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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY-LEVEL OFFICE OCCUPATIONS WORKERS ON A FOLLOW-UP OF MCNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE ADMINISTRATION GRADUATES AND THEIR ENTRY LEVEL EMPLOYERS FROM 1970 - 1984

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DOUGLAS ADREAN GOINGS

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Robert Poland
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A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY-LEVEL OFFICE OCCUPATIONS WORKERS BASED ON A FOLLOW-UP OF MCNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE ADMINISTRATION GRADUATES AND THEIR ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYERS FROM 1970-1984

by

Douglas Adrean Goings

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY-LEVEL OFFICE OCCUPATIONS WORKERS BASED ON A FOLLOW-UP OF MCNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY OFFICE ADMINISTRATION GRADUATES AND THEIR ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYERS FROM 1970 - 1984

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Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the office administration training program at McNeese State University as it relates to employment experiences of its baccalaureate graduates. This was accomplished through analyzing (1) the employment experiences of graduates who were employed in office occupations and (2) the opinions of employers of graduates.

Procedures

The data gathering procedure involved an initial mailing of the graduate questionnaire to 127 graduates with three follow-up mailings; this produced 94 usable questionnaires, an 80 percent return. A second data gathering procedure involved an initial mailing of an employer questionnaire to 70 employers with two follow-up mailings; this produced 46 usable questionnaires, a 60 percent return.

Data analysis consisted of descriptive statistics, the Friedman two-way analysis of variance, and the Spearman rank order correlation.

Findings

Ninety percent of the graduate respondents were employed in office occupations after graduation, and 57 percent of those were employed in entry-level office occupations positions as secretaries.

With the exception of calculus and statistics, most graduate and employer respondents agreed that the courses presently incorporated into the curriculum were appropriate for the preparation of office occupations workers.

Graduate and employer respondent opinions concerning the courses for incorporation into the present curriculum, rankings of entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and rankings of component elements considered basic for office work were found to be positively and significantly correlated at the .01 level.

Finally, shorthand was required as a prerequisite for entry-level employment in office occupations as reported by 51 percent of the graduate respondents.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following are the most significant conclusions.

1. The office administration degree is a viable educational program for office occupations workers.

2. Shorthand is still important in helping graduates find employment in office occupations.

3. The office administration program is appropriate for the preparation of entry-level office occupations workers.

4. The office administration curriculum adequately prepares graduates for office occupations positions.

DEDICATED

To my wife, Carol, who has worked hard to give me the support to pursue my own goals--both in my education and in my profession, and whose love and understanding have remained constant through our life together.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Department of Office Administration at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana, was established in 1970 to meet the educational needs of those who seek collegiate preparation for office occupations. The Department has experienced considerable growth since its establishment as a source for collegiate office education, and in 1979 the two-year certificate program in office administration was upgraded to an Associate in Science degree. A two-year, Associate in Science degree in word processing was added to the existing curricula in 1980.

The name of the Department of Office Administration was changed to the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication in 1981. The change was made to reflect more accurately the nature of the current program and to reflect a more progressive approach which embraces high technology in the office environment.

Since the establishment of the Department, there has not been an evaluation of the educational program. Changes which occurred were based on faculty thought without benefit of a comprehensive feedback structure. No survey had been made to determine perceptions of employers concerning the preparedness of graduates. Nolan, Hayden, and Malsbary (1967) advocate the use of follow-up research ". . . to learn what former students are now doing and how well the education and training they received in the school prepared them for their work and life in the business world."

Literature in professional journals and doctoral dissertations lay a basic foundation for the need to conduct follow-up research. Wise, Hengstler, and Braskamp (1981) support follow-up research as a way collegiate programs can strengthen the professional readiness of their graduates. They write, "Alumni have provided their assessments of the skills needed for success in their current profession."

Pierce (1976) projects a similar idea in the 1976 National Business Education Yearbook. He writes,

> . . . with the constantly increasing complexity of the labor market, with the advent of new and different kinds of jobs resulting from an expanding economy, with the constant reduction of the number of so-called blue collar jobs and the concomitant increase of white collar jobs, there is a greater need than ever before for educators to predict much more accurately the occupational climate during the 1980's.

Recent financial crises have caused colleges and universities to cut programs in office administration and other disciplines. Business educators must take action to secure the stability of collegiate office education programs. They must provide evidence of the viability of office education at the collegiate level.

Sission, Arthur, Fierro, and Gazden (1978) contribute to the viability issue in writing, ". . . educational systems should continue to stress the development of skills and knowledge that are perceived to be vital to success." The secretarial curriculum must show its viability as an attractive, satisfying occupation within the business world.

Curricula must be adaptable to the changes in the world of business. Potential secretaries and other administrative services personnel must be attracted to preparatory programs which honestly promise positions in the ranks of business.

Based on what has appeared in research studies and articles, it seems logical and professional to follow-up occupational curricula for office education. The results from follow-up research should be used to assess the effectiveness of the curricula and to implement changes for the improvement of curricula.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the office administration training program at McNeese State University as it relates to employment experiences of its baccalaureate graduates. This was accomplished through analyzing (1) the employment experiences of graduates who were employed in office occupations and (2) the opinions of employers of graduates.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up, through a questionnaire, of office administration graduates who graduated from McNeese State University between December, 1970, through July, 1984, to determine whether or not the courses they had taken had provided them with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of business and industry. Based on this purpose, further goals included: (1) to determine what general attitudes graduates have concerning the courses currently incorporated in the office administration curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and component elements considered basic for office work, (2) to determine if the employers of graduates share similar opinions concerning the educational preparation of graduates, and (3) to present conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study which could aid in planning new programs or evaluating those which already exist.

Sission, Arthur, Fierro, and Gazden (1978) encourage such research for the ultimate purpose of helping practitioners acquire the knowledge necessary to become professional, successful workers.

Research Questions

The specific research questions of this study were:

1. What number and percentage of graduates found entry-level employment in office occupations?

2. (a) What were the most common entry-level job titles of graduates who found employment in office occupations, and (b) what additional training was provided by their entry-level employers?

3. (a) What are the current job titles of the graduates, and (b) what are their current salaries?

4. What general attitudes do graduates have concerning (a) the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum, (b) entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and (c) component elements considered basic for office work?

5. (a) What role did shorthand play in helping graduates find employment, (b) what was the minimum shorthand speed required for entry-level employment, and (c) what role does shorthand play in their daily office work?

6. How do graduates compare their office work experiences and their office administration learning experiences?

7. Are graduates satisfied with their degrees in office administration and with their careers and jobs in office occupations?

8. How would graduates describe the manner in which instruction was offered in office administration classes at McNeese?

9. Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions

concerning the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and component elements considered basic for office work?

Significance of the Study

Changes which have occurred in the work place since the early 1980's have resulted in increased accountability of academic programs which prepare workers for more technological work environments. Appraisal of the academic progress of graduates must be made to indicate strengths and weaknesses concerning their training and preparedness to meet the demands of the work place.

If the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication wishes to be forward-looking, progressive, and capable of staying abreast of technological and sociological changes taking place in the work place, research must be undertaken. Follow-up research would act as a method to obtain product-oriented data upon which to reexamine the programs of the Department. A formal study of the baccalaureate program has not been made to determine how the graduates evaluate it. There has always been a concerted effort on the part of the faculty to make the program comprehensive and relevant by studying current trends as suggested by professional business education leaders in the latest research publications, by trends in business, and by the content of courses taught in other post-secondary office administration programs. The graduates and their employers, however, have generally been overlooked as a viable source of reference to identify strengths and weaknesses. On a broader scale, formal follow-up research of the Department's graduates should be made to comply with reporting requirements of the Vocational

Education Section (Title II) of the Education Amendments of 1976 (Public Law 94-482). Specifically, Section 112 (b) of the Act states:

> . . . Each State shall evaluate, by using data collected, whenever possible, by statistically valid sampling techniques, each such program within the State which purports to impart entry level job skills according to the extent to which program completers and leavers--
>
> "(i) find employment in occupations related to their training, and
>
> "(ii) are considered by their employers to be well-trained and prepared for employment . . .

