true for prior generations.

While there are many similarities between Stony Brook students and students elsewhere, the differences are striking. Outstanding among the differences is the very high degree of academic achievement of Stony Brook freshman entrants. Seventy-seven percent in 1971 had an A+, A, or A- average in high school; ninety percent were in the top quarter of their high school class. Two-thirds of them were members of a scholastic honor society and more than a fifth attained the National Merit Scholarship recognition. Almost a third had poems, stories, essays or articles published. An astonishing two-thirds of the men aspire for the doctorate degree and the proportion of women who plan to obtain a doctoral degree, over one-third, is very high compared with the aspirations of college women elsewhere. Moreover, in thinking about their college careers the entering Stony Brook freshmen are oriented much more toward academic goals and becoming authorities in their field than towards making money. These are students who are accustomed to academic success. Many are bound to experience a severe shock when the grade curve in college places them at the B and C levels, particularly when this happens in subjects in which they considered themselves most competent.

The entering Stony Brook freshmen in their prior academic achievements and professional aspirations rank much higher than their peers in the public universities across the country. They are more like students in the private four-year colleges and universities. But even here, when compared with the aggregate of students in private institutions they

turn out to be considerably higher in prior academic achievements, aspirations, and degree of confidence in their academic abilities. They are by these criteria in an elite group, belonging to the nation's most able, motivated, and promising students.

In other respects Stony Brook freshmen are different from academically comparable peers in private institutions. Fewer Stony Brook students have parents who have college degrees. Hence they may not receive in the same degree guidance from family experience that steers them towards better utilization of their college and its occupational possibilities. They also may have more difficulty communicating to their parents the more disinterested or "liberal learning" values of college. Further, only about ten percent of Stony Brook parents have an income of $25,000 or more as compared with nearly a third of parents in the private universities. This suggests that a smaller proportion of Stony Brook students has had access to the benefits that greater affluence provides, such as exposure to wider social and cultural experiences, including travel. It also means that there are fewer students from middle and higher socioeconomic brackets available who can acquaint their peers with the styles of thinking, working, and socializing characteristic of the occupations towards which Stony Brook students aspire. This is of course not an overwhelming disadvantage but it points to the need at Stony Brook for providing a university-sponsored orientation that at other institutions is available in the peer culture itself.

Nearly all Stony Brook freshmen come from a radius of one hundred miles or less from home. This is a considerably shorter distance than is true for students even in the public universities. When we asked Stony Brook students in interviews why they had come here, they replied almost invariably that Stony Brook had a low tuition, a good academic reputation, and was close to home but not so close as to preclude living away. The last phrase seems to indicate that while there is some attempt to achieve independence from home, it is a hesitant attempt. We know that this psychological dependence can hamper the development of intellectual initiative. (A study at Berkeley showed that by the junior year all Berkeley students who had initially lived at home and were still in the university had left their home for a dormitory or an off-campus residence of their own.) The age of Stony Brook freshmen may be a factor facilitating continuing dependency on home. One third of the freshmen are 17 or younger when they enter as compared with a mere four percent in the public universities at large. One may also speculate that upbringing in the metropolitan area of New York during the last two decades may have fostered stronger dependence on the family than on other institutions and peer groups.

Almost all undergraduates come from the metropolitan area, very few from upstate New York, other states or foreign countries. This mix, unusual for a school of Stony Brook's cosmopolitan aspirations, is further underlined by the fact that more than a majority of the freshmen are Jewish, about a quarter Catholic and only about ten percent Protestant. While students on many campuses complain about too much homogeneity, Stony Brook students we interviewed were particularly intense in this objection, to the point of saying that in talking to fellow students they felt at times as if they were addressing mirror images of themselves. If one keeps in mind that much of the education that students receive is peer education, the composition of Stony Brook's student body clearly requires a remedy.

