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**A STUDY OF WITHIN-TERM MALE DROP-OUTS  
AT MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE  
FOR THE SCHOOL YEARS  
1947-'49**

**By  
L. DALE FAUNCE**

**A DISSERTATION**

**Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Michigan  
State College of Agriculture and Applied Science  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF EDUCATION**

**Department of Guidance and Counselor Training  
School of Education**

**1952**



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Approved

Walter L. Johnson

THESIS ABSTRACT

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This investigation was undertaken to identify and describe attributes of within-term college drop-outs during the freshman and sophomore years, and to interpret the relationship of these attributes to the over-all functioning of a student personnel program at the college level. Specifically, the problem is concerned with describing the differential statuses of drop-out students at the time they leave school and the reasons they give for leaving.

Two primary sources of information were used in this study. Official records from various student personnel offices at Michigan State College were made available and provided a basis for collecting data pertinent to the personal-social background of the within-term drop-outs and the conditions under which this behavior occurred at the time of withdrawal. A second source of information was the drop-out student in person after at least one year had elapsed since the time of his withdrawal. Information was obtained from these former students by means of a questionnaire which had been checked for both validity and reliability by means of several outside criteria, including judges, trial runs, and interviewing. The records of all male freshman and sophomore students withdrawing from Michigan State College during the terms of years 1947-49 were used for analysis.

The study revealed that within the college community the potential within-term drop-out fails to participate on a par with others in campus organizations. The requirements of academic discipline are more of a casual anchoring point for him, while his housing, health, personal matters, and finances stand in the foreground. The important values, the values about which he is concerned in either a positive or negative frame of reference (either for or against but in either case primary objects of attention and evaluation), serve as diversions from meeting the prerequisites of social and academic participation in the college as a community of interacting persons with mutual and reciprocal role expectations.

As a further index for potential within-term drop-out behavior the study also revealed that, (1) Off-campus housing presents the student with a financial dilemma, real or imaginary, which makes it difficult for him to maintain his student status and carry out his role obligations in the college community, (2) Poor academic work is acknowledged by students as a reason for their withdrawal only when some other reason is lacking, i.e., as a last resort, (3) Students who consider illness, finances, or employment as reasons for withdrawal will be functioning academically at the same level as students who recognize academic difficulty as their reason for leaving,

(4) Private homes or temporary housing afford a condition associated with the concept of illness as a reason for withdrawal in direct contrast to dormitories, cooperatives, or fraternities, where the concept seldom emerges, and (5) The student who does well on entrance examinations is less likely to give illness as a reason for withdrawal than the student with average or poor performance on these examinations.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Appreciation is due the members of the author's Doctoral Committee, Professors Walter Johnson, C. E. Erickson, G. V. Millard, L. J. Luker, Charles P. Loomis and Clyde Campbell, with special thanks to Dr. Johnson, Chairman, and Dean Erickson for their encouragement and guidance; also to Mr. Ralph Holloway, graduate student in sociology at the State University of Iowa, for his untiring assistance.

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## Chapter I

### THE PROBLEM

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is (1) to identify and describe attributes of students who drop out of college within-terms during their freshman and sophomore years, and (2) to interpret the relationship of these attributes to the over-all functioning of a student personnel program at the college level. Specifically, the problem is concerned with describing the differential statuses of drop-out students at the time they leave school and the reasons they give for leaving.

#### Importance of the Problem

While several references are available concerning drop-outs in general, educational literature contains little information pertaining to those who drop out within-terms. The within-terms criterion suggests that unanticipated or anomalous factors of a strategic nature arose which in the student's conception were so significant that he felt compelled to leave immediately. Pressure from somewhere was exerted upon the individual to substitute a new or different pattern of activity for his current academic program. Because many colleges have been concerned with the mortality rate of their student population, several

have inaugurated the procedure of conducting exit interviews to secure data for analysis of the drop-out problem. Reports of the exit interviewing programs do not cite the particular problems of the within-term drop-outs; instead, drop-outs are considered as a general type, irrespective of whether they left school between terms or within the term under the pressure of a situation which appeared immediate and demanding to them. The problem is of importance because at the present time the same general interpretation of reasons for dropping out is applied to both within-term drop-outs and between term (or end of term) drop-outs. While on the surface the symptoms for both groups may appear to be the same, the causes of mortality may differ.

Specifically, the study is important from the standpoint of administrators as a possible means of increasing their knowledge of the relationship of this unit of student behavior to the over-all student personnel program. In turn, admission counselors, personal counselors, and others dealing with interpersonal relations might well make use of such knowledge.

However important the information may be for administrators or others, its primary significance may emerge if future within-term drop-outs are aided because their cases are better understood. Moreover, paradoxical though it may seem, the ultimate importance of such a study is in

terms of elimination of the within-term drop-out student either by non-admission, or by his continuing through to the completion of his role requirements as a student. While this ultimate goal is not to be expected per se, an approximation is possible only if efforts in this direction are undertaken which are based upon reliable knowledge and understanding of the within-term drop-out problem.

Last, but not necessarily least, is the importance of this problem in terms of the relationships between the college and the public which it serves. President Hanoher (29:4) of the State University of Iowa states in an annual report:

. . . it must not be forgotten that this State has no more precious possession than its human stock. And, in its state-supported University, this State possesses an institution which is engaged in a unique fashion in the study, conservation, development, and improvement of its human resources--its men, women, and children.

In this day and age industry has a personal stake in higher education and takes a vital interest in college and university affairs. In comparing the college drop-out problem with the problem of industrial rejects, the following statement has been made:

Using an industrial analogy the Universities carry only 37 per cent of their initial products through to the end, and 63 per cent are rejects. In industry any production unit which had such a



record would be ripe for an administrative overhauling. Universities are in exactly the same position.\*

One would immediately note that a college "reject" in the form of a drop-out is not of necessity a total loss, as is apt to be the case in an industry where physical objects are being molded for a specific and limited purpose. However, the direction of the point taken still holds true — particularly for students who leave prior to the completion of their second year, as is the case with the students under consideration in this study. At present only a small fraction of the information necessary for understanding this problem is available.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study will be exploratory in that the subclass of within-term drop-outs which will be the focal point of the investigation is, in general, a field of exploration largely unanalyzed heretofore. Crowder (13:3) emphasizes this in his thesis when he writes:

Little can be determined or suggested in the way of improvement of the University's efforts to serve its students in the future without knowledge of the problems or conditions which cause students to leave the school.

---

\*Taken from a panel discussion of industrialists and educators. Annual Meeting, Southern College Placement Officers Association, Gatlinberg, Tennessee, 1951.



Analysis of within-term drop-outs will be confined to the first and second year student population at Michigan State College during the years 1947-'49. While generalizations from one population to another increase the range of error by an unknown amount, limiting one's investigation to a specific population for purposes of intensive analysis in the exploratory stage of investigation is defensible. From such exploratory study this thesis will then proceed to suggest techniques for further study and investigation along this line. In any event, the postulate is accepted that new knowledge is gained by departure from convention. This thesis departs from the conventional approach to the drop-out problem by analysis of within-term drop-outs as a special class with problems peculiar to, and therefore best understood by, such analysis.

Michigan State College operates on a four quarter basis; therefore, each student enrolls by terms. A within-term drop-out is a student who withdraws before his relatively immediate objective is completed, i.e., before completing the current term in which he is enrolled. This student, unlike the between-term drop-out, leaves his fellow students and companions behind at a time when they are remaining. In addition, he must be interviewed by several college personnel offices and he must state a reason for his unanticipated departure. The records of such personal

interviews as took place at Michigan State College at the time of withdrawal were made available for this study. All such withdrawals were voluntary. If under twenty-one years of age, the student was required to have written permission from his parents to withdraw. The expression within-term drop-out as here used is limited therefore to those students meeting the above criteria.

### Plan of the Study


The data were gathered for the description of within-term drop-outs during the period of 1947-'49 at Michigan State College from the records previously described. The selection of this specific group appeared to be justifiable because (1) intensive analysis of this group was possible, thereby making for an accurate description from which new relationships might be discovered, and (2) examination of the elements among a number of cases having characteristics in common may reveal cues for the understanding of any given case. Such a procedure is useful in providing data from which inductive generalizations can be formed.

Any collection of data is of significance only in so far as the units known or surmised to be useful and therefore collected as data are valid and reliable. The question one must face is: Collecting data of what for what? While it is possible that a relationship might be found between blue and brown eyed students in terms of their

relationship to student mortality, such fortuitous circumstances would be of little value to understanding the problem at hand. The absence of data dealing specifically with the problems of within-term drop-outs does not mean that no information is available. At the present time within-term drop-outs in many instances receive the same services as end-of-term or between-term drop-outs. Studies reporting on the general drop-out problem are available and will be reviewed for purposes of abstracting a tentative list of attributes or characteristics which will then become the basis for investigation to determine their relevance for the specific class of drop-outs who withdraw within a term. The review of the literature constitutes Chapter II of this study.

Following the review of the literature and the construction of a tentative list of general drop-out attributes, a comparison of the association between these items and the significant items for within-term drop-outs will be made.

A follow-up study makes use of a questionnaire to check the validity and reliability of the data as here procured and analyzed. The follow-up is based on a sample of the Michigan State College drop-outs. These findings are reported in Chapter V along with the results of the general study.



### Definition of Terms

The term drop-outs is used in the literature with such comparable terms as withdrawals and school-leavers. In general, these terms identify that class of persons subsumed under references to student mortality -- those who for one reason or another fail to complete a college education at a given school. The general terms are often modified to make up sub-classifications such as voluntary withdrawals and involuntary withdrawals. The former refer to those students who leave on their own initiative, or who leave prior to official action on the part of the educational institution which would require them to drop out. The latter term, involuntary withdrawal, refers to students expelled, dismissed, or forced to withdraw because of their failure to fulfill the minimum role expectations attached to their student status as defined by the administration of the institution.

Within-term or intra-term drop-outs, such as are the subjects of this study, are a sub-class within the general class of drop-outs referred to as a part of student mortality. The within-term drop-out, as referred to in this thesis, is a student who enrolled for a term at Michigan State College but discontinued before the end of that term. At Michigan State College it is possible for a student to enter the institution with only one term of credit

as his immediate objective. While there is a possibility that some students may have planned to enroll for only part of a term, i.e., to have considered their objective to be less than a complete term, it is reasonable to assume that such persons are practically non-existent.

### Summary

This study is concerned with identifying and describing attributes of the within-term drop-out students at the freshman and sophomore level of college by means of an exploratory investigation for purposes of gaining knowledge which might be of aid to the college administrators, the student, and others concerned with the over-all student personnel program at the college level. Many educators have expressed an awareness of this need, among them MacIntosh (34:67):

There can be little question that the matter of voluntary withdrawal is one which will bear further study by colleges and universities and that it is a factor which must not be overlooked in any consideration of the persistence and stability of a student body.

In addition, due to the lack of previous research in this specific area, it is the aim of this study to make suggestions for further research which might lead to greater advancements in this area. Such a study would seem to be important since the conventional approach to the problem of drop-outs has neglected to take into account the possibility

of differential characteristics being associated with the within-term drop-outs; for example, his status and role playing are not necessarily the same as that for other students.

The following procedures were included in the proposals for this study: (1) A review of the literature pertaining to the problem of student mortality and drop-outs in general, including any literature, if such could be found, pertaining to within-term drop-outs; (2) The collection of data concerning freshmen and sophomore students who were within-term drop-outs at Michigan State College during the years 1947-'49, allowing for a thorough and accurate description of attributes and characteristics by which they might be identified; (3) An analysis of the within-term drop-out problem as distinguished from the problem of general drop-outs presented in the literature; (4) The preparation of a number of inductive generalizations and recommendations for further research.

## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Reports on Previous Studies Indicating the Nature of the Problem

A review of the literature reveals many reports dealing either directly or indirectly with the general nature of the drop-out problem but none dealing specifically with the problem of within-term drop-outs. Of primary concern has been the general problem of student mortality and the studies found in the literature serve both as an indicator of the lack of holding power of the colleges as well as providing some general cues as to the nature of the drop-out problem.

The magnitude of the general drop-out problem is cited by Charter (9:401) in a reference to a United States Office of Education study:

Of one hundred entering freshmen, sixty remained through the first year and entered as sophomores, forty-nine stayed until the end of the sophomore year, forty-one through the junior year, and thirty-seven through the senior year.

These figures agree with other studies which indicate that the mortality rate is 50 per cent or higher during the first two years of college life. MacIntosh (34) in a study of 655 liberal arts colleges reported a mortality rate exceeding 50 per cent, with large coeducational

colleges (enrollment over one thousand) having a mortality rate of 61 per cent.

Charter (9:401) states that the most amazing fact of all is the apparent lack of knowledge on the part of the colleges and the universities as to the causes of student mortality. "Twenty per cent were dropped for disciplinary reasons, for the other 80 per cent the causes were unknown."

The proportion of drop-outs by term during the first year of college reveals that no single term differs significantly from other terms. This suggests that the causes for the students leaving, whatever they are, become manifest at any time throughout the year. Mitchell (42:96) tabulated the first year drop-outs by terms over a three-year period as follows:

TABLE 1  
DROP-OUTS BY TERMS IN PERCENTAGES

| Terms                     | 1937-'38 | 1938-'39 | 1939-'40 |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| During the first term     | 11       | 11       | 7        |
| By end of the first term  | 48       | 36       | 23       |
| By end of the second term | 63       | 55       | 41       |
| By end of the third term  | 100      | 100      | 100      |

In an analysis of first year drop-outs by terms, McNeely (40) found approximately the same proportions.



Snyder (51) reported an even higher proportion dropping out by the end of the first semester in a study based on a profile of drop-outs from Los Angeles City College.

The above observations have relevance for this study in that among other things they demonstrate that the problem of student mortality starts approximately with the day school begins. From here on it is apparent that many students are having difficulty with maintaining what one might call status-equilibrium. By a variety of experiences, as will be seen, some not only learn to carry out the role expectations attached to their newly acquired status of college student, but go on to the successful completion of both their immediate and their long-range objective. Others, the drop-outs, remain marginal for varying periods of time. Varying degrees of crisis may ensue, with the intensity of the crisis probably proportional to the degree of friction and contradiction of the external demands and internal factors. "Dropping-out", as seen from this perspective, is by no means an accidental or arbitrary affair.

#### Some Social-Psychological Characteristics of the Drop-out Problem

In this section an attempt will be made to sketch the problem as reported in the literature in order to give a general characterization of drop-outs as seen from the



drop-out's point of view. The characterization necessarily consists of rather arbitrary statements since the literature is neither abundant nor comprehensive, hence, only a rough indication of the implication of these findings can be given.

A significant study of reasons students give for dropping out is reported by Mitchell (42). After learning something about general status, economic, academic, family and health factors, he found that within several comparable status categories the reasons given for dropping out were quite consistent. Poor academic work, lack of money, and lack of interest were dominant factors reported.

