A REPORT OF AN EXPERIMENTAL ORIENTATION FORUM FOR PARENTS OF MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Dissertation for the Degree of Ed. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Ellwood A. Voller

1960

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ABSTRACT

A Report of an Experimental Orientation Forum for Parents of Michigan State University Students

By Ellwood A. Voller

The objective of the study was to report the planning and development of an experimental orientation program for parents of Michigan State University students. The study grew out of a concern for assisting the student to make the best possible adjustment to college life and increase the effectiveness of his total educational experience.

The pilot program was undertaken to determine worthwhile content, effective implementation and appropriate resource personnel and materials for the organization of such a program on a counting basis.

The methods and procedures employed in the development of the pilot program were based upon the philosophy that the involvement of several select persons would result in a program of optimum value. Several weeks were required to gather pertinent facts, opinions and suggestions from numerous sources. A preliminary planning committee met to analyze and evaluate accumulated information. It was agreed the parent orientation pilot program would be most effective if carried on in local communities within existing adult education programs.

After extensive planning by the committee and several adult education directors, two geographical areas were selected for the

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experimental programs. They concluded that a series of separate forums should be conducted in each locality.

Although general plans of organization and implementation were agreed upon by the planning committee, yet each local area was intentionally involved in the specific planning of their own program in accordance with their own needs. It was decided to have four evening sessions in each area scheduled at intervals of two weeks.

There was a continuous appraisal and evaluation of the forums as the series progressed. Each parent participating was requested to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make suggestions for the improvement of future forums. In addition to the ongoing evaluation during the orientation meetings themselves, there was a parents' evaluation questionnaire designed to send parents at the conclusion of the last session of the forum.

The major findings of the study were as follows:

1. There is practical need for Michigan State University and other institutions of higher learning to develop a systematic program of orientation of some design that will assist parents of freshmen and parents of prospective students to more fully understand and comprehend many phases of college life.

2. There are many problems and concerns of both parents and students resulting from the latter's college matriculation. Adjustment to college life is so complex and involved that there is an apparent need to develop new approaches and methods of assisting the student.

3. It was found parents were interested in helping their son or daughter in their adjustment, but admittedly did not know how to offer constructive help. Expectations of parents and the demands of college are often in conflict or even in contradiction to each other.

4. It is believed properly oriented and informed parents can assist the college student personnel people acquire better understanding of the student and his needs.

5. In the study it was found that the parent orientation forum which involves adult education directors, secondary school counselors, university students and university representatives strengthens the interrelations between several educational agencies.

6. Special emphasis should be placed upon delegating major responsibility for implementing the program to the adult education director of the local area.

A REPORT OF AN EXPERIMENTAL ORIENTATION FORUM FOR PARENTS OF MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

by

Ellwood Archie Voller

A THESIS

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

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

College of Education
Guidance and Personnel Services

1960

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express gratitude to his major adviser, Dr. Walter Johnson of Michigan State University, College of Education. Dr. Johnson's assistance and continuous encouragement throughout the graduate program has been of invaluable aid both personally and professionally.

The writer wishes to thank Dr. William Farquhar for his valuable guidance in the preparation and planning of this study.

Also particular debt is owed to Dr. Harold Dillon who assisted in the planning and development of the Experimental Program of Parent College orientation through Adult Education. The enthusiastic cooperation of several Adult Education Directors in the state of Michigan was a direct result of Dr. Dillon's influence.

He is appreciative of the help and encouragement received from Dr. Donald Leu and Dr. Carl Horn, both members of his guidance committee. Grateful acknowledgment is given to the many members of the faculty and administrative staff of Michigan State University who cooperated and gave so generously of their time in the development of the Michigan State University Parents Forum.

The completion of this study would not have been realized if it had not been for the encouragement and understanding of the writer's wife, Bethavery, and two daughters, Cheryl and Carolee.

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Office of the Dean of Students and other administrative personnel of Michigan State University indicated interest in the many problems and concerns of both parents and students, resulting from the latters' college matriculation. To date, no planned program in Michigan, or other states, has been directed to these issues. Before such a program was initiated at Michigan State University, the Dean of Students' Office and representatives of the College of Education proposed a pilot program in adult education. Such an experimentation could be used to determine worthwhile content, effective implementation, and appropriate resource personnel and materials for the organization of such a program on a continuing basis.

The planning and development of a pilot program of parent orientation to college life were undertaken. The study is designed to describe the methods used in the organization of such an experimental program, and report the effectiveness of the program itself.

NEED FOR THE STUDY AND IMPORTANCE OF PARENT ORIENTATION

With the growing development of student personnel programs on most campuses, there has been an increased effort to assist the student to make a satisfactory adjustment to all phases of college life. Many orientation programs emphasize the involvement of administrative officers and student personnel people. Other programs are planned to give a well-organized introduction to college life to the student prior to the beginning of formal instruction. A modern trend of student orientation is to follow the pre-school or welcome week plan with an extended, continuous orientation to all phases of college life. There is also an increasing emphasis on assisting the new student develop proper communications skills and study habits as part of the orientation program.

At Michigan State University extensive effort and numerous methods have been used in assisting students to a better understanding of every phase of college life. Through formal programs such as counseling clinics,[1] and freshman welcome week,[2] together with the work of the counseling center, Dean of Student Affairs, and student government, there have

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[1]See Appendix B.

[2]See Appendix B.

[illegible]

been unified efforts to help students make proper adjustment to their new experience at Michigan State.

In addition to the formal programs, there have been several less structured, or informal opportunities afforded the student to receive needed assistance. The counseling center, health clinic, Dean of Students' Office, residence hall advisers, along with faculty advisers and enrollment officers, have developed continuous voluntary programs for helping students with many kinds of problems during their stay at the University. All of these influences mentioned are positive in nature and should be continued and further developed.

The types of programs and emphasis of assisting the student in his college-adjustment have been well conceived and most worthwhile. However, in spite of the effectiveness of the existing programs, there needs to be further experimentation to develop methods which more successfully assist the student in making the transition from high school graduation to a new world of experience. There has been increasing evidence that college adjustment is so complex and involved that there is need of new approaches and methods, or systems in assisting the student. The problem of high academic mortality among college freshmen and sophomores is still one that needs serious attention.

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As a result of interviewing several hundred students withdrawing from Michigan State University during a five-year period, it appeared that many failed to make proper adjustment to college because of some aspect of parental pressure or influence. Furthermore, interviews with parents of students receiving disciplinary action verified the belief that many parents had unintentionally hindered the progress of students seeking to make satisfactory adjustment to the academic and non-academic life on campus. Almost every parent was found to be interested in assisting his son or daughter succeed in college. However, many parents did not know how to offer constructive help.

It is common to find conflict, and even serious contradiction between the demands of the college and the expectations of the parent. In visiting with parents it has been found that they often overestimate the scholastic aptitude of their sons or daughters. Often the parent has selected a different occupation or goal for his son than the son has for himself. In many instances parents lack sufficient information regarding vocational opportunities, and therefore, resulting in differences between the parent and child in educational and vocational choices. Testimony of many parents gave evidence to the fact that they had been advising a

certain course of action to their children, while the college adviser was giving quite different advice concerning an identical situation or problem.

After several years of interviewing male students leaving Michigan State University, it became increasingly evident that many student maladjustments to college were a result of parent-student conflict or misunderstanding.[3] In those instances, it was found that the cultivation of better understanding between college parents and students reduced many of the tensions on the part of both students and parents.

In light of the experience mentioned above, there was practical need to develop some means by which Michigan State University could assist parents of freshmen, and parents of prospective students to more fully understand many phases of the college. There had been occasional informal opportunities to work with parents, yet there were no planned methods that provided the type of parental orientation requested by parents, even though this seemed to be important to the successful adjustment of the college student.

Keeping the above factors in mind, a plan was evolved whereby parents of both students and prospective students could be oriented to the general nature of the college by trained personnel. The basic plan with appropriate evaluation procedures was submitted to the All University Research Grant

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[3]See Appendix A.

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Committee with a request for instigating funds.[4] An appropriation was granted for the year 1957-58. The pilot program in adult education was proposed and approved to determine worthwhile content, effective implementation, and appropriate resource personnel and materials for the organization of such a parent orientation program under a continuing basis. The proposed programs consisted of a series of parent forums to be held in several regions or counties within the State of Michigan.

ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made in undertaking the development of the pilot program of orientation of parents of college students.

1. Well-informed parents can assist students in making a more satisfactory adjustment to the college experience. Since it is assumed many of the tensions and conflicts that students experience during the first years of college are intensified by parental pressure, these pressures can be modified by parents who understand the college procedures and philosophy.

2. Properly oriented parents can assist the University Student-Personnel people acquire a better understanding of the student and his needs. The effectiveness of the guidance

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[4]See Appendix E.

services available to the student will increase with a knowledge and understanding of that student.

3. Parent orientation programs that involve adult education personnel, secondary school counselors, and college representatives, will strengthen the interrelationships between several educational agencies. By integrating these educational groups each will be better understood and strengthened. The student himself will be subjected to a more continuous and coordinated program of guidance on all levels of education.

4. When parents become familiar with the activities of the college and campus and understand the educational philosophies of the institution, the parent-child relationship itself will be strengthened.

5. A well-organized program of parent orientation for parents of prospective students has a potential of providing a source of student recruitment.

LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE

The experimental program of parent orientation to college life was originally planned to assist parents of prospective students as well as the parents of students already enrolled in Michigan State University. The adult education directors involved in the planning of the parent forums readily offered their services in an adult education program that would give information to parents of students

already enrolled in the University. They were hesitant, however, to sponsor a program that might be interpreted as a recruiting device for any single college or university in the state. The attitude of the adult education directors limited the scope of the experimental program in the early stages of its development to those parents with students already enrolled in the University.

The number of parents participating was further limited by the difficulty experienced in scheduling the series of four programs which did not interfere with the participants' previous commitments. The uniqueness and newness of the parents' orientation forum limited the possibility of communicating effectively to parents the type of assistance they could receive attending the forums.

The parent forums were experimental programs themselves, thereby necessitating a continuous change in pattern and techniques throughout the series. Part of the design of planning was to solicit ideas, suggestions, and evaluations from the participants as the series of forums progressed. Although the basic goals and objectives were adhered to, there were sufficient minor changes in techniques and procedures to limit the validity of evaluating some aspects of the new program.

The geographical areas selected did not include a large metropolitan area. It was felt the type of program and

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techniques used along with the method of implementation would be of greater significance than a broad geographical sampling which would include various sizes of communities.

Although the questionnaire contained useful and valuable information, it did not lend itself to the extensive statistical analysis. Several parents returning questionnaires had not participated in all four sessions; therefore, the validity and appropriateness of certain of their responses are somewhat limited.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

All planning related to the study was based upon the philosophy that involvement of several persons and groups would result in a pilot program of optimum usefulness. Every effort was made to solicit ideas, opinions, and suggestions of college personnel, parents, and other individuals interested in the improvement of the students' adjustment to college.

Several weeks were taken to gather and compile ideas and opinions from the various sources. A preliminary planning committee met to analyze the information gathered and study procedures used in other colleges and universities to acquaint parents with college life. The preliminary planning committee formulated a tentative plan in developing an experimental program of parent orientation.

It was agreed the parent orientation program would be more effective if carried on in local communities within

existing adult education programs. There was no known existing adult education program including this type of instruction; therefore, a new pattern would have to be designed.

The result of the committee's report was given to an adult education seminar to study and criticize. The seminar group had not been involved in any of the previous planning; therefore, was requested to evaluate tentative plans and make any additional suggestions.

The next procedure was to convene a committee composed of adult education directors, university personnel, and consultants to further refine the general plan and request assistance and cooperation of the adult education directors. The adult education directors readily confirmed the need for such a program and agreed to sponsor a series of parent forums in their respective areas.

It became evident that this experimental program was of sufficient significance to the University to request an all university research grant for its financing. A sufficient grant was approved to adequately finance the publicity, travel, secretarial services, and all incidental expenses incurred by the university and the adult education centers.

Two counties were selected for the initial parent forums. A steering committee, representing the University, adult education directors, and parents was appointed to complete the detailed plans for the program itself. It was decided to

have four forums in each of the two counties, with each area tailoring its plans according to the needs of their own situation. The general procedures were similar, but a maximum amount of local planning was encouraged.

Before the contents of the first program were specifically planned, several parents were requested to indicate the type of information and questions they would like to have explored by discussion.

A publicity brochure[5] of the parent orientation was prepared by the Information Services at the University and sent to parents of students in the respective areas. A panel of several college persons representing various areas of college interest met with each group of parents in four evening sessions held semi-monthly. The adult education director of the area, along with the forum director, met with the parents' steering committee at the conclusion of each session to plan for the future programs. A questionnaire[6] was designed to send to parents at the conclusion of the last program. Each parent was requested to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make suggestions for the improvement of future continuing programs.

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[5]See Appendix C.

[6]See Appendix F.

The experience and insights gained during the development of the pilot program, together with the evaluation of the participants were felt valuable in assisting planning of future programs. Parents from other communities expressed their desire to participate in similar programs.

PLAN OF THE STUDY

In Chapter II the review of literature pertinent to the study will be pursued. This will consist of a report of studies relating to parent orientation programs as administered by select colleges. Several general references will be made to the purpose of the college orientation. Related studies which are particularly significant to student, parent, school relations will be examined.