We recommend:

1. More students from other parts of the state should be enticed to enter Stony Brook. This would enrich the present student body with people whose experiences and styles of upbringing are different from those now present. This could go hand in hand with attracting students from the rich mix of groups in the metropolitan area who are now uncerrepresented at Stony Brook.
2. Further diversification could be achieved by carefully planned exchange programs with colleges across the nation. On an exchange basis Stony Brook students would attend public universities in other states in numbers equivalent to out-of-state residents we would receive here. Both the out-of-state students in residence here and the returning in-state students would contribute to the diversification of life at Stony Brook.
3. The enlargement of opportunities for Stony Brook students to study abroad would go in the same direction. These opportunities should be made available any time after the freshman year, not just stereotypically in the junior year. Perhaps some students might be encouraged to spend a year abroad before entering Stony Brook.
4. We should also consider more attention to the psychological mix of students. Our evidence suggests that selecting students for admission based on grade point average alone seems to deprive Stony Brook of available students with high theoretical motivation, imagination, and drive. In the fall of 1971, under a policy begun in 1968, about thirty percent of the freshmen class was admitted by relaxing very slightly the grade point average requirements and looking for other signs of excellence. Students admitted on this basis were found higher in intellectual complexity, esthetic orientation, and emotional energy than their peers. We would recommend that the grade point average requirement be relaxed considerably in the case of applicants who show that they are talented by other indices and past performance. In general, we need to pay more attention to identifying and attracting talented students to Stony Brook.

In considering the composition of the student body at large, proportions of students who plan to major in the natural sciences and mathematics must also be taken into account. Thirty-seven percent of the Stony Brook freshmen men and twenty-five percent of the women plan to major in the natural sciences and mathematics. This compares with thirteen percent of the men and nine percent of the women in the other public universities across the nation. By contrast only thirteen percent of the Stony Brook men plan to major in the humanities and seven percent in the social sciences. The figures for the women are thirty-five percent and sixteen percent. (Another seven percent of the men plan to major in engineering and twenty-four percent plan to concentrate on pre-professional studies.)

The large number of science aspirants raises a problem at Stony Brook because many of these students do not stay in the sciences. These students have been high performers in the sciences when in high school and they often do not shift happily into other fields without loss of self-confidence in their abilities. This situation could be improved by more counseling associated with introductory science courses, more development of science courses as liberal arts instead of pre-graduate courses, introduction to non-science fields that stresses the intellectual and occupational opportunities of these subjects in order to

counteract their being viewed as "failure options." Given the large numbers of science-orientated freshmen and, as our data show, their lesser interest in general education, the arts, and other people, the teaching of these students by the humanities and the social sciences faculties should be re-thought to help overcome this originally lower motivation. Fresh avenues of communication with these students also need to be found. Stony Brook students who plan to major in the biological or physical sciences are the lowest in reporting themselves of having argued with a teacher in class in high school.

What is the optimal mix of academic interest groups for Stony Brook? Given that much learning is determined by interactions among students, a greater infusion of students oriented towards the humanities and social sciences might be desirable. This could be accomplished without reducing the proportions of science aspirants by looking for students who combine scientific with other interests. (Studies of creative scientists show they typically exhibit a broad combination of intellect and imagination.)

There is a further noteworthy feature in our profiles of the entering freshmen (and also the transfer) students. In spite of the fact that the freshmen are extremely high performers in high school and most stringently selected, they are in the aggregate only average on interest and attitude scales that measure intellectuality and theoretical orientation. They show no outstanding disposition for reflective thought, a broad range of ideas, scientific theory, and originality. Our interpretation of these data proposes that while Stony Brook freshmen have been good grade getters in high school, they have not sufficiently internalized the values of the intellectual life nor the pleasures of curiosity and imagination. Further they have not adequately developed a desire for rounded intellectual competence. Once at Stony Brook, this situation continues to be unsatisfactory. Faculty say that only seventeen percent of all undergraduate students have high academic motivation. Students in turn are very critical of the instruction they receive and the quality of academic life in general. Whatever the causes, after three years at Stony Brock, seniors on our scales show no growth in theoretical interest over the freshman.