In a comparable study at DePauw, Cumings (14) found the same three factors to be dominant, though lack of money ranked third among his subjects. A comparison by Mitchell (42:97) of McNeely's study with two other reports is presented in Table 2 and tends to verify the stability of this complex factor:

**TABLE 2**  
**COMPARISONS OF THREE STUDIES CONCERNING DROP-OUTS AND**  
**THEIR REASONS FOR LEAVING COLLEGE**

| Reason                      | Michigan<br>( - - per cent of - - ) | McNeely | Ursinus |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Lack of money               | 20.8                                | 22.4    | 20.3    |
| Not interested, discouraged | 15.6                                | 17.6    | 7.3     |
| Transferred                 | 8.1                                 | -       | -       |
| Poor academic work          | 39.4                                | 44.4    | 23.9    |
| Illness or injury           | 11.1                                | 7.6     | 10.6    |
| Needed at home              | 2.5                                 | 1.6     | -       |

Within the framework of this phase of the literature, a different relationship is reported by Snyder (51) who, employing more categories than the other writers cited, found that academic failure accounted for only seven per cent of the drop-outs while lack of money was highest among the subjects, forty-six per cent giving this as their reason.

No matter how important any one of these factors may be, the studies still indicate that it is a complex of elements and conditions which surround the potential drop-out student, and the reason he gives for dropping out is apt to be simply a name for the many characteristics which contribute to his situation. In dealing with this problem one sees that there is always the danger of generalizing on the

basis of one rather than another event instead of relating the events within a realistic perspective. In other words, to say that poor academic work is important in the decision of the student to drop out is not the equivalent of saying he dropped out simply because his grades were low. The other factors which limit his adaptability and persistence need to be taken into account and one must not lose sight of the multiple nature of this complex of influences. So while one searches the literature to gain a proper recognition of each of these factors, one is at the same time aware that an understanding of their place in the over-all structure of drop-out influences is a necessary condition for this study.

Psychological Traits as Indicated by Tests of Aptitude and Ability in Terms of Their Relationship to the Drop-out Problem

A 1938 U. S. Office of Education Report (40:112) says "Scholastic failure is one of the chief sources of student mortality." Swan (52:236) states in a study of withdrawals during 1947 at the University of Minnesota where exit interviewing had been inaugurated:

The exit interview study found that 25 per cent of those who withdrew from school left because of academic difficulties, either voluntarily or through drop action.

Many attempts have been made to predict on the basis of I.Q., scholastic ability, or scholastic aptitude the students who will drop out of college. The usual technique is to "measure" by means of a scale the individual's position in relation to others participating in the particular dimension of behavior under study. The statistics of measurement of I.Q., scholastic ability, or scholastic aptitude are difficult to interpret unless accompanied by a high correlation between the conditions on which the norms for the measuring instruments are based and the conditions under which the behavior of the individual occurs. Secondly, so long as the "normal curve" is used for grading at the college level, a specified proportion of students is going to fail due to "academic difficulty" even if the top 50 per cent of those taking entrance examinations were the only ones allowed to enroll. For these reasons, if no others, the value of tests and measurements of the type referred to is limited in so far as prediction of drop-out behavior due to ability or aptitude is concerned.

Fresfield (24:117) writing on the use of the American Council on Education Psychological Examination states:

It is one of the standard credos in psychology that among college students academic achievement is not substantially commensurate with native intellectual ability. Among the many qualifying factors are time and energy absorbed by athletic events, the need of many students to devote considerable time to earning at least part of their support through college, and/or participation in the many and varied extra-curricular activities.

It is obvious that the items mentioned by Fresfield represent only a few factors which may under certain conditions contribute to poor academic work. For example, other items contributing to failure include poor health, emotional maladjustment, and lack of interest. With this in mind it appears remarkable that test scores reach the degree of differentiation sometimes reported.

Agate (2) studied the relationship of I.Q. scores to persistence in college and found that those who stayed in college four years were 23 points higher than those who withdrew during the first semester.

Freeman (23) reported that tests of college aptitude are most likely to identify individuals at the two extremes; namely, those who are least likely to complete their undergraduate work, and those who are most likely to do so. The test scores, he stated, are likely to have little predictive value for individuals in the middle range, approximately the mid-sixty per cent.

While not refuting the importance of general intelligence for college work, Goodenough (27:14) states:

General intelligence tests have a real place in the college testing service, even though it is a place of smaller importance than that assigned in the earlier stages of educational progress.

#### Personality Scales and Other Measures of Adjustment

The term personality has been variously defined because personalities are complex and inclusive of many

traits or behavior patterns. A definition which is commendable for one purpose may not be for another. Just as some people are able to act intelligently in many situations, others in only a few, so too a personality well integrated in terms of a Hollywood career may be poorly equipped for adjustment to college life. All this has a definite bearing on the literature pertaining to the measurement or rating of personality at the college level, since the rating of one person by another is among the oldest of practices -- the present rating scales being refinements of older techniques. The phase of personality to be judged, whether specific or general, the conditions under which the behavior is to take place -- all of these have an important bearing on the usefulness of a given scale or measuring device. Their importance, however, should not be underestimated.

After a comprehensive review of the general literature dealing with rating scales, Masoner (35:7) concludes that personality rating scales have considerable promise for the future. He states:

It is important to note that the number of rating scales, inventories, anecdotal reporting devices, report cards for the evaluation of personality, and other measures of personality that have been developed in school systems are probably in the hundreds or even thousands. Returns from schools concerned indicate that a number of secondary schools regard rating as an important phase of the pupil personnel program.

Rating scales or personality inventories designed to deal specifically with the characteristics of drop-outs are not reported in the literature and, in so far as this writer could determine, such scales do not exist. From a logical point of view this lack of such scales is not surprising since one of the first prerequisites in rating scale construction is that the traits be clearly defined. This is essential so that the traits will be clearly understood by the raters or judges. With the present state of tenuous knowledge concerning the drop-out problem, one would be hard put to select traits which could be assigned proper weights in regard to their association with drop-out behavior, or to define these traits as they are functionally related to the problem at hand. When the above criteria are not met, one can be reasonably sure that independent judgments by raters concerning the score or rank of the subject under consideration will be scattered. Since it is necessary to take the mean or some average of all the judgments as representing the nearest approximation to the "true" rating, the hypothetical "true" score has little meaning when a large proportion of these judgments deviate significantly from the average.


Nevertheless, rating scales have a place in the evaluation of social-personal characteristics of drop-out behavior even though their use is somewhat limited at this



time. The Teacher's Rating Scale for Pupil Adjustment (54) based on norms through the first two years of college lists five categories of adjustment: intellectual characteristics, social adjustment, work and study habits, emotional adjustment, and scholastic adjustment. The authors of this scale are aware apparently of the generalness or abstractness of their categories and a sign of their awareness is indicated by a provision for numerous supplemental data they consider necessary to "increase the value of the scales."

The Vineland Social Maturity Scale (55) lists items supposedly representing progressive maturation by several categories: self-help, self-direction, locomotion, occupation, and socialization. The scale is intended for use with a normal population up to age thirty. While the results have a high correlation with intelligence test results, the validity of the test in terms of behavior prediction is only ambiguously reported.

In general, the literature suggests many avenues of exploration by means of rating scales. The above cited scales are only suggestive of the way the scales are conceived and serve to illustrate the fact that the elements of behavior rated are primarily general abstractions rather than concrete realities. In so far as such scales will be of aid in understanding college adjustment with reference to the drop-out problem, the job of scale construction is yet to be done.



Writing of rating scales, Garrett (26:42) states:

The various tests of character and personality have practically no value as predictors of college scholastic success, but the rating scales. . . on a various number of items do have possibilities as an instrument of prediction of college success.

Garrett's optimism would appear to be especially true in so far as such characteristics as studiousness, persistence, ability to budget time, and characteristics of like kind are concerned. Unfortunately the relevance of these items, i.e., the weight to be assigned them, in the over-all personality configuration as related to school adjustment is unknown. There seems to be little doubt, however, but that this will be an active field for experimentation and research in the immediate future.

Personality inventories are closely related to rating scales though usually distinguished on the basis of who the rater will be. The personality inventory is in effect a self-rating questionnaire which deals not only with overt behavior, but also with the person's own feelings about himself and his environment reported by means of introspection. The limitations of such inventories at the present time are similar to the limitations of the rating scales previously described with the additional problem of estimating variability when introspection is used.

The Allport A-S Reaction Study (4), a self-rating inventory, is an example. Devised for use with college

students to disclose the degree to which individuals tend to dominate others or be dominated by them, the test may give us an abstract conception of this element of behavior on the part of the student. On the other hand, its usefulness for predicting general scholastic adjustment or drop-out behavior in particular is so limited that it is scarcely worth mentioning.

The Bell Adjustment Inventory (6) supposedly deals with items more closely related to general college adjustment. It consists of questions intended to evaluate the subject's status with respect to home, health, social adjustment, emotional adjustment, and occupational adjustment. One form is applicable for college students. However, the inventory has been sharply criticized on grounds that the characteristics are not mutually exclusive and therefore the test does not measure what it is supposed to measure. While validity scores are high when compared with other adjustment inventories, validity is relatively low when judged by behavior patterns on the part of students in college.

While numerous other inventories might be mentioned, the purpose of reviewing this literature was to ascertain whether this field of exploration might provide us with some insight into personality factors as they relate to college adjustment and, therefore, to the problem of understanding drop-out behavior. The results indicate many



avenues for further exploration, but leave us with the conclusion that the instruments available at present are too general and have not been demonstrated as having particular relevance for the drop-out problem. This conclusion is not meant to be a critique of personality assessment by these methods. It is simply a statement that the general purposes of personality inventories are not necessarily directly applicable to the particular problem at hand although they may indirectly aid us in understanding both the complexity of the problem and its manifestations in some specific areas.

Socio-Economic Status and Other Social Values as Related to College Enrollment and the Role of the Student

While it is possible to conceive of a college campus as a world of its own with an independent social system and culture, and while such a concept might be useful if one were limiting a study to some specific intra-college problem, the drop-out problem does not lend itself to such an abstract view. The drop-out is a person in transition -- a student who in most instances has only recently come from another setting and who is returning to this former social system or some other one either by choice or necessity. He comes from a rural community -- a metropolitan center, a social class, a home and family within a class, a wealthy family -- a poor one. In other words, to the flow of events

at college the student brings a cultural background of his own. Several attempts have been made to associate objectively this background with college enrollment and adjustment. An editorial in School and Society (49) entitled "Education as a Class Privilege" cites figures to show that many students who might profit from college training are unable to attend college at all, or to finish if they start, because of economic reasons. Agate (2), in a study of persistence in college, found that the children of persons in the highest occupational categories remained in school much longer than those in the lower categories. Osborn (46) states that the proportion of college students coming from homes in the higher socio-economic classes is much greater than from lower classes. Furthermore, he concludes that those from the lower classes are a highly selected segment of that group.

Using father's occupation as an index of class affiliation, O'Dell (44) found no relation between social class and college grades. However, Gough (28:69) found a slight relationship between academic achievement and socio-economic status:

Intercorrelation between scores on the American Home Scale, the Brown Personality Inventory, and various achievement tests show . . . a slight positive relation to academic achievement, while personality inventory scores have a slight negative relation to achievement and status.

That colleges have their own prestige systems which in most instances are not based on the same social values the student was familiar with in his home community is evident. Secondly, the student coming from his senior class status in high school to freshman status in college may be experiencing downward social mobility for the first time. The student must learn to assimilate the college culture outside the classroom as well as in the classroom and to adjust to the paradoxes and complexities which at first baffle any attempt at direct inquiry on his part.

The study of the community and of social classes has become a discipline within sociology as well as other areas. Literature in sociology might provide a basis for some tentative hypotheses concerning socio-economic class as related to the college community and thereby indirectly contribute to our understanding of the drop-out problem. Educational sociology in its present state would be able to make the same type of general tentative hypotheses although its position in the field is somewhat uncertain at this time. The National Society for the Study of Educational Sociology was organized in 1923 (8). Following its discontinuance in 1928, its members met as a section of the American Sociological Society until 1948 when the section was abandoned. Brookhover (8:413) states:

There is a tremendous amount of research to be done before an adequate sociology of education can be said to exist.

Brookhover notes a new and increasing interest in this area and reinforces the idea that sociological analysis as a means of understanding schools and the educational processes is apt to prove fruitful in the future. Zeleny (57) cites the need for educational sociologists to broaden their scope to include practical problems of education as well as the laboratory and library.

In spite of the paucity of research in educational sociology, one does find in the sociological literature of the community several references to community school systems and social class. In Elmtown's Youth, Hollingshead (32) reports the lower one's social class position the more likely he is to receive poor grades. This is summarized in the following table taken from Hollingshead's report:

TABLE 3  
DISTRIBUTION OF MEAN GRADES BY CLASS BACKGROUND

| Class | 100-85 | 84-70 | 69-50 |
|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| I, II | 51.4   | 48.6  | 0.0   |
| III   | 35.5   | 63.2  | 1.3   |
| IV    | 18.4   | 69.2  | 12.4  |
| V     | 8.3    | 66.7  | 25.0  |
| Total | 23.8   | 66.3  | 9.9   |

In terms of social role definitions, Hollingshead (32) states that for the members of the lower classes "growing up means quitting school, getting a job, escaping adult control, doing as one pleases." Upper to middle class homes, on the other hand, are reported as stressing the things that formal education has to offer -- book learning, manners, associates, preparation for a career, etc. In other words, while upper and middle class backgrounds reinforce and stress the ideals and practices leading to a college career, at the lower class levels the situation is the opposite.

Writing in the area of the sociology of education, Cook (11:42) speaks of . . .

. . . the major difference between students who go on to college and those who drop out of school . . . are income of parents (plus parental attitudes) and interest in school work.

Cook stresses the point that motivation for a career requiring college training is primarily an acquired characteristic, acquired from a variety of environmental sources.


Snyder (51:32) concludes that home background or parents' interest is a potential force in keeping a student in college while at the same time she shows no outstanding difference between the education of parents of the withdrawal group she studied and that of the colleges as a whole:



Only 25 per cent of the withdrawal group as compared with 28 per cent of the college as a whole state their father's education terminated in the elementary grades.

In effect, any difference noted could be attributed to chance, otherwise the direction would favor the withdrawal group. Twenty-two per cent of this group indicated some college work on the part of their father in comparison to 20 per cent of the college as a whole. Education of mothers showed the same tendency.

In general, socio-economic status scales are constructed on the basis of a variety of factors. Common elements are income, wealth, residence, education, occupation, etc. From our review of the literature in this area, it is indicated that these factors may all in some way be related to personal-social adjustment in the college community. In addition to these objective indices one needs as well to consider social class identification in the form of attitudes toward college and occupational goals. While ostensibly the opportunity to go to college irrespective of class position, wealth or income, and similar factors is intended in our society, the opportunity is more apparent than real. It may well be that the major barrier to equal opportunity stems from this attitudinal background derived from social class differentials. Bell's account in Youth Tell Their Story (7) is a summary of considerable factual research in this area which would support this hypothesis.



Perhaps the most provocative report along this line comes from Warner, Havighurst, and Loeb in Who Shall Be Educated (56), a summary dealing with the realities of class differentials in the educational system containing substantial factual material gathered by the authors and their staff in support of their theory.

### Summary

From the foregoing literature there is evidence that the formation of drop-out behavior is the consequence of numerous factors, and we have seen the difficulty which comes from attempting to label drop-outs according to a specific trait, as though all drop-outs were the result of a single unitary variable. Any given characteristic associated with drop-out behavior does not operate in a vacuum. While some of the characteristics such as family background, housing, and some aspects of social status appear to be less directly related than scholastic ability or achievement, the critical point to remember is that the potential drop-out brings a cultural background to the campus with him as well as the specific traits and attributes which relate themselves directly to his academic potential. The educator, and perhaps more directly, the student personnel worker, is in a position to see this complex of factors as they operate in the form of a continuing process.