The first part of Chapter III will deal with the actual methods and procedures used in the development of the plans for the experimental orientation program for parents of Michigan State University students. Part two of Chapter III will describe the procedures and techniques used during the parent forums themselves. Chapter IV will contain a report and discussion of the construction of the parents' questionnaire and the general summary of their evaluation of the forum. Chapter V will present recommendations for future consideration of parent orientation programs of Michigan State University, with modifications of the experimental program used as a basis

for this study. Chapter VI has the basic concern to present the summary of the main findings of the evaluation along with accompanying conclusions. Implications of these outcomes will be cited.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE RELATED TO COLLEGE ORIENTATION OF PARENTS

In this chapter references will be made to the purpose of college orientation with a brief resume of its history and development. More direct attention will be given to references related to parent orientation programs as administered in selected colleges. Literature pertaining to the parent-student-school relations will be referred to briefly.

Purpose of Orientation

The basic purpose of higher education, according to a report of the American Council on Education,[1] is "the preservation, transmission, and enrichment of the important elements of culture--product of scholarship, research, creative imagination, and human experience--it puts emphasis in brief upon the development of the student as a person rather than upon his intellectual training alone."

Knode[2] found that orientation was most important for

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[1]American Council on Education, The Student Personnel Point of View. Washington: American Council on Education Series I, Volume I (No. 3), 1947, p. 1.

[2]Jay C. Knode, Orienting the Student in College. New York: Columbia University Press, Bureau of Publications, 1930, pp. 112-113.

the following purposes:

1. Imparting knowledge of college history and traditions.

2. Explaining college rules and regulations.

3. Discussing registration procedures.

4. Giving introduction to campus.

5. Extending official welcomes and making provision for acquaintances.

6. Providing information regarding student activities and organizations.

Additional purposes related to improving general academic and social adjustment might well be added to the above. College orientation refers to those organized services and activities whose purpose it is to help new students better adjust to college life.

Strang states that orientation means "turning toward the east, facing a new dawn--it means assisting students in acquiring techniques of living in college and achieving a beneficial balance among all the demands and opportunities of college life and in gaining perspective and a new sense of purpose."[3]

Development of College Orientation

One of the first references to any formal program of the orientation of students to college life was the introduction

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[3]Gilbert Wrenn, Student Personnel Work in College. New York: Ronald Press Company, 1951, p. 274.

of a special freshman course in Boston University in 1888.[4] The specific purpose of the course was the "orienting of its new students." In 1900 Iowa State College introduced new students to a required course without credit.[5] This required course was for the purpose of orienting new students to college life.

Between 1910 and 1915 many colleges and universities initiated formal courses or lectures required by all students. A typical college course given for credit in 1912 is described in an article entitled "Helping the Freshman Find Himself."[6] The general plan of Freshman Week, or pre-registration orientation, was inaugurated in approximately 1917 and 1918, by the University of Rochester and Wellsley College.[7] Mackay[8] describes the widespread attention of the Freshman Week program organized at the University of Maine in 1923. The program adopted by the University of Maine is similar to most of the Freshman Week schedules used in colleges at the

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[4]George Daley Mackay, Freshmen and New Student Orientation. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Colorado, 1949, pp. 2-3.

[5]Loc. cit.

[6]Joseph K. Hart, "Helping Freshman to Find Himself," The Nation, Vol. XCIV, Feb. 22, 1912, p. 182.

[7]Knode, op. cit., p. 7.

[8]Mackay, op. cit., p. 7.

present time. Mackay[9] cites the fact that as early as 1930 approximately one-third of the American colleges and universities offered some form of orientation courses and approximately three-fourths emphasized individual orientation to college life. During the decade of the thirties[10] there was a development of general education programs which incorporated many of the objectives of orientation and group guidance.

The article on "College Orientation" by Margaret Bennett for the Encyclopedia of Educational Research carries the following statement: "Orientation services in colleges and universities have been introduced during the past thirty years as an essential part of student personnel programs, and more recently of general education programs."[11]

In an article entitled "Trends in College Orientation," Ludeman[12] described his survey of fifty colleges in the Midwest, which included liberal arts, state colleges, teachers colleges, and so on. He found all had some form of formal orientation programs. Twenty-five of the colleges concentrated on a few days at the beginning, while the other fifty per cent distributed activities over a longer period

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[9]Mackay, op. cit., p. 7.

[10]Walter S. Monroe (ed.), Encyclopedia of Educational Research, "College Orientation," by Margaret Bennett. New York: Macmillan Company, 1941, p. 1304.

[11]Monroe, op. cit., p. 1304.

[12]W. W. Ludeman, Educational Forum, "Trends in College Freshman Orientation," 21:63-5, November, 1956.

of time. Some of the colleges involved gave credit for orientation courses or activities. Ludeman publishes the following conclusion in the problems of orientation.

1. The trend is to distribute orientation periods rather than concentrating them.

2. Properly organized programs have tremendous value to students.

3. Orientation is becoming a more vital part of guidance programs.

4. Orientation planning should become a cooperative venture with faculty, rather than just involving counselors.

5. There is still much to do before reaching an ideal plan.

One of the most recent developments in the area of freshman orientation is found in the article, "Pre-College Counseling at Michigan State University."[13]

Those students who enroll at Michigan State University in the fall are given the opportunity to attend one of several summer counseling clinics held on the University campus during July and August.

Students are divided into small groups and assigned to an experienced counselor who becomes personally acquainted with each individual within the group. During the three-

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[13]William Mann, "Pre-College Counseling at Michigan State University," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 35:595-96, August, 1959.

day period, considerable time is devoted to administering a battery of selected tests to each client. The results of these tests are interpreted to each individual by his counselor. This information is used in assisting the student with his academic planning.

The entire time of the clinic has been carefully planned to give maximum opportunity for each client to be exposed to pertinent information and actual campus experiences. An evaluation of the pre-college orientation program has reflected a great deal of satisfaction in assisting the students in making a successful adjustment to college life.

Studies Related to Parent-College Orientation

New York City College. Newton[14] states that "College doors are open eagerly to students, but often carry unwritten signs, Stop Here." He felt colleges should plan to help freshmen over hurdles by developing an orientation program for parents, as well as students. In the same article, President Ewell Gallagher of City College, New York, stated, "It is difficult to provide suitable opportunities for growing individuals to mature without open rebellion against parental authority." The plan used at City College was initiated by upper class students suggesting they write to

[14]David Newton, "Dear Parents, Our College Cordially Invites You," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 34:217-18, December, 1955.

parents inviting them to a parents' reception held on Mother's Day. This activity was to be sponsored by the Student Social Organization. The forenoon plans included campus tours for parents during which time they would meet and visit with faculty and other college personnel. The idea was not to engage parents in activities, such as is planned for high school open houses, but rather it was to share with parents some of the college world.

According to Newton this experience was so successful that the Student Affairs Office felt it worthwhile to plan an official parent orientation program. The new program would be officially sponsored by the college and more extensive than the organized tours planned by the students. The first annual parents' orientation day was attended by 700 parents.

Although planned and sponsored by the college, yet students assisted in mailing, etc. All parents met for thirty or thirty-five minutes in a general assembly where they were welcomed by the president and given information about the day's program by other administrative officers. The parents were then divided into twenty groups which met in separate rooms. Each group had a faculty coordinator, two other faculty members, and two students. This team of five had prepared outlines for discussion of topics and

questions of known problems. They discovered that although the procedures varied in each group, yet all groups discussed similar problems, which included the following:

1. Parent-child relationship at college age
2. Academic program
3. Curriculum
4. Problems of adjustment
5. Student personnel services
6. Vocational goals

After the hour discussion periods in which the parents were urged to express their problems freely, they were invited to an informal coffee hour. The remainder was scheduled campus tours and a luncheon.

The effectiveness of the program was summarized in the following evaluation statement. "The program was well received by the parents. Participation was excellent by faculty, administration and students." The report also included the following comment, "This is a new frontier in student personnel work."

University of Wisconsin. David O'Dea,[15] while at the University of Wisconsin, asked the question, "How can college counselors obtain assistance of parents in dealing with students' educational and vocational choices?" In his article,

[15]David J. O'Dea, "Parents Can Assist the Counselor," Phi Delta Kappa, 34:323-5, May, 1953.

"Parents Can Assist the College Counselor," O'Dea stated, "The staff recognizes the value of including parents in the counseling programs set up for their children, and feels that counseling should provide parents with an opportunity to communicate pertinent information to the college personnel."

Prior to freshman pre-enrollment interviews, a letter is sent to the parents. The letter explains about the counseling services of the University and states that a successful educational program is a result of cooperation between home, student, and school. Also they request a Parents' Confidential Report be returned. The report consists of questions such as:

1. Does your son like the idea of attending college?

2. To what degree do you feel a college education is necessary for future plans for your son? Answer--absolutely necessary, helpful, not necessary.

3. What is his preference concerning his future life's work? Do you approve, disapprove. Why?

4. What are his special talents?

5. What subjects or courses previously taken have been of greatest interest? Of least interest?

6. Any special defects which might affect his success in college? Other questions about activities, friends, study habits, intentions to work, etc., are included.

It was found that 67 per cent felt college necessary, while 20 per cent expressed feeling it would be helpful. The

remaining 13 per cent did not believe college necessary to future plans of son or daughter. In several instances what parents reported for son's plans were not the same as the student wrote on his application. O'Dea's conclusion was summarized as follows:

1. Parents overestimated scholastic aptitude of sons.

2. After parents and counselors discussed differences between parents and the child's educational and vocational choices, it was discovered parents lacked sufficient information regarding vocational opportunities.

3. Regardless of reasons for parents and sons vocational differences, the conclusion was that virtually all parents were sincerely interested in the welfare of their children and desirous of cooperating to the utmost with the college personnel.

4. Having parents participate in the student personnel program has rendered in virtually every situation a positive benefit to students, parents, and college.

Allegany College. According to McCracken,[16] the Allegany College education guidance clinic tries to provide a realistic picture of college studies and skills, attitudes, and goals needed for successful completion of college work. One of the goals is to bring together college faculties, students,

[16]Charles W. McCracken, "Pre-College Clinic Week," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 34:437-440, May, 1956.

parents, and high school counselors, for helpful discussions of pre-college guidance problems and methods. An attempt is made to give the student an opportunity to work in labs briefly, visit classes, take tests, and have interviews. McCracken reports that the plan of the five and a half day clinic program provides for close contact of students and parents with the counselors. Although parents do not stay for the entire program, they are involved in group meetings and interviews with counselors. After an interview with the student and parents separately, the counselor has a final conference with student and parents together. It is stated that the counselor spends a great deal of time with the parents at the close of the week. An evaluation of the pre-college clinic week, McCracken stated, "this contact with parents has been a most important contribution of the clinic to the family and the college." The questions discussed during the counselors' conferences with the students and his parents are divided into the following categories:

1. Relationship of college education and military service.

2. The nature of recreational and social activities of college.

3. College entrance requirements and examinations.

4. Cost of college and ways of securing financial aid.

5. Information concerning academic side of college life,

such as required vs. electives, how to learn to study, teacher-student relations, amount of knowledge needed for concentration.

6. Rules and regulations.

7. Fraternity and non-fraternity.

8. What is dorm life like.

9. Other miscellaneous problems.

Limited follow-up studies make it apparent that these parents, students, and counselors relationships were positive factors in a successful adjustment of the student to college life.

In an earlier reference in this chapter, Ludeman of the University of Wisconsin was quoted as stating, "Parent, college orientation is a new frontier in student personnel work." The writer of this study experienced difficulty in finding references or descriptions of orientation programs which were specifically designed for parents. Numerous articles were found that referred to the need of a formalized program but indicated little or no experimentation in this field.

RELATED STUDIES PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT TO STUDENT, PARENT, SCHOOL RELATIONS

Evelyn Duvall,[17] one of our foremost authors on parent-child relations made the following statement: "If parents

[17] Evelyn Duvall, "Helping Them Over the Hurdles," National Parent Teachers, 50:4-7, March, 1956.

can understand the problems of college age young people every young person should have the feeling that when he is really up against it, his parents are still the ones he can turn to without fear or shame." Miss Duvall urges that parents be the kind of people their sons and daughters can continue to turn to at college age.

In a study of parental attitudes and academic achievements, Andrews[18] found that children from homes where parents give guidance and direct information make better academic achievements than those from completely permissive homes. It should be noted that Andrews' study was confined primarily to a sample of parents of high school students. It was felt, however, that the findings of this study would be to some degree applicable to college age. This was predicated on the concept that high school academic achievement is still the best single predictor of scholastic success in college.

In 1956 Keiel[19] made a study of the college adjustment of fatherless male students in Brooklyn College. According to Keiel, all freshman men were requested to see the counselors for individual interviews during the first three weeks of their freshman term. At the end of the first week,

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[18] E. M. Andrews, "Parental Attitudes and Academic Achievement," Journal of Clinical Psychology, 13:328-32, October, 1957.

[19] Norman Keiel, "Vocational Counseling of Fatherless Male College Students," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 34:369-70, February, 1956.

over 50 per cent of the fatherless students came in for interviews. This represented a proportionately large percentage as compared to the 19 per cent of those whose fathers were living who sought interviews. He found that motivation for college training of students whose fathers were deceased was due to pre-determined vocational goals. They sought help in planning for achievement of these goals. In summarization Keiel said, "Students need parents' understanding and support when making college adjustment. Those without parents sought help more readily."