This follow-up of the Department's baccalaureate program was undertaken to address three needs. First, to present empirical data upon which to base program changes consistent with the mission of the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication at McNeese State University. Second, to extend the relevance of the literature which expounds the merits of follow-up research. Finally, to meet the requirements of the Vocational Education Section (Title II) of the Education Amendments of 1976 (Public Law 94-482) that schools receiving funds under the Act report each year information concerning graduates who have found employment in their field (Asche and O'Reilly, 1978).

According to Thompson (1978) ". . . no better method exists for determining how well the technical occupational objectives of the college are being carried out." This is especially true since accreditation teams also consider systematic follow-up research as an important component of program evaluation.

Ristau and Roth (1977) caution educators who ignore their responsibilities in conducting studies which test and assess the value of their programs. They write, "If colleges of business fail to prepare people to understand business in its totality and to recognize business as an integral part of a complex social order, they will have failed to

achieve an important part of the total mission no matter how many thousands of students are graduated."

Delimitations of the Study

Since its inception, the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication has offered two curricula, (1) a four-year program to prepare individuals to become administrative assistants and executive secretaries and (2) a two-year program to prepare individuals to become secretaries and clerical workers. Prior to 1979, the two-year majors were given certificates upon completion of their curriculum. The two-year certificates were upgraded to degree status--Associate in Science in Office Administration--in 1979. In order to obtain controlled data, this study focused only on graduates who had received Bachelor of Science degrees and the employers of those graduates. These delimitations helped to define the research population and helped to control certain variables which might be characteristic of baccalaureate degree recipients but not of recipients of the other degrees.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations placed on the results and recommendations generated from this study include:

1. The credibility of responses was limited by the extent to which respondents accepted the promise of confidentiality.

2. Conclusions were based on data received from respondents, which may not reflect the perceptions of those choosing not to respond.

3. Means of contact with graduates was limited to available information as to their whereabouts. Contact with employers was limited by the willingness or ability of graduates to elicit their responses.

4. Due to the relatively small population size and the large

number of variables compared in a curriculum analysis, appropriate options were limited in regard to statistical analysis.

5. Findings and recommendations are applicable only to the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication at McNeese State University.

6. Findings and recommendations developed from this study are not long generalizable to the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication at McNeese State University. According to Smith (1980) "Out-of-date information has limited applications for users, except for those 'bits and pieces' having historical significance for indicating trends."

Basic Assumptions

The following assumptions were considered basic to the formulation of this study:

1. The descriptive method of research was the most appropriate research method for realizing the purpose and intent of this study.

2. Graduates and their employers would cooperate in this study by responding to the questionnaires.

3. Respondents would be willing to provide information on their experiences and attitudes.

4. Responses from a majority of a population would represent typical opinions.

5. Graduates who have an opportunity to evaluate their career preparation program in relation to job requirements would provide usable information regarding weaknesses, strengths, and recommendations in existing programs.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of specific meanings assigned to terms used in the preparation of this study.

Administrative Assistant

Non-management employee who aids executives by coordinating office activities, i.e., communications, budgets, records.

Bachelor of Science degree

An academic degree granted upon completion of a course of study normally requiring four academic years of college.

Basic Component

A component considered essential in the performance of a job task, such as "typewriting."

Clerical Worker

Office worker at the lowest level of the secretarial hierarchy who performs minor clerical tasks, i.e., filing, transcription.

Component Element

One aspect of a basic component, such as "assembling all materials necessary to the production of the copy."

Employer

Immediate employment supervisor of an individual classified as a graduate who has worked in an office occupation.

Employer Respondent

An employer who responded to the employer questionnaire.

Executive Secretary

Employee who assists executives by performing top-level secretarial duties. They may supervise clerical workers.

Graduate

Graduate from McNeese State University who has been graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Office Administration.

Graduate Respondent

Any graduate who responded to the graduate questionnaire.

Job Task

A specific assignment having identifiable objectives, such as "prepare annual report."

Non-respondent

Any person who has not responded after all planned follow-up contact procedures were completed.

Office Administration

Various curricula that provide educational training to persons who seek various career levels in secretarial administrative occupations.

Office Education Program

College curricula leading to a Bachelor of Science degree in the field of secretarial and administrative responsibility.

Office Occupations

Any position within an organization which has as its responsibility clerical, secretarial, or other classifications which deal primarily in information flow.

Secretarial Experience

Occupational exposure and activity in the secretarial field that produces attitudes and abilities consistent with the secretarial field.

Secretary

Clerical employee who does minor administrative and general office tasks, i.e., typewriting, routine correspondence, records control.

Organization of the Study

The statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, limitations of the study, basic assumptions, and definition of terms were presented in Chapter 1. A review of related literature and research studies concerning follow-up research of post-secondary office administration programs is presented and summarized in Chapter 2. The population, development of questionnaires, collection of data, and design of the research are presented in Chapter 3; Chapter 4 presents an analysis of follow-up data. Finally, summary, conclusions, and recommendations are presented in Chapter 5. A bibliography follows and includes books, periodicals, microformed documents, and other research studies utilized in the compilation of this study. Appendices include copies of the research instruments (graduate and employer) and cover letters.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this chapter was to present a review of literature concerning methods and procedures for conducting follow-up research and summaries of follow-up studies of post-secondary office administration programs. The chapter is divided into two sections: (1) published literature related to methods and procedures for conducting follow-up research and (2) studies selected because of their similarities to the present study.

Research in the preliminary stages of the literature review consisted of two computer-assisted searches, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) and Dissertation Abstracts, and three manual searches, Index to Doctoral Dissertations in Business Education 1900-1975, Index to Doctoral Dissertations in Business Education Supplement, 1975-1980, and Business Education Index, 1981-1984.

The purpose for a review of related literature is presented by Lowry (1961):

> The published literature of business education alone contains hundreds of articles and summaries of investigations concerned with placement and follow-up. Time allotted to reviewing at least the most pertinent parts of this literature will be well spent. This is true even though it is finally decided to approach the problem in what is believed to be an entirely new or different way.

In recent years, the business environment has become more finely tuned to technological change; and the work place, having by-passed traditional tasks, now demands technically competent workers for high accountability and productivity. The business environment has changed

and educational institutions must change in order to keep pace with the demands of the work place. In order to ensure that office administration programs prepare employable office workers, educators must provide high-quality instructional programs to satisfy the technically-oriented work place.

Departments of office administration must periodically assess their curricula to determine whether any changes in educational programs are actually needed. Successful office administration curricula must be based on follow-up occupational analyses. Sources of input for program assessment and revision are program graduates and business employers.

Those most directly affected by programs and curricula are graduates preparing to enter the job market and business employers seeking qualified office workers. According to Asche and O'Reilly (1979), "Graduates and their employers are often the first to identify areas in which recent technological change has created need for program revision." Program completers can make valuable suggestions for improving the curricula, and business employers are able to advise curriculum researchers on the most recent changes in technology and human aspects of the office environment (Cox, 1977).