As Pressey (48:509) reports:

A student may be able to stand infected tonsils, a relatively low level of intelligence, opposition from his family to his plans, or a desperate love affair, or poor eyesight, or a lack of any vocational objective, but he cannot stand all of them simultaneously.

Eckert (19:71) feels that . . .

. . . enough differences were discovered (in her study) in personality traits, social attitudes, recreational interests and vocational objectives to warrant the statement that the superior student has a different outlook on life and organizes his thinking and activities to somewhat different ends than does the poor student.

Snyder (51:27) sees this difference in terms of the perspective as follows:

One characteristic of the drop-out is they do not think in terms of five years hence. They see merely that their immediate desires and hopes are being frustrated by longer education.

The reports from the literature and research have helped accumulate a great deal of useful descriptive data which are relevant to the problem of the analysis of drop-out behavior, but despite the scope of the data, further investigation is needed in order to understand the relationships among these factors. McKelheny (36:2) states that:

While the spheres of guidance and counseling, admissions, and examinations have received extensive recognition and investigative treatment, such other spheres as student housing, orientation procedures, student aid and placement, and extra-curricular activities have been virtually overlooked.

While earlier studies attempted to deal with isolated factors, more recently the approach to the problem has been broadened with the development of counseling centers and the technique of exit interviewing. The concepts of student mortality and drop-out behavior have been applied in studies which take into consideration the relationships among factors. Relevant data from psychology, sociology, education, and other areas all contribute to this approach to the problem. It remains for the educator, and particularly those working in the field of educational personnel to apply this information to the concrete problem that is of special concern here, i.e., a functional analysis of within-term drop-out behavior.

### Chapter III

#### PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

##### Initial Phase

The idea to study "during the term drop-outs" took form as a result of much concern expressed in the Counselor for Men's Office over the reasons given by students for withdrawal from Michigan State College. The reasons were given during exit interviews, required of all students withdrawing during a school term. Of particular concern was (1) the accuracy of the reason given by a student, (2) the personal-social adjustment of the student at the time of withdrawal, and (3) the conditions under which the withdrawal took place.

After discussing the problem at some length with the Director of the Counseling Center, the Registrar, Dean of Students, Dean of the Basic College, Director of the Institute of Counseling, Testing and Guidance, and other student personnel officers, plans for a survey of within-term drop-outs were initiated. The value of such a survey on an exploratory level was agreed upon, and the initial phase of the proposed study as a thesis project was completed and approved.

Following further discussions and preliminary investigation, a tentative outline of the thesis was prepared

and approved by the committee. This proposal limited the survey to male within-term drop-outs during the academic years 1947-'49. This period represents the first two years for which records of students in the Counselor for Men's Office and records of exit interviews could be compared since the exit interviewing program had only been initiated in 1947.

A second phase of the study included an extensive search of the literature in several areas concerning studies which had either direct or indirect relationship to the within-term drop-out problem. Two factors were especially in evidence as a result of this phase of the study: (1) the proposed study had not been done previously -- in fact, no studies of within-term drop-outs per se were reported in the literature, and (2) studies concerned with the general drop-out problem or the problems of student mortality were limited in scope at the college level. Following the review of the literature further consideration was given to the over-all plan of the study and the details of procedures to be used and techniques to be followed were completed and approved. The operations are described in the following pages.


### Collection of Data

Since the study was planned as a survey of reasons given by students for dropping out within-terms and a survey of the conditions under which this behavior occurred,

two sources of data were found most useful. Official records from the Office of the College Registrar, the Office of the Counselor for Men, and the College Housing Office were available. From these sources information was collected concerning the following items under which the drop-out behavior occurred: (1) grade point average, (2) entrance examination scores, (3) the number of terms the student was enrolled at Michigan State College, (4) age, (5) veteran status, (6) rank in high school class, (7) reasons the student gave for withdrawal at the time of the exit interview, (8) type of housing -- dormitory, fraternity, private home, cooperative, or quonset, (9) last known address of the student after leaving college.

The above data were selected (1) because of their presumable relationship to the problem at hand as indicated by the review of the literature and research reports which were presented in Chapter II, and (2) as a result of consultation with student personnel workers, administrators, and other staff persons at Michigan State College where the study took place.

A second source of data was a questionnaire sent to the student after his withdrawal. The questionnaire was a source of additional information regarding the extent of participation in campus organizations by the student, as well as an instrument for checking the validity of the reasons given for withdrawal at the time of the exit interview.



Validity of Reasons Given by Students for Leaving  
Within Terms

Checking the validity of the reasons given for leaving at the time of the exit interview involved the preparation of a questionnaire in which the advice and consultation of staff members in the Department of Sociology and members of the Institute of Counseling, Testing and Guidance were solicited. Careful consideration to both form and content was given under their direction. It was determined that the questionnaire should be designed to elicit responses in as brief form as possible on the assumption that a number of the former students would not have as intense personal loyalty to Michigan State College as they might have had if they had completed their college career. Consequently, the questionnaire consisted of one page which was pertinent and to the point.<sup>1</sup>

The adequacy of the questionnaire was judged by several criteria: (1) Ten faculty and administrative personnel who were familiar with student personnel problems were asked to take the role of the student withdrawing from school and to express their judgments concerning the design and content of the questionnaire. (2) Twenty-seven students coming to the Office of the Counselor for Men for an

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1. See Appendix B, p. 107.



exit interview were asked to complete the questionnaire. After the establishment of rapport and a brief explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire, they were directed to project themselves a year or two hence as they completed the questionnaire. (3) Several campus leaders -- non-drop-outs -- were also requested to fill out the questionnaire on a role playing basis.

A final form of the questionnaire, using the above criteria as a guide, was given technical approval by staff members of the Department of Sociology and the Institute of Counseling, Testing and Guidance.

Since the above criteria included the establishment of rapport, the development of a letter to accompany the questionnaire was necessary.<sup>2</sup> Technical advice and assistance were again solicited in somewhat the same manner as with the questionnaire.

### Collection Procedure

During July 1950, the questionnaire, accompanied by the cover letter, was mailed to all male students who had dropped out within-terms from Michigan State College during the years 1947-'49. This allowed an interval of from one to two years between the time of withdrawal and the time of mailing the questionnaires. During August 1950,

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2. See Appendix A, p. 104.



a follow-up letter<sup>3</sup> was sent to those who had not replied previously. Two weeks later a final letter was sent to the remaining non-returns. The percentages of return in terms of the total group answering the questionnaire were:

First letter 87 per cent

Second letter 12 per cent

Third letter 1- per cent

#### Reliability Through Interviewing

As one more step in checking the reliability of the questionnaire, and to be assured that the respondents understood it, a sample of thirty-four within-term drop-outs were interviewed. Among the thirty-four, six were from cities of over 200,000 population; seven from cities of 50,000 to 200,000; ten from towns of 5,000 to 50,000; five from communities under 5,000; and six from farm areas. In all instances the reliability of the questionnaire was judged to be high on the basis of the interviews and, in addition, more detailed information was usually elicited. Such information did not contradict the questionnaire but in effect substantiated its briefer content.


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3. See Appendix A, p. 105.

### Procedure for Analysis

The design of this study as compared with the previous studies in the literature is more inclusive in that a larger number of specific items have been taken into consideration. These factors, numerous though they may be, are classifiable under two general categories: (1) the social conditions under which withdrawal behavior occurs, i.e., external forces and pressures which may be associated with drop-out behavior, and (2) social-psychological factors -- selected attitudes of the student who withdraws. By attitudes is simply meant the tendency to behave in a given way as verbally expressed in exit interviews and in response to the previously mentioned questionnaire.

Any systematic study needs to classify reliably its data, with further analysis being dependent upon accurate classification. A first step in analysis will therefore be descriptive in that the social conditions will be classified according to a number of logically valid categories as derived from the literature and from consultation with student personnel workers. A second step will be the conceptualization and classification of social-psychological data by means of content analysis. The replies of withdrawal students as abstracted from the questionnaire will be analyzed with the theme of the response serving as a unit for classificatory purposes, the theme representing



the student's point of view. In other words, if "financial" is given as a reason for withdrawal, what attitude is expressed? Content analysis is a method for classifying the "meaning" of the symbolic expression "financial", i.e., of locating the empirical reference of the symbols and their place in the student's hierarchy of values.

In order to establish the tenability of any given complex of social conditions and attitudes, a general analysis of the association between conditions and attitudes will follow. The procedure for this analysis will be primarily that of analytical induction to establish generalizations on a logical basis with two resulting primary functions: (1) the conclusions, based on exploratory study, become data for applied student personnel action on a tentative basis, and (2) a number of hypotheses for further research are suggested.

One might well note that here, as in any exploratory study, what are considered to be the conclusions may become the main topic of investigation for another study.

### Summary

Two primary sources of information were used in this study. Official records from various student personnel offices at Michigan State College were made available and provided a basis for collecting data pertinent to the personal-social background of the within-term drop-outs and

the conditions under which this behavior occurred at the time of withdrawal. A second source of information was the drop-out student in person after at least one year had elapsed since the time of his withdrawal. Information was obtained from these former students by means of a questionnaire which had been checked for both validity and reliability by means of several outside criteria, including judges, trial runs, and interviewing. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the "reasons for dropping out" as expressed by the student after he had shifted his status position and had acquired a different role than his role as a student at Michigan State College. The data thus collected provided a basis for analyzing the reasons given at the time of withdrawal from college and the conditions under which the drop-out behavior occurred.

## Chapter IV

### CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WITHIN-TERM DROP-OUTS OCCUR

#### Social Status and Social Conditions

The term status refers to the position one occupies in relation to others. While status may be either ascribed or achieved, in either instance it refers to an anchoring point or point of reference by which one may be identified. Social conditions are similar in that they refer to conditions under which behavior occurs and is identified; therefore, housing, home background, or membership groups, etc., may all serve as reference points to classify a person or an event.

This chapter concerns itself with social status and social conditions under which within-term drop-out behavior occurs. Of concern here is the student as he has been identified and classified according to selected status positions or conditions in the college social structure. This chapter does not refer to self-status, i.e., the position the student conceived of himself as holding or of the conditions as seen by the student. These latter factors are considered in the next chapter which deals with reasons the student gave for withdrawal from college.

One never deals with all the positions or conditions which exist during a given period of time. The

essence of analysis is to abstract a selected number of characteristics which are assumed to be relevant to the problem at hand on the basis of previous study and logical analysis. The selected characteristics here studied are those assumed to be important factors as found in the review of the literature and from other sources previously indicated.

#### Veteran and Non-Veteran

The following differentials were found to exist among within-term drop-outs when they were identified according to their veteran or non-veteran status.

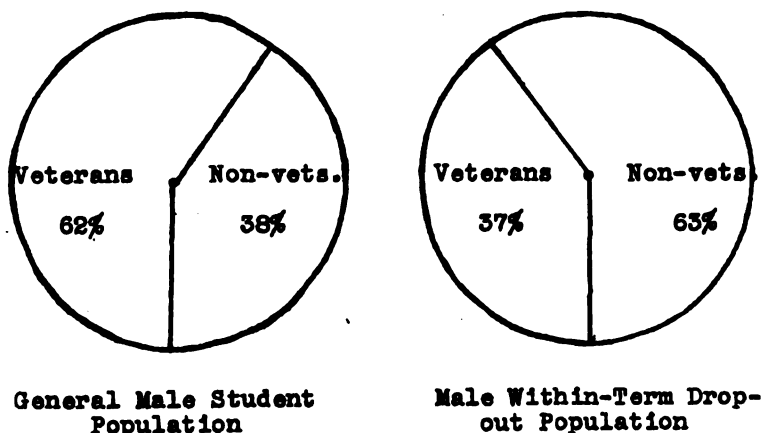


Figure I: Comparison of the Proportion of Veterans and Non-Veterans among the Within-Term Drop-Outs with the General Male Student Population.

While veteran or non-veteran status is not to be considered necessarily a cause of within-term drop-out behavior, such status does serve as an identifying characteristic in that a significant difference is readily discernible between the two categories. While being a veteran and not dropping out are strongly associated, not being a veteran meant the student was more apt to discontinue his academic program and to leave within-terms.

#### Class in College and Age

The rate of within-term drop-out behavior decreases as the number of terms completed increases. Therefore, one would expect few juniors or seniors to drop-out within-terms, a larger number of sophomore students to drop out, and the largest number leaving to be freshmen. Further breakdown shows that within any given college class the rate decreases according to the number of terms completed. For example, among freshmen, the highest within-term drop-out rate will be found among those who have not completed a term, the second highest rate will be among those who have completed only one term and are in their second term, etc.

While the rate of within-term drop-out behavior decreases with the number of terms completed, the age of those who drop out increases within the remaining drop-out groups, i.e., a sophomore who drops out within a term is



apt to be one of the older members of his class. Again this may be analyzed in categories based on the number of terms completed. A comparison of age and within-term drop-out behavior by terms using three categories for each follows:

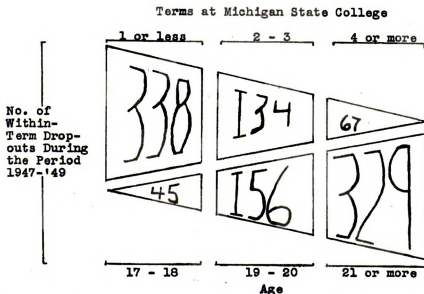


Figure II: A Comparison of Age Status and Within-Term Drop-out Behavior According to the Number of Terms Completed, 1947-'49.

#### Academic Work - Grade Point Average

While academic failure was not in and of itself sufficient to account for general drop-out behavior, the within-term drop-outs did relatively poorer work than the general male student population during the two year period

of this study. The grade point average for within-term drop-outs was 2.18 as compared with 2.37 for the general male student population. The grade point for the within-term drop-outs ranged from those who were complete failures on the one hand to students with a 3/ average or better.

#### High School Rank and Entrance Examination Scores

Rank in high school was not associated with within-term drop-out behavior. In fact, it was found that approximately the same number of within-term drop-outs came from the top one-fourth of their high school class as came from either the second or third quartiles, but that relatively few came from the fourth quartile. This latter factor may be accounted for in that few students in high school who ranked in the bottom quartile of their class enrolled at Michigan State College.

The proportion of within-term drop-outs according to high school rank is indicated in Table 4:

TABLE 4

PROPORTION OF WITHIN-TERM DROP-OUTS ACCORDING  
TO RANK IN HIGH SCHOOL

| Rank | Per Cent of Drop-outs |
|------|-----------------------|
| 1    | 28                    |
| 2    | 31                    |
| 3    | 31                    |
| 4    | 10                    |

While high school rank is taken into consideration as a factor in admission to Michigan State College, more important perhaps are the scores on selected entrance examinations. The two general aptitude tests analyzed here are the American Council on Education Psychological Examination, 1947 edition, and the Cooperative Test of Reading Comprehension, Form S, 1947 edition. It should be noted that the norms for these examinations were local norms for students at Michigan State College.

Compared with the general male student population, within-term drop-out students did somewhat poorly. However, when the within-term drop-out population was divided according to veteran and non-veteran status, differences did obtain. Forty-three per cent of the non-veterans were in the lower 3 deciles of the examinations and only 29 per cent of the veterans fell within this classification.