The results of a recent study made by Weigard[20] relative to the adaptiveness and role of parents in college academic success at the University of Maryland further emphasized the importance of the relationship between college parents and students. A group of students who entered the University of Maryland in September of 1948, and who also returned the following school year, represented almost an ideal group on which to investigate the importance of motivational factors in academic success. This statement is made because the group was relatively homogenius in relation to high school performance and measured scholastic achievement and aptitude, and demonstrated variable performance in college. The

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[20]George Weigard, "Adaptiveness and Role of Parents in Academic Success," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 35:518-22, August, 1957.

indications from the differences are that the parents of successful students exercised more positive supervision and inspired more confidence than did the parents of the students of the unsuccessful group. Those parents who instill a desire for cooperation in their offspring in home affairs may well be re-enforcing a habit which is one of the determinors of success in later life. The same kinds of attitudes shown by parents with reference to supervision are expressed relative to grades. Successful students report that their parents were interested in their work and encouraged them.

In a study of parent-child, school relationships, Camp[21] makes a concluding statement confirming the belief that as the cooperation and relationship between school, parent, and child increases, the child himself has a "three-way chance for improvement."

Beier[22] studies the parental identification of male and female college students. His conclusions contain two general observations which have definite relevance to the development of a program designed to improve college, parent, and student relations. First he found that young men identify more readily with their father, while young ladies identify more readily

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[21] L. T. Camp, "A Three-Way Chance for Improvement," Teacher College Record, 60:104-10, November, 1958.

[22] E. O. Beier, "Parental Identification of Male and Female College Students," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 48:569-72, October, 1953.

with their mother. Secondly, he pointed out that when a young man identifies strongly with his father, he ascribes more than average feminine values to his mother.

Blum[23] in a study of parents' reaction to college counseling reports were based upon a questionnaire sent to parents of college students who had received intensive pre-registration counseling and other services. As a result of this inquiry, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Parents desire to be informed regarding the outcomes of counseling. They read and discuss communications related to counseling and apparently welcome additional direct contact with the counselor.

2. Parents agree counseling and related services are helpful, especially so in academic advisement and counseling with low achievers, and occupational information services.

3. Parents expect certain student services will be provided; services which are most commonly expected include academic advisement, counseling with low achievers, and occupational information services.

4. It appears that by communicating with parents regarding counseling, they not only become involved in the counseling but desirable attitudes develop toward newer and less familiar services.

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[23] L. P. Blum, "Parent Reaction to College Counseling Reports," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 34:150-3, November, 1955.

CHAPTER III

PARENT ORIENTATION AS AN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

I. Development of Preliminary Plans for an Experimental Orientation Program for Parents of Michigan State University Students.

The whole process of the development of plans and procedures for the experimental parents' forum was predicated upon the following concept: maximum involvement of all groups and persons concerned would not only provide comprehensive planning but would minimize barriers of communication and insure cooperation in implementing suggested procedures of the pilot program itself.

Evelyn Duvall[1] declared the desirability of parents acquiring an understanding of college life; yet to date, there are no reported organized orientation programs that assist parents in achieving an understanding of such broad scope.

The lack of an established pattern to follow necessitated cautious planning and careful study of every suggested procedure. Ideas, suggestions, and opinions were evaluated by administrative committees and educational seminars before being adopted as part of the experimental forum. The involve-

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[1]Duvall, loc. cit.

ment of many persons in the early stages of planning was entirely intentional to establish good rapport with those whose cooperation would be essential or at least advantageous to the continuance of the program. The second objective of maximum involvement was to utilize all possible experience and ideas of others so as to develop an initial program of high quality.

One of the first important steps in the development of the experimental program was an endorsement by the Dean of Student Affairs at Michigan State University. Although much discussion had centered around the possibility of initiating a parents' orientation program no formal approval had been requested. The Dean's office not only endorsed the development of a plan but offered many valuable suggestions for procedure. One of the recommendations was that persons from the following departments be interviewed for initial suggestions and reactions:

1. Counseling Center
2. Men's Division of Dean of Students
3. Women's Division of Dean of Students
4. Department of High School Cooperation

Each representative interviewed expressed interest in the development of some type of program that would provide parents with various types of information concerning the university.

Preliminary Group Discussion

During preliminary interviews it was suggested that a meeting of the four representatives from the above groups discuss general preliminary plans and establish guide lines for the development of a program. Such a meeting was called, and the following questions were presented for discussion:

1. What kinds of information would be both desirable and profitable for parents to acquire?

2. What kind of formal or informal organizational pattern should be established?

3. What personnel should become involved in the planning and implementing of such a broad program?

The discussion resulted in the following reactions and suggestions:

Types of information. It was expected parents would have varied interests as a natural result of the diversity of their backgrounds. It was further anticipated that despite the varied interests, parents would find the following types of information basic to an understanding of college life:

1. Academic information--credits, majors, basic college.

2. University policies and regulations--working, automobiles, dorm hours, discipline.

3. Costs and financial aid--loans, payments, scholarships.

4. Housing and health information--medical care, housing availability.

5. Social and cultural opportunities--programs, activities.

6. Religious opportunities--churches, religious organizations, chapel services.

7. Student personnel services available--guidance, testing, counseling, vocational help, placement.

8. Miscellaneous and general information.

It was felt that parents should be given an opportunity to identify areas for which they want additional information. As a result, it was decided to have a group of parents submit a list of specific questions. In addition to the general types of information identified by the committee, specific questions from parents would help pinpoint what was most important.

Developing organizational structure. When the question of organizational structure was presented, there were several opinions expressed as to size of parents' groups, length of sessions, number of sessions and appropriate timing. There was general agreement that if feasible the experimental program of parent orientation should be held in several central areas off campus. If an extensive program was planned, there would be serious difficulty in persuading parents to come to campus for a sufficient length of time. Moreover, distant travel to multiple sessions would be prohibitive.

Out of the discussion emerged the suggestion of conducting a series of night sessions at various counties or regions within the state of Michigan. There was agreement that a greater degree of participation by parents would be probable if some media for taking information to the parents could be arranged. The proposal indicated a need for some kind of extension program similar to those used in disseminating other types of information to off-campus people.

While discussing possible methods of implementing the off-campus parent orientation program, the committee mentioned the possibility of utilizing the existing adult educational structure in the local communities. Although at first the suggestion of using an adult education program seemed irrelevant, yet after further consideration it was agreed the possibility should be explored with a member of the Department of Adult Education at Michigan State University.

Selection and involvement of planning personnel. The discussion of the first two questions established at least a preliminary assumption concerning appropriate resource persons. The committee's inclination to cover the various areas of information necessitated expanding the planning group and resource personnel to include representatives from:

1. Basic College
2. College of Education

3. Adult Education

4. Registrar's Office

In addition to enlarging the planning group, it was considered appropriate to consult with other administrative personnel because it was becoming apparent the pilot study could very well become an all-university, off-campus experimental program. Upon approval of the office of the Dean of Students and suggestions of the Committee, individual interviews were scheduled with several persons in administrative positions whose departments were directly involved or concerned with a study of this kind.

Without exception those persons interviewed were not only interested in the proposed suggestions but confirmed the need and value of involving parents more intimately with the University. All expressed a feeling that much could be gained if parents, students and university personnel could more fully understand each other and the problems involving all three.

Several parents were interviewed as a follow-up of a previous suggestion. Those interviewed were informed of the general plan of the orientation program and were requested to answer several questions and evaluate the tentative plans.

There was strong support for such a program on the part of every parent interviewed. Most of the parents expressed their disappointment that they had not had the opportunity to

be involved in such an orientation forum prior to their son's or daughter's enrollment. In a few cases the parents referred to Parents Convocation[2] or some other brief orientation they had participated in. Their common feeling seemed to be that they had not received sufficient information about the university and college life in general. Several expressed the hope that the acquisition of more information would make it possible to better understand what their son or daughter faced in college in the way of problems and living situations. Others remarked that it would be helpful to be able to "talk the same language" as their young people in college.

Several students from both basic college and upper classes were asked to make a general reaction to the plan of parent orientation. In a few cases students did not show enthusiasm about the plan because they were reluctant to involve their parents in their personal college life. The majority of the students frankly stated their parents just didn't understand what was meant by such words as majors, minors, "comping out," hours, credits, non-preference, grade point, etc. Several students stated their parents were interested and even concerned about their vocational choice and professional preparation.

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[2]See Appendix B.

With the assistance of the consultants, a tentative plan was formulated using the suggested procedures from all persons involved in previous discussions and interviews. The tentative plan was then presented to a Graduate Seminar for critical analysis. After extensive deliberation the following suggestions were made by the Graduate Seminar:

1. A pilot program of parent orientation through Adult Education Directors should be developed.

2. Considerable responsibility should be given to local groups.

3. A planning meeting should be held involving Adult Education Directors from several communities in the state of Michigan, a regional Michigan State University coordinator from one area, consultants and the Dean of Students.

4. The name of the program could be appropriately called "Michigan State University Parent Forum."

All University Research Grant

A request for an all-university research grant was submitted following preliminary visits with several University administrative officers. There was a consensus that the experimental project was of sufficient significance to be worthy of consideration as an all-university research project. If accepted as a project, necessary finances would be made available for implementing the proposed plan. Because of the interest in presenting the pilot program through local

Adult Education Programs within the state, it was decided to request that the research grant be jointly sponsored by the Adult Education Department of the College of Education and the Office of Dean of Students. Approval of necessary funds was granted upon submission of a request containing the following brief outline:

> The Men's Division of the Office of the Dean of Students has indicated the many problems and concerns of both parents and students as a result of the latter's college matriculation. To date, no program in Michigan or other states has been directed to these issues. Before such a program is initiated at Michigan State University, the Men's Division of the Office of Dean of Students and the Department of Teacher Education propose a pilot program in adult education to determine worthwhile content, effective implementation and appropriate resource personnel and materials for the organization of such a program on a continuing basis. It is recommended that four communities be involved in such a pilot study.

Area Directors of Adult Education

Following the approval of the research grant, four counties (Jackson, Saginaw, Calhoun, Genesee) were tentatively selected as areas in which a pilot program might be conducted. An appointment was made with the Adult Education Director in each area. The project directors traveled to each area and visited with the Adult Education Director and his associates. The tentative proposal was explained, and three of the directors were enthusiastic about cooperating in any way possible. The fourth director was personally agreeable to assist but had reservations about the public reaction to giving help and publicity to one state university and not the others.

It was generally agreed in these initial interviews that the Adult Education Director would promote and conduct the series of Parent Forums as part of their regular scheduled services to the community. The University agreed to furnish necessary resource personnel and materials.

Final Planning Meeting of Committee

A planning meeting was held which involved Adult Education Directors from the four selected areas, meeting with several representatives of the University. The meeting was called to formulate specific plans and procedures for conducting a pilot program in one or more of the four areas represented by the Adult Education Directors in attendance. The persons representing the local areas presented many constructive suggestions not previously considered by the University planning committee. The general conclusions resulting from the meeting were as follows:

1. The initial pilot programs should be limited to Saginaw county and Jackson county.

2. Four evening sessions be planned in each area and tentative dates established for semi-monthly forums.

3. Both centers would use existing Adult Education facilities, and if possible, make the forum a regularly scheduled class.

4. Each local area be given latitude in its own planning and publicity with the assistance of the University representatives.

5. Cooperation of the high school counselors in the areas would be solicited.

The more specific suggestions for planning the first forums were as follows:

1. Nucleus of forums and programs would be centered around a panel of college representatives.

2. Programs be somewhat varied to give maximum experimentation.

3. The first forum of the series would involve parents of students already enrolled as Michigan State University freshmen.

4. Make maximum use of local people.

5. Involve local parent steering committee to assist in the planning of the remaining forums.

6. Local alumni groups were given privilege of furnishing coffee and snacks at conclusion of each session.

7. There would be no registration fee charged participants as the University Research Grant would assume any financial obligations for expenses incurred.

8. List of parents and their addresses would be compiled by the Michigan State University Dean of Students Office and sent to the Director of Adult Education in each area.

9. Develop and publish a brochure listing typical questions parents like to have answered. Design brochure that can be used for all areas as pre-forum publicity.

10. The programs be continually evaluated for effectiveness.

Adult Education Seminar Evaluation

The recommendations and suggestions resulting from the planning meeting were submitted to an Adult Education Seminar for critical review and suggestions. An entire evening session of the Seminar was spent in reviewing and discussing many aspects of the proposals to date. The group reiterated the need to keep the over-all program flexible and subject to constant evaluation. They further suggested the first session be cooperatively planned by the Adult Educational Directors and the University representatives, but the subsequent sessions be planned and revised by working with a parents' steering committee. The parents' steering committee could be elected at the first session and meet following the formal program to begin planning subsequent content.

The Seminar group suggested a list of questions be solicited from a number of parents. The lists could then be studied and a selection of questions most frequently asked could be compiled and used in preparing both the program and publicity brochure.

A group of parents and students was asked to submit a list of questions to which they would like to receive answers.

The questions should be specific. Those submitting questions were not to be identified.

When the lists were received, they were classified as previously suggested as a basis for inclusion in the brochure.

Preparation of Brochure

The general idea and format of the Parents Forum was submitted to the Department of Information Services of the University with a request they prepare and design a brochure.[3]

This was to be designed to give parents assurance that this was an informative and worthwhile program. The brochure was to present this parents' forum as an opportunity to get answers to many questions they might have concerning college life.

Development of First Forum Program

A conference was held in Saginaw with the Adult Education Director, the Michigan State University Regional Coordinator, a consultant in adult education, and Forum Director. Several details of programming were discussed and general procedures planned. The following tentative schedule and program was agreed upon for the first session at Saginaw:

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[3]See Appendix C.