From Freshman to the Senior Year: Academic Life

To deepen our understanding we need to take a closer look at what happens to the student once he has entered Stony Brook. Stony Brook students - freshmen and transfer students alike - enter the institution with much hopefulness. They expect to find not only a high level of scholarship, but also much opportunity to further their personal development, a sense of community, and even a certain level of propriety and manners. For instance, in the summer of 1972 most prospective freshmen expressed an idyllic composite of expectations, such as professors readily available for informal discussions, faculty experimentation with new and interesting teaching methods, students participating in academic planning and administrative governance, many quiet and comfortable places to study, students browsing in the bookstore, good occupational preparation, personal, patient and helpful counseling and guidance services. Eighty-eight percent of the entering freshmen expected that "most of the students here are pretty happy." Our data show that once they are here about half of the students declare themselves severely depressed a few times a month or more often. They report that the quality of teaching, the conditions of scholarship, sense of community, and opportunities for exploring personal meanings are often at an unsatisfactory level.

What are the causes of this disappointment? In exploring this question it needs saying first that the situation found at Stony Brook is not dissimilar to that of comparable universities in this country. It should also be pointed out that many of the freshmen's ambitions are being fulfilled. We have data for the class that entered Stony Brook in 1967 which indicate that shortly after graduation in 1971 as many of the men who had aspired to doctoral degrees as freshmen still expected to receive them by 1975 or later. (The women's situation is different as we will see.) The dropout rate of this class is quite low. Negligible percentages dropped out permanently and in comparison with other similar institutions relatively low percentages transferred before graduation (twenty-one percent of the men and eleven percent of the women).

In addition to many positive achievements there are also a number of less satisfactory circumstances. We turn to their exploration in the hope that what we find may be useful at Stony Brook - and elsewhere. Some of the freshmen's disappointments are a function of their very success of being admitted to a selective institution. Here they find themselves matched against others with similar ability levels. Hence their performances no longer have the special distinction they had in prior schooling. The tasks set for them by the college often are more demanding than those encountered in their previous schooling and they may not be psychologically prepared to cope with this new challenge. Paradoxically many are usually performing better even though their grades are worse. An aggravating factor in some courses or departments, particularly in the sciences, is that the competitive weeding-out process subjects students to evaluation before many have been able to adapt successfully to the university and develop the capacities which, with more time, might have allowed them to satisfy the expectancies of demanding courses.

Difficulties with courses are experienced by more students than any other single college problem. In spite of the wane of in loco parentis in the student culture, Stony Brook students poignantly call for more contact with and help from faculty in the classroom. Stony Brook students on a scale measuring the classroom environment give the institution a very low score. Classes are described as too large and impersonal. Instructors are seen as frequently giving priority to research over teaching. Students often oversleep and miss their classes. Many do not speak out in class unless called upon. Instructors tend to be described as lacking enthusiasm and disinterested, not encouraging close personal relationships with students.

The insufficiency of response to students from faculty coupled with both inadequate internalization by students of intellectual curiosity and their high ambition all contribute to making cheating a not uncommon response. The value of the degree or simply the attempt of staying in college often outweigh the student's involvement in the academic enterprise. Uncertainty about occupational opportunities after college, particularly in the present economic situation, has a further depressing influence on academic motivation. More than half of the men and nearly two-thirds of the women single out concern with career as a problem. While career achievement is traditionally a prerequisite of adult status for males, eighty-eight percent of the Stony Brook women now say that having a career in addition to being a wife and mother is vital for their self-fulfillment.