Just as business, industry, and government periodically assess the effectiveness of workers, equipment, and services, so must the office administration educator. Assessment by follow-up can become an important tool in the development of highly qualified, professionally recognized office workers. Follow-up data provides the substantiating evidence regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the students as well as obvious implications for business teachers and school administrators.

Follow-up provides educators with first-hand information on business standards, equipment forecasts, and materials requirements. Follow-up data can provide information on:

> . . . norms on aptitudes, socioeconomic status, vocational aspirations, and other characteristics; assessing the degree to which the curriculum and instruction are adapted to the full range of student and community needs, improving the effectiveness of technical-occupational curriculums, courses, instruction, and guidance; evaluating the effectiveness of entrance requirements; evaluation of grading standards; appraising the effectiveness of student counseling; and verifying the validity of the testing program (O'Connor, 1965).

What information could office administration educators use to improve programs? Hennington (1979) suggests questions like "Is there need for shorthand in the business curriculum of tomorrow?" Other concerns: is shorthand becoming a thing of the past? will computers take over all office information services? how will the paper-less office affect office administration programs? Hennington guides researchers to generate evidence, through follow-up, so that intelligent decisions will guide curriculum researchers toward meeting future office needs.

One example of how follow-up research can guide curriculum researchers is presented by Hennington (1979). She states that shorthand skill will continue to be in demand for secretaries; also, research shows that business continues to pay high salaries to office workers who are able to take and transcribe dictation at high speeds. Another example of how follow-up research can guide curriculum researchers is provided by Frederickson (1978). Managerial level secretaries were surveyed, and they reported, by a response rate of 94 percent, that they used shorthand. Accuracy and proofreading in typewriting and transcription were also reported as important skills.

Follow-up research, particularly follow-up of graduates, can provide valuable information concerning program development. McKinney and Oglesby (1971) provide this definition of follow-up research: "A follow-up study is a procedure for accumulating pertinent data from or about individuals after they have had similar or comparable experiences." Benefits obtained could include additions, revisions, and/or deletions to existing programs.

According to Gilli (1975) follow-up data could provide data on:

1. curriculum relevancy
2. overall value of program
3. quality of training
4. job characteristics
5. job satisfaction
6. job mobility and geographic data
7. further educational needs
8. demographic data

Follow-up research is an important part of program evaluation. If properly planned, implemented, and analyzed, information from follow-up research can serve as valuable material for decision making.

An important element in planning follow-up research concerns an effective method of gathering data. Hillestad (1977) offers the questionnaire as the most frequently used technique to ensure uniformity in data collection.

An important aspect of follow-up research is questionnaire development. Researchers must take care to write items to solicit adequate responses covering a wide range of issues. Adequate coverage may be the single most important act available to ensure a proper

response rate. An ill prepared questionnaire is the most common cause of a poor response rate. There seems to be an inverse relationship between reduced response rate and poorly designed items on the questionnaire (McKinney and Oglesby, 1971). A properly balanced questionnaire--content to brevity--should reduce the likelihood of a large non-response rate.

O'Reilly and Asche (1981) warn follow-up researchers not to dismiss non-respondents. A short telephone interview with a small, random sample of non-respondents could reduce possible affects of researcher and respondent bias.

The literature is full of suggestions for enhancing return rate. Physical appearance, tone, timing, reminders, incentives, and assurances of confidentiality are popular suggestions (Hillestad, 1977; McKinney and Oglesby, 1971; O'Reilly and Asche 1981). Asche and O'Reilly (1979) studied vocational education follow-up in the United States and Canada. Based on their research, they offer these general comments on follow-up research:

1. Interest in conducting follow-up research is increasing.

2. Objectives were seldom identified in follow-up research reports--less than one third included objectives.

3. Evaluation was the most commonly mentioned objective for conducting follow-up research.

4. Over half of the follow-up reports dealt with post-secondary institutions.

5. Students were the primary sources of follow-up research.

6. Program completers were most frequently sought for follow-up research.

7. Less that 10 percent of the follow-up reports mentioned investigating possible differences between respondents and non-respondents.

8. Most follow-up research used the census approach--entire population.

9. The median return rate was 60.3 percent for student follow-up research; 70 percent for employer follow-up research.

10. Only 10 percent of the student follow-up reports mentioned the use of incentives; no employer follow-up reports mentioned them.

11. The mail-out questionnaire was the most frequently used method of data collection.

12. Two to three weeks were generally allowed between first and second contacts.

13. Sixty percent of the follow-up reports mentioned the use of prompts--reminder letters.

14. Less that 10 percent were identified as longitudinal studies.

Shortcomings mentioned by O'Reilly and Asche were:

1. The majority of follow-up reports did not include information about the cost of conducting the study.

2. Most of the follow-up research was one-time research; very little longitudinal research.

3. Information regarding non-respondents was generally over-looked.

4. Most follow-up reports were incomplete regarding procedures used to collect data.

The work of O'Reilly and Asche was very useful in the development of this study. One of the major aspects of their work concerned the

development of a list of major tasks frequently cited in conducting follow-up research. These major tasks include:

1. Determine potential system goals
2. Develop system timelines
3. Make major operational decisions
4. Define population
5. Specify data elements
6. Specify study type, design and methods
7. Develop instrumentation
8. Collect and analyze data
9. Prepare reports and documentation
10. Evaluate and modify the system

After considering the importance of conducting follow-up research and review suggestions from researchers on how best to prepare and conduct follow-up research, some attention will now be given to reviewing actual follow-up studies.

Research Related to this Study

There are only a small number of follow-up studies of post-secondary office administration reported in various indexes. Despite this small number, various institutions across the country have completed quality research in the field. These studies have provided a basis for this investigation.

Axmann Study (1981)

The purpose of this study was to follow-up former office occupations students who attended Wharton County Junior College in Wharton, Texas to determine: (1) how important in their occupational experiences were the knowledges and skills provided by the office

occupations courses and (2) how well prepared they had become by taking these courses.

Questionnaires were mailed to 704 former students, and a return rate of 59 percent was received. Respondents were asked to rate a list of work-related tasks in two ways: (1) importance, helpfulness, and usefulness in their jobs and (2) the adequacy of preparation in each task. A five-point rating scale was used to rate ten major task categories (typewriting, shorthand and transcription, filing, telephoning and communication, mailing, general clerical, office machines, data gathering, mathematics, and financial and recordkeeping) which were further broken down into specific tasks.

Data were combined to determine the percentage of change in importance on the job for each task and the percentage of change in the adequacy of preparation at Wharton County Junior College, as perceived by the respondents.

Findings included:

1. Negative opinions for both importance on the job and adequacy of preparation for typewriting, shorthand and transcription tasks, telephoning/communication tasks, mailing tasks, and general clerical tasks;

2. Filing tasks received positive opinions for importance on the job, but negative opinions for adequacy of preparation;

3. Office machines tasks and mathematics tasks received positive ratings for both importance on the job and adequacy of preparation; and

4. Data gathering tasks and financial/recording tasks received negative ratings for importance on the job, but positive ratings for adequacy of preparation.

It was recommended that a sequential program be developed for the large number of non-completers. The sequential program should be open ended to permit non-completers to reach competency level as their individual life/work styles allow. A further recommendation was made to Wharton County Junior College to conduct follow-up studies at five-year intervals to collect data on which to base future curriculum decisions.

Brown Study (1980)

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the undergraduate business and office education and distributive and business education programs at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

Graduates who received the bachelor's degree from 1963 - 1978 were surveyed. Two hundred eighty-one graduates were mailed questionnaires, and a return rate of 73 percent was received.