Saginaw County

Dates: February 4, February 18, March 4, March 18

Meeting Place: The West Hall of the new Saginaw High School, located at 3100 Webber, Saginaw, Michigan

Panel Members: Earl Robinson, Director of Adult Education (Saginaw)
Dr. Frances H. DeLisle, Director, Women's Division of Student Affairs, Michigan State University
Henry C. Dykema, High School Cooperation, Michigan State University
Kermit H. Smith, Registrar, Michigan State University
Rowland R. Pierson, Counseling Center, Michigan State University
Ellwood A. Voller, Assistant Director, Men's Division of Student Affairs, Michigan State University
Dr. Edward A. Carlin, Dean of Basic College, Michigan State University
Charles N. Carr, Student, Michigan State University

Tentative Program:

7:30 - 7:35 - Introduction of Panel
7:35 - 7:40 - Why Parents Forum - Mr. Voller
7:40 - 8:05 - New orientation film "Journey"
8:05 - 8:35 - Panel discussion
8:40 - 9:10 - Group meetings with panel members
9:10 - 9:30 - Individual interviews
9:30 - - Coffee hour and mix

The Adult Education Director at Jackson suggested the same tentative program[4] (except for minor changes) be used for the first forum at Jackson. The Director of Guidance at Jackson Central High School was asked to assist the Adult Education Director in coordinating the series of forums.

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[4]See Appendix D.

Pre-Forum Publicity

An initial letter[5] was sent to all parents of Michigan State University freshmen who lived in the specified area. The letter including a brochure[6] was sent from the Office of Student Affairs, Michigan State University. The letter announced briefly the purpose of the forums and notified the parents they would be receiving further information from the Adult Education Director of that area.

The local Adult Education Director followed the initial contact letter with a more descriptive communication[7] to each parent, emphasizing the fact that this session would be informal, helpful and without speeches. A card was enclosed which could be returned with additional questions they would like to have answered or discussed.

Each area's local newspaper carried well-written stories, urging parents to attend. The radio stations of the Saginaw area gave free publicity in behalf of the program.

In addition to the above media of publicity, several parents received personal telephone calls urging their attendance at the first meeting. The phone calls were made by a group of selected parents and the Office of the Adult Education Director.

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[5]See Appendix D.
[6]See Appendix C.
[7]See Appendix D.

II. Procedures Used at First Forum.

Registration of Parents. The Adult Education Director made arrangements for two couples of parents to act as hosts and hostesses for the evening of the first forum. It was their responsibility to greet parents and guests as they arrived, and personally introduce them to the panel members and other parents. The hosts and hostesses were furnished with name cards to present to the parents as they arrived. The name cards were prepared prior to the session, and included the name of the parents as well as the given name of their son or daughter who was enrolled at Michigan State University.

As the parents gathered, it was gratifying to observe how easily a good rapport was established between parents and the panel members. A friendly relationship was also established between parents who had not met prior to this occasion. The technique of using parents as hosts and hostesses, to make informal introductions, established a warm friendly atmosphere which was a significant factor in stimulating prompt participation by parents in later discussions.

Introduction of Panel. The meeting was formally called to order by the local Director of Adult Education.

The technique of involving the Adult Education Director was intentionally planned to emphasize the importance of local leadership. The role of the panel of representatives

from the University was designed to be of an advisory and consultant nature. Following calling the meeting to order the Adult Education Director briefly explained the purpose of the meeting and introduced the Forum Director. Each panel member was introduced and requested to give a brief resume of his official duties on campus. In the description of these duties, special mention was made of the particular areas of student campus life he or she was most familiar with.

An embossed name card was placed on the table directly in front of each panel member. This enabled the parents in the audience to readily identify any member of the panel by name.

Following the brief presentation by each panel member, the Forum Director explained further the purposes and objectives of the parent orientation programs. Also a general outline of the procedures for this and the subsequent three sessions were described. Here again emphasis was placed on the desire of the University personnel and the Adult Education Director to design the series of forums to meet the needs of the parents of this local community. The group was requested to be considering methods, techniques and materials they might be interested in using or exploring during the subsequent three evening sessions. They were encouraged to identify specific topics for discussion that

would be of interest to them. They were also informed that following the orientation film entitled, "Journey," there would be an informal discussion period of the whole group. During this discussion period they would be encouraged to ask questions directed to any panel member.

Orientation Film. This newly developed twenty-minute, sound, color film, entitled, "Journey," presented an interesting story of a young man. This film portrayed the experiences of this high school graduate from the time he applied for admission to Michigan State University until he had completed his first few weeks on the University campus as a college freshman. The experiences included enrollment and registration procedures, counseling, testing, welcome week activities, dorm life, and many other aspects of college life as it appears to the new student. The film answered many questions in the minds of parents, but perhaps more important, it made them aware of many areas of college life they became interested in discussing.

Panel Discussion with Whole Group. The thirty minutes scheduled for this part of the evening's program was far from adequate time to give satisfactory consideration to the topics and questions raised by interested parents. The Forum Director opened the general discussion period by referring to the prepared brochure which included twelve carefully selected typical questions most frequently asked by parents.

It was suggested the participants might direct their questions to specific panel members if they so desired. To serve as guide lines for referring certain questions or topics directly to panel members, the following suggestions were made:

1. Registration Representative--registration procedure, academic grades, majors, minors

2. Counseling Center Representative--guidance, testing, personal problems, counseling procedures

3. High School Cooperation Department Representative--costs, financial aid, general questions about transition from high school to college

4. Women's Division, Dean of Students Representative--girls' dorm regulations, social regulations, housing conditions, social activities

5. Men's Division, Dean of Students Representative--disciplinary questions, university rules and regulations, work opportunities, withdrawals, men's housing

6. Basic College Representatives--general education questions, entrance requirements, academic questions, non-preference

7. Student--any general or specific questions of student adjustment to college

After several questions were raised and discussed, it became evident the time would be more equitable distributed if the general areas of greatest interest could be predetermined for the whole group. Then these general areas could be divided into two general categories. It was agreed the panel discussion period during the second and third sessions would be confined generally to the respective two groups of questions or topics. The group, as well as the

parents' steering committee, felt the fourth and final session of the forum should be an over-all review with an opportunity to raise desired questions of either a personal or general nature.

During the panel discussions all parents appeared to be genuinely interested in almost every topic discussed. In a few instances parents raised questions that were obviously of singular interest to their own son or daughter. In such cases the panel leader suggested the question be raised during the small group discussions or during their individual interview. After almost one full hour of discussion, the chairman adjourned this part of the evening's program and suggested they proceed to the small group discussion technique as planned. There seemed to be an almost unanimous feeling that more time should be allowed for the subsequent sessions for the general discussion period. Just prior to adjournment the group was requested to nominate and elect three or four parents to serve on a parents' steering committee. The committee would be requested to assist the Adult Education Director and Forum Director in planning for the remaining three sessions. Four parents were elected.

Small Group Discussions. The parents were divided into six equal groups. Each of the six panel members met with a group for a period of ten minutes. By means of a rotating schedule each group of parents met with three different

University representatives within the one-half hour period.

The purpose of these small groups was threefold:

1. Provide further opportunity for parents to become more personally acquainted with panel members, as well as with other parents.

2. Give opportunity for certain parents to participate in the discussion who were hesitant to speak before the larger group. This more informal situation encouraged every parent to speak.

3. Certain types of questions were more freely discussed in small informal groups than in the large group situation.

Individual Interviews. Several parents used the small group period to schedule individual interviews with the resource person. These interviews were scheduled during and following the coffee hour. Twenty minutes had been tentatively scheduled for individual interviews, but due to the lateness of the hour the informal coffee period followed the small group discussion.

Coffee Hour. The coffee and light refreshments were furnished and served by the local chapter of the Michigan State University Alumni Association. Representatives of the University were continuously involved with individual interviews during and following the coffee period. It became necessary to ask

several parents to postpone their scheduled interview to a later date.

Parents' Steering Committee. While other members of the panel were visiting with parents, the Forum Director, Adult Education Director and the four parents elected to the steering committee met to plan for the next session scheduled to be held in two weeks.

The steering committee endorsed the general tentative plan presented. They were enthusiastic about continuing the general format of the sessions but adopted the following specific suggestions:

1. Program be further publicized by radio.
2. Members of steering committee be furnished with names of all parents not attending first session. Personal telephone calls were to be made urging attendance.
3. Time be given for each panel member to present certain areas of information of interest to all. This would perhaps replace many time-consuming questions.
4. Prospective students and their parents be invited to attend the last session which would be a general review and synopsis of material covered in other three sessions.
5. A student be included on the panel for the remaining sessions.

III. Planning Subsequent Forums.

The parents' steering committee, panel members, and adult education directors were requested to continuously

evaluate each session. They were encouraged to make suggestions for changing procedures or techniques to be used in the subsequent forums. They were aware of the experimental aspect of the total program and therefore were asked to suggest different approaches. The basic plan designed by the preliminary planning committee remained substantially the same. The following variations in schedule and modification of methods were integrated into the remaining programs.

1. Additional time scheduled for whole group discussion
2. Use of Phillips 66 method in third session
3. Local selected parents responsible for calling and inviting new parents
4. Prospective students and their parents be invited to final session
5. Include upper classman on panel
6. Additional time be scheduled for individual interviews
7. Specific pre-announced topics or areas of information be presented each session
8. Each panel member be given more time to present information pertinent to his specialized field
9. Local radio and newspaper be encouraged to give coverage of forums for both news and publicity purpose

CHAPTER IV

DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS OF PARENTS' EVALUATION OF FORUMS

One purpose of this chapter is to describe and discuss procedures used in developing an instrument to measure parents' reaction to the orientation forums. Another aspect of this chapter is the analysis of the parents' evaluation of the pilot forums as a part of the research necessary in the development and formulation of future parent orientation programs.

Construction of Parents' Questionnaire

The prime objective of the experimental parent forums was to develop a parent orientation program on a continuing basis that would be most helpful to parents and students--both present and prospective. An instrument was needed to determine the parents' reaction to the organization and the value of the parent forums as they were presented. It was also the desire of the writer to elicit suggestions from parents for future use. Faced with the lack of any existing device to measure or evaluate parents' reaction to the parent forums, the writer was compelled to develop a questionnaire[1]

[1]See Appendix F.

of his own making. The resulting instrument consisted of four parts:

1. The first section entitled, Publicity, was designed to determine types of publicity which had greatest influence on parents' attendance.

2. The part with the heading, Organization and Procedures of Forums, provided an opportunity for participating parents to indicate how helpful these methods were in presenting information. This part of the questionnaire sought opinion of parents on the most desirable time to schedule forum meeting. The judgment of participants was solicited in determining helpfulness of the forum to parents of prospective students, and parents of students already enrolled.

3. The third section of the questionnaire under the topic, Evaluation of Information, was used to indicate how helpful information concerning the various topics had been to them.

4. The concluding section of the instrument asked for additional comments and suggestions relevant to both the organization and implementation of the parent forums.

Rough drafts of the proposed questionnaire were given to each panel member for notation and suggestions. The revised instrument was then submitted to the Adult Education Seminar for criticism and suggestions. Several revisions were incorporated and the resulting forms sent to panel members

and selected parents for final evaluation and correction. Because of its subjective nature, many items of the instrument did not lend themselves to a statistical analysis. The questionnaire was a composite of collective thinking and did appear to have the possibility of providing needed and pertinent information for the development of parent orientations on a continuing basis. The following instructions were printed at the top of the questionnaire just below the chapter heading: "Dear Parents: We are anxious to develop a parent forum program that will be most helpful to both parents and students, both present and prospective. It will be of great help to us in future planning if you will take the necessary time to complete this questionnaire and return it as soon as possible."

In the discussion which follows each of the four sections referred to above will be examined in order of their appearance in the body of this questionnaire.

In organizing the questionnaire, the section on publicity was included to determine the most effective method of encouraging attendance of parents at the forums. This section of the parents' evaluation questionnaire was relatively simple but considered important to the successful implementation of future programs. The total success of the program is based, to some degree, upon the percentage of participants

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of available or eligible parents. Attendance, therefore, became an important factor to be considered.

The items in the check list included all of the media through which the programs were publicized. It should be pointed out that not every type of publicity was made available to all parents. Only a select number of parents, for instance, received a personal invitation from a friend. In addition to asking parents to check the items which influenced their attendance, they were asked to indicate one media of publicity which was most influential in encouraging their attendance.

Organization and Procedures of Forum

As a factor of significance in the development of an effective program for future implementation, parents were asked to indicate how helpful various methods of presenting the information were. One of the basic objectives of the pilot program was to experiment with various methods of presenting pertinent information. The writer was cognizant of the tendency for parents to be influenced by the type of information, rather than the method used. In spite of this limitation, it was believed pertinent to the study to determine which method produced the greatest satisfaction to parents.

One of the questions in the mind of those responsible for initiating the planning of parent forum orientation was to determine to whom should the parents' forum be primarily directed for maximum influence and effectiveness. There was

diversity of opinion as to whether parents of students already enrolled or parents of prospective students should be invited as participants. The content of the information presented would be essentially the same in either case; yet some aspects of the forums would be different. The first sessions were limited to parents of students already enrolled. Even at the first session it became apparent that most favored inviting parents of prospective students. The latter group were invited to the last one or two sessions. Responses from several parents indicated their interest in such a series of forums, but were unable to attend because of previous commitments. The third part of section two of the questionnaire was an attempt to sample the opinions of parents as to the most desirable day of week and time of day as well as the frequency with which the sessions of the forums should be held.