The classroom and teaching situation seems to call for many changes. We recommend:

1. Many more smaller classes in which students and professor can have genuine intellectual interaction should be created. The Incoming Students Seminars are a first attempt in that direction. Smaller classes will allow the students to take a more active role in investigation and to have available the individualized supervision, critique, and encouragement of their teacher. Every Stony Brook student in every semester should be part of at least one small class of not more than fifteen participants.
2. Much greater attention needs to be paid to the occupational aspirations and possibilities of undergraduates. This might involve more exposure, while in college, to occupations by way of internships, apprenticeships, site visits, etc. It might be desirable for each department to appoint one or more faculty members charged with determining and communicating to their students occupational possibilities for their majors -- both those occupations directly in the field or in areas to which the major might be instrumental. Vocational counseling and the provision of sophisticated information about occupations should become a clearly defined departmental task.
3. We see a need for greater balance between academic departments in the numbers of majors they serve and the total student loads they carry in all four undergraduate years, so that departments can more equitably share in the task of educating students. This task includes training students specifically for a profession in their field, usually only a fraction of those who major in it, helping prepare other students for a career for which instruction in the major is instrumental, e.g. economics for business administration, and teaching the subject matter to all students so that it broadens and liberalizes their intellectual and affective horizons.
4. We see a need for a university-wide definition of minimum teaching standards with strong moral and other sanctions to insure that they are lived up to. It might also become part of the professor's function to make relatively sophisticated assessments of his or her teaching techniques and teaching outcomes. Training for this should be provided by the university.
5. There needs to be more diversification of academic programs so that students can follow interests and develop competencies in a more organized way. These objectives can be met by (a) more interdepartmental programs; (b) new programs adapted to new needs, e.g. urban planning, developmental studies, undergraduate law or social welfare programs, community studies and service; (c) revival of the idea underlying the residential college plan, e.g programs and residential colleges devoted to such themes as history of science, women's status, utopias, use of computer, film making, folk music; in many, if not most instances, such programs should be the result of student initiative and in all cases students should be centrally involved in the planning because there can be no successful academic program in the dormitories without strong student support.
6. The entire curricular structure, including its many ad hoc devices, should be re-thought We need a more articulate and coherent philosophy of undergraduate education and we need to relate instruction more fully to the personal and professional growth of students.

The Social and Psychological Dimensions

Their own psychological development is an overriding concern for all undergraduates. Self-understanding, learning to live with others, understanding why they are in school are frequently registered concerns of Stony Brook freshmen. These concerns increase over the undergraduate years reaching their highest level [illegible]ors. For example, half of the freshmen men and women express a concern fo[illegible]ing to understand myself better." In the senior year two-thirds of the men and over eighty percent of the women express this concern. At Stony Brook, and elsewhere, many students do not make the variety of friends nor carry friendships to the level of intimacy they had hoped. Over sixty percent of the students describe themselves as frequently lonely - and this in spite of the much greater sexual freedom that characterizes Stony Brook and most other campuses across the nation.

Dissatisfaction with oneself, conflict with other people are cited as major sources of depression by students at Stony Brook and other institutions we have studied. Career uncertainty and feeling that school is useless are other frequently cited sources. There may be some aggravating factors contributing to student depression at Stony Brook. We have already mentioned the homogeneity of the undergraduate student body. In addition students seem not very outgoing. Stony Brook students in all four college years register low scores on the Social Extroversion scale. (Low scorers are people who tend to withdraw from social contacts and responsibilities.) Perhaps the students' high performance in high school, the work and attitudes it entailed, may have contributed to isolation from peers. Moreover, as was suggested earlier, growing up in the New York metropolitan area during the last fifteen years may have strengthened a tendency towards seeking closeness primarily within the family and a few close friends and of distrusting strangers. Whatever the causes, the result is one of undersocialization. To what extent have the residential system and the services to students been an antidote and what have they been able to do to meet student needs?