Two hypotheses were subjected to Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance by ranks: teaching and non-teaching. The hypotheses were: (1) graduates in teaching and non-teaching ranks have different perceptions of the value of the courses in the business program and (2) graduates in teaching and non-teaching ranks have different perceptions of the value of the courses in the professional teacher education program. The .05 level of significance was required for rejection of null hypotheses.

Brown's study revealed that business and office education and distributive and business education graduates:

1. were very satisfied with their present positions;

2. stated that dedication, concern, and helpful attitude were strengths of the undergraduate program.

The most significant conclusion drawn from the findings was that graduates who teach value undergraduate course work more highly than graduates who do not teach.

Cone Study (1971)

The purpose of this study was to obtain information from the 1965 through 1969 graduates of the College of Business Administration at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana. The nature of the information concerned opinions of graduates regarding the curriculum, graduate education, and occupational experiences.

Two hundred sixty-three graduates were surveyed by questionnaire, and 197 graduates responded to the survey (75 percent rate of return).

The following conclusions were reached:

1. course requirements were believed satisfactory by most graduates;

2. all core requirements except marketing and introduction to business were thought valuable by most graduates;

3. office administration majors consider business finance and statistics to have little or no value to their occupations;

4. most graduates who had not continued their education were employed in an area related to their undergraduate major;

5. most graduates recognized certain deficiencies in job-placement services at Nicholls State University; and

6. graduates exhibited strong job stability and were progressing monetarily.

Recommendations which resulted from this study included:

1. attention should be given to ways to increase the amount of instruction in data processing, oral communication, and insurance;

2. reevaluate the place of marketing and introduction to business and study ways to make these courses more relevant;

3. possibly eliminate the requirement that office administration majors complete business finance and statistics;

4. retain the one semester course in office machines as a requirement for all majors and consider requiring at least one semester of collegiate typewriting of all business majors;

5. core requirements in business and general studies should remain as they are;

6. on-campus interviewing and job-placement procedures should be scrutinized; and

7. periodically repeat studies of this type in order to continually upgrade the program.

Dufrene Study (1983)

The purpose of this study conducted at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana, was to assess the effectiveness of the two-year office administration curriculum.

Ninety-eight graduates (those who received the associate degree in office administration from 1980 - 1982) and their employers were mailed questionnaires. The questionnaire was researcher made and had been previously pilot tested. A return of 72 percent was received.

The questionnaire sought perceptions regarding a list of 86 office related competencies, both academic/technical and personal/ social. Hypotheses included: (1) a comparison of job importance and curricular emphasis revealed that graduates perceived that 13 of 86 competencies received inadequate curricular emphasis; (2) a comparison of graduate and employer responses for job importance showed significant differences

for 12 of 86 competencies; and (3) a comparison of self-evaluations of graduates to employer evaluations of graduates indicated that significant differences occur for 9 of 86 competencies. The .05 level of confidence was required for rejection of null hypotheses.

Dufrene's conclusions drawn from the findings included: (1) curricular emphasis generally meets or exceeds job requirements for academic competencies and (2) responses for graduates and employers generally agree concerning performance ratings.

It was recommended that future follow-up efforts be directed toward graduates since there was general agreement between the responses of graduates and those of employers.

Dyess Study (1981)

The purpose of this study was to follow up graduates of the department of business administration who attended San Jacinto College from January, 1977, through May, 1981, in order to determine whether certain selected business courses had provided them with the necessary skills and knowledges to meet the employment requirements of business and industry.

Four hundred seventy-six graduates were mailed questionnaires, and a response rate of 48 percent was received. The questionnaire was modified from one used by Patricia Axmann in a follow-up of office occupations students who attended Wharton County Junior College in Wharton, Texas. It was pilot tested for reliability. A list of 13 task clusters encompassing the knowledge and skills learned in business administration classes comprised the questionnaire.

The hypothesis tested in this study was that there is no discrepancy between how important a task is on the job and how well

the graduate was prepared for it at San Jacinto College. The .05 level of confidence was required for rejection of the null hypothesis.

Findings developed from the data included:

1. graduates rated the importance of tasks on the job differently than their preparation for those tasks for 10 of the 13 task clusters. These clusters were typewriting tasks, dictating and transcribing tasks using Gregg or ABC shorthand, dictating and transcribing tasks using dictating machines, filing tasks, verbal communication tasks, written communication tasks, operating electronic calculators, operating word processing equipment, mailing tasks, and general clerical tasks;

2. the three tasks which were not statistically significant (graduates tended to rate importance similar to preparation) were gathering data tasks, using mathematics (without machines), and financial and recordkeeping tasks; and

3. specific tasks needing curricular attention included typing statistical copy and reports, grammar and punctuation, technical report writing, data gathering, and bank statement reconciliation.

Johnson Study (1971)

The purpose of this study was to appraise the undergraduate business programs at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

Three hundred sixty business, business education, and distributive education graduates were surveyed via questionnaire, and an 86 percent return rate was received.

Information requested included:

1. post-graduate occupational experiences;

2. four-year curriculum requirements; and

3. graduates' education experiences.

The study reported that approximately 61 percent of the graduate respondents were working in the area of business for which they had prepared.

Conclusions reached as a result of the study were:

1. a majority of graduate respondents from the College of Business and Education secured employment in the area of business;

2. the majority of graduate respondents were satisfied with their choice of major in business; and

3. most graduate respondents indicated a high value for business communications, principles of accounting, electronic data processing, business finance, and money and banking.

Sullivan Study (1977)

The purpose of this study was to examine the office administration major specifically in terms of:

1. the level of position attained by women who received a degree with a secretarial specialization;

2. the career aspirations of graduates;

3. the obstacles to obtaining a high-level secretarial, managerial, and/or executive position; and

4. the advantages or disadvantages of a secretarial background in meeting the aspirations of the graduates.

The population of this study was 220 female graduates who obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration from Michigan State University between 1955 and 1975 inclusive. The questionnaire was used to collect data, and a return rate of 80 percent was received.

Some of the findings of the study were:

1. seventy-eight percent of the respondents were married, and 65 percent had children;

2. all respondents were less than 50 years of age;

3. forty-seven percent of the graduates were employed on a full-time basis, 13 percent were employed on a part-time basis, and 41 percent were unemployed;

4. high-level secretarial positions (executive secretaries and administrative assistants) were obtained by 45 percent of the graduates and 16 percent attained managerial level positions;

5. most graduates reported that they like their work--indicating factors such as job security, work conditions, the job itself, potential for advancement, and challenge of the work;

6. forty-seven percent indicated that they needed further education and/or training if they wished to advance;

7. over 70 percent of the graduates felt that their secretarial skills contributed in some degree to advancement and that the secretarial core and the business administration core had been important factors in preparing them for employment.

The following conclusions were based on the findings:

1. once graduates were established in secretarial positions, opportunities to advance into non-secretarial positions were limited;

2. relatively few of the office administration majors obtained middle-management positions;

3. office administration does not offer the best entrance into the business world for women who aspire to move beyond the secretarial level into management;

4. over half of the graduates remain employed for only one to five years after graduation, but many return to full-time employment after their family responsibilities are lessened;

Urbaniak Study (1983)

The purposes of this study were: (1) to construct a profile of the typical business administration graduate of Northern State College in Aberdeen, South Dakota, at least six months after graduation; (2) to make curriculum recommendations that will affect the present and future business students; and (3) to determine if there is agreement among the educational programs provided and the perceived needs of students and employers.

Five hundred graduates were surveyed via questionnaire, and a return rate of 71 percent was received. The questionnaire included the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Minnesota Satisfactoriness Scales.