Evaluation of Information

As a factor of significance in the development of future forums, the evaluation of specific areas of information was considered important. In responding to these items the parent was asked to indicate how helpful the information concerning the various topics had been to him. An attempt was made to list specific topics rather than general areas of information. Following the list of specific topics to evaluate parents

were requested to list areas of information they felt would have been of interest to them.

To stimulate creative thinking on the part of the participants, one of the final items was constructed to elicit suggestions for planning the future forums. The concluding response in this section of the questionnaire was designed to yield suggestions and techniques the University might use in assisting their sons and daughters make the most successful adjustment to college life.

Signature

The parents were asked to sign their names to the questionnaire at the risk of reducing the frankness of the responses. An attempt was made to retain proper rapport in honest response by assuring them in the accompanying letter that the information would in no way be identified with their names. Parents still indicated some hesitancy in becoming identified. A few of the questionnaires returned were completed but without a signature. The main objective of identifying the questionnaire with a signature was to determine the differences, if any, between the response of the different groups of parents.

ANALYSIS OF DATA RELATING TO PARENT EVALUATIONS OF ORIENTATION FORUMS

Since the major purpose of this study was the development of an experimental program of college orientation for parents,

the techniques employed for tabulation and analysis have been kept relatively simple and reporting is largely descriptive.

It is important, however, to determine what aspects of the experimental program have been most helpful to both parents and students. To accomplish this objective, it was necessary to request parents who had participated in the series of forums to evaluate every aspect of the pilot program. They were asked to evaluate both the procedures used and the content included in the forums, as well as make suggestions for the improvement of future programs.

During the fourth and last session with the parents, time was devoted to discussing the possibility of improvement of the total program. During the discussion it was suggested by the parents that a questionnaire be sent to all participants for the purpose of gathering information and suggestions for future development of the parent orientation program.

A letter[2] with an enclosed questionnaire was sent to each participant. The letter expressed appreciation for their participation in the Michigan State University parents' forum, and requested early return of the questionnaire. The need for and value of their assistance in formulating future plans were also emphasized in the initial letter. A follow-up

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[2]See Appendix D.

letter was sent to those not responding to the first request.[3] The letter re-emphasized the need for their evaluation and suggestions. Slightly over 70 per cent of the questionnaires were returned as a result of the two requests.

Due to the limited number of questionnaires to be analyzed, the checked items and responses were hand tabulated. During the following discussion the parents' evaluation of various aspects of the forum will be given consideration with a brief interpretation of the tabulated data resulting from the questionnaires returned by participating parents.

Forum Publicity

Data showing the types of publicity which influenced parents to participate in the forums are summarized in Table I. It is interesting to note that three-fourths of the parents responding indicated the personal letter from the Dean of Students Office was a factor in persuading them to participate in the forums. The information sent to them by their local Adult Education Director was at least partially responsible for the participation of almost half of the parents.

It is apparent from the survey that more than one type of publicity influenced most parents to attend the forums. Almost without exception participants checked two or more of the six items in this section of the evaluation question-

[3]See Appendix D.

TABLE I

COMPARISON OF INFLUENCES RESPONSIBLE FOR PARENTS' DECISION TO ATTEND PARENT ORIENTATION FORUMS

Influence	Frequency	
Personal letter from Dean of Students	66	73%
Information from Adult Education Director in community	40	44%
Brochure of Michigan State University Parents' Forum	32	36%
Personal invitation from a friend	22	24%
Suggestion of your son or daughter	20	22%
Newspaper article	14	16%

naire. Even though a considerable amount of newspaper publicity was given to the forums, yet only a few parents indicated it was an influencing factor in their decision to participate in the program.

Although the printed brochure was prepared primarily to describe the program for pre-forum publicity, yet only one-third of those responding indicated the brochure was a factor in persuading them to attend.

As the forums progressed the brochures became increasingly valuable as a guide for planning a schedule for discussing specific areas of information.

Several parents offered valuable suggestions as to methods of encouraging attendance.[4] There was general concern among the participants to develop methods of communicating more effectively with parents prior to the first forum. Several expressed the opinion that more of their friends would have attended if they had more fully comprehended how helpful the forums could be to them.

Organization and Procedures of Forum

Examination of Table II indicates a general acceptance of several methods and procedures used in presenting orientation information. It is noteworthy to observe that the following methods of presenting information were checked as either very helpful or helpful by more than 80 per cent of the sample.

1. Whole group participating in question and answers with complete panel.
2. Informal discussions with panel members either before or after formal meeting.
3. Short talks by each panel member concerning designated areas of information.
4. Smaller groups meeting with individual panel members, then rotating.

The kinds of information presented varied to some degree with the method used, although an attempt was made to present similar information by different methods.

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[4]See Appendix G.

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF THE DEGREE OF HELPFULNESS THE VARIOUS METHODS WERE IN PRESENTING INFORMATION AS REFLECTED BY THE RESPONSES OF PARENTS

Methods Used	Frequency Checked		
	Very Helpful	Helpful	Not Helpful
1. Whole group participation in question and answer with complete panel	50	28	8
2. Informal discussions with panel members before or after formal meeting	44	34	0
3. Smaller groups meeting with individual panel members then rotating	48	26	8
4. Short talk by each panel member concerning designated areas of information	38	38	2
5. General discussion of planned topics for each meeting	10	32	14
6. Freshman orientation movie	14	26	6

During the period in which the smaller groups met with individual panel members the discussion evolved around more personal topics than those considered during the session with the whole group. The least effective methods of communication were indicated to be the general discussion of planned topics for each meeting and the presentation of the freshman orientation movie. This visual aid was primarily designed to depict the life of a new student on campus. Less than on one-half of the samples checked the above two methods as either very helpful or helpful.

There seemed to be a consensus of opinion that varied methods of presenting the orientation information should be employed rather than limiting the presentation to one or two procedures.

Groups of Parents

Earlier in the discussion of the study the question of what group of parents would benefit most by a parent college orientation was raised. It is apparent by observing Table III that the majority of participating parents responding to the questionnaire felt the forums were helpful to both the parents of students already enrolled at Michigan State University and the parents of prospective students. Also it was interesting to note that 93 per cent of the parents felt the forums would be very helpful or at least helpful to

TABLE III

SUMMARY OF PARENT RESPONSES IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF HOW HELPFUL THEY FELT THE FORUMS WOULD BE TO THE TWO DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PARENTS

Parent Groups	Frequency Checked		
	Very Helpful	Helpful	Not Helpful
1. Parents of prospective students of Michigan State University	72	10	0
2. Parents of students already enrolled in Michigan State University	42	34	2

parents of prospective students, while 84 per cent indicated parents of students already enrolled would benefit by the college orientation program for parents.

When observing those responses limited only to the item indicating the program was very helpful, there was a more noticeable difference between the two groups. Eighty per cent checked "very helpful for parents of prospective students," while 46 per cent appraised the forums as being "very helpful to parents of students already enrolled at Michigan State University."

Additional comments on the questionnaire, together with verbal statements made during an evaluation discussion during

the last session of the forums made it clear that both groups of parents could benefit by the orientation forums. It was suggested a series of forums be designed to involve both groups of parents in a common session as well as a separate session planned within the series for each group. Most participants commented they felt most of the information would be beneficial to both groups.

Frequency and Schedule of Forums

Data gathered relative to the most favorable time to schedule forums indicated Monday evenings as most ideal during the week. More than three-fourths checked the item, semi-monthly or monthly, as being preferable to a weekly schedule for forum sessions. This tabulation was rather simple and objective, yet important as a factor in planning future forums.

Evaluation of Information Concerning Various Topics

Table IV contains data on the relative importance parents placed on the 21 specific areas of information discussed during the orientation forums. It should be understood that the amount of information or time devoted to discussing the various areas of information was not equal. Several topics discussed or presented were of necessity integrated with each other; therefore, making the evaluation of specific items more difficult.

TABLE IV

SUMMARY OF THE DATA REGARDING RELATIVE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH PARENTS CHECKED HOW HELPFUL VARIOUS AREAS OF INFORMATION HAD BEEN TO THEM

Area of Information	Total of First Two Columns	Frequency Checked		
		Very Helpful	Helpful	Not Helpful
1. Methods of paying	82	52	30	4
2. Counseling services	78	60	18	0
3. Costs--tuition, room and board, books, etc.	74	58	16	4
4. Dorm regulations	68	22	46	0
5. Basic college	66	42	24	0
6. General rules of student conduct	66	30	36	0
7. General adjustment of student	64	30	34	0
8. Fraternities--Sororities	64	16	48	4
9. Summer clinics	62	32	30	8
10. Health services	60	30	30	0
11. Grade system, credits	58	20	38	4
12. Discipline philosophy	58	18	40	2
13. Religious opportunities	58	16	42	4
14. Social activities	58	16	42	0
15. Participation in student organization	58	16	42	0
16. Student loans	56	24	32	14
17. Placement bureau, work opportunities	54	16	36	10
18. Selection of major	50	16	34	8
19. Non-preference course	48	16	32	10
20. Scholarship	44	18	30	0
21. Driving regulations	46	14	32	8

Arranged in descending order according to total of responses in both very helpful and helpful columns

Based upon a total of 90 answering questionnaire

For purposes of recording parents' general reaction to the various items, it is noted that when combining the number of responses to both the very helpful and helpful columns that 75 per cent of those responding checked the following five areas of information:

1. Methods of paying college costs
2. Counseling services
3. Costs--tuition, room, board, books, etc.
4. Dorm regulations
5. Basic college (general education)

It should be noted that more than 50 per cent of the total number of the parents returning the questionnaire checked all the remaining 21 areas of information as being helpful or very helpful.

The two areas checked most frequently as being very helpful were college costs and counseling services. The information presented that was apparently of least interest to the parents responding included facts about student driving regulations on campus.

A serious attempt was made to cover at least briefly the topics of information most likely to be helpful and of interest to both parents and students. Although the typical questions on the brochure were stated in rather broad categories, yet more specific subjects for discussion were raised by parents themselves during the forums. Following

the list of specific topics to be evaluated, the following question was asked. What other specific topics would have been of interest to you? The following statements are typical reactions of those parents responding:

1. "You covered the field sufficiently."
2. "Topics discussed covered everything I was interested in."
3. "I think everything was ably taken care of."

In general it was evident the field had been adequately covered for the average parent.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COLLEGE PARENT ORIENTATION AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

It should be pointed out that financial assistance in the form of an all university research grant was proposed and approved for the following specific purpose:

> To conduct a pilot program in adult education to determine worthwhile content, effective methods of implementation and appropriate resource personnel and materials for the organization of such a parents orientation program at Michigan State University on a continuing basis.

The following recommendations for a parent orientation program at Michigan State University on a continuing basis were formulated as a result of the experience and insights gained in planning, organizing and implementing experimental parent orientation programs in two local areas in Michigan. The programs were planned and executed in cooperation with the adult education directors of those local areas. A review of the literature related to this field added significantly to the development of these recommendations.

Even though the suggestions offered in planning a parent orientation program are designed specifically for Michigan State University, yet it is anticipated that other institutions of higher learning might benefit by the experimentation and study.

Delegation of Responsibility

The primary responsibility for planning and implementing a parent orientation program at Michigan State University should be delegated to the office of the Dean of Students. The development and coordination of such a program at Michigan State would necessitate the involvement of several administrative staff whose responsibilities are not directly related to the office of Dean of Students.

The need for cooperative planning with administrators from secondary schools and adult education centers implies the complexity of this as an all-university project. This kind of program requires careful and thoughtful coordination of the various institutional resources.

Study Committee

It is suggested the Dean of Students appoint a study committee for the purpose of formulating a general organizational plan for initiating a parent orientation forum at Michigan State University. This committee would also recommend general procedures for the implementation of such a proposed program.

The basic membership of the study committee should include representatives from men's division of the Dean of Students Office, women's division of the Dean of Students Office and the Counseling Center. Although this is primarily a preliminary study committee, its membership might well be expanded to include other university representatives. Student and parent representation might also prove helpful even in the early stages of general planning.

It is suggested the committee described above confine its report and recommendation to matters of general organization and procedures. Subsequent planning of specific programs should be left to a steering committee and forum director.

Recommendations for General Organization of Program

The following recommendations emerge as a result of the knowledge and experiences gained through the development and implementation of the experimental orientation program for parents described in Chapter III of this study. The committee referred to in the preceding paragraph should carefully weigh these suggestions in light of present factors and changing situations.

These are only guide lines to assist in establishing a general organizational pattern for a comprehensive and continuing program of parent orientation at Michigan State University.

1. Participants--Primary consideration should be given to a program of orientation designed for parents of prospective students of Michigan State University. Prospective students might be defined as those persons who have received their college admissions notice. In some localities participation in the parent forums may be expanded to include parents of students already enrolled.

2. Schedule--Not less than two or more than three evening sessions seem to be most applicable to this type of presentation. These sessions should be scheduled at regular intervals of two to four weeks.

3. Resource--The parent forums should be coordinated with existing adult education programs if possible or feasible. It is suggested that the university provide a forum director and a pan of resource personnel. This number on the panel will vary with the availability of properly informed persons but will range from three to six members. At least one upper class student should be included on the panel of resource persons. It is important that someone in the group presenting information to parents is thoroughly familiar with the following areas of college life: (a) academic, (b) financial, (c) social, (d) cultural, (e) religious, (f) guidance services, (g) regulations, and (h) general information.

4. Location--Various geographical areas, such as counties, should be designated within the state of Michigan. The selection of these areas should be determined after giving consideration to the (a) population density of the parents of prospective students, (b) existing and available adult education centers.

5. Planning--Each local area be given latitude in its own planning and publicity with assistance of university representatives. Cooperation of high school counselors in the areas should be solicited. A steering committee should be established to carry out specific and detailed planning.