The Residences

Students in the residences express desires for a wide variety of arrangements. The following four are among the most highly desired by all students regardless of place of campus residence, sex, or undergraduate class: (1) opportunity to be with friends, (2) opportunity to meet different kinds of people, (3) congenial physical facilities and surroundings, including quiet places to study and pleasant lounge areas, and (4) good means of communicating news about college events. Other desiderata are: help with academic problems, opportunity to participate in planning college activities, active and accessible program coordinators. The women express a strong desire for the facilitation of artistic activities. Many Stony Brook students find that in a number of areas the residential arrangements live up to their expectations. Among these are good means of communicating news of college events, opportunity to be with friends, opportunity to participate in planning college activities. The students also comment favorably on the opportunity they have for regulating their own lives in the residential colleges.

But the students also list many deficiencies. Among them are academic and personal counseling, opportunity to meet different people, active faculty associates, congenial physical surroundings, quiet places to study, residential libraries. There are differences of views among students in different quads. These seem to mirror more or less obvious differences in arrangements. In H quad, which has corridor style accommodations, students say there are adequate opportunities for meeting different people while this is not said in other quads, especially Tabler and Kelly (suite style accommodations). Students often comment on the difficulty of meeting people outside of one's own group in those residences that are divided by suites, re-enforced by the absence of adequate common areas. The decline of the food services with common dining areas greatly contributes to this isolation. In quads in which there is a low number of program coordinators dissatisfaction with that service is registered while students in residences with a high number of program coordinators are satisfied with them.

When we asked students why they selected a particular residence, replies show that social motivation, the opportunity to be with friends and to meet different people, again stands out. The great popularity of informal meals and concerts seems to derive in many ways from the opportunities they provide for meeting people. The need for more interaction with adult people is expressed in the students' desire for more program coordinators and for more academic and personal counseling than is now present. The social motivation thus is complex. It comprehends the desire for the acquisition of interpersonal skills and the development of the capacity for intimacy in relations with peers, more attention from adults and the availability of more adults who can serve as models and teachers in the wider sense of the word. These socializing tendencies are accompanied by the need for greater individualization. Half of the Stony Brook students, who do not now have a room solely to themselves, prefer one. More than half desire more privacy in the residences. More than half think the ideal residence unit would contain no more than thirty people.

The psychological inventory we administered indicates that our students are inadequately prepared for the tough, impersonal, and bureaucratized campus they encounter. We may need to teach students how to fare better psychologically in a bureaucratic world that is a replica of what they did and will encounter in the outside world. We also need to enhance their opportunities for deepening social relationships and social responsiveness, including the amenities of social intercourse. Too few people smile at each other on this campus.

To these purposes we recommend:

1. A concerted effort should be made to supply more people to the residences who are trained, or can be trained, to facilitate social interaction.
2. Further efforts should be undertaken to make the interior living spaces more attractive and more congenial for socializing, study, and recreation.
3. As food seems on this campus a particular potent convener of people, further provisions for the availability of food outside of regular meal times should be made. The trend towards coffee shops and the like is a step in this direction.
4. Faculty should be encouraged to meet and interact more frequently with students outside of the classroom. Among them might be meetings around tasks of joint interest

which is one way of avoiding the stiff socializing that often characterizes student-faculty encounters outside of the classroom

5. People in the community surrounding the university can bring stimulation, example, and friendship to many students. It might even be desirable to convert one or several campus residences to house people other than students, if these people are selected for their maximal usefulness to students - and vise versa. For instance, young married professionals, with and without children, would give our students a desirably clearer view of the phase of life just in front of them. Appropriate senior citizens might provide some of the grandparental perspective now often lost with the wane of the extended family.

The Services and Peer Helping

Students have a large array of academic, occupational, and personal problems and there are many services available to help them. What problems stand out in the students' minds? The problem undergraduates mention most often is that of choosing courses. Seventy-eight percent of the men and eighty-nine percent of the women list it. Nearly as many men and women say that finding satisfying activities on campus is a problem. Next come problems in self-understanding, getting along with others, financial problems. Men often mention difficulties in studying and in understanding art, literature, and music. Women often report obtaining service for their me al needs as a problem.