TABLE 5

A COMPARISON OF THE PROPORTION OF WITHIN-TERM DROP-OUTS ACCORDING TO DECILE RANK OF ENTRANCE EXAMINATION SCORES WITH THOSE OF THE GENERAL STUDENT POPULATION

| Rank                    | Per Cent<br>of Non-Vet.<br>Drop-outs | Per Cent<br>of Veteran<br>Drop-outs | Per Cent<br>of Total<br>Drop-outs | Per Cent of<br>Gen. Student<br>Population |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 (Lower 3<br>Deciles)  | 43                                   | 29                                  | 35                                | 30  |
| 2 (Middle 4<br>Deciles) | 40                                   | 47                                  | 44                                | 40  |
| 3 (Upper 3<br>Deciles)  | 17                                   | 24                                  | 21                                | 30  |

### Rural-Urban Influences

Michigan State College draws students from all parts of the state representing a continuum from rural to urban areas. While the largest proportion of students comes from cities of 50,000 to 200,000 population, a significant number comes from each of the other areas. So too, within-term drop-outs were found to be represented in all five of the population categories used in this study. A slightly positive association between rural background and drop-out behavior was noted; however, the question of the degree of significance one might attach to the differences obtained would be answerable only upon further investigation, which is considered to be beyond the scope of this study.

The actual proportions of within-term drop-outs and the expected frequencies based on an analysis of the general male student population are as follows:

TABLE 6

PROPORTION OF WITHIN-TERM DROP-OUTS BY CATEGORIES OF RURAL-URBAN BACKGROUND AS COMPARED WITH EXPECTED FREQUENCIES BASED ON THE GENERAL MALE STUDENT POPULATION, 1947-'49

| Rural-Urban<br>Continuum | Per Cent of<br>Drop-outs | Per Cent of Ex-<br>pected Frequency | Difference |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| 200,000 or more          | 19                       | 21                                  | -2         |
| 50,000 to 200,000        | 30                       | 30                                  | 0          |
| 5,000 to 50,000          | 19                       | 24                                  | -5         |
| Towns under 5,000        | 15                       | 13                                  | -2         |
| Farm background          | 17                       | 12                                  | -5         |

Defining rural as constituting either a farm or small town background, further explorations along this line are indicated.

### Housing Differentials

Type of housing proved to be one of the strongest differentials noted for identifying the conditions for within-term drop-out behavior. Five types of housing were considered: male students living in dormitories, fraternities, cooperatives, private homes, and quonsets. The drop-out behavior pattern is clearly evident in Figure III.

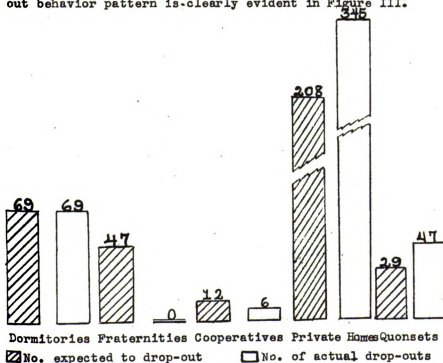


Figure III: Comparison of Drop-out Behavior with the Expected Frequencies in the General Male Student Population.

From Figure III one might well conclude that living in a private home or quonset is a decided disadvantage, living in a dormitory provides average conditions, and living in a fraternity or cooperative housing unit is advantageous. Whether there is a causal relationship, however, has not been established in this investigation.

### Parental Education

An analysis of parental education on the basis of whether neither, one, or both parents attended college revealed that parents of approximately two-thirds of the within-term drop-outs had not attended college. About one-fourth had parents one of whom had attended college, and the remainder came from families where both parents attended college. In the general college population, 42 per cent of the students' parents completed one or more years of college according to McVey and Hughes (41). The findings in the writer's study were somewhat consistent with these proportions -- a difference of only 7 per cent being indicated. While no specific conclusions can be drawn from this data, it seems probable that an intensive study in this area might reveal whether significant differences exist.

### Student Participation in Campus Organizations

An analysis of the extent to which a student participated in campus organizations was limited to the number

of organizations in which he participated. A previous study by the Office of Counselor to Men of participation in student organizations for the year 1947-'48 had indicated an average of 1.2 organizations per male student in the general student population. Data collected from within-term drop-outs revealed an average of .6 organizations per student. On the basis of this evidence, it appears that, contrary to some reports in the literature, participation in campus organizations is not a handicap. Presumably, the student who is well adjusted in his college life is one who is participating in at least one or more activities, thereby gaining the benefits of shared behavior and group morale.

### Summary

This analysis of the conditions under which within-term drop-out behavior occurs suggests that the most significant influences are associated with the type of housing in which the student lives, veteran status, class in college, participation in campus organizations, number of terms completed in college, age, and academic achievement. Rural influences in the home background indicated some positive association with within-term drop-out behavior, but were not as conclusive as entrance examination scores. No significant association with parental education or rank in high school was indicated.

## Chapter V

### WITHDRAWAL - FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE WITHIN-TERM DROP-OUT

#### The Direction of Within-Term Drop-Out Attitudes

In the previous chapter a number of factors describing the conditions under which drop-out behavior occurred were presented. In the present chapter it is proposed to describe drop-out behavior from the former student's point of view, i.e., what are the attitudes of the former drop-out student; in retrospect, what factors were so psychologically real to him that they became the primary reference or anchoring points in his evaluation of his reason for withdrawal.

The description of this attitudinal reality to be presented here is derived from two sources, the exit interviews at the time of withdrawal and the follow-up questionnaires. The exit interview data provides a means of classifying the drop-out student according to the reason for withdrawal given at the time he left school. The questionnaire provides a means of checking the reliability of the first reason given as measured by a period of at least one year, this amount of time having elapsed between the time of withdrawal and the questionnaire survey. On certain specified grounds it is proposed that the questionnaire



data is more valid. The basis for this proposal is that at the time of reply, by means of the questionnaire, the former student was detached from the pressures and status aspirations of the college community, i.e., he was in a position to give more objective consideration to his reason for withdrawal and free to express himself without the chance of personalized identification. This proposal, in the form of an assumption, is based on logical grounds and in part was supported by follow-up interviews. However, its acceptance is to be taken primarily on an axiomatic basis rather than on the basis of empirical evidence.

For this purpose the within-term drop-out student is classified according to the reason given at the time of withdrawal, using as categories those employed by the Counselor for Men's Office at Michigan State College. Under each category the statements made by the members of that category in their response to the questionnaire are analyzed, checking for the agreement between reasons given at both the time of withdrawal and at the later period. In the analysis of the questionnaire responses a content analysis will serve as the means of identifying the references of the within-term drop-out as they pertain to his reason for withdrawal, including any comments he may have volunteered concerning social conditions at Michigan State College as he perceived them.

From the above analysis it should be possible, therefore, to derive a numerical proposition concerning the reliability of the reasons given for withdrawal, and to derive the "meaning" of the categorical reasons for withdrawal, i.e., the meaning of financial, illness or health, employment, housing, etc., when given as reasons. By "meaning" is simply meant that the symbol used has empirical reference, i.e., refers to some concrete, observable reality, or to an identifiable psychological reality from which behavior can be inferred. Thus, of concern in this chapter is what the within-term drop-out student considered to be the reason for his withdrawal -- this is the former student's point of view.

#### Illness or Health - As A Reason For Withdrawal

Illness or health, as a reason for withdrawal within-terms, appears to be one of the most reliable reasons given by students for withdrawal. The percentage of agreement between responses given at the time of withdrawal and in response to the questionnaire was .85. Of the withdrawal students during the two year period of this study, 22 per cent gave this as the reason for dropping out.

Among the reliable responses in this category, the 85 per cent for which agreement was obtained, three sub-categories were identifiable, as follows:

|                                 | Per Cent |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Nervous condition or insecurity | 17       |
| Injury                          | 17       |
| Illness                         | 66       |

For the remaining 15 per cent, those students who gave illness or health as a reason for withdrawal at the time of the exit interview but made no reference to this a year or more later, the reasons given in response to the questionnaire were varied. Reference was made to academic difficulty, dislike of the Basic College, the school being too large, finances, and illness in the family.

When asked for suggestions as to how Michigan State College might help new students, only two respondents made suggestions concerning illness or health. One of these, a handicapped person, was critical of the physical facilities, stating that he had difficulty getting to and from classes and suggesting that handicapped people be given more general consideration; the other, a student injured in boxing, felt that examinations at the health center should be more inclusive.

In general, the inference can be drawn that illness or health, when given as a reason for withdrawal, has direct reference to a condition about which the student is aware and which in his evaluation is a sufficient and necessary condition for withdrawal. In some instances it



was indicated that this awareness came directly from the recommendations of the health center, an indication as well of the validity of the response. In other instances the source of the student's evaluation is not given directly; however, responses such as "had to have several operations", "x-ray revealed T.B.", "broken collar bone", etc., suggest on their face value that validity is high.

On the basis of the above description, it is evident that a health center on the campus is of service to both the student and the college. Of interest to this study is the implication that such a facility offers the student a realistic means of evaluating the condition and of deriving a reliable judgment concerning his potential drop-out student status. The high percentage of agreement between reasons given at the time of withdrawal and at a later date indicates the facilities offered contribute to a reliable understanding of this aspect of withdrawal behavior. The writer infers from the above that the withdrawal student's attitudes in this area are formed in close association with the health services available.

#### Finances -- As a Reason for Withdrawal

One of the most frequent reasons given for dropping out and at the same time one of the most ambiguous reasons is "finances" or insufficient funds. Actually, the

concept, finances, is too abstract when detached from the value system of the student giving this as a reason. For some students, funds are considered sufficient if basic needs are met, i.e., food, clothing, shelter, etc. For others, finances are sufficient if some other specific additional items are included, a problem involving the actual standard of living the student maintains and his aspiration level. For example, the student may consider his problem to be financial because he doesn't have the funds necessary to live in a fraternity, or to buy a car, or to dress in the current campus style. His aspiration level may be much higher than his resources, and yet his resources may be greater than those of other students who are content to stay in school without a car, new clothes, or belonging to a fraternity. In other words, other students under the same financial conditions may decide that their limited resources are not a sufficient condition for withdrawal.

The percentage of agreement between responses in the exit interview classified as financial and the responses to the questionnaire classified in this way was comparatively low, 60 per cent. The reason for this seemingly low figure is understandable in terms of the relativity of financial status and the ambiguity of the concept when it is used as a general classificatory term.

Included in the 60 per cent for which agreement was obtained are such responses as "financial - to keep up

a car", "financial - was getting married", or "had a family to support". Since many students remain in school without a car, without getting married, or remain and support their family, these conditions per se do not necessitate withdrawal except in conjunction with the value system of the student, i.e., in accordance with the relative position he attached to financial factors.

The insight obtained from a description of the responses may be of more value for our purposes where disagreement did occur. Following is a list of reasons given on the questionnaires by respondents who were classified as having withdrawn for financial reasons at the time of the exit interview:

- Didn't like instructors (2 times)
- Classes too large, felt he was a number instead of an individual
- Didn't like Basic College (2 times)
- Housing problem
- To be married
- Didn't like Quonset Village
- Dislocation of arm
- Unable to decide upon course to study
- Veterinary medicine field overcrowded
- Wasn't qualified for course picked out
- Didn't like attitudes of students in general
- Social activities over-ride educational activities at Michigan State College
- Living off campus
- Discouraged with school work

While it is possible that a housing problem or the dislocation of one's arm is related to financial matters to a degree that financial hardship results, the majority of the above reasons do not have any direct reference to

financial status. Again, by inference, it may be assumed that financial is a "reason for withdrawal" only within a broader context.

The fact that students did anchor themselves to the concept, as a reason for withdrawal, suggests that counseling and guidance services might well be extended to students who feel that their problems are financial. Such students might profit from insight into the status of other students in a similar financial position who do not consider their problem to be financial -- in fact, do not have a financial problem at all even though they are living at a comparable level to the withdrawal student.

When asked to comment on how new students might be helped at Michigan State College, these respondents made reference to loans or other financial aid in less than 6 per cent of the cases. Apparently, in retrospect, the student who left for what he thought were financial reasons, does not anticipate that others will face the problem in the manner he did.

#### Transferring - As a Reason for Withdrawal

Remembering that this study is concerned with the drop-out student who leaves within a term, the concept of transferring gives an inadequate and incomplete account of the students' reason for withdrawal.

Following is a list of statements made by within-term withdrawals who, at the time of their leaving, stated they were transferring to another school, and who, in their response to the questionnaire, made no mention of transferring to another institution:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Did not like Basic College                           | 6 |
| Inadequate housing                                   | 6 |
| School too large                                     | 5 |
| Lack of funds  | 4 |
| To join wife   | 2 |
| Felt he was discriminated against<br>because of race | 1 |

Other respondents who by their answer indicated that they did enter another school gave the following reasons:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| To be nearer home   | 4 |
| Received a scholarship at another institution                           | 1 |
| To enter business college (because he could<br>get through in less time | 1 |

From the above it is logical to infer that the within-term drop-out student who proposes to transfer is for the most part no different than the student who withdraws for other reasons, i.e., his reason for withdrawal and his reason for transfer are one and the same, and such reasons fall within the other categories which represent the reasons for withdrawal without transferring.

Since the survey was conducted during the summer months, the question of how many of these students were actually enrolled in another school could not be ascertained.



In so far as enrollment during the summer was concerned, none indicated that he or she was at that time enrolled in another school.

#### Personal Reasons for Withdrawal

When a student proposes to withdraw from school within a term he becomes "different" from his fellow classmates -- he is leaving not only the campus and college community, but friends and associates with whom he has been in everyday contact, he is withdrawing from the regular re-occurring social interaction of college life. Some students in this process of transition consider their reasons for leaving to be "personal" -- no longer are status, social participation, or attitudes to be exposed to critical evaluation by others. Twenty-three former students who withdrew for "personal reasons" during the period of this study responded to the questionnaire and restated their reasons for withdrawal. In all cases the "reason in retrospect" was no longer considered personal but had reference to a condition or attitude about which the respondent spoke freely.

Of the twenty-three who originally considered their reason for withdrawal to be personal, nine now stated their withdrawal was due to a lack of interest in college work, some of these attributing this to their dislike of the Basic College, and others to a lack of vocational plans.

Other reasons once considered personal but later freely expressed were sickness at home, finances, employment, housing, and family problems.

Again, as with the transfer-drop-out, the reason originally given for withdrawal undergoes a transformation in the mind of the former student. His perspective changes and he now identifies his former attitude with some specific condition seen as a non-personal factor to which he anchors his reason for withdrawal.

#### Employment - Transition from Campus to Job

Employment, as a reason for withdrawal, is best understood as a means of achieving post-college adjustment, but not as a reason for withdrawal. This view is supported by two types of data: (1) the occupation of the former student, and (2) the reason for withdrawal given in the questionnaire.

Following is a list of the types of occupations held by students who gave employment as their reason for withdrawal at the time they left school:

|   |    |
|---|----|
| laborer (skilled or unskilled)              | 12 |
| service occupations (chef, policeman, etc.) | 5  |
| clerical (bookkeeper, stock clerk)          | 3  |
| farmer                                      | 1  |
| technical (draftsman)                       | 1  |
| managerial (credit mgr., ins.)              | 1  |
| student                                     | 1  |


Twelve, or 50 per cent, of the within-term drop-outs giving employment as their original reason for

withdrawal were laborers. On the questionnaire they gave as their reason for withdrawal such items as illness in the family, insufficient funds, inadequate housing, poor grades, etc.