Specific Recommendations for Program

The following recommendations are designed to assist the steering committee formulate specific and detailed plans for the parents program on the local level. The development and implementation of a specific program can only be undertaken after the general format of the parent orientation program has been adopted.

It should be understood that some of the following suggestions may not be applicable to all situations. No doubt each local area will formulate rather specific plans and procedures best suited to their unique situation.

1. Pre-Forum Publicity--The publishing of an attractive and informative brochure will be helpful as a basic medium

of publicity in all areas. The brochure might list typical questions parents like to have answered. Several types and methods of publicity should be used to give widespread encouragement to eligible parents to attend.

Both personal letters and telephone calls seem to be more effective than newspaper or radio announcements. Parents making a personal call to other parents is also suggested as helpful.

2. Procedures at Forums--Several parents could be selected as hosts and hostesses for each evening. When parents arrive, they should be greeted and given name cards for convenient identification. An informal, warm atmosphere should be created if possible. Following the registration of parents, it is suggested the local adult education director call the meeting to order and introduce the forum director.

The following suggested outline is presented as one of the various schedules that might be used at first forum. There should be a specific planned arrangement for presenting the information to the parents each session.

7:15 - 7:45	Registration of parents (name cards)
7:45 - 7:50	Introduction of panel (Adult Ed. Dir.)
7:50 - 8:00	Why a parents forum (by director)
8:00 - 8:40	Panel discussion (with whole group)
8:45 - 9:20	Group meetings with panel members (rotate ten minutes each)
9:25 -	Coffee hour and personal interviews

It is suggested topics and questions of a specific and personal nature be referred for discussion at the small group meetings or perhaps during individual interviews. The coffee hour can be planned very successfully by an alumni group in some localities. Every effort should be made to spend at least a brief period with individual parents who have a desire to discuss a personal problem.

3. Topics for Discussion--During the experimental forums, parents indicated their interest in almost every topic discussed. It is suggested panel members be prepared to answer questions or present pertinent information concerning the following topics:

Scholarship

Methods of paying college costs

Counseling services

College costs--tuition, room, board, books, etc.

Dorm regulations

Basic college and general education

General rules of student conduct

General problems of adjustment of student

Fraternities--sororities

Summer clinics

Health services

Grade system, credits

Discipline philosophy

Religious opportunities

Social activities

Participation in student organization

Student loans

Placement Bureau--work opportunities

Selection of major, minor

Non-preference course

Driving regulations

Evaluation

Some instrument to measure or evaluate parents' reaction to the forums should be developed. The purpose of this instrument is twofold. First, to determine parents reaction to the forums as they were organized and measure their value as presented; second, to accumulate suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of future forums.

In addition to a written questionnaire or other type of instrument, participants should be requested to make verbal evaluations and recommendations.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Problem

The objective of the study was to report the planning and development of an experimental orientation forum for parents of Michigan State University students. The pilot program of parent orientation was undertaken with the following specific intentions:

1. To develop the most effective methods of organizing and planning a series of orientation sessions with parents of students already enrolled in Michigan State University and parents of prospective students.

2. To determine worthwhile content and types of information most useful and valuable to parents.

3. To discover most appropriate resource personnel to be used in planning and implementing a college orientation program for parents.

4. To describe the methods used in such an experimental program and report the effectiveness of the pilot study itself.

5. To recommend a parent orientation forum for Michigan State University based upon the findings of the experimentation.

The need for the study grows out of a concern for assisting the student make the best possible adjustment to college life and increase the effectiveness of his total educational experience. The problém of high academic mortality among college freshmen and sophomores is still one that needs serious attention. Although there has been increased emphasis in assisting the student make proper adjustment to every phase of college life, yet little planned effort has been made to deal with the problems and concerns of both parents and students, resulting from the latter's matriculation in college.

Many freshmen and sophomores withdrawing from Michigan State University failed to make satisfactory adjustment to this new experience of college life because of some aspect of parental-student conflict or misunderstanding.

It was found parents had unintentionally hindered the progress of students seeking to make a satisfactory adjustment to the academic and non-academic life on campus.

Almost every parent interviewed expressed interest in helping his son or daughter, but admittedly did not know how to give constructive help. In numerous instances it was discovered the parents were advising a certain course of action while the college advisor was giving quite different advice concerning an identical problem or situation. It was common to find conflict and even serious contradiction between the demands of the college and the expectations of the parents.

A brief survey of existing college orientation programs disclosed little being done in the way of providing planned orientation programs for parents. A review of the literature on studies concerned with parent-student relationship revealed much attention given to cooperative three-way planning and understanding between the parent-child and school in all levels of education except higher education. The review of literature did include references related to parent orientation programs in a number of selected colleges. The programs were rather limited in their scope but did re-emphasize the importance of and need for more extensive study and experimentation in this area. Numerous articles referred to the need of a formalized and well-planned program of parent orientation to college life, but indicated little or no progress had been achieved in the development of such a plan.

The premise which underlies the study is that professional personal workers in the field of higher education are concerned with the growth, adjustment and development of the student through his college years.

The development of the experimental program is based upon the belief that well-informed parents can assist the student in making a more satisfactory adjustment to the total college experience. Since it is assumed that many of the

tensions and conflicts that block the student's progress during his first years of college are often intensified by parental influences, these pressures can be modified or alleviated by parents who understand the college procedures and philosophy.

It is felt properly oriented parents can assist the college student personnel staff acquire a better understanding of the student and his needs. Another assumption which prompted the study is that the parent-student relationship itself will be strengthened when parents become familiar with the various educational problems and experiences confronting their son or daughter.

While the problem of parent orientation is one of general importance to the field of higher education, the study proper and pilot forum were developed primarily as an experimental program for parents of students at Michigan State University.

Methodology and Procedures

The lack of any existing pattern of parent orientation program on the college level made it necessary to develop a pilot program for purposes of experimentation and evaluation.

All planning for the pilot study was based upon the philosophy that the involvement of several persons and

groups would result in a program of optimum results. After weeks of gathering ideas, opinions and suggestions from numerous sources, a preliminary planning committee met to analyze and evaluate accumulated information.

After extensive planning by the committee and several adult education directors, two geographical areas were selected for the experimental programs. They concluded that a series of separate forums should be conducted in each locality.

Although general plans of organization and implementation were agreed upon by the planning committee, yet each local area was intentionally involved in the specific planning of their own program in accordance with their own needs. It was decided to have a pilot program in each of the two counties selected. It was further decided to have four evening sessions in each area scheduled at intervals of two weeks.

There was a continuous appraisal and evaluation of the forums as the series progressed. Each parent participating was requested to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make suggestions for the improvement of future forums. In addition to the ongoing evaluation during the orientation meetings themselves, there was a parents' evaluation questionnaire designed to send parents at the conclusion of the last session of the forum.

The Questionnaire

Faced with a lack of any existing instrument to measure or evaluate parents' reaction to the orientation forum, it was necessary that a questionnaire be developed.

The purpose of the instrument was twofold. First, to determine parents' reaction to the forums as they were organized and measure their value as presented; and second, to elicit suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of future forums. The resulting questionnaire was divided into three general sections.

The first section consisted of a check list of items entitled, "Publicity." The list included several types of publicity used to encourage attendance of parents. The persons returning the questionnaires were asked to check the item or items that influenced them to attend the forums. The concluding part of this section of the instrument asked for further suggestions to encourage attendance. The request was particularly significant because of the difficulty in communicating effectively with eligible parents. Parents attending the pilot forum were concerned about designing some method of informing other parents about the program and its value to them.

The second general division of the parents' evaluation questionnaire was called, "Organization and Procedures of Forum." The program, being experimental in nature, encouraged

the use of varied approaches or methods of presenting information to the participants of the forum. It, therefore, became important to determine how effective or helpful these various types of presenting information had been to the parents.

This division of the instrument also included items for checking designed to answer these questions:

1. To whom should the parents' forum be primarily directed for maximum influence and effectiveness? (Parents of present freshmen, or parents of prospective students.)

2. What is the most desirable time of day and day of week to hold forum meetings?

3. What should be time interval between each session of the forum series?

The first part of the final section of the questionnaire concerned itself with the parents' evaluation of the specific areas of information presented during the four sessions. A check list of 21 topics was compiled with instructions for parents to check each item indicating as to whether they felt each particular area of information was very helpful, helpful or not helpful to them as participants in the forum.

The check list of topics was followed by the following questions and statements:

1. What other specific topics would have been of interest to you?

2. List any additional comments you feel would be helpful in planning future parent forums.

3. Please suggest any ways other than the parents forum that the University may better help your son or daughter.

Sample

The original parent population concerned with the study were parents of freshmen enrolled at Michigan State University and parents of prospective students of Michigan State University. For the purpose of development of a pilot program, the study was limited to two geographical areas known as Jackson County and the Saginaw area. The invitations to attend the first session of the Michigan State University forum were sent to all parents of Michigan State University students living in each respective area. Upon recommendation of forum participants, parents of prospective students of Michigan State University were invited as guests to the last session of the forum in each area.

There were 128 parents attending all four sessions, while others could only participate in one or more. This represented 69 per cent of the eligible parents from Jackson County. Sixty-seven per cent of the eligible parents

of the Saginaw area participated in the complete series of meetings. Questionnaires were sent to all those attending all sessions of the pilot programs with a 70.3 per cent return.

An analysis of the sample returning questionnaires found them to be representative of those attending forums.

Tabulation and Analysis of the Data

Since it is understood the main purpose of the study is to report the development and implementation of a pilot program of college orientation for parents, the techniques employed for tabulating and analyzing the data have been kept relatively simple. The responses were hand tabulated. The summaries of the individual items checked by parents were made. Analysis consisted of a comparison of various frequencies, percentages and averages. The data was arranged on summarizing tables in a manner as to display most clearly the appraisal of all phases of the forum by the participating parents. Additional comments and suggestions given by parents in response to requests in the questionnaires were categorized and used in the over-all evaluation of the pilot study.

The Findings

Types of Publicity Most Influential. As parents attended the first session, they became enthusiastic about the forum and

volunteered to call other eligible parents to invite them to the remaining sessions. Many parents expressed the opinion that they were certain the pre-forum publicity failed to properly inform parents of the value of attending such programs.

The tabulation and analysis of the responses to the publicity items disclosed a number of facts relating to the persuasiveness of various types of publicity. The following appear to be the most important findings to be derived of this phase of the experiment:

1. Several types of publicity should be used to give widespread encouragement to eligible parents to attend. Some parents responded to certain media of communication while others are influenced by a combination of approaches.

2. The most effective single phase of the pre-forum publicity was the personal letters from the college and adult education director. This emphasizes the desirability of individually typed letters of invitation.

3. The printed brochure suggesting types of questions to be answered and information given at the forums succeeded in giving parents a more concise idea of the nature and value of the forum.

4. A personal invitation from a friend was found to be most helpful in those instances where other types of invitation were not successful. This type of communication

was strongly recommended by the participants and the parents steering committee for future forums.

5. One final observation concerning pre-forum publicity was the advisability of meeting with the students whose parents are to be invited. There would be several advantages in having a brief orientation period with the students. In some instances there was an initial feeling of suspicion on the part of students due to lack of understanding. When college officials met with the parents without the students understanding the purpose of the forums, it limited the freedom with which some of the parents participated. The orientation period with students could be used to request students urge their parents to attend forums.

Appraisal of Organizational Procedures of Forums

The tabulation and analysis of the responses to the various methods of presenting information revealed the desirability of using a diversity of procedures when planning a parents' orientation program.

The most significant findings of this part of the experimental program seem to be as follows:

1. The practice of having the whole group participate in a question and answer discussion with the entire panel appears to be the most desirable procedure used in presenting many general problems and areas of information. These periods

of whole group discussion should be used to primarily present information considered to be of common interest to all participants. If questions are raised during this period that are applicable only to specific cases or persons, the panel leader should suggest the question be answered during the small group discussion period or by individual conference with a panel member. It was found that parents participated more freely and frequently in the large group discussion after they had an opportunity to establish a good rapport with the panel members and become acquainted with the other participants by small group dynamics.

2. One of the methods checked most frequently as being very helpful was the informal discussion period with the panel members, either before or after the formal part of the meeting.

It seemed important to the success of the forum that all panel members make themselves available for informal discussion or individual conferences with parents for a period of a minimum of thirty minutes, both prior to and after the regularly scheduled part of each evening session. During this informal period many parents became actively involved who had previously exercised noticeable reservation about discussing educational problems or topics with college personnel.

3. Another phase of the program checked frequently as being helpful to parents was the ten-minute small group

meetings with individual panel members. Each group rotated to a different panel member, thereby giving opportunity for continued small group interaction with different resource persons. Many parents were observed as actively participating in these small groups who hesitated to become involved in the larger group discussions.

4. More than 80 per cent of those parents participating in the evaluation indicated the short talk by each panel member concerning designated areas of information was helpful. It was found certain objective information concerning many phases of college life can be presented in a concise but interesting manner without need of questions or discussion. Each panel member covered previously assigned materials and topics in a formal talk not to exceed five minutes.

5. It was concluded that all sessions should be well scheduled and organized in such a way to use a diversity of methods of presenting information and materials. The rapidity with which the activities and procedures changed seem to stimulate participation and maintain a high interest level.

6. The parent steering committee of five persons selected from the group by the participants to work with the forum director and adult education director in planning each meeting was interested and active. The suggestions, opinions and observations of this group constituted a fine contribution to the effectiveness of the forums.