When we compiled a list of services at Stony Brook we were astonished to find that they numbered over one hundred. But it turns out that students have never heard or at best are vaguely aware of over half of these services. For some of these services this is no surprise because they address themselves to specialized needs or do not require direct student contact. But among the unknown services are several addressed to students' academic, psychological, and social well-being. Included among these are the legislative and executive student government services which ironically are unknown to over half of the students.

Some services are highly used and considered highly effective. The highest rated are the Statesman and News at Noon. COCA (films) is also very highly rated. Other services receiving high ratings are residential and managerial assistants and the Library. Departmental advisers also received high ratings. Another group of services were not used as often but were considered effective. Among these were services that by their nature concern fewer students, such as the International Student Affairs office, Ambulance Corps, Study Abroad, the financial aid office, draft counseling, child care center, and the craft shop. Among effective services that have a potentially larger use were physical education, Action Line, Response.

Among services that are little used and considered at best moderately adequate are many addressed to the academic, psychological, social, and career functioning of students. Students stay away from them because of their low reputation, justified or unjustified, or simply because they are not well enough known. Communication continually is revealed as a problem at Stony Brook.

There are some services which by necessity have a high use but which the students consider low in effectiveness. The services so listed are the bursar, the food service,

and the registrar. The kinds and causes of problems vary with each service. They are all vital services and if they were more effective, it would much increase the sense of well-being at Stony Brook. We recommend special student-staff task groups to begin working immediately towards the improvement of these crucial services.

To whom do students turn for the help they do not find in the formal services? Our data show that they turn in very large numbers to their peers (though many others to nothing). The men turn to friends fifty-four percent of the time, to parents eighteen percent, to faculty thirteen percent, to professional service staff ten percent, to administrators two percent. The figures for the women are similar, but they turn to friends less often and to parents and relatives more often. It is of interest to note that the help from all these sources is considered effective not much more than a third of the time; so there still is considerable scope for improved helping by any one of these groups.

Peer helping is not to be viewed merely negatively - as a function of the absence or underuse of formal services though it is partly that. Many studies in the last two decades have shown the great impact of peers on the intellectual, emotional, and social development of students. Academic advising, at Stony Brook and elsewhere, would be in shambles were it not for the grapevine knowledge provided by peers; for instance, it fills in the gaps between the formal statements of the catalog and the operational realities of departments and instructors. In regard to teaching, peers are a resource that has not yet been adequately understood or utilized in any institution.

There are many areas in which the knowledge held by peers is inadequate. Students are insufficiently informed about the job market, occupational opportunities, the nature of jobs. In considering careers they may have underdeveloped skills to distinguish their own motivations from pressures by parents, peers, faculty and from the fantasy objectives which are an invariable concomitant of the child's career thoughts. Students need more training in executing those counseling functions they already informally perform. As our research brought home to us the fact that peers are an important resource for each other, we were instrumental in developing a course which attempts to equip students more adequately for the helping roles they are already occupying. The effects of this program currently are under study.

More needs to be done. We recommend the use of counseling professionals to train selected students to acquire relevant information concerning occupations, to make appropriate referrals to information sources. and to aid their peers in a more sophisticated assessment of occupational motivations and attitudes.

Student self-help is also underdeveloped in the intellectual domain. Students at many times in educational history have created their own educational arrangements to compensate for shortcomings in the formal system. Literary, scientific, and other clubs, free universities, self-directed studies, creative activities and vigorous dormitory discussions have served this purpose. At Stony Brook student autonomy in intellectual matters is not at as high a level as it could be. When we discussed this with students they said to us that the impersonality and lack of excitement in many classrooms exerted a dampening effect on their readiness to discuss ideas or pursue knowledge on their own. Perhaps the large lecture courses which

freshmen encounter and continue during their college career re-enforce the passivity toward learning that many students seem to bring from high school. To encourage the development of a more autonomous intellectual student culture, several recommendations we will make later should help, among them more student participation in academic planning, creation of more integrated academic programs, better communication between students.