Findings of the study included:

1. positions held by two-year graduates included: secretary, clerk, programmer/analyst, computer operator, labor, and other;

2. both two-year and four-year graduates indicated that the courses business communication, principles of accounting (I and II), intermediate accounting, business machines, salesmanship, and miscellaneous other courses were most helpful in employment since graduation;

3. lack of quality in job placement was the greatest weakness in the program;

4. over 91 percent of the four-year graduates and over 80 percent of the two-year graduates were presently employed in a position that provided an opportunity to use their business skills;

5. both two-year and four-year graduates reported being satisfied with their work; and

6. employers indicated that graduates were satisfactory to highly satisfactory.

Williams Study (1960)

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the office training program at Flint Community Junior College in Flint, Michigan, as related to the employment needs of former students. The effectiveness was determined by comparing the job expectancy of 200 students with the job realities of a similar number of former students. Another part of the study compared the training given students and the training expected by employers.

The questionnaire method was used for students, former students, and employers. Interviews with directors of office personnel in some large industries supplemented questionnaire data.

Information sought from students included the type of work expected, employment conditions, vocational skills and personal qualities offered as perspective employees. Information sought from former students included employment conditions and deficiencies in office administration training. Information sought from employers included employment conditions, vocational skills and personal qualities considered important for employability, and deficiencies prevalent in employees.

Findings included several areas which provided the basis for possible revisions in the training program. These findings included:

1. students, former students, and employers agreed on the knowledges and skills commonly used in office occupations; as well as

2. students, former students, and employers agreed on the personal factors which contribute to success on the job;

3. some lack of understanding among students of the types of job opportunities that were available in the area and the subjects that would best prepare them for the kind of jobs they hoped to secure; and

4. apparent overemphasis in some areas of academic instruction and lack of emphasis in others.

One recommendation was to conduct additional studies to provide for continued interchange between business and Michigan State University. Williams also recommended that conferences be offered as another way to bring about articulation between business and educational institutions.

Zabinsky Study (1976)

The purpose of this study was to obtain evaluative data to assess the effectiveness of business education programs in accredited private business schools and public junior colleges in San Diego County.

Objectives outlined included: (1) to compare follow-up data of the graduates of the two types of schools, including employment status, additional training since graduation, job information, advancement, and salary information; (2) to compare employer evaluations of on-the-job graduates of the two types of schools by analyzing mean scores on the scales of the Minnesota Satisfactoriness Scales (MSS), totally and by program; and (3) to compare mean scores on the General Satisfactoriness Scale of the MSS of graduates from the two types of schools with the given published norm means, totally and by program.

Institutions involved in this study were three accredited private business schools and five public junior colleges. Data were collected on 600 students from these institutions who had completed a secretarial

or office/clerical training program during the 1972 - 1974 school years. The random sample method was used to select comparable groups based on sex, age, race, marital status, level of education, type of program completed, and year of completion. The final groupings consisted of 100 public junior college students and 100 private business school students. Data from these groups and their employers were collected via questionnaire.

There was no significant difference in the distribution of graduates on present employment status, additional training since graduation, time to secure a job since graduation, time on present job, job turn-over, job relatedness to training, salary status, or program choice satisfaction.

It was concluded that both types of school are serving the career oriented students in terms of secretarial and office/clerical occupational preparation.

Summary

There is a abundance of information available to researchers on how to go about conducting follow-up research. Also, numerous follow-up studies have been made of office administration graduates from high schools, junior and community colleges, and colleges and universities. Generally, however, there have not been many long-term follow-up studies of four-year collegiate programs particularly at the doctoral level.

The review of literature presented here revealed evidence that much needed research has been completed for the purpose of appraising post-secondary office administration programs. Generally, respondents indicated satisfied with their education in office administration.

CHAPTER 3

Procedures Used and Design of the Research

The purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up, through a questionnaire, of office administration graduates who graduated from McNeese State University between December, 1970, through July, 1984, to determine whether or not the courses they had taken had provided them with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of business and industry.

A synthesis of Kingston's (1978) study recommended areas of interest for follow-up studies produced the following areas of interest for this study:

1. number and percent of graduates employed,
2. entry-level job titles and additional training,
3. current job titles and salaries of those employed,
4. attitudes concerning courses in the curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements, and component elements basic to office work,
5. role of shorthand in helping graduates find employment, speed requirements, and use in daily office work,
6. correlation between collegiate learning experiences and office work experiences,
7. extent of satisfaction with degree, career, and job,
8. attitudes toward instruction in office administration, and
9. correlation between opinions of graduates and employers concerning courses in the curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements, and component elements basic to office work.

It was the intent of this study to acquire data to assist in the evaluation and future planning of the baccalaureate program of the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication. This study was the first scientific step in the development of new knowledge about the baccalaureate program of the Department. Borg and Gall (1983) state that science has four purposes: description, prediction, control, and explanation. They state "Science could not advance without accurate identification and description . . . ." Given the purpose and intent of this study, the descriptive-survey method of research was the most appropriate research method.

Thompson (1978) supports the theory behind follow-up research. He writes, "It is almost universally agreed that information from and about students after they leave school or college is important to the school or college in evaluating its program and in planning for the future."

This chapter describes the procedures used in implementing this study. It discusses population, development of the questionnaires, collection of data, and design of the research.

Population

The population of this follow-up included: all four-year majors who graduated from McNeese State University and majored in office administration from December, 1970, through July, 1984; and the employers of those graduates. Graduates receiving the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree totaled 129. Graduates reported a total 70 different employers.

The graduates were identified from their respective commencement lists. According to the records from the Dean of the College of Business, 129 office administration majors were graduates from December, 1970, through July, 1984.

Addresses for graduates were obtained from the alumni office and from permanent records of graduates of the department. Permission to search the records was granted by Dr. LaJuana W. Lee, Head of the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication.

The names and addresses of parents were used whenever the addresses of graduates were unknown. The Lake Charles City Directory was used to determine telephone numbers for some graduates. This was used for reminder calls. Addresses for two graduates were unknown, and ten letters were returned by the postal service as "undeliverable."

After the final follow-up for graduates, a list of employers was developed. The procedure for developing the master list of employers was to list employer names from graduate questionnaires. An employer's name was listed only once if two or more graduate respondents listed the same employer. This procedure provided a list of 70 employers for the study.

After excluding graduates for whom addresses could not be located and deleting duplicate employer names, the population for this study was composed of 117 graduates and 70 employers.

Development of Questionnaires

Graduate Questionnaire Development

In the search of related literature, several survey instruments which seemed appropriate for the collection of data were located. Various aspects of the collected instruments were revised and refined in order to develop research questionnaires appropriate for the population and purpose of this study. A copy of the explanatory cover letter is included in Appendix A. A copy of the graduate questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

Page one (see Appendix B) of the graduate questionnaire sought information on year of graduation (item no. 1) and employment status (item no. 2). If the graduates had not entered an office occupation since graduation, they were asked to give a reason (item no. 3). Page one also sought information on job title (item no. 4) and name and address of company where first employed in an office occupation (item no. 5).

Page two sought information on the most common methods for additional training provided by employers (item no. 6) and collegiate courses appropriate for incorporation into the curriculum which prepares entry-level office employees (item no. 7). Page three sought information concerning entry-level proficiency requirements on various types of office equipment as skill prerequisites for entry-level office employment (item no. 8). The list of equipment was compiled from job descriptions of office occupations listed in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (1977), the Occupational Outlook Handbook (1980), and a booklet by Erickson (1971).