Forum Participants

Practically all of the parents participating in the program indicated they felt the orientation forum was very helpful. The general enthusiasm of the participants was expressed by numerous comments[1] written on the questionnaire by parents.

Many parents expressed an opinion that this type of program would be helpful and worthwhile for parents of prospective students and that most of the material presented would have been helpful to them prior to the enrollment of their sons or daughters.

Desirable Time for Forum Meetings

Results of the data gathered relative to the most favorable time to conduct the forums clearly indicated Monday evenings would be most ideal time of the week. The majority of responses favored scheduling the three or four sessions at intervals of two or four weeks--the stronger preference for the latter.

Evaluation of Information

A careful study of the importance parents placed on the various topics or areas of information presented during the forum disclosed the following findings:

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[1]See Appendix G.

1. A majority of parents surveyed indicated all 21 areas of information listed were either very helpful or helpful.

2. Most parents were enthusiastic about gaining information concerning any phase of college life. A series of sessions should include, or at least make brief reference, to almost every area of the college experience. More extensive discussion of information known to be significant to the success of students should be scheduled.

3. Costs of a college education and methods of paying and financing college expenses were checked as of prime interest to parents. It was surprising to find most parents were not familiar with the possibilities of long term, low cost financing plans available to parents and students. Many parents were appreciative of assistance in making realistic analysis about the cost and financing of a four-year college education.

4. It was found parents were pleased to be informed of the various student personnel services available to their sons or daughters. The counseling services offered to all students at the counseling center were of particular interest. One of the most common inquiries made by parents was, "Is there any one person at the college I can contact to get information about my son or daughter?" Many parents expressed the desire to establish a means by which they could

communicate with some one person at the University. This person could answer questions and discuss problems relative to the progress and adjustment of their son or daughter while in college.

5. As parents acquired even a limited knowledge of several areas of college life, they expressed a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment. They could at least visit or communicate intelligently with their college son or daughter concerning their educational experiences.

General Reactions and Comments from Parents

General comments, both verbal and written, concerning the parents' forums were commendable but did include suggestions for the improvement of future forums. Following are a few of the specific recommendations or suggestions offered by parents:

1. Reduce the number of sessions from four to two or three. Do not, however, attempt to limit the program to one session.

2. The last and final session in each series should include a combined group of parents of students and parents of prospective students.

3. High school counselors should be urged to attend the forums. Also it was suggested the counselors assist in planning of such meetings.

4. The number of panel members might be reduced if group of parents were not too large.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The stated conclusions of the study emerge as a result of the following contributing influences:

1. Evaluation resulting from the questionnaire distributed to parents who participated in the program.

2. General reactions and suggestions from the participants.

3. Comments and recommendations by the panel members and others administering the forum.

4. Review of literature pertaining to existing college programs for orientation of parents. Also review of literature dealing with parent-student-college relationships.

5. Experience in the planning, development and organization of the experimental parent orientation program at Michigan State University.

6. Knowledge gained from actual implementation of two parent orientation forums with four sessions each.

Concluding Statements

1. The report of an experimental orientation program for parents of Michigan State University students sets forth a basic plan and philosophy of assisting parents. The basic plan was enthusiastically supported and endorsed by all the parents involved as participants.

2. There is practical need for Michigan State University and other institutions of higher learning to develop a systematic program of orientation of some design that will assist parents of freshmen and parents of prospective students to more fully understand and comprehend many phases of college life.

3. There are many problems and concerns of both parents and students resulting from the latter's college matriculation. Adjustment to college life is so complex and involved that there is an apparent need to develop new approaches and methods of assisting the student.

4. Many parents unintentionally hinder the progress of students endeavoring to make a satisfactory adjustment to both the academic and non-academic phases of college life. It was found parents were interested in helping their son or daughter in their adjustment but admittedly did not know how to offer constructive help. Expectations of parents and the demands of college are often in conflict or even in contradiction to each other.

5. It is believed properly oriented and informed parents can assist the college student personnel people acquire better understanding of the student and his needs. The effectiveness of the counseling and guidance services to the student while at college will increase with the knowledge and understanding of that student.

6. In the study it was found that the parent orientation forum which involves adult education directors, secondary school counselors, university students and university representatives strengthens the interrelations between several educational agencies.

7. The high school counselors involved in the forums gained a better understanding of the problems faced by college freshmen. They were, therefore, better prepared to administer a more effective program of guiding and preparing their students for the transition from secondary school to college life.

8. As parents became familiar with the activities of the college and understood the educational philosophy of the institution, they discovered they were able to establish a closer personal relationship with their son or daughter.

9. It is imperative that each local area should be given opportunity to develop a program best suited to its needs. Although the basic goals, objectives and philosophies were adhered to in both programs, yet there were varied techniques and procedures used to suit local circumstances.

10. The early involvement of several persons representing various interested groups proved to be a sound procedure.

11. Special emphasis should be placed upon delegating major responsibility for implementing the program to the adult education director of the local area. It is advantageous

to create a feeling of local responsibility within the community itself. The college personnel should be thought of as resource persons.

Implications for Further Research

In the course of implementing the experimental parent orientation forum, there were a number of issues and questions raised which were beyond the scope of the study. Thus while certain conclusions were reached in terms of the study, it constitutes only a beginning of research in the field of parent-student interaction as it relates to college planning and experience.

In view of the experiences with this particular study, the following points appear to be some of the more important areas for future research or study:

1. A study designed to yield more refined analytical procedures dealing with the validity of the following assumption. As parents become better informed concerning college life, they can more ably assist their son or daughter make a satisfactory adjustment to the whole experience of college life.

2. A study similar to the present one needs to be carried out involving an adequate sample of parents of prospective students. Such a study could provide a basis for evaluating more accurately the influence parent orientation has on the success of college students.

3. A more comprehensive study of the changes in attitudes of the students in relation to both the college and their parents as a result of the involvement of their parents in a college parent orientation program.

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APPENDIX A

Case 1

A young man, who was a second term freshman at Michigan State University, came to the office of student affairs proposing to withdraw from the University before the end of the term. This withdrawal interview was part of the procedure required by all students officially leaving the college during the term. Without extensive probing on the part of the interviewer, the student related the following story:

"I am fed up with college. Anyway, I am flunking most of my courses and might just as well leave now and join the army. Going to college and taking up business administration was not my idea, anyway. You know my dad and mother are the ones who insisted that I come to Michigan State University, while I preferred to volunteer for the armed services. They talked nothing except going to college. My dad owns a business and expects me to eventually take over, but I am not particularly interested in that type of business."

The counselor asked the student if he had talked his college plans over with his father and inquired as to whether or not he understood why his father insisted he go to college. The young man answered the question by stating that he felt there were three reasons his father and mother insisted he go to college immediately upon his graduation from high school.

First, they were afraid to have him go to the armed services because his only brother had recently been killed while serving in the U. S. Army. Going to college would change the draft status of the student.

The second reason for parental pressure to attend college, as described by the student, was the fact that he had developed a rather close friendship with a young lady in the local community who was a senior in the local high school. His parents were attempting to break up the friendship by sending him to a college some distance from home.

The third reason the young man gave for being forced to college was the desire of his parents to prepare him for taking over the family business.

The student was under 21; therefore, according to university regulations it was necessary for the counselor to have permission from the parents before officially withdrawing the student from classes. When this requirement was stated, it upset the young man very much, and he declared, "Rather than ask my parents, I will leave without officially withdrawing. Anyway, the thing for me to do is go directly to the recruiting office and join up; then let my parents know."

After further interviewing, the young man agreed to go home first and visit with his parents prior to enlisting,

even though he felt his dad would, according to his own statement, "Blow his stack."

The young man returned home to inform his parents as to his decision. Upon suggestion of the counselor, he explained in detail his feelings and attitudes about college to his father and mother. During this frank discussion his father realized for the first time the futility of planning for, rather than with, his son. Instead of following his first urge to join the army, the son discussed with his father in a realistic manner his future in relation to college, marriage, vocational preparation, etc.

The third morning after the student had been withdrawn from classes, he appeared in the counselor's office, accompanied by his father. After brief introductory remarks the father related with apparent appreciation the story of the objective planning and discussion with his son about college plans. The father stated that for the first time in their lives they had developed a mutual personal understanding with each other.

Both the son and the father were anxious to inform the counselor that they had discussed plans concerning their future business possibilities, as well as marriage and college plans. The father made the following statement: "I shall always be grateful and indebted to you and Michigan State University for your part in encouraging my son to return

home to discuss his plans with us prior to enlisting. We have the best understanding between us we have ever had."

The student then asked the counselor if he could be reinstated in college classes. He stated that after careful consideration he had decided to continue in his business administration major. At this point, the son said, "This time it is my own idea."

The son was reinstated and during the next three terms did so well academically that his below average grade point was raised to well above average. This academic progress and personal adjustment to the college was obvious to all who were acquainted with the situation.

The student married a young lady from his home town after she graduated from high school. They took residence in married housing at Michigan State University, and both continued undergraduate work with above average success.

The father made a special trip to the campus the next year to thank the counselor for assisting in the adjustment of his son to college life, and urged that some type of parent orientation would be most helpful to all parents whose children planned to enter college.

APPENDIX B

PLEASE NOTE: We have not microfilmed the backside of pamphlets pasted or stapled on pages 107, 108 and 112 of this thesis.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS, INC.

WELCOME WEEK AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Program for Sunday, September 18, 1960

We hope that you will take advantage of your visit to the campus to increase your knowledge of the University which will be the home of your son or daughter for the next few years. We feel sure that this knowledge will assist you in future discussions with your son or daughter about life at Michigan State University.

9:00 a.m.	"CHECK IN" at University Residence Halls. Information tents and tables will be located on the campus for your convenience. Please feel free to ask students at these centers for any information you may need. There will also be other students and faculty members at designated areas to assist parents and new students.
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon	OPEN HOUSE - Olin Memorial Health Center. We are proud of our Michigan State University Health Center. Since the health of your son or daughter is of great concern to you and to us, we invite you to attend this open house.
12:00 noon to 1:15 p.m.	BUFFET DINNER IN THE RESIDENCE HALLS The regular schedule of meals does not begin until Monday morning, but special service is provided on Sunday so that parents and new students may become acquainted with the Residence Halls. New students, who do not live in the halls, and their families are also invited to make use of this service. The charge is $1.50 per person.
2:30 p.m.	THE PRESIDENT'S CONVOCATION FOR PARENTS OF NEW STUDENTS Auditorium
3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	OPEN HOUSE AT CAMPUS RELIGIOUS CENTERS The Religious Advisers to Michigan State University students cordially invite new students and their parents to attend these open houses to become acquainted with the religious resources available to students. (Consult the map - Churches and Religious Centers - which you will receive at the Convocation.)
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	SUNDAY EVENING SUPPER IN THE RESIDENCE HALLS This buffet, like the buffet dinner, is available both to new students and their parents. The charge is $1 per person.
7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	ORIENTATION MEETINGS IN RESIDENCE HALLS The purpose of these meetings for all new students living in Residence Halls is to present information about life in the halls, general information about the University, and to answer questions the students may have about their stay at Michigan State University. You are cordially invited to attend the meeting in the Residence Hall to which your son or daughter has been assigned.

Note: - The program for all the activities of Welcome Week will be distributed to new students at the "President's Welcome" Monday morning, September 19. This meeting is scheduled for 8:00 a.m. for freshmen. The meeting for transfer students is scheduled for 10:15 a.m.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

September 1, 1960

Dear Parents:

On Sunday, September 18th, we expect a large number of new students to arrive on campus to participate in the orientation activities of Welcome Week. The chapter, Welcome Week, in the Helot, the handbook which has been mailed to every new student, provides a description of the events of this week. Later these students will be joined by the "old" students. We are looking forward to a successful school year for both groups.

The first few weeks will be a time of adjustment. Your son or daughter will have to adjust to new teachers, new books, a new mode of living - in fact, a new evaluation of life. We know the deep interest you have in these matters because we believe the education of each student to be a joint parent-university undertaking, if the process is to produce the maximum results.

We believe you will agree that an education neither starts nor ends with the mastery of textbooks. The development of leadership traits and the art of assuming responsibility are also objectives of higher education. Participation in well chosen student activities and social events can aid in the development of these traits. Michigan State University affords many opportunities for development both in the academic and non-academic areas, but the goals of a college education can only be achieved by the interest and motivation of your son or daughter.

We are taking this means of cordially inviting you to a convocation for parents of new students on Sunday, September 18th at 2:30 p.m. in the University Auditorium. President John A. Hannah will be the speaker. This will afford an opportunity for you to meet other officials of the University and for them to discuss with you some of the things of interest to you concerning your son or daughter's stay at Michigan State University.

It is our sincere desire that your son or daughter may progress in total development and that these experiences while in school will be of permanent value in the future.

Any time you are on the campus, I shall be happy to have you come by for a visit with me.

Sincerely,

Tom King

Tom King
Dean of Students

enc.

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX D

Mr. and Mrs. John Arasim
7365 Napoleon Road
Jackson, Michigan

Dear Parents:

Many parents have expressed a desire to become more familiar with areas of information concerning campus life, professional opportunities, policies and so forth. It has been our observation that the best informed parents are usually the most successful in helping their sons or daughters make necessary adjustments to university life.

We are taking this opportunity to inform you of a Michigan State University Parents Forum to be offered in Jackson by the Director of Adult Education, Lloyd Wolfe. Detailed announcement of the series will be dispatched to you from Mr. Wolfe's office very soon.