Students admit to many problems. But also they often do not attempt to get help They give as reasons for not seeking help that they feel hassled by the formality of getting help, that they do not think that anyone could help them o. at least that they do not know anyone who could help them, that they do not know where to go, in part because they do not know anybody personally in a relevant service. This and other things we have said makes clear that the network of formal services and of informal student helping still is insufficient to provide for the basic personal needs of many students, to overcome isolation, and to stimulate intellectual autonomy. More generally, students do not have a sufficient sense of being cared about, and they respond with apathy and lowered self-esteem.

Women Undergraduates

Women undergraduates at Stony Brook and elsewhere, face more problems than their male peers. Stony Brook women report themselves more often than the men as facing problems in the areas of identity and interpersonal relation. Women more frequently register problems in the area of choosing courses. They report more difficulties finding satisfying activities on and off-campus. About two-thirds of the women, as compared to one-third of the men declared they had medical problems. The women used the health service more often but were less satisfied with it than the men. The major problem is the lack of availability of gynecologists. To speak here of understaffing would be an understatement.

As many as forty-one percent of the Stony Brook women undergraduates said that in many of their relations with the various university services there had not been sufficient attention to the special needs of women. We have insufficient data on what detractions of their ambitions women may face in the classroom. The following figures at least tell what happens to these ambitions. In a 1971 follow-up of women who entered Stony Brook in 1969, it turns out that the thirty percent of the women who had expressed ambitious professional plans were reduced to half by the time of leaving college. The seventy-two percent of their male peers who had similar ambitious plans underwent no such reduction.

Special attention to the quality of life for undergraduate women seems overdue. We recommend that women students and women faculty be encouraged and aided in investigating in further detail the academic, emotional, and social problems of women undergraduates in the classroom, university services, and residences. We urge that the university cooperate fully in moving toward those formal and informal remedies that will guarantee women students equal psychological status and help them overcome deficiencies resulting from earlier discrimination in child rearing and prior schooling.

Student Participation, Communication, Integrated Education

Our data show decided deficiencies among students in social integration, communication, academic, and psychological vitality. In addition to the recommendation, already made, we believe that student autonomy and vitality would be enhanced if students were given a greater and more effective share in the conduct of the university's affairs We recommend fuller student participation in the academic, governmental, social and cultural processes of the university. Students should be enlisted in the planning of individual courses, departmental programs, administrative and other services that more or less directly affect their welfare. We also should encourage greater development of student self-help and of independent student traditions and subcultures.

As part of the development of a more vigorous student culture we recommend considerable expansion of the means of communication. Our data indicate that Stony Brook students value existing means of communication highly. But, as among other things the level of ignorance about services reveals they are not enough. For instance, a campus newspaper should appear every weekday. On many campuses the newspaper had taken the place of the compulsory chapel of old as a common experience and unifying force. In the newspaper, campus events are made known and reflected upon. We are struck by the many excellent campus events - lectures, artistic performances, workshops, etc. - which are poorly attended and little known. We need to create at Stony Brook a climate which encourages attendance at such events as part of a new cultural and social nexus. Further, a daily newspaper would provide the necessary focus and stimulation for debate on the concerns of the university community. The campus newspaper should be made easily available to all students and personnel on campus if it is to fulfill its vital mission of creating community. We suggest that as a practical measure the university purchase sufficient subscriptions to assure copies for all faculty and other interested employees. This arrangement should help in providing a reasonable economic base without compromising editorial integrity.

The weekly calendar should be brought out in a more effective format. Kiosks in strategic parts of the campus should be used to broadcast the weekly calendar and other news of events.