Of the remainder, those with positions other than laborer, only 8 per cent stated that their reason for withdrawal was to accept the employment offered, in each case this being a family affair in which the father or a relative had offered the student a position.

From the above, it can be inferred that the concept of employment when applied to within-term drop-outs refers to a conclusion the student reached as a result of his decision to withdraw rather than as a reason for withdrawal. Once having decided to leave school (for any one of a number of reasons -- such as: no particular ambitions, did not consider myself a student, bad grades, to be married, too large a school, etc.), the student concluded that he needed employment, and this now became the reason for withdrawal from his point of view.

When asked how new students could be helped, various responses were given, such as the machinist stating that "students should belong to organizations", or the turret lathe operator saying "there is a need for more adequate housing and study facilities", or a bookkeeper stating that "students should decide on their vocation before entering college".



Regardless of the adequacy or inadequacy of their "reasons", the purpose here has been to describe the within-term drop-out's point of view. When he considers employment to be his reason for withdrawal, one might well conclude that at a later date he will focus his attention on some condition at the college, and will drop the concept of employment from his frame of reference. The percentage of agreement obtained between reasons given at the time of the exit interview and the reason given on the questionnaire was .07, the lowest of any category here described.

#### Academic Work - From the Student's Point of View

Few students leave Michigan State College within terms with the belief that they are unable to make the grade in their academic work -- at any rate, only 7 per cent of the within-term drop-outs covered by this study considered this to be their reason for withdrawal.

#### Family Illness - Assuming the Role of the Father


The findings of this investigation revealed that if a male student's father becomes ill the student may, depending on other conditions, drop out to support the family. Of eight students leaving because of family illness, illness of the father in the family was reported four times. One student referred to his mother's illness, and two referred to illness in the family without reference to the

particular family member concerned. Only one drop-out gave illness at home as the reason for his withdrawal at the time of the exit interview while later reporting that he withdrew because of financial reasons and dislike of the Basic College. The percentage of agreement between responses as a whole in this category was therefore high, .88, suggesting that family illness as a reason for withdrawal within-terms, while not frequent, is a relatively reliable reason when given. Such drop-outs accounted for 3 per cent of the total number of male within-term withdrawals over the two year period of this study.

Drop-outs in this category failed to offer suggestions as to how new students might be helped at Michigan State College. Since their reason given for withdrawal had reference to a condition at home rather than in terms of the college community, their lack of suggestions is readily understood.

#### Housing - As a Contributing Factor in Withdrawal

In a few cases, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, housing was given as the reason for withdrawal within terms. From the student's point of view, however, housing was more often considered as a factor directly related to poor grades, health, need for employment, or as a personal matter -- these latter being given as the reasons for withdrawal.



Housing is, therefore, considered by the student as a contributing factor, but not a direct reason for withdrawal. The Quonset Village was most often mentioned as the center of undesirable housing but again this was referred to primarily in terms of study conditions prevailing there and only indirectly as a reason for withdrawal.

While the number of cases in this category was small, the percentage of agreement was .75 as to the inadequacy of housing as seen at the time of withdrawal and later on at the time of the survey.

#### Miscellaneous Reasons for Withdrawal

Other reasons given for withdrawal during this period were: to enter service, dissatisfied, married, could not get proper courses, schedule difficulty and work trouble. Because they were relatively infrequent, or because they were not describable due to the limited data available, they have been placed under a single category here and while they represent views of 3 per cent of the within-term drop-outs during this period, they are neither consistent nor identifiable in terms of a concrete social or psychological reality.

#### A Summary of Reliability of the Reasons Given and the Points of View Expressed by Within-Term Drop-Outs

Of the 246 within-term drop-outs whose replies to the questionnaire were adequate and sufficient for

descriptive purposes in this chapter, the following table summarizes the consistency of their "reason for withdrawal". Where possible this summary has been stated in numerical terms indicating the proportion of students within each category of reasons given, and the reliability of reasons given within that category.

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF REASONS INDICATED IN EXIT INTERVIEW  
WITH THOSE GIVEN ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

| Reason for Withdrawal<br>Given at the Time the<br>Student Left School | Per Cent of<br>Total Male<br>Drop-Outs | Per Cent of Agreement<br>with Reasons Given in<br>Questionnaire |
|---|--|---|
| Illness   | 22                                     | 85  |
| Financial   | 21                                     | 60 <sup>a</sup>   |
| Transferring  | 17                                     | -- <sup>b</sup>   |
| Employment  | 16                                     | 7 <sup>b</sup>  |
| Personal  | 13                                     | 12 <sup>c</sup>   |
| Academic  | 3                                      | 86  |
| Family illness  | 3                                      | 33  |
| Housing   | 2                                      | 75  |
| Miscellaneous   | 3                                      | --  |

- a. Data as to whether the former student had actually enrolled in another school was not available.
- b. While all respondents were employed, their responses indicated that only two had actually left to accept a specific job offer.
- c. What were originally considered to be "personal" reasons were later reported in a different perspective.

The above table suggests on the whole that male within-term drop-out students do not consider their withdrawal due to their own inadequacy or lack of ability to

do college work. From their point of view, the dominant reason given for withdrawal is health or financial need, or, at the time of withdrawal, employment or a personal factor later to be considered in the light of external forces or pressures. From their comments it is indicated that they feel their situation is one about which something can be done, and they (in retrospect) suggest more counseling and guidance. They express a desire for more adequate housing, more personal attention, a more thorough orientation program; and a dislike for the Basic College, large classes, and a large school.

This, within the limits of this study, is revealed to be the psychological reality the student personnel worker and school administrator face in understanding and working with the within-term drop-outs. The problem posed presents many difficulties since some "reasons for withdrawal" are not meaningful unless seen in a much broader context. When a student withdraws for what he considers to be a personal reason, or to transfer, or to get a job, the counselor can be relatively sure that the picture is incomplete, or if the student withdraws for financial reasons, the meaning of financial is relative to the living standard and aspiration level of the student.

On the other hand, personal illness, illness in the family, or academic difficulty, when given as the



reason for withdrawal, are apt to be reliable reasons as indicated by the data here described. Housing, while not reported frequently as the primary reason for withdrawal, is often considered by the student to be a contributing factor in his withdrawal.

The above description pertains to the within-term drop-out's point of view -- the psychological reality of the reasons he gives for withdrawal. It may or may not correspond to the conditions that exist as seen through the eyes of others. Nevertheless, it is to be reckoned with and constitutes a part of the problem of understanding within-term drop-outs. In the following chapter conditions under which this psychological reality occurs are considered.

## Chapter VI

### WITHIN-TERM WITHDRAWAL AS A COMPLEX OF ATTITUDES AND CONDITIONS


#### The Relationship of Attitudes to Conditions Surrounding the Student

Up to this point the emphasis in this study has been on two classes of phenomena considered separately. On the one hand a number of selected conditions have been described under which drop-out behavior occurs as abstracted from official college records. Following this a description of the verbalized attitudes of the drop-out has been provided in terms of his expressed reason for withdrawal at the time he left school and later in response to a questionnaire. These steps have given a descriptive background. The writer is not, however, presenting descriptions based on unrelated elements for it is recognized that withdrawal consists of a complex of activity.

An attempt will be made in this chapter to describe the conduct of the within-term drop-out in terms of an on-going process. While observations are of necessity confined to verbalized statements made by the drop-out, written records, or descriptions of social acts, these components are to be considered in terms of their place in individual and group activity -- where the student lives,

what aspirations he maintains, his reference group behavior in terms of his family, friends, social participation, membership groups, classroom activity, activity in the college community, or his references to general status such as a job, etc.

These remarks have to do with the final phase of this study -- emphasis on the within-term drop-out's attitudes in their natural setting. Early in this study, Chapter I, it was stated as a basic premise that the within-term drop-out was responding to pressures exerted upon him to substitute a new or different pattern of activity than that accompanying his status in the academic program and the college community. Of particular concern then in this chapter is the endeavor to describe the conditions which exert such pressures and their association with the reasons given by students for withdrawal. To accomplish this end each category of drop-outs (classified according to the reason given for withdrawal) shall be examined in relation to those conditions found to be most significant in the analysis described in Chapter IV. It is conceivable, indeed probable, that there are significant aspects of the problem which have not been touched upon in this study; but if the review of the literature upon which the tentative selection of factors took place is considered, it will be noted that the factors studied constituted a starting point



based on the evidence at hand which indicated that such a selection of factors as were made should prove useful. This, in an exploratory study, constitutes the procedure by which recommendations for further study as well as a tentative general understanding of within-term drop-outs could be formulated.

The analysis which follows is offered as descriptive and makes no claim for proving a specific hypothesis. It is hoped, however, that some understanding has been achieved whereby the concept of within-term drop-out can be identified with greater empirical content and the way paved for further analysis and study.

Analysis of Conditions under which the Reason "Illness"  
Emerged

The following analysis is not to be interpreted as an analysis of what made the student ill. In fact, in many instances it is not known whether he was ill (or injured) but it is known that he gave illness as the reason for his withdrawal. The purpose of the analysis is to describe the conditions associated with the person giving illness as a reason for withdrawal -- where he lived, his academic status, etc.

The strongest association between illness and type of housing occurred within the group living in the

Quonset Village. It would have been expected that 14 per cent of the village residents might give this as their reason for leaving, based on a theoretical proportion derived from their frequency in the general male student population. However, it was found that 23 per cent of the within-term drop-outs were from the village, 9 per cent more than expected. In the same positive manner those living in private homes exceeded their expected frequency of 39 per cent, the actual percentage being 46 per cent, or 7 per cent more than expected. Among dormitory residents an even stronger association in the opposite direction was discovered, 19 per cent less than expected. Fraternities and cooperatives had no one in this category although their theoretical proportion was 11 per cent. Data were not available concerning the housing of 11 per cent of the subjects in this category. In essence then the data suggests that student residences, such as private homes or temporary housing (Quonset Village) afforded a condition associated with the concept of illness as a reason for withdrawal. This is in direct contrast to dormitories, cooperatives, or fraternities, where the concept seldom emerges.

According to age status the younger group, those 17-18 years of age, were more apt to give illness as a reason for withdrawal than would theoretically be expected, 17 per cent stating illness as a reason compared with a

theoretical proportion of 10 per cent. The 19-20 year old group was about as expected, with 28 per cent giving this reason as compared with a theoretical frequency of 30 per cent. For the older students, those 21 or over, while the expected frequency was 62 per cent, only 48 per cent gave this as their reason for withdrawal. Data were not available for 2 per cent of the cases in this category. The data indicates that age is associated with within-term drop-out behavior at the two extremes, i.e., the younger students are positively identified with illness as a reason for dropping out while older students are negatively identified in this manner.

Illness as a reason for leaving within terms did not vary from its expected pattern according to the number of terms completed by the student at the time of withdrawal. The proportions were within 1 per cent of their expected frequency in all cases. So, too, with urban-rural background serving as a reference differential except that the percentage of disagreement was 3 per cent, a small difference here interpreted as not significant.

While the grade point average of within-term drop-outs as a whole was 2.18, and for the general male student population during the period of this study 2.37, the average for those falling within the illness category was 1.7, an extremely low figure by comparison, suggesting that grade point average is strongly associated with illness as a

reason for withdrawal. The author does not offer a proposition concerning the nature of this association, i.e., whether illness causes a low grade point average or whether a low grade point average causes illness, other than to state that these are apparently not two independent phenomena. Remembering that the category of illness included "nervous fatigue" and "insecurity", the two-way relationship is readily understandable.

Entrance examination scores were negatively related to illness as a reason for withdrawal among those in the upper third on the examinations, 14 per cent giving this as a reason compared with the expected proportion of 33 per cent. A positive relationship to the middle third was indicated by 54 per cent in this category, while 31 per cent of an expected 33 per cent in the lower third was obtained. Entrance examinations, therefore, may be considered as a differential for the student who does well, i.e., the student who does well on entrance examinations is less apt to give illness as a reason for withdrawal than the student with average or poor performance on these examinations.

Apparently the student identified as ill (including the injured, nervous, or insecure) doesn't participate in social organizations, or if so, to a very limited degree. While the within-term drop-outs as a whole only participated in an average of .6 organizations as compared



with 1.2 for the general male student population, within-term drop-outs within the category of illness as a reason for withdrawal participated in only .2 organizations. While recognizing that this study does not indicate the degree of participation except in terms of the number of organizations participated in (without considering offices held, committees, etc.), the differential figures obtained do suggest that seclusiveness or withdrawal is a significant aspect of the behavior one might anticipate among students stating illness as their reason for leaving within terms.

In summary, evidence has been presented to show that within-term drop-out behavior identified with illness as the reason for leaving is associated with a number of conditions. The drop-out is, relatively speaking, the young student, living in a private home or temporary housing, who had a low grade point average, did not rank high on entrance examinations, and usually failed to participate in campus organizations. Critical research must, of course, go beyond the findings of this study with its exploratory limits. The implications of these findings are not of lesser importance because of this, but rather they present a description which through further study might help to illuminate the processes by which such a configuration of drop-out behavior occurs.



### The "Financial Dilemma"

The relativity of the concept "financial", in terms of its relationship to the student's value system, has already been indicated. Having acknowledged this limitation, the drop-out was considered within this category and with the same selected conditions applied in the preceding category.

Once again, as with illness, the student giving finances as his reason for withdrawal is strongly identified with residence in a private home, the relationship being an actual proportion of .60 as compared with an expected proportion of .39. The student living in the Quonset Village showed a slight relationship in this direction, .14 as compared with an expected proportion of .18. Dormitories, co-operatives and fraternities are negatively related. It can be inferred that pressures exerted on the student living in a private home while he is trying to maintain his student status and carry out his role in the college community are many and varied, the "financial dilemma" being one such manifestation.

Age was not a significant differential in this area, a slight positive association being related to the 17-18 year old group, this being offset by the 19-20 year old group, with the older students presenting the expected proportion for their category. The same was true for the

number of terms completed except that the tendency was in the opposite direction, i.e., the more terms completed the greater the tendency to attribute withdrawal to finances.

Students coming from urban residential backgrounds were more apt to consider their reason for dropping out to be finances than were students from rural backgrounds. The urban students exceeded their expected proportion by 7 per cent, the rural asserting this as a reason 6 per cent fewer times than expected. Data were not available in 2 per cent of these cases. The only inference here is derived from logical grounds and suggests a hypothesis for further study, namely that the aspiration level derived from the urban community's value system exerts more pressure in the form of desire for upward socio-economic mobility, thereby making for a larger gap between achieved status and aspired status. Such a hypothesis is testable and verifiable (or refutable as the case may be), but exceeds the limits of this study.

While within-term drop-outs in this category did better in their academic work on the average than those withdrawing under the illness category, their grade point average was still less than that of the general within-term drop-out or that of the general male student population, a difference of  $\text{\textyen}.31$  and  $\text{\textyen}.5$  being obtained by the latter two categories mentioned above. As previously suggested, a

hypothetical value system is inferred, with the value system of the drop-out, as part of an interpretive schema, necessary for understanding the financial drop-out's rationale.

For drop-outs within this category examination scores do not serve as a significant differential. This is true also of social participation. The within-term drop-out giving finances as a reason for withdrawal is like the general male student population in regard to his participation in activities. He has not withdrawn or remained isolated but plays a number of active roles the same as any other student.