Each of the four evening sessions--February11 and 25, March 11 and 25--will provide an opportunity for you to ask questions, seek information and discuss any problems with members of the University staff. A part of each session will be scheduled for individual interviews with staff members if you wish to discuss specific problems concerning Raymond. There will be several well-qualified University representatives present to give you all possible help.

We urge all parents to attend the four sessions if possible. Enclosed is a brochure to be used as a further source of information.

Sincerely yours,

Ellwood A. Voller, Assistant Director
Men's Division of Student Affairs

Enclosure

January 18, 1957

Adult Education Department
Jackson Public Schools
Jackson, Michigan

February 7, 1957

To Parents of M.S.U. Students:

The Public School Adult Education Department joins with Michigan State University in inviting you to the Parents' Forum, about which you have received a preliminary announcement.

It will be held the 2nd and 4th Mondays of February and March, at 7:30 p.m., in the Library, 2nd floor, Jackson High School, 544 Wildwood Ave. Mr. Carroll Fortress, Counselor at Jackson High School, will be the moderator.

We are glad to cooperate with M.S.U. in this program, because we feel sure you have many questions about the University and its services to the member of your family who is enrolled there.

M.S.U. faculty members who will be present are: Kermit Smith, Registrar; Dr. Tom Goodrich, Director of Summer Counseling Clinic; Dr. Lorena Beadle, Assistant Director, Women's Division; Dr. Guy Hill, Director of High School Cooperation; Ellwood Voller, Assistant to Dean of Students; and Dr. Harold Dillon, Professor in Adult Education. This team is well prepared to answer your questions.

The meeting will be very informal -- no speeches! Enclosed is a card on which you are urged to write specific questions, or general topics you would like to have discussed. Questions frequently asked by parents who come to the campus are listed on the previous announcement you received. Or, you may want to know what the "Basic College" is; or how term credits compare with semester credits; or what is an appropriate allowance for living expenses; or what about fraternities and sororities.

With this chance for first-hand information, we believe you will agree that every family should be represented at these meetings by one or both parents.

A 20-minute film, sound and color, on a student's first day on the campus, entitled "Journey," will be shown at 7:30.

We hope you can come Monday, February 11. And bring your questions.

Sincerely,

Lloyd M. Wolfe
Director

LMW:FEC

March 7, 1957

According to our records, you have made application to Michigan State University for September, 1957. If it is definite that you are going to attend Michigan State this fall, I think you would be interested in the Michigan State University Parents' Forum that has met at Jackson High School on two occasions recently--and will continue for two more sessions on March 11 and March 25.

The past two sessions have been composed of the parents of our present Michigan State University freshmen and seven or eight key faculty members from the Michigan State University campus. These have been very profitable meetings, and it was the opinion of the parents that you and your parents might wish to meet with this group at the last two meetings.

I have brochures in my office that tell more about this Parents' Forum. It is very informal and informative. If it is at all possible for you and your parents to attend, will you let me know so that I can give you a brochure. There will be refreshments, and I am sure you will enjoy the evening.

Sincerely,

C. E. Fortress

C. E. Fortress
Counselor

CEF:js

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE • EAST LANSING

OFFICE OF THE MEN'S DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Dear Parents:

According to our records your son or daughter has made application to Michigan State University for September 1957. Although the Registrar's Office may not have completed the evaluation of the application, the Dean of Students Office would urge you to attend the program described below.

Mr. Earl Robinson, the Adult Education Director in Saginaw, and several staff members from Michigan State have been meeting with parents of freshmen from Saginaw County. During the third session of the forum which was held March 4th, the parents suggested that we invite prospective freshmen and their parents to attend our fourth and final session. This last meeting will be held Monday evening at 7:30 P.M., March 18, in the West Hall of the new Saginaw High School. We believe this will give both you as parents and your son or daughter an opportunity to learn a great deal about student life at Michigan State. Those who have attended these sessions have found them to be most profitable.

We cordially invite you and your son or daughter to attend this informative meeting. Enclosed find brochure which briefly describes the purpose of this forum and suggests several questions you will have an opportunity to have answered. Also, if you have any specific questions or problems, we will be glad to discuss them with you at that time.

Sincerely yours,

Ellwood A. Voller, Forum Director
Men's Division of Student Affairs
EAV/cc
Enc.

March 12, 1957

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE • EAST LANSING

OFFICE OF THE MEN'S DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your contribution in making the M.S.U. Parent's Forum the success that it was. Although we were all rather disappointed in the number of parents who attended the Forum, those who did attend expressed their appreciation for the information they received. Many of these parents found this experience helpful to them and their son or daughter.

In planning for the future, it will be necessary to evaluate and possibly revise the program somewhat. There seems to be agreement that there is a real need for some kind of formal Parent Orientation which will be helpful in assisting the student achieve the best possible adjustment to College life. I have sent a questionnaire to all parents who attended the Forum and am enclosing a copy with this letter.

Although this questionnaire is designed for parents, I am asking if you would be willing to give your reactions to as many of the items that might be applicable to you and then return the questionnaire to me.

Thanks once again for all your time and help.

Sincerely,

Ellwood Voller, Forum Director
Dean of Students - Men's Division
Michigan State University
cc
Enclosure

June 7, 1957

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE • EAST LANSING

OFFICE OF THE MEN'S DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

July 23, 1957

Dear Parent:

I wish to express my appreciation again for your participation in the Michigan State University Parents forum this spring.

Although this is a very busy season for you I am sure you can sneak in ten minutes during your full schedule to answer and return the enclosed questionnaire. Perhaps you failed to receive the first request a couple of weeks ago. Please don't worry about answering every question. If you will even answer part of the questions and return the questionnaire, it will be of great help to us in planning for the future.

Thanks again for your help and I hope I have the opportunity to work with you at some future date.

Sincerely,

Ellwood A. Voller

Ellwood A. Voller
Forum Director

EAV:jd

APPENDIX E

White copy to Chairman of All University Research
Yellow copy to Head of Department
Blue copy to Project Leader
Green copy to Dean of College

RECOMMENDATION FOR

ALL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GRANT

121

REQUEST

Date October 15, 1956

Project Leader Ellwood Voller and Harold Dillon

Department Office of Dean of Students, Department of Teacher Education

Project Title and Brief Outline THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY PARENTS' FORUM

The Men's Division of the Office of the Dean of Students has indicated the many problems and concerns of both parents and students as a result of the latters college matriculation. To date, no program in Michigan or other states has been directed to these issues. Before such a program is initiated at M.S.U., the Men's Division of the Office of Dean of Students and the Department of Teacher Education of the College of Education propose a pilot program in adult education to determine worthwhile content, effective implementation and appropriate resource personnel and materials for the organization of such a program on a continuing basis. It is recommended that four communities be involved in such a pilot study.

Expected Completion Date July 1, 1957

Total Amount Requested $1550.00 Estimate for Labor $1200.00

Supplies $100.00, Travel $250.00

Ellwood A. Voller Harold Dillon
Project Leader

Cole S. Brembeck
Head of Department

[illegible]
Dean of College

APPROVAL

Project Number 773

Account Number 11-4903

Amount Approved $300.00 Date of Approval October 16, 1956

Exceptions or Modification by Committee Travel is limited to first class transportation. No maintenance is allowed.

T. K. Cowden
Chairman, All University Research Committee

(See reverse side for full explanation of procedure in the use of this fund.)

ALL UNIVERSITY RESEARCH GRANTS

From time to time certain grants are made for research from a fund called All University Research, administered by the All University Research Committee of which Dean T. K. Cowden is chairman. While a broad interpretation of the word Research is recognized, it is understood that such work must be definite in character and outline and will be a real contribution by both the project leader and the University. A clear distinction should be recognized between suitable research projects and regular departmental activities supported by regular university budgets.

The following instructions should guide grantees in the expenditure of their grant. In general, the grantee is responsible for keeping accurate records of all funds he spends for which he expects reimbursement. He should use the regular university forms for each type of expenditure. All pay roll cards, supply or travel vouchers, university requisitions and special vouchers should be marked "All University Research" and indicate the project number and department. Also, these forms must in each case be approved by the department head, dean and chairman of the All University Research Committee.

LABOR: All labor should be paid at regular rates established by the personnel director, and submitted on regular labor pay roll cards.

SUPPLIES AND INCIDENTAL EXPENSES: Some of the materials or services required by the grantee can be supplied by the University. To obtain such material or service, the grantee must fill out the regular requisition or service request. When special materials must be purchased off campus, the grantee should get from the Comptroller's Office a supply of "Special Purpose" or "Reimbursement Vouchers." These vouchers must be filled out in duplicate by an agent of the firm where the material is purchased, indicating firm name, location, material purchased, and price. In the case of mail order purchases, the invoice should be attached to the voucher.

TRAVEL: To the extent that reimbursements are made for travel, the University regulations apply. Under these grants reimbursement has not been made for maintenance.

EXPIRATION OF GRANT: Your grant will expire at the end of the fiscal year (June 30). All expense items must be approved before that date. If you fail to follow University regulations regarding the use of vouchers, requisitions, etc., you will fail to receive reimbursements for your expenditures.

REPORT: A one-page summary report of the work performed on the project is due at the time your grant expires. No further grants can be awarded until the Committee has received this report.

APPENDIX F

MSU PARENTS FORUM EVALUATION
DEAN OF STUDENTS - MEN'S DIVISION
309 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Dear Parents;

We are anxious to develop a Parents Forum Program that will be most helpful to both parents and students, both present and prospective. It will be of great help to us in future planning if you will take the necessary time to complete this questionnaire and return it as soon as possible.

---

1. PUBLICITY

A. Check those items below which influenced you to attend the Parents Forums.

__ (1) Personal letter from Dean of Students Office of MSU.

__ (2) Brochure of MSU Parents Forum.

__ (3) Newspaper article.

__ (4) Information from the Adult Education Director in your Community.

__ (5) Personal invitation from a friend.

__ (6) Suggestion of your son or daughter.

B. Of those checked, circle the one which influenced you most to attend.

C. Please make any suggestions you may have to encourage attendance:

_____

_____

_____.

2. ORGANIZATION & PROCEDURES OF FORUM

A. Indicate by checking in box at the right how helpful the following methods were in presenting information.

	VERY HELP-FUL	HELP-FUL	NOT HELP-FUL
(1) Short talk by each panel member concerning designated areas of information.			
(2) Whole group participating in question and answers with complete panel.			
(3) Smaller groups meeting with individual panel members and then rotating.			
(4) Informal discussions with panel members either before or after formal meeting.			
(5) General discussion of planned topics for each meeting.			
(6) Freshman orientation movie.			
(7) Other methods.			

B. How helpful do you feel the Forum will be to the following:

(1) Parents of prospective students of MSU.			
(2) Parents of students already enrolled at MSU.			

C. Check the most desirable time to have Forum meetings.

(1) What day of week? Mon___ Tues___ Wed___ Thurs___ Fri___ Sat___

(2) What time of day? Morning___ Afternoon___ Evening___

(3) How often? Weekly___ Semi-Monthly___ Monthly___

D. Do you feel time should be set aside for individual conferences during the meeting? Yes ___ No ___

E. Do you think it would be worthwhile to include a visit to the Campus as part of the Forum program? Yes ___ No ___

3. EVALUATION OF INFORMATION

A. Indicate in box to right how helpful the information concerning the various topics has been to you.

	VERY HELP-FUL	HELP-FUL	NOT HELP-FUL
(1) Basic College			
(2) Selection of Major			
(3) Non-Preference Course			
(4) Grade System, Credits			
(5) Costs - tuition, Room & Board, Books & Supplies, etc.			
(6) Methods of paying			
(7) Student Loans			
(8) Scholarships			
(9) Counseling Services			
(10) Health Services			
(11) Summer Clinics			
(12) Placement Bureau, work opportunities			
(13) Fraternities - Sororities			
(14) Dorm Regulations			
(15) Religious opportunities			
(16) Discipline Philosophy			
(17) Social Activities			
(18) Participation in student organizations			
(19) Driving Regulations			
(20) General adjustment of student			
(21) General rules of student conduct			

B. What other specific topics would have been of interest to you?

_____

_____.

C. Any additional comments you feel will be helpful in planning future Parent Forums. _____

_____

_____.

D. Please suggest any ways other than the Parents Forum that the University may better help your son or daughter. _____

_____

_____

_____.

_____
Signature

Ellwood Voller, Forum Director
Dean of Students - Men's Division
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan
c

APPENDIX G

APPENDIX G

Summary of suggestions made by parents in answer to Part C of section 1 of questionnaire. The responses were a result of the following statement:

Please make any suggestions you may have to encourage attendance.

1. I believe the parents committee making a personal telephone call could help get folks to attend.

2. Personal letters in my opinion is the most effective of the methods used.

3. Most of those attending know of parents who are not attending. A special invitation from attending parents might create more interest and improve attendance.

4. Make personal contact with parents of freshmen before first meeting.

5. Telephone follow-up by parent committee.

6. Initial letter should have return post card indicating they will or will not attend.

7. Encourage the students and prospective students to work on their parents to attend.

Numerous comments written on the questionnaire by parents:

From a mother: "I think Michigan State is doing a very worthwhile project with the intense personal interest and appeal to students and parents. I feel more interested and closer to my daughter and her education since I attended the Parents' Orientation Forum."

From a father: "Working with the counselors and parents in this forum has been one of my most enjoyable experiences. I would like to offer my services to Michigan State on future forums."

From a mother: "Let me take this opportunity to say I derived more from the forum than I could have hoped for. It was so worthwhile I would be glad to help you, or anyone else, make these forums possible for future parents of Michigan State University students. If there is anything I can do, please feel free to call on me."

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