Pages four and five contained lists of component elements basic for work in office occupations, grouped into seven categories or basic components (item no. 9). The list of component elements was based on a list by Erickson (1971). Graduates were asked to rank the three top component elements in each category or basic component. They were also asked to chart when they, as entry-level office employees, were first assigned responsibility for each of the three top ranked component elements and when they relinquished responsibility for those elements.

At the bottom of page five, graduates were asked to report on shorthand as an employment prerequisite (item no. 10) and on the use of shorthand in their entry-level office position (item nos. 11, 12, and

13). Also, graduates were asked whether or not their office education corresponded with their entry-level office experience (item no. 14).

Page six sought information regarding job satisfaction (item no. 15); a Semantic Differential scale having eight word groups describing the manner in which instruction was offered in office education at McNeese State University (item no. 16); and a question seeking degree of satisfaction graduates have with their degree in office administration (item no. 18). Item 17 concerned whether graduates had ended their office occupations careers.

Page seven sought various employment and demographic questions which included: type of company where first employed in an office occupation (item no. 19), current job title (item no. 20), age (item no. 21), marital status (item no. 22), and annual income (item no. 23).

Employer Questionnaire Development

The graduate questionnaire was revised and used to obtain information from the employers of graduates as reported by graduates. The number of employers totaled 70.

The first page (see Appendix D) of the employer questionnaire sought identification on a job title for a person with a degree in office administration who might apply for an office occupations job in that particular business (item no. 1). Employers were then asked to rank collegiate courses appropriate for incorporation into the curriculum which prepares entry-level office employees (item no. 2).

Page two of the employer questionnaire sought employer ranking of the three top component elements in seven categories of basic components for office work (item no. 3). This was a simplified version of item nine on the graduate questionnaire.

Page three sought employer indication of entry-level proficiency requirements for employees on various types of office equipment (item no. 4).

The last page of the employer questionnaire sought employer information on the use of shorthand and typewriting skills (item nos. 5-12). This information included percent of time the skill (shorthand and typewriting) was used per workday and minimum speed required. The final item (no. 13) on the employer questionnaire was used to identify the type of business office for employers. A copy of the explanatory cover letter is included in Appendix C. A copy of the employer questionnaire is included in Appendix D.

Validation of the Questionnaire

After preparation, the graduate and employer questionnaires were reviewed for clarity, meaning, and appearance by a panel of business educators from the nine state colleges and universities under the Louisiana State Board of Trustees. This step was taken as recommended by Wentling and Lawson (1975) and West (1977). The graduate questionnaire was then administered to the 1980 class of office administration graduates from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana, as a pilot. Graduates from Southeastern Louisiana University were selected to avoid having respondents in the pilot study who were also included in the formal study. Each graduate was asked to make comments regarding the clarity, meaning, and appearance of the questionnaire. The results from the pilot test were taken into consideration in the development of the questionnaires used in the actual study. Since the employer questionnaire was a simplified version of the graduate questionnaire no pilot test was conducted to assess its validity.

Reliability of the Questionnaire

According to Hillestad (1977), the test-retest procedure was considered suitable for determining the reliability of the questionnaire. Hillestad gives two reasons for the suitability of the test-retest procedure: first, there are no correct or incorrect answers to the questionnaire items and second, the questionnaire did not yield a total score.

Downie and Starry (1977) state that a Pearson correlation coefficient is computed between the two sets of scores with the r value indicating the reliability of the two scores. Axmann (1981) followed the advice of Hillestad and Downie and Starry in the development of the research instrument used in her follow-up study of post-secondary office administration graduates.

Hillestad (1977) warns ". . . the danger exists, of course, that something could occur between administrations that would drastically affect the subjects' attitudes toward the topic."

Borg and Gall (1983) continue:

> The most critical problem in calculating this form of reliability is to determine the correct delay between the two administrations of the measure. If the retest is administered too quickly after the initial test, students will recall their responses to many of the items, which will tend to produce a spuriously high reliability coefficient. On the other hand, if the retesting is delayed for too long a period, there is a good possibility that the students' ability to answer some items will change.

The reliability of such an instrument is difficult, if not impossible, to establish. While the reliability of personal, factual items, such as employment and income, is high; the reliability of attitude responses is harder to determine since a changed response can mean a changed attitude, not a faulty instrument (Kerlinger, 1973).

The graduate questionnaire as revised for the pilot test was sent to the pilot group of graduates one month after they originally received their questionnaires. Responses from both the pilot study and the follow-up pilot study were examined by a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSX) procedure, to determine a Pearson correlation coefficient for the test-retest data. The procedure for a Pearson correlation coefficient is part of the SPSSX procedure called PEARSON CORR. The reliability coefficients indicate how well respondents' first responses match their second responses. The median reliability coefficient was .90, indicating that graduates were generally consistent in their responses.

Collection of Data

Permission was sought and granted from Dr. LaJuana W. Lee, Head of the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication to conduct this study. The graduate questionnaire and cover letter were mailed to 127 graduates on August 1, 1984. Graduates were instructed to answer all items carefully. Each addressed, stamped return envelope was numbered to correspond to each graduate respondent's name on the master list of graduates. This procedure allowed for the directing of follow-up notices to non-respondents, while maintaining the anonymity of the respondents. Responses were not linked to any one individual. This first mailing resulted in 43 returns (37 percent). Ten questionnaires were returned by the postal service as "undeliverable," leaving 117 potential responses.

A follow-up letter was mailed to those graduates from whom responses had not been received by August 15--a two week period. By that date, 58 graduates (50 percent) had returned questionnaires. Two

weeks later, on August 29, a letter and a second copy of the questionnaire were sent to each graduate from whom a response had not been received. Seventy-five graduates (64 percent) had returned questionnaires by that time. A third letter was mailed on September 12; the deadline for graduate responses was September 19. The total number of responses at the deadline for graduate questionnaires was 94 (80 percent). This total made up the number included in the survey results.

The employer questionnaire and cover letter were mailed to 70 employers of office administration graduates of McNeese State University on September 21, 1984. Each addressed, stamped return envelope was numbered to correspond to each employer respondent's name on the master list of employers. As with the graduates, this procedure allowed for the directing of follow-up notices to non-respondents, while maintaining the anonymity of the respondents. Responses had been received from 15 employers (21 percent) by that time.

A follow-up letter was mailed to those employers from whom responses had not yet been received by October 5. Thirty-six employers (51 percent) had returned questionnaires by that date. Two weeks later, on October 19, a second letter and copy of the questionnaire were sent to each employer from whom a response had not been received. Thirty-nine employers (56 percent) had returned questionnaires by that date.

A third letter was mailed on November 2; the deadline for employer responses was November 16. The total number of responses at the deadline for employer questionnaires was 46 (66 percent). This total made up the number included in the survey results.

Design of the Research

The data from returned graduate and employer questionnaires were entered into a computer file which had been developed to organize the data in various ways. Responses of graduates were tallied separately from responses of employers.

After conferring with a consultant for the Michigan State University, College of Education, Office for Research Consultation, and Dr. Kenneth Fairbanks, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Murray State University, it was determined that frequencies and percentages were appropriate for discussing separately graduate respondent data and employer respondent data. The Friedman test (two-way analysis of variance) was used to determine final rankings of component elements for both graduate respondents and employer respondents. Spearman's rho was used to compare graduate respondent data and employer respondent data.

Treatment of Graduate Data

Graduate respondent data were analyzed by an SPSSX procedure, FREQUENCIES, to determine the number and percentage of responses made for each item on the graduate questionnaire. The Friedman test (two-way analysis of variance) was used to determine final rankings of component elements (graduate questionnaire, item no. 9).