It should be noted that the description of this category of within-term drop-outs is of necessity based on interpretive concepts rather than a singular relationship to the data at hand. Except for housing, where a significant relationship with private home residence did obtain, it must be assumed that "finances" as a reason given for withdrawal is so related to such diverse psychological attitudes that a direct relationship between the symbol finances and conditions here examined did not obtain.

#### The Anticipatory Transfer

Although the anticipation of transferring schools may be considered acceptable by the students in general, apparently this attitude is most strongly associated with

some types of housing as a background. At the risk of sounding repetitious, and to the point of reporting the data at hand, "transfer", like "illness" or "finances", is considered a justification for withdrawal among within-term drop-outs living in private homes, and acceptable too as a reason among the expressions of those living in quonset type housing. The expected proportions were exceeded by 18 and 10 per cent in each group respectfully, with other housing showing a strong negative relationship.

Age and the number of terms completed were observed in their expected proportions but rural home background as compared with urban exceeded its expected frequency by 13 per cent, a -10 per cent being observed for the urban. Anticipatory transfer students from a rural environment were more apt to consider Michigan State College too large a school and to state this as the primary condition contributing to their desire for a transfer. As was noted earlier, the data does not necessarily suggest the student actually did transfer, but that he gave "transfer" as the reason for his withdrawal within-terms. That such students were more eligible for satisfactory transfer of their credits is indicated by their general grade point average of 2.0, a higher average than that found in any of the previously mentioned categories. On the whole such students did not achieve high scores on their entrance examinations,


i.e., were not in the upper third; their distribution in the lower two-thirds was about as expected. Social participation was limited among the potential transfer students. They belonged to an average of .33 social organizations as compared with .6 for the general within-term drop-out population, and 1.2 for the male student population in general.

The data suggest that the anticipatory transfer student had only loosely identified himself with the extra-academic activities associated with his student status. It may be that the degree to which the student alienates himself from the college in which he is enrolled is dependent upon the degree to which he identifies himself with another school.

### Getting a Job

The individual who leaves to get a job is not unlike the drop-out who gave illness, transfer, or finances, as his reason for leaving in so far as college residence is concerned. The expected or theoretical proportions were exceeded by 21 per cent in the private home category and by 6 per cent in the Quonset Village group. Again, dormitories, fraternities, and cooperatives contributed relatively fewer drop-outs than anticipated.

Withdrawal to accept employment is predominantly a function associated with increase in age regardless of the



number of terms completed prior to withdrawal, particularly so among rural within-term drop-outs. Members in the rural category exceeded their expected proportions by 19 per cent. It is possible, of course, that these students didn't leave to take a job, a hypothesis already suggested by preceding analysis and the extremely low reliability figure of only 7 per cent agreement between employment as an anchoring point at the time of withdrawal and reference to employment in the questionnaire responses. More intensive study must be done before one can say this is indeed the case. Supporting evidence is indirectly derived, however, by an analysis of the grade point average of the group, their average of 1.6 being extremely low, and the fact that this group did poorer on the entrance examination scores than any group heretofore described. Participation in campus activities was also relatively limited.

To this point, then, it is found that within-term drop-outs stating they are leaving to find employment have a reason precipitated by poor academic work, associated with poor aptitude for scholastic work, originating from a rural orientation, and associated with private home or quonset type housing.

Though much remains to be said, it could be generalized that the student falling within this category was a poor prospect from the beginning. One other item of

descriptive data lends credulity to this point of view. An analysis of the jobs held by these students during the second year of their post-college employment indicated they were predominantly laborers, clerical workers, or in a service occupation, i.e., predominantly in the lower, or in the lower-middle socio-economic bracket. Their performance level here was commensurate with their level of performance in the college community. This suggests a latent function possibly performed by employment: it may serve to compensate for the relatively low standing of the potential drop-out in the college community.

#### Academic Work - Its Relationship to Social Conditions

In this category, as with family illness and housing which are yet to be considered, the low frequency of cases makes our description a tenuous one. At the same time an analysis of their contribution to a general understanding of the within-term drop-out problem may be significant because, while they are not often mentioned as primary reasons for leaving, the evidence indicates that they do serve as underlying contributing factors far beyond the recognition given them by the student.

As has been noted in the preceding descriptions, poor academic work was closely related to employment, finances, and illness, as a reason for withdrawal. But, even if generally true, this did not indicate the nature of the

relationship. It should be pointed out, however, that students who considered poor academic work as the reason for withdrawal were functioning at the same approximate level as those giving illness, finances, or employment as their reason for leaving. The levels of their respective averages are as follows:

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| Employment | 1.6  |
| Academic   | 1.62 |
| Illness    | 1.7  |
| Financial  | 1.87 |

It seems that a student can state he is in need of finances, of a job, or he can state he is ill or in poor health, but he cannot state he is a poor risk academically. What needs to be uncovered is the process by which this pattern emerges.

For one thing those students who gave academic difficulty as the reason for their withdrawal did not rank high on entrance examinations; on the other hand, they did not in general represent the lower third either, three times as many having scores near the mid-point as in the lower category. They were not socially inactive, having the highest social participation score of any group, an average of 2.0 as compared with 1.2 for the general male student population and of .6 for within-term drop-outs as a whole. They were not predominantly rural or urban, and age or number of terms did not appear to be a significant factor. They



did, as with the majority of the other categories, come predominantly from private homes or quonset type housing.

At best only a tentative formulation of a proposition can be offered concerning the within-term drop-out who considers academic difficulty to be his reason for withdrawal. First, as the study reveals, such drop-outs are rare; and secondly, poor academic work is known to be closely related to other reasons for leaving. What the individual who does poorly in his academic work experiences, and gives as his reason for withdrawal is more apt to be some related interpretive view of the situation. He is likely to consider academic difficulty a result, rather than a cause of his problem. However, when other conditions are favorable (when he is busy in campus activities, considers his finances adequate, etc.), he will then acknowledge academic difficulty as the reason for his withdrawal if his grades are low.

#### Family Illness - A Reference Point in Leaving

Family illness, as a reason for withdrawal, is primarily associated with the older age group. As suggested in Chapter V, the predominant complex here involves the status of the father, his apparent inability to meet his former role demands because of illness, and his subsequent replacement in this role by the son away at college. This is particularly true for students coming from a rural

background, regardless of whether he is living in a private home, quonset, or dormitory.

The incompleteness of the data in this category makes the description of this complex rather narrow, and limits generalizations to a minimum. It seems probable that if special inquiry were concentrated on this area of activity, the problem would have many extensions leading over into social status, financial resources, occupational level of the father, size of family and its composition, etc. Our brief analysis provides intimations to this effect. We have no indication that grade point averages are related to this activity.

#### Housing - Estrangement from the Group Norms

It will be recalled in the discussion of housing as a contributing factor in withdrawal (page 65) that only about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the total percentage in the study gave dissatisfaction with housing as the reason for leaving. Withdrawal attributed to inadequate or unsatisfactory housing is limited to students who resided in private homes or the Quonset Village. These students were all older students, i.e., twenty-one years of age or over, and young in terms of their existence on the campus, none of them completing a full year's study. They could not be identified as predominantly from rural or urban backgrounds, their

academic work was poor (average of 1.7), they did extremely poorly on entrance examinations (in the lower third), and were not active in campus organizations.

In nearly every respect this student is describable as a deviate from the general campus norm. It might be tentatively assumed that, since his group relationships did not develop, or deteriorate, as his academic work lagged, he would orient himself toward the values of some other community than the campus, eventually dropping out of school. Within such a set of conditions it is little wonder that "everything is bad -- including the house I live in".

#### A Summary of Descriptions

The goal in the preceding descriptions has been to identify with greater empirical content and in a systematic manner a number of selected factors as they are associated with within-term drop-out behavior. Of concern were not isolated segments of phenomena, but complexes in which relationships were described, thus paving the way for analytical interpretation and the construction of hypotheses for further study.

In some cases the breakdown by categories did not yield differential processes. With reference to housing as the condition under which withdrawal occurred, it was shown that this condition when identified with private homes is



with one exception always a factor to be considered. It is impossible to differentiate as to "why" a student withdraws by taking into consideration his school residence. A different type of implication is, however, important because of this. In fact, where this factor fails to differentiate within the drop-out group, it becomes one of the most clear-cut differentials between drop-outs and non-drop-outs, and an hypothesis for further research concerning the process by which housing influences operate to produce within-term withdrawal is provided.

In a similar manner housing, illness, finances, and employment are all closely associated with poor academic work. This complex is not so much an academic status differential within the drop-out group as it is a uniformity within the group. It is also a differential between within-term drop-outs and the general male student population under the specified conditions associated with illness, housing, finance, and employment.

Previously other differentials which were found in the drop-out classifications have been described. The descriptions took the form of abstractions concerning the student who conceived himself ill, or anticipated transferring to another school, or taking a job. In the large school with its complex social milieu, such as Michigan State College, it can be assumed that all the relationships

described may be influential at any given time, enforcing or reflecting to the potential within-term drop-out the role he will play. These conditions serve as reference points whereby the drop-out defines the situation and anticipates his role in relation to that of others.

### The Inconsistent Cases

It was noted in Chapter VI that there were a number of cases where reliability was not established. It was not the intention to analyze all of these cases, but rather to select a number which might be of aid in understanding the peculiarities, if any, of the unreliable case. On logical grounds the unreliable cases associated with illness and with insufficient finances were chosen. The reasoning in selecting these two categories was as follows:

(1) In both instances there were enough reliable cases to suggest that there was some persistent pattern from which the unreliable case was a deviation. In other words, 86 per cent of the cases in the illness category were consistent in giving their reason for withdrawal, and 60 per cent of the cases in the financial category did likewise. How did the inconsistent response differ?

In many instances the pattern of conditions remained the same. The drop-out who was inconsistent in stating his reason for withdrawal came predominantly from private home housing, withdrew early in his college career,

did poorly (but no more poorly than other within-term drop-outs) in his academic work, and was not a very active participant in campus organizations. Three factors did stand out as identifying characteristics of the unreliable cases: (1) They were definitely students who at the time of withdrawal were older than the average student of similar academic status; (2) They came almost exclusively from urban home backgrounds; and (3) They did poorly on entrance examinations.

The author simply describes the unreliable case as an older student (older at the time he began his college career and older than others in his class at the time he withdraw) who is relatively poorly suited for academic work and who has as a background the social system of the larger community, a background usually considered to be heterogeneous and interwoven with a complex of alternative and contradictory social roles.

### Summary

The data reported here concerning the consistency or inconsistency of relationships between within-term drop-outs' stated reasons for leaving school and the conditions selected for comparison in this study reinforce the idea presented in the initial phase of this study that within-term drop-out behavior was a complex of activity identifiable and describable in its natural setting. Without

previous studies of within-term drop-outs with which to make comparisons, the descriptions presented have been in every sense exploratory. It may be that these descriptions will take on new meaning when other college studies are available. The interpretation and the theoretical formulation of the findings leading to hypotheses for further study follow in the next chapter.

## Chapter VII

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

1. A review of the literature revealed that studies pertaining to within-term drop-outs were lacking. Related studies concerning both within-term and between-term drop-outs as a general class were frequent and suggested a number of variables or factors for investigation.
2. An exploratory study was then designed to provide for the analysis of a wide range of data which on the basis of the literature or consultation with administrators and student personnel workers were assumed to be relevant to the problem at hand.
3. Data were obtained from two primary sources: official college records and directly from male within-term drop-outs. The latter information was collected by means of a questionnaire which had been successively reformulated through a series of pretests. Validity of the questionnaire was established by selected follow-up interviews.
4. The data were then analyzed with reference to the conditions associated with within-term drop-out behavior, and the frequency and reliability of the reasons drop-outs gave for their withdrawal from college.



5. Further analysis involved the description of conditions related to drop-out behavior and their association with several categories of reasons for withdrawal as expressed by the drop-out students.
6. It was found that several differential patterns within the intra-term drop-outs could be described, as well as differential patterns between within-term drop-outs and non-drop-outs.
7. The patterns were interpreted to indicate that the drop-out students maintain a number of relationships both on-campus and off-campus which serve as effective differential reference points in their withdrawal.
8. The need was cited for further study of a comparative nature which would evaluate the implications of college community and off-campus relationships as they relate to withdrawal.

#### Interpretations and Conclusions

The interpretations and conclusions in this study, like any exploratory study, are not to be considered final but rather lead to the formulation of tentative conclusions which in turn become the preliminary formulations or hypotheses for further study. The interpretation and theoretical formulations leading to a rationale for further investigation follow:



At the outset of this study reference was made in Chapter I to the fact that within-term drop-outs have been considered as belonging to the same general class as any drop-out student. It was then suggested that while this might be the case, an explanation for the withdrawal of within-term drop-outs might be found in an analysis of the conditions which appeared immediate and demanding to them; situations so significant to the potential drop-out that within the term he decided he had to leave more or less immediately. After examination of a number of selected conditions and an analysis of reasons given for withdrawal the problem can now be restated.


Within-term drop-outs are officially members of the college community prior to their withdrawal. At the same time they participate either directly or through personal identification in the many-faceted life of society with basic loyalties and demands extending to their home community, to sub-groups within the home community, to their family, or to general status positions -- occupational, financial, etc. Hence, their reference points off the campus are manifold in both content and intensity.

Within the college community the potential within-term drop-out fails to participate on a par with others in campus organizations. The requirements of academic discipline are likewise more of a casual anchoring point for him,

while his housing, health, personal matters, and finances stand in the foreground. The tangentially important values, the values about which he is concerned in either a positive or negative frame of reference (either for or against but in either case primary objects of attention and evaluation), serve as diversions from meeting the prerequisites of social and academic participation in the college as a community of interacting persons with mutual and reciprocal role expectations.

It should be noted that this interpretation rests upon the hypothesis that social cohesion and morale do prevail in the general student body. While this study did not concern itself with an index of general student morale, that such morale is a reality at Michigan State College can be qualitatively established by reference to the activities and pursuits of the general student body. There is an identification by the student with the institution with a set of generalized predispositions to meet role obligations and a readiness to acknowledge the demands of the institution in numerous particular situations.

Similarly, the evidence does find the within-term drop-out directing his interests or focusing his attention away from the institutional demands. He is less ready to acknowledge the legitimacy of the institution's role expectations in the numerous particular situations which



exist and, therefore, from the drop-out's point of view, he is less obliged to fulfill these role requirements.

The key to interpretation then becomes the comparative significance of off-campus conditions and relationships (home, friends at another school, housing) or general status categories (job, occupational goal, financial status) in contrast to social and academic participation within the campus community as they operate jointly to shape prevailing attitudes among potential within-term drop-outs.

The implications of this interpretation and formulation are many. Studies of students have been concerned with academic success, social participation, achievement, health, social adjustment, personality characteristics, student leadership, to mention just a few. These are reported in the literature. Comparative studies, however, in which the above are considered in relation to the off-campus community -- one's home background, socio-economic status, off-campus housing, differentials in rural and urban background -- comparative studies linking relationships on and off the campus as they operate simultaneously to form attitudes among drop-outs are lacking.