A desirable ingredient in facilitating the intellectual life is a considerably enlarged bookstore. Particularly because of the university's location, a bookstore that carries a wide assortment of books is much needed. Facilities for browsing should be ample. In addition to books, there ought to be available a wide variety of professional, literary, and other magazines, perhaps also a few major newspapers from this country and abroad. Because much education derives from one's own self-directed reading, the opportunities and invitingness of available books are essential. At this time our facilities make it difficult for our students to develop the habit of browsing, let alone book buying. We will need to find a solution to the financial problem entailed by enlarging the bookstore.

The fragmentation of student culture could also be countered by the creation of more integrated academic programs. These programs would link together more intimately the subjects that students study thus making an undergraduate's transcript less the disconnected miscellany it often is now. In regard to student life these programs would bring together the

same students for periods of joint work and study for periods lasting from a few weeks to several years. These programs would provide opportunities for mutual intellectual stimulation as well as intellectual cooperation, and would lead, as an inevitable byproduct, to more knowledge of each other, personal linkage, and community among students.

We finally point out that the developing Health Sciences Center at Stony Brook is particularly rich in professionals whose competence is in the areas of community planning and services. Here seems a special challenge to have this expertise bear on our own university community and to develop arrangements that could serve as models to other universities and other communities.

Commuters

Little has been said about students who do not live on campus. Perhaps it is an indication of their present centrifugal status that our research efforts to obtain information from them have been frustrating. We are making a fresh attempt this year. There is anecdotal evidence that at least some of the commuters (as well as many residents who leave the campus on weekends) continue to be anchored in their home communities, have their social and emotional lives there and regard the university as something like a service station with which they have little contact outside of the classroom. We have more secure evidence that at least initially many of them desire more contact with the university. A large majority of the entering transfer students in 1972 expressed a desire to participate in campus extracurricular activities.

Studies done elsewhere suggest that non-residential students do not develop their thinking, their independence and emotional freedom as well as resident students. We will need to develop fresh means to enable commuters to benefit more fully from the curricular and extracurricular offerings of the university if they are to have an equal opportunity for intellectual and personal growth.

Minority Students

We know even less about minority students than we know about commuters. Yet we believe that for the sake of white and non-white students alike, and for the new society we are trying to build, we need more knowledge of the academic and nonacademic impact of the university on non-white students. We are engaged this year in the task of collecting initial data that we hope will lead to such knowledge.

Preparation for a New Life Style

Frequently throughout this report we have indicated that there are many interferences with student attempts at Stony Brook to become educated. The lack of attention the university pays to student struggles with establishing identity, with achieving social competence and less encumbered intimacy create unproductive anxieties and make the academy seem remote if not hostile to their essential goals. Uncertainty about what a college education is for, anxiety about occupational possibilities, and vagueness of what the "real" world outside is like all contribute to disorientation. There is a further obstacle to

students taking college seriously. It lies in the students' future prospects. As long as what is in store for graduates is a mediocre job in an overspecialized organizational hierarchy and residence in one of the banal and artless tracts that have vulgarized the American landscape, dullness and lack of intellectual involvement are perhaps adaptive; it is anticipatory socialization. The dimly perceived future of mediocrity does not stimulate that cultivation of the mind that requires scope for expression at work and at home; hence some of the apathy that even the dormant fires of adolescence cannot excite.

The issue is clear. Unless students can look forward to a life in which intellect, science, and art have an essential place, they will not respond eagerly to what we offer them in academia. What is needed is a change in the life style of the middle classes of our society. The function of our universities could be that of a vast proving ground for the development of such a life style. This would put in question many of our present ways of "teaching" and it would be a great challenge to test whether the faculty are resourceful and talented enough to fashion university environments which can serve students as basic models for an existence in which poetry, art, and science are not pursued as classroom assignments but as life itself.

There is no institution yet that has picked up this challenge. But if it is not met, the danger is that universities and colleges will become dull holding stations of young people for whom there is no useful work. Some institutions will have to respond to the challenge. Will it be Stony Brook?