Treatment of Employer Data

Employer respondent data were analyzed by an SPSSX procedure, FREQUENCIES, to determine the number and percentage of responses made for each item on the employer questionnaire. The Friedman test (two-way analysis of variance) was used to determine final rankings of component elements (employer questionnaire, item no. 3).

Treatment of Graduate and Employer Data

Graduate respondent data and employer respondent data were analyzed by an SPSSX procedure, NONPAR CORR, to compute the Spearman rank order coefficient to determine if significant correlations existed between responses from graduates and responses from employers concerning the courses for incorporation into the current office administration curriculum.

Further analysis of graduate respondent data and employer respondent data was made by an SPSSX procedure, NONPAR CORR, to compute the Spearman rank order coefficient to determine if significant correlations existed between graduate respondent ratings and employer respondent ratings of entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment.

The final analysis for graduate respondent data and employer respondent data was made by an SPSSX procedure, NONPAR CORR, to compute the Spearman rank order coefficient to determine if significant correlations existed between graduate respondent rankings and employer respondent rankings on a listing of component elements basic to office work.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of Follow-Up Data

The analysis of the data obtained from the office administration graduates and their entry-level employers who responded to questionnaire surveys is presented in four parts.

The first part of this chapter presents demographic data for graduate respondents. These data include: year of graduation, age of graduates, marital status, classification of businesses for entry-level positions, and years of time in entry-level positions.

Part two of this chapter presents the analysis of data from graduates who responded to the graduate questionnaire. This analysis is based on 94 responses (80 percent of the population).

Analysis of data from the employers of graduates is presented as the third part of the chapter. This analysis is based on 46 responses (66 percent of the reported population).

The fourth part of the chapter presents a comparison of responses from graduates and employers. This analysis deals with the correlation of the responses from graduates and employers.

Demographic Data

Year of Graduation

The number and percentage of graduate respondents receiving baccalaureate degrees by year of graduation are presented in Table 1. In the 15 years prior to this follow-up study, 129 women were graduated from McNeese State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in office administration.

TABLE 1

Graduate Respondents Receiving Baccalaureate Degrees
by Year of Graduation
N=94

Year of Graduation	Number of Graduates	Percentage of Graduates	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1970	3	2	3	3
1971	6	5	3	3
1972	5	4	3	3
1973	7	5	4	4
1974	8	6	2	3
1975	8	6	6	6
1976	10	8	8	9
1977	10	8	7	7
1978	9	7	7	7
1979	10	8	5	5
1980	13	10	12	13
1981	14	10	12	13
1982	10	8	9	10
1983	6	5	5	5
1984	10	8	8	9
Total	129	100	94	100

Age of Graduates

As shown in Table 2, the majority of graduate respondents indicated that they were between the ages of 25 to 30 (53 percent). No graduate

respondents reported being older than 45 years of age. One graduate respondent did not answer to this item.

TABLE 2

Graduate Respondents by Age
N=94

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
under 25	19	20
25 to 30	50	53
31 to 35	19	20
36 to 40	4	5
41 to 45	1	1
46 to 50	-	-
over 50	-	-
No response	1	1
Total	94	100

Marital Status

Thirty-three of the graduate respondents (35 percent) indicated that they were single. Responses from married graduate respondents totaled 54 (57 percent). The number and percentage of graduate respondents by marital status are revealed in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Marital Status of Graduate Respondents
N=94

Marital Status	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Single	33	35
Married	54	57
Divorced	1	1
Widowed	5	6
No response	1	1
Total	94	100

Classification of Business for Entry-Level Positions

The types of businesses where graduate respondents were first employed in office occupations are shown in Table 4. Of the available categories, local government (8 percent), manufacturing (9 percent), petroleum industry (24 percent), and service (6 percent) were the most common types of offices where graduates respondents were first employed in office occupations.

Twenty-two graduate respondents (25 percent) indicated other as the type of business where first employed in an office occupation. Architectural (1), chemical (4), industrial (6), legal (6), and religion (3) were listed to identify the other category. Two graduate respondents did not identify their choice of other.

Table 4

Classification of Businesses in Which Graduate Respondents Were First Employed
N=85

Classification of Business	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Communication	1	1
Construction	4	5
Education	3	4
Federal government	2	2
Finance	4	5
Insurance	1	1
Local government	7	8
Manufacturing	8	9
Petroleum industry	20	24
Real estate	3	4
Retail trade	3	4
Service	5	6
State government	1	1
Utilities	1	1
Other	22	25
Total	85	100

Years of Time in Entry-Level Position

Graduate respondents reported various years of time spent in entry-level employment as presented in Table 5. Less than one year was

reported by 20 graduate respondents (24 percent). Thirty-eight graduate respondents (44 percent) reported that they spent from one to three years in their entry-level office occupations jobs.

Table 5

Years of Time in Entry-Level Positions
by Graduate Respondents
N=85

Years of Time	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Less than one year	20	24
1 to 3 years	38	44
4 to 6 years	15	18
7 years or more	7	8
No response	5	6
Total	85	100

The number and percentage of graduate respondents by time between graduation and entry-level employment in office occupations are illustrated in Table 6. The majority of the graduate respondents (76 percent) reported employment within one year after graduation. Sixteen of the graduate respondents (19 percent) did not respond to this item.

TABLE 6

Time Between Graduation and Entry-Level Employment of Graduate Respondents N=85

Time Span	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Less than one year	52	61
One year	13	15
More than one year	1	1
Employment prior to graduation	3	4
No response	16	19
Total	85	100

Analysis of Graduate Data

Entry-Level Employment Status

Research Question 1: What number and percentage of graduates found entry-level employment in office occupations?

Eighty-five of the graduate respondents (90 percent) were employed in office occupations after graduation. Nine of the graduate respondents (10 percent) were not employed in office occupations. Because of the brevity of the information, no table was constructed for the number and percentage of respondents who did and did not enter office occupations after graduation.

Two of the nine graduate respondents who did not enter office occupations reported marriage/family obligations as their reasons for not entering employment in office occupations. Preference for other

work was reported as the reasons for not entering employment in office occupations by two graduate respondents. One graduate respondent reported, "deciding to continue my education." One graduate respondent reported, "received a 'better' offer as a laboratory technician for a chemical company;" and one graduate respondent reported "taught typewriting at a local business school." Of the nine graduate respondents who reported not having entered employment in office occupations, only two reported that they could not find employment.

> Research Question 2: (a) What were the most common entry-level job titles of graduates who found employment in office occupations, and (b) what additional training was provided by their entry-level employers?

Entry-Level Job Title

> Research Question 2.a: What were the most common entry-level job titles of graduates who found employment in office occupations?

Graduates were asked to check one of three job titles: administrative assistant, executive secretary, or secretary. These job titles were chosen because the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication at McNeese State University proposes to prepare office occupations workers for employment in these three areas. Other was available as a fourth choice.

The choice administrative assistant was reported by three graduate respondents (4 percent). Sixteen (19 percent) chose executive secretary to describe their entry-level job titles. Secretary was reported by 49 of the graduate respondents (57 percent). The results of the question which sought information on entry-level job titles are presented in Table 7.

In the other category, seven graduate respondents reported the job title of clerk. Seven other graduate respondents reported the title clerk typist, and three graduate respondents reported receptionist.

Table 7

Job Titles in Entry-Level Positions for Graduate Respondents
N=85

Job Title	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Administrative assistant	3	4
Executive secretary	16	19
Secretary	49	57
Other	17	20
Total	85	100

Additional Training

Research Question 2.b: What additional training was provided by their entry-level employers?