There are a number of grounds on which objections to the above retrospective interpretation might be based. First of all, it is difficult to state in precise terms or

concepts how these factors are presumably related without introducing further variables. Secondly, analysis involving interpretative concepts is at least one step removed from the empirical data upon which we base our interpretation. To justify the conclusion that comparative studies which cross the life of the college community and off-campus activities or identifications are necessary, even though they may be difficult to conceptualize at this time, an earlier affirmation that this is a legitimate stage at the level of exploratory study may be repeated. In the early stages of investigation when rigid empirical tests are lacking, gaps must be filled in by a system of concepts and tentative formulations which become the hypotheses for further investigation. These tentative formulations aid in discovering what factors have previously been overlooked, or what additional factors must be described and taken into account. This is perhaps the difference between exploratory and experimental study in terms of the purpose for which they are designed. The purpose in this study has been to explore and to describe, and thereby to conclude with suggestions and recommendations for further study as well as to make a few tentative suggestions concerning the practical problem faced in understanding the within-term drop-out at this time. It is recognized, however, that continuity in any area of investigation requires

that some generalizations in the form of an interpretation such as here presented be included. These then become the central theses about which there is doubt. These theses, in the form of specific hypotheses, can then be subject to further investigation.

Recommendations I (Hypotheses for further study)

1. Private homes or temporary housing afford a condition associated with the concept of illness as a reason for withdrawal in direct contrast to dormitories, co-operatives, or fraternities, where the concept seldom emerges.
2. Illness and a low grade point average are not independent phenomena; however, the nature of their association, i.e., whether illness causes a low grade point average or whether a low grade point average is a cause of illness is in need of further exploration.
3. The student who does well on entrance examinations is less likely to give illness as a reason for withdrawal than the student with average or poor performance on these examinations.
4. Seclusiveness or withdrawal from campus activities is a significant aspect of the behavior one might anticipate among students who consider withdrawal for which they give illness as the reason.

5. Off-campus housing presents the student with a financial dilemma, real or imaginary, which makes it difficult for him to maintain his student status and carry out his role obligations in the college community.
6. The aspiration level derived from the urban community's value system exerts more pressure in the form of desire for upward socio-economic mobility, thereby making for a large gap between achieved and aspired socio-economic status, this latter serving as an index of potential within-term drop-out behavior.
7. Students from a rural environment are more likely to consider Michigan State College as too large a school and to give this as a primary condition contributing to their desire for transferring.
8. The degree to which a student identifies himself with another school results in a corresponding alienation from the college in which he is enrolled.
9. Employment as a goal prior to the completion of one's college career is a compensatory factor for one's relatively low standing in both academic and social activities on the campus.
10. Poor academic work is acknowledged by students as a reason for their withdrawal only when some other reason is lacking, i.e., as a last resort.

11. Students who consider illness, finances, or employment as reasons for withdrawal will be functioning academically at the same level as students who recognize academic difficulty as their reason for leaving.

### Recommendations II

This study has posed several questions related to the present student personnel program at Michigan State College and the efforts now being made to understand and work with potential within-term drop-outs. While the details involved in the application of any recommendations made here would involve the professional insights and training of administrative personnel and counselors on the job, the general scope of the recommendations which follow is aimed at suggestions which, carried through to the applied level, might aid in reducing the number of within-term drop-outs in the future.

1. One of the crucial factors which must be faced, difficult though it may be to work out in terms of a detailed program, is off-campus housing. Two alternatives appear feasible which are in line with better control and improvement of the off-campus housing problem: One approach would be to assign one or more persons the specific responsibility to inspect off-campus housing and to maintain a close



working relationship with students living in such units. Just as the dormitory, fraternity, or co-operative maintains a close working relationship to the student personnel program, so too some means of communicating the problems of the off-campus units to the student personnel offices is necessary. A second approach, one less cumbersome although somewhat limited in scope, would be to require all freshmen students to live on campus during their first year at Michigan State College. While this approach would not reach the student who enters Michigan State by way of transfer, it would over a period of time mean that most students would have experienced at least one year of supervised and campus oriented student participation.

2. From general remarks and comments made in response to the questionnaires used in this study, remarks which cut across the different categories of within-term drop-outs as here analyzed, it is suggested that the content of the general orientation program for new students place more emphasis on the function of the Basic College in relation to the student's training in whatever area he may contemplate choosing for specialization.
3. While any student personnel program must be flexible and adjust to the needs of the students, the

structure of the counseling program needs to be well-defined and its specific resources made available to the student in the sense that he is aware of the help available to him. While counseling services may be broad in scope at Michigan State College, there is some evidence that these services are not necessarily known to the student at the time he desires or is in need of counseling. Many students either directly or indirectly infer that they would have made use of counseling facilities, if such were available. On the other hand, it is known that in many cases the facilities were available, but apparently not known to the student.

4. In line with the preceding recommendation, it is suggested that a concerted effort be made to establish a closer working relationship among those personnel offices interested in living situations, academic advisory services, extra-class activities, student health, and the professional counselors.

**APPENDIX A**



**COPY**

**MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE  
East Lansing**

**104**

**Office of the Counselor for Men**

**July 20, 1950**

**Dear Sir:**

The Office of Counselor for Men at Michigan State College would like to ask your assistance in solving a problem that confronts us. A number of students who start their college careers withdraw before the completion of their course. Although this number is not large, we feel it is significant enough to study carefully in order to assist other students with similar problems.

Our major concern is to discover the reasons for withdrawals during the freshman and sophomore years. Since you withdrew from Michigan State College during that period, I would like to ask your cooperation in completing the accompanying questionnaire so that we may gather some information which will be helpful for future use in counseling and advising other students. The questionnaire is brief and will only take a few minutes of your time.

This information will be kept in strictest confidence and your name will not be used at any time. We would like to have the information ready for fall. Therefore, it would be appreciated if you would complete and return this questionnaire immediately. An addressed and stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation in helping us to help other students, I remain.

**Sincerely yours,**

**L. Dale Faunce  
Counselor for Men**

**LDf:jm**

**Encl.**

MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE  
East Lansing

**COPY**

Office of the Counselor for Men

August 20, 1950

Dear Sir:

Some time ago this office wrote to you requesting your assistance in solving a problem that confronts us. We feel sure that you did not receive the letter or inadvertently misplaced it so we are again writing and requesting your kind indulgence. A number of students who start their college career withdraw before the completion of their course. Although this number is not large, we feel it is significant enough to study carefully in order to assist other students with similar problems.

Our major concern is to discover the reasons for withdrawals during the freshman and sophomore years. Since you withdrew from Michigan State College during that period, I would like to ask your cooperation in completing the accompanying questionnaire so that we may gather some information which would be helpful for future use in counseling and advising other students. The questionnaire is brief and will only take a few minutes of your time.

This information will be kept in strictest confidence and your name will not be used at any time. We would like to have the information ready for fall. Therefore, it would be appreciated if you would complete and return this questionnaire immediately. An addressed and stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation in helping us to help other students, I remain.

Sincerely yours,

L. Dale Faunce  
Counselor for Men

LDF:jm

Encl.



**APPENDIX B**

**COPY**

107

**MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE  
East Lansing**

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Present address \_\_\_\_\_  
                                    Street                      Town                      State
3. After leaving M.S.C. did you transfer to any other  
school? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ What school? \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you graduate? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Will you please describe briefly the work you are doing  
at present?
5. In a brief statement would you explain the reason or  
reasons you had for withdrawing from M.S.C.? (Please be  
frank as this will be of help to us in working with fu-  
ture students. If there happened to be some phase of  
college life you did not like, please say so.)
6. Please list any organizations or activities to which you  
belonged or in which you participated while attending  
M.S.C. (This would include campus or community groups.)  
  
Religious \_\_\_\_\_ Recreational \_\_\_\_\_ Departmental \_\_\_\_\_ Social \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
Professional \_\_\_\_\_ Fraternal \_\_\_\_\_ Athletics \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. If you have any suggestions that would assist us in help-  
ing new students, please list them below. (If you do  
not have sufficient space, please use the reverse side of  
this sheet.)



**APPENDIX C**





Data showing the frequencies of questionnaire answers according to the reason given for withdrawal as related to selected Data in College records.

|                              |    | Illness | Financial | Transfer | Employment | Personal | Academic | Family Illness | Housing | Miscellaneous |
|------------------------------|----|---------|-----------|----------|------------|----------|----------|----------------|---------|---------------|
| Private Home                 | 25 | 31      | 24        | 23       | 16         | 5        | 4        | 2              | 4       |               |
| Quonset                      | 14 | 9       | 11        | 8        | 6          | 2        | 1        | 2              | 2       |               |
| Dormitory                    | 9  | 12      | 5         | 6        | 7          | 1        | 2        |                |         |               |
| Frat. or Coop.               |    |         |           |          |            |          |          |                |         | 2             |
| No Data                      | 6  |         | 2         | 2        | 3          | 1        |          |                |         |               |
| Age: 17-18                   | 10 | 9       | 3         | 1        | 7          |          | 1        |                |         | 1             |
| 19-20                        | 14 | 11      | 16        | 13       | 8          | 5        | 1        |                |         | 2             |
| 21                           | 29 | 30      | 20        | 24       | 15         | 3        | 6        | 4              |         | 5             |
| No Data                      | 1  | 2       | 2         | 1        | 2          |          |          |                |         |               |
| No. 1 or less                | 34 | 28      | 27        | 19       | 15         | 6        | 4        | 4              |         | 5             |
| Terms 2 or 3                 | 13 | 16      | 8         | 15       | 8          | 1        | 3        |                |         | 3             |
| 4 or more                    | 6  | 7       | 6         | 5        | 7          | 1        | 1        |                |         |               |
| No Data                      | 1  | 1       |           |          | 2          |          |          |                |         |               |
| Urban (over 500 Pop.)        | 34 | 42      | 26        | 22       | 16         | 5        | 4        | 3              |         | 4             |
| Rural (Pop. of 500 or under) | 15 | 6       | 15        | 18       | 16         | 3        | 4        | 1              |         | 3             |
| No Data                      | 5  | 2       | 1         |          |            |          |          |                |         | 1             |
| Grade less than 1.5          | 14 | 11      | 5         | 10       | 9          | 3        | 2        | 1              |         |               |
| Point 1.5 to 2.5             | 38 | 31      | 33        | 28       | 20         | 5        | 5        | 3              |         | 7             |
| Average over 2.5             |    | 5       | 3         |          | 1          |          | 1        |                |         | 1             |
| No Data                      | 2  | 4       | 2         | 1        | 2          |          |          |                |         |               |
| Ent. Upper 3rd               | 6  | 14      | 7         | 8        | 2          |          | 1        |                |         | 1             |
| Exam. Middle 3rd             | 27 | 17      | 16        | 13       | 12         | 6        | 2        |                |         | 4             |
| Scores Lower 3rd             | 17 | 17      | 13        | 16       | 12         | 2        | 5        | 2              |         | 2             |
| No Data                      | 4  | 3       | 6         | 2        | 6          |          |          | 2              |         | 1             |
| No. Activ. 0                 | 35 | 27      | 32        | 21       | 16         | 4        | 4        | 4              |         | 6             |
| Activities 1                 | 9  | 9       | 4         | 11       | 9          | 2        | 2        |                |         | 1             |
| Participate 2                |    | 4       | 4         | 2        | 3          | 1        | 2        |                |         | 1             |
| In 3                         | 1  | 2       | 1         | 1        | 1          |          |          |                |         |               |
| 4                            |    | 1       |           |          |            | 1        |          |                |         |               |
| No Data                      | 7  | 8       | 1         | 4        | 3          |          |          |                |         |               |

**APPENDIX D**

SUMMARY OF REASONS GIVEN FOR WITHDRAWAL AT TIME OF  
EXIT INTERVIEW, TOGETHER WITH REASONS AND  
COMMENTS GIVEN ON QUESTIONNAIRE

| <u>Reasons Given<br/>at<br/>Exit Interview</u> | <u>Reasons Given on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                         | <u>Comments on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                                   |
|--|---|--|
| Family illness                                 | Financial   | No comment   |
| Financial                                      | Financial   | No comment   |
| Financial                                      | Financial and lack<br>of adequate housing                         | No comment   |
| Financial                                      | Financial   | No comment   |
| Employment                                     | Financial   | No comment   |
| Financial                                      | Didn't like instructors   | Get new instruc-<br>tors   |
| Financial                                      | Unable to attend classes -<br>permanently disabled -<br>financial | Urge first term<br>students to<br>join organi-<br>zations              |
| Illness in family                              | Financial   | No comment   |
| Financial                                      | Classes too large,<br>lost individuality                          | No comment   |
| Illness  | Financial - health  | Favorable comment  |
| Wife's illness                                 | Financial   | Work out study<br>plan for married<br>students                         |
| Financial                                      | Didn't like Basic<br>College                                      | Students should<br>be asked to join<br>activities                      |
| Financial                                      | Financial   | More loans   |
| Financial                                      | Financial (married)   | No comment   |
| Illness  | Lack of interest and<br>finances                                  | No comment   |
| Personal                                       | To acquire enough money<br>to get divorce                         | No comment   |
| Personal                                       | Financial   | New students<br>should partici-<br>pate in all so-<br>cial activities  |
| Financial                                      | Housing problem   | No comment   |
| Employment                                     | Financial - Father's<br>death                                     | No comment   |
| Financial                                      | To be married - couldn't<br>keep up with studies                  | College should do<br>more than just<br>send out proba-<br>tion notices |

| <u>Reasons Given<br/>at<br/>Exit Interview</u> | <u>Reasons Given on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                   | <u>Comments on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                        |
|--|---|---|
| Illness at home                                | Financial - dislike of Comps.                               | No comment  |
| Transferring                                   | Financial - and credits didn't transfer from West. Michigan | Do away with Basic College                                  |
| Transferring                                   | Housing and financial                                       | No comment  |
| Transferring                                   | Financial - didn't get expected scholarship                 | No comment  |
| Too big a school                               | Financial   | No comment  |
| Entering Navy                                  | Financial - couldn't decide on a career                     | Favorable comment   |
| Financial                                      | Financial   | Set up aid fund for out-of-state veterans                   |
| Financial                                      | Lacked money and peace of mind                              | No comment  |
| Family illness                                 | Financial   | Favorable comment   |
| Going into business                            | Financial   | No comment  |
| Support family                                 | Financial - Mother's illness                                | No comment  |
| Employment                                     | Financial   | No comment  |
| Personal                                       | Financial   | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Disliked Quonset Village, too large school                  | Simpler registration program and don't overcrowd the campus |
| Father's illness                               | Financial - family illness                                  | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Dislocation of arm  | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Unable to decide upon course of study                       | More personal help from teachers and counselors             |
| Health   | Financial   | No comment  |
| Personal                                       | Financial   | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Financial   | Find some way to assist new students                        |
| Financial                                      | Financial   | No comment  |
| Transferring                                   | Financial   | Need for more counselors                                    |
| Entering service                               | Financial and uncertain of major                            | Do away with comp. system for grading                       |
| Transferring                                   | Financial, and undesirable housing                          | Lower room rates for G.I.'s, and more social gatherings     |

| <u>Reasons Given<br/>at<br/>Exit Interview</u> | <u>Reasons Given on<br/>Questionnaire</u>   | <u>Comments on<br/>Questionnaire</u>  |
|--|---|---|
| Financial                                      | Financial   | No comment  |
| Plans to reenter                               | Financial   | No comment  |
| Insufficient funds                             | College out for student's money   | Give small town kids a break in athletics                                   |
| Financial                                      | Vet. Med. field overcrowded   | Show no partiality to men with athletic scholarships                        |
| Financial                                      | Wasn't qualified for course he chose  | Entrance exam. for all and more capable teachers                            |
| None given                                     | Financial - both parents ill - farming  | No comment  |
| Personal                                       | Financial - couldn't make friends   | Give vocational aptitude tests to entering students                         |
| Financial                                      | Financial - lack of interest and no goal  | Give more help to no-pref. students   |
| Financial                                      | Reorganization of Father's business   | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Dislike of instructors  | Increase staff so instructors could spend more time with individual student |
| Financial                                      | Housing and financial   | House students according to income  |
| Financial                                      | Attitudes of students in general - social activities stressed more than education | Stress more education than social activities                                |
| Financial                                      | Financial - no particular interest  | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Financial   | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Class schedule conflicted with employment   | No comment  |
| Financial                                      | Dislike of Basic College and grading system                                       | More concentration on education and less on grades                          |
| Personal                                       | Family illness - finances   | More personal counseling help and employment aid                            |
| Financial                                      | Lived off campus - discouragement   | Discourage students who require indiv. recognition                          |

| <u>Reasons Given at Exit Interview</u> | <u>Reasons Given on Questionnaire</u> | <u>Comments on Questionnaire</u>          |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Financial                              | Had a family to support               | Get Gov't. checks to veterans on time     |
| Financial                              | Had to maintain car - Aunt's illness  | No comment                                |
| Transferring                           | Financial                             | No comment                                |
| Financial                              | Financial                             | No comment                                |
| Financial & personal                   | Financial                             | No comment                                |
| Mother's illness                       | Financial                             | No comment                                |
| Financial                              | Financial                             | Should feel he could confide in counselor |
| Employment                             | Financial                             | No comment                                |

### Personal

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| Personal | Didn't care for subjects offered                     | No comment  |
| Personal | Dislike of Basic College and running around too much | Abolish Basic College   |
| Personal | Not applying self to study up to capacity            | No comment  |
| Personal | Offered fine position which is present employment    | Individual students should be considered more   |
| Personal | Illness in family                                    | No comment  |
| Personal | Inadequate background for college                    | No comment  |
| Personal | Could not become adjusted after army life            | Smaller classes   |
| Personal | Inadequate preparation for college                   | Should prepare student in high school for college   |
| Personal | Sickness at home and finances                        | More personal counseling and aid in securing part-time employment                             |
| Personal | Unsure of course to follow                           | Doesn't favor Basic College; provide more opportunity for analyzing adaptability and aptitude |

Reasons Given  
at  
Exit Interview

Reasons Given on  
Questionnaire

Comments on  
Questionnaire

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| Personal | No interest, Quonset Village too large, lack of individual attention in classes      | More personal and individual help for incoming students           |
| Personal | Financial  | No comment  |
| Personal | Lack of interest in field where enrolled   | No comment  |
| Personal | Financial; couldn't make friends   | Give vocational tests to entering students                        |
| Personal | Quonset not conducive to study; overcrowded classes                                  | Brief students on how to arrange classes                          |
| Personal | Misinformed concerning athletic scholarship  | No comment  |
| Personal | Felt five year forestry course entailed too large a sacrifice for future it afforded | No comment  |
| Personal | Wanted to get married  | No comment  |
| Personal | Insufficient funds   | No comment  |
| Personal | Study difficult after breaking engagement  | Favorable comment   |
| Personal | To acquire money to obtain divorce   | New students should participate in all social activities          |
| Personal | Had had three years at previous college so didn't feel need for more                 | Doesn't think college degree necessary                            |
| Personal | Couldn't decide upon field to enter; Basic College                                   | Need more counselors, more personal student-teacher relationships |

Employment

|            |                              |  |
|------------|------------------------------|--|
| Employment | Bad grades, crowded classes  | Need more instructors (general construction work)                    |
| Employment | Unsettled about career       | Students should decide on vocation before entering college (laborer) |
| Employment | Left to operate uncle's farm | No comment (mgr. of 500 acre farm)                                   |

Reasons Given  
at  
Exit Interview

Reasons Given on  
Questionnaire

Comments on  
Questionnaire

|            |  |  |
|------------|--|--|
| Employment | Business opportunity seemed attractive   | Give students more personal attention (book-keeper at bank)                |
| Employment | Needed immediate employment  | Favorable comments (telephone co.)   |
| Employment | Didn't consider himself a student; thought he should take job offer  | No comment (letter carrier)  |
| Employment | Left to join police force  | No comment (policeman)   |
| Employment | Left to do work he enjoyed   | Read Reader's Digest, p. 76, July 1950 (eng. drafting)                     |
| Employment | To be married, offered position  | Route man for Coca Cola  |
| Employment | Veteran and didn't want to take one year ROTC  | No comment (laborer)   |
| Employment | Offered present job  | No comment (book-keeper - milling co.)                                     |
| Employment | To take present job  | No comment (managing father's gas station)                                 |
| Employment | Not well and had family to support   | No comment (M.S.C. dairy dept.)  |
| Employment | Lived off campus, no participation in organizations, no particular ambitions   | No comment (operates confectionary)  |
| Employment | Had to work, couldn't keep up with studies, too large a school   | Exceptions should be made regarding rules (credit mgr., insurance company) |
| Employment | Living in Quonset Village not conducive to study, etc.   | Need more adequate housing and study facilities (turret lathe operator)    |
| Employment | Insufficient funds   | No comment (shipping clerk)  |
| Employment | Illness in family, dissatisfaction with selection of courses, lack of consideration on part of Deans, Counselors, etc. | No comment (laborer)   |
| Employment | Couldn't manage working and studying   | No comment (proof-reader)  |



| <u>Reasons Given<br/>at<br/>Exit Interview</u> | <u>Reasons Given on<br/>Questionnaire</u>             | <u>Comments on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                |
|--|---|---|
| Employment                                     | New job prohibited continuing in school               | No comment (chef-steward)                           |
| Employment                                     | Financial   | No comment (gen. maintenance man in hospital)       |
| Employment                                     | Lack of interest, no one vocational choice            | More adequate preparation in high school (student)  |
| Employment                                     | Only enrolled for one day                             | No comment  |
| Employment                                     | Didn't get along well in studies                      | Students should belong to organizations (machinist) |
| Employment                                     | To join police dept.                                  | No comment (police department)                      |
| Employment                                     | Family illness  | No comment (lab. tech.)                             |
| Employment                                     | Couldn't make adjustments after Navy, hopes to return | No comment (laborer)                                |
| Employment                                     | Financial   | No comment (welder)                                 |

### Transferring

|              |   |  |
|--------------|---|--|
| Transferring | Basic College; didn't have enough G.I. time                           | More counselors and more personal student-teacher relations needed |
| Transferring | Lack of funds   | No comment   |
| Transferring | Wanted to go to school in home town                                   | No comment   |
| Transferring | Entered service from state and wished to be near home after discharge | No comment   |
| Transferring | College too large; ill health   | Smaller and more personal classes                                  |
| Transferring | Basic College; system of handling student housing                     | No comment   |
| Transferring | Wishes of parents; school too large; ill health                       | Give vocational examinations to entering students                  |
| Transferring | Unsettled as to plans; had to study in Q. V.                          | Need more counselors; abolish Q. Village                           |
| Transferring | To be married   | No comment   |
| Transferring | School too large, had to live too far from campus                     | No comment   |

Reasons Given  
at  
Exit Interview

Reasons Given on  
Questionnaire

Comments on  
Questionnaire

|              |  |   |
|--------------|--|---|
| Transferring | Dislike of Basic Col.  | No comment  |
| Transferring | Financial  | Abolish Basic Col.                                  |
| Transferring | Housing and financial  | No comment  |
| Transferring | Financial  | No comment  |
| Transferring | Disliked Basic Col.,<br>too large  | Better living conditions, jealousy of other housing |
| Transferring | Living conditions  | Abolish Basic Col.                                  |
| Transferring | School too large   | No comment  |
| Transferring | Received scholarship to University of New York                                     | Find more convenient way for students to withdraw   |
| Transferring | Poor housing; didn't like football set-up  | Better housing facilities - Quon.                   |
| Transferring | To join wife in Cal.   | Establish refresher course for vets.                |
| Transferring | Felt personal racial discrimination  | No comment  |
| Transferring | Felt he could get same schooling in business college, no basic college             | No comment  |
| Transferring | Financial  | School too large                                    |
| Transferring | Wife's health, school too large  | Do away with overcrowded classrooms                 |
| Transferring | Thought he was going in to pharmacy, now in accounting                             | No comment  |
| Transferring | Called home by parents   | No comment  |
| Transferring | Insufficient funds; poor housing   | Lower room rates for G.I.'s; more social gatherings |
| Transferring | Too troubled living conditions   | No comment  |
| Transferring | School too large   | No comment  |
| Transferring | Dissatisfaction with Basic Col., could finish school in less time at business col. | No comment  |
| Transferring | Because of wife  | No comment  |

Illness (Health)

|         |                                   |                                      |
|---------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Illness | Dislike of Basic College; climate | No comment                           |
| Illness | Illness                           | More thorough indoctrination program |

| <u>Reasons Given<br/>at<br/>Exit Interview</u>  | <u>Reasons Given on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                                   | <u>Comments on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                                  |
|---|---|---|
| Illness   | Illness   | No comment  |
| Illness   | Insufficient college preparation; one class held religious conflict for him | No comment  |
| Illness   | Hospitalized by V.A.  | No comment  |
| Recommendation of Dr. Holland and Dean Strother | Living conditions; illness and too long in school                           | No comment  |
| Recommendation of Health Service                | Nervous fatigue   | Students should regulate their time for study and play                |
| Health  | Financial   | No comment  |
| Health  | Wife's health, school too large   | Eliminate overcrowded classrooms                                      |
| Illness   | Invalid - had difficulty getting to and from classes                        | Handicapped people should be shown more consideration                 |
| Health  | Had to transfer to a warmer climate   | No comment  |
| Health  | Ill health  | No comment  |
| Health  | Couldn't do required work due to bad leg                                    | Favorable   |
| Illness   | Became ill during registration week   | No comment  |
| Illness   | Lack of understanding of theoretical and practical education, insecurity    | No comment  |
| Illness   | Illness   | No comment  |
| Illness   | Illness   | No comment  |
| Illness   | Illness   | Don't encourage students to drop out if they get behind in their work |
| Health  | Dislike of Basic College  | Try to show new students reason for Basic College                     |
| No reason given                                 | Illness   | No comment  |
| Health  | Nervous condition   | No comment  |
| Health  | Illness, x-ray revealed TB  | No comment  |

Reasons Given  
at  
Exit Interview

Reasons Given on  
Questionnaire

Comments on  
Questionnaire

|                        |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Injured in boxing      | Required several operations                                       | Make complete check of student's health when he goes to health center for treatment |
| Injured                | Injured in deer hunting   | No comment  |
| Health                 | Had TB - 15 months in hospital                                    | No comment  |
| Health                 | Housing facilities, illness                                       | No comment  |
| Illness                | Broken collarbone while playing football                          | Each student should have faculty counselor  |
| Illness                | Had trouble with college algebra; had to drive to and from school | No comment  |
| Illness                | Killed June 9th   | -   |
| Medical reasons        | Had to have operation   | Make counselors more readily available  |
| Transferring           | Wishes of parents; school too large; ill because of Q.V. heating  | Give vocational examinations to entering students                                   |
| Illness                | Ill health  | No comment  |
| Illness                | Deceased, April 1949  | No comment  |
| Academic & poor health | Illness - sinus trouble   | No comment  |
| Illness                | Financial, health   | Favorable comments  |
| Health                 | Illness   | No comment  |
| Illness                | Lack of interest and finances                                     | No comment  |
| Health                 | Accepted at Notre Dame  | No comment  |
| Health                 | Nerves - recommended leave by physician                           | Teachers have better understanding of students                                      |
| Health                 | Illness and parents moved to Wisconsin                            | No comment  |
| Health                 | Mental health   | Student should study what he is best suited for; join at least one organization     |
| Health                 | Deceased  | No comment  |

Miscellaneous

| <u>Reasons Given<br/>at<br/>Exit Interview</u> | <u>Reasons Given on<br/>Questionnaire</u>   | <u>Comments on<br/>Questionnaire</u>  |
|--|---|---|
| Dissatisfied                                   | Didn't think chance of getting job in four years too great                        | No comment  |
| No housing                                     | Poor housing, school too large  | More counselors   |
| Course too difficult                           | Couldn't become adjusted to college life after service                            | More adequate housing   |
| Father's illness                               | Father's illness, had to go home every weekend; grades low                        | No comment  |
| Dissatisfied                                   | Didn't like Basic College or life on campus, too crowded                          | More personal attention, felt too much like a number  |
| Needed at home                                 | Too far from home, campus too large   | No comment  |
| Academic                                       | Had been out of high school too long  | Students just out of high school should be kept in separate classes from those out six to eight years     |
| Academic                                       | Dislike Basic College   | Let Basic College be optional   |
| Work trouble                                   | No particular field of interest   | Compulsory aptitude tests and counseling  |
| Schedule difficulty                            | Housing and studying conditions   | No comment  |
| Death of Father                                | Father's death  | Favorable comments  |
| Evicted from housing                           | Lack of housing facilities  | No comment  |
| Housing and scheduling                         | Living conditions   | Request students to visit MSC before enrolling  |
| Father's illness                               | Father's illness  | Should take more interest in individual students  |
| Father's illness                               | Father's illness  | No comment  |
| Dissatisfied                                   | Dislike of Basic College  | No comment  |
| Scholastic                                     | Requested to withdraw, tried to carry too much work, insufficient background      | Take min. work first term; instructors should report on failing students every two weeks; more counseling |
| Married  | Entered pre-med., marks not high enough; couldn't find married housing facilities | No comment  |

| <u>Reasons Given<br/>at<br/>Exit Interview</u> | <u>Reasons Given on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                                  | <u>Comments on<br/>Questionnaire</u>                                |
|--|--|---|
| Illness at home                                | Financial; dislike of Basic College  | No comment  |
| Not qualified to do college work               | Not able to settle down  | No comment  |
| To work a year, unsettled                      | Didn't like basic English; failed course                                   | No comment  |
| Couldn't get proper courses                    | Dislike of Basic College   | Now can see theory behind Basic College                             |
| Too large a school                             | Financial  | No comment  |
| Employment                                     | Financial  | No comment  |
| Illness at home                                | Insufficient manpower at home  | No comment  |
| Support his family                             | Financial; Mother's illness  | No comment  |
| Too large a school                             | Couldn't get down to work  | Students should all live on campus                                  |
| Dissatisfaction with living quarters           | Poor sleeping quarters, no place to study; not enough time between classes | No comment  |
| Father's illness                               | Family illness & finances  | No comment  |
| Dissatisfied                                   | Jump from small to large college too great                                 | Students should become acquainted with buildings before they attend |
| Father's illness                               | Father's illness   | No comment  |
| Academic                                       | Living conditions in Q.V.; lazy at studying                                | Do away with Q.V.   |
| Employment                                     | Living conditions  | Better housing project for married students                         |
| Scholastic                                     | Wanted to get into different type of work                                  | No comment  |
| Academic                                       | Grades too poor to transfer to hotel ad.                                   | No comment  |
| Course difficulty                              | Had no particular vocation in mind   | Additional help at registration time                                |
| Too busy                                       | Too busy with other work; lack of respect of teachers for students         | Discipline  |
| Mother's illness                               | Finances   | No comment  |
| Dissatisfied                                   | School too large, too impersonal, no goal in mind                          | No comment  |
| Dissatisfied                                   | Offered football scholarship at Tulane; didn't like comps.                 | Doesn't think whole year's grade should depend on comps.            |

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