Table 8 is a report of graduate respondent ranking of five methods of additional training which were provided them by their employers while in their entry-level jobs. The ranking scale was from one--representing most common--to five--representing least common. Directions for tasks given by employer was the most common method. Both regular classes for office employees and evening classes (tuition paid) were ranked as the least common methods.

TABLE 8

Weighted Mean Response, Number, and Percentage of Responses Indicating Graduate Respondent Ranking of Additional Training Provided by Their Entry-Level Employers
N=85

Training Method	Mean Response	Range: Most Common 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Least Common 5 No.	%	No Response No.	%	Totals No.	%
Directions for tasks given by employers	2	29	34	22	26	6	7	2	2	3	4	23	27	85	100
Office manuals	3	17	20	10	12	27	31	9	11	16	19	6	7	85	100
Supervision for specific tasks	3	18	21	23	27	19	22	9	11	3	4	13	15	85	100
Regular classes for office employees	4	1	1	3	4	2	2	26	31	35	41	18	21	85	100
Evening classes (tuition paid)	4	11	13	4	5	3	4	9	11	22	26	36	41	85	100

Research Question 3: (a) What are the current job titles of the graduates, and (b) what are their salaries?

Current Job Titles

Research Question 3.a: What are the current job titles of the graduates?

Job titles currently held by graduate respondents are listed in Table 9. Thirty-two graduate respondents (38 percent) reported holding the job title of secretary. Clerk was reported by eight graduate respondents (10 percent).

Thirteen percent of the graduate respondents were unemployed. Five of the graduate respondents included in the unemployed group reported their job titles as homemaker. Because of the brevity of the information, no table was constructed for the number and percentage of respondents who currently hold and do not hold positions in office occupations.

TABLE 9

Job Titles Which Most Closely Describe Current Positions
by Graduate Respondents
N=85

Job Title	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Account service representative	2	2
Accountant/accountant assistant	4	5
Administrative assistant	1	1
Assistant personnel manager	1	1
Bookkeeper	2	2
Business teacher	1	1
Clerk	8	10
Clerk typist	4	5
Court reporter	1	1
Executive secretary	3	4
Legal secretary	4	5
Medical social worker	1	1
Receptionist	1	1
Secretary	32	38
Supervisor	2	2
Systems analyst	1	1
Word processor operator	1	1
Unemployed	11	13
No Response	5	6
Total	85	100

Current Salaries

Research Question 3.b: What are their salaries?

Graduate respondents reported various current salary figures as shown in Table 10. Eleven (13 percent) indicated current salary as under $10,000. Most of the responses came for the salary range $10,000 - $20,000--34 (40 percent). There were 29 responses (34 percent) for the salary range $20,001 - $30,000. Seven graduate respondents (8 percent) choose prefer not to answer as their choice.

TABLE 10

Current Salary Range of Graduate Respondents
N=85

Salary Range	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Under $10,000	11	13
$10,000 - $20,000	34	40
$20,001 - $30,000	29	34
$30,001 - $50,000	2	2
Prefer Not to Answer	7	9
No Response	2	2
Total	85	100

Research Question 4: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning (a) the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum, (b) entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and (c) component elements considered basic for office work?

Courses to Incorporate into the Office Administration Curriculum

Research Question 4.a: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum?

Graduate respondent opinions regarding agreement for courses to be incorporated into the present curriculum in office administration are revealed in Table 11. All graduate respondents indicated that business communication and typewriting should be incorporated into the curriculum. Graduate respondents ranked eleven of the courses which are presently included in the office administration curriculum as important for incorporation into the curriculum with an average percent of agreement of 95. These courses included: administrative procedures, business behavior, English/grammar, machine transcription, management, management information systems, management of word processing, office management, organizational behavior, records management, and word processing.

Responses to the other category included: advertising, stenotype or court reporting machine, medical terminology, psychology, and a "real world" course.

TABLE 11

Courses Which Graduate Respondents Believed Should be Incorporated in the Present Office Administration Curriculum
N=85

Course	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No Response		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accounting	68	80	16	19	1	1	-	-	85	100
Administrative procedures	82	97	2	2	1	1	-	-	85	100
Business behavior	82	97	1	1	2	2	-	-	85	100
Business calculations	75	88	9	11	1	1	-	-	85	100
Business communication	85	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	100
Business law	45	53	34	40	6	7	-	-	85	100
Calculus	4	5	33	39	47	55	1	1	85	100
Computer science	63	74	17	20	4	5	1	1	85	100
Economics	43	51	30	35	10	12	2	2	85	100
English/grammar	84	99	-	-	1	1	-	-	85	100
Finance	51	60	29	34	5	6	-	-	85	100
Machine transcription	77	91	7	8	1	1	-	-	85	100

TABLE 11 continued

Course	Agree No.	Agree %	Neutral No.	Neutral %	Disagree No.	Disagree %	No Response No.	No Response %	Total No.	Total %
Management	78	92	5	6	2	2	-	-	85	100
Management information systems	77	91	6	7	2	2	-	-	85	100
Management of word processing	81	95	3	4	1	1	-	-	85	100
Marketing	49	58	29	34	7	8	-	-	85	100
Mathematics	71	84	12	14	2	2	-	-	85	100
Office management	83	98	1	1	1	1	-	-	85	100
Organizational behavior	79	93	6	7	-	-	-	-	85	100
Records management	82	96	3	4	-	-	-	-	85	100
Shorthand	76	89	9	11	-	-	-	-	85	100
Speech	69	81	13	15	3	4	-	-	85	100
Statistics	30	35	35	41	19	22	1	2	85	100
Typewriting	85	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	85	100
Word processing	83	98	1	1	1	1	-	-	85	100
Other	4	5	-	-	-	-	81	95	85	100

Entry-Level Proficiency Requirements for Various Office Equipment

Research Question 4.b: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment?

Similar data concerning graduate respondent appraisals of entry-level proficiency requirements for a variety of office equipment are presented in Tables 12 - 18. The list of office equipment was grouped into functional categories, i.e., typewriter equipment. Graduate respondents used a five-point Likert-type scale to indicate their opinions concerning entry-level proficiency requirements for each piece of equipment within each functional category. The scale ranged from a low of (1), to indicate no proficiency level requirements or novice status, to a middle of (3), to indicate average proficiency level requirements or average status, to a high of (5), to indicate high proficiency level requirements or expert status. A weighted mean was calculated for each piece of equipment within each functional category. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 12 - 18 are presented in Appendix E.

The number and percentage of responses indicating appraisal by graduate respondents of proficiency level requirements for typewriter equipment are shown in Table 12. The weighted mean for electric typewriters was 4.4, indicating that graduate respondents considered entry-level office occupations workers to need better than average skill to operate electric typewriters proficiently. A weighted mean of 3.1 was calculated for memory typewriters. This indicates that graduate respondents considered entry-level office occupations workers to need average to slightly less than average skill to operate electronic and memory typewriters proficiently.

TABLE 12

Graduate Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Typewriter Equipment
N=85

Typewriter Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Electric typewriters	1	1	2	3	12	14	19	22	50	59	1	1
Electronic typewriters	8	9	6	7	14	17	12	14	7	8	38	45
Memory typewriters	12	14	8	9	11	13	4	5	7	8	43	51

It is important to note that only one (one percent) of the graduate respondents checked not applicable for electric typewriters while 38 (45 percent) checked the same for electronic typewriters and 43 (51 percent) for memory typewriters.

Appraisal by graduate respondents of proficiency levels required of entry-level office occupations workers on word processing equipment is summarized in Table 13. The weighted mean for dictating/transcribing equipment ranked highest at 3.3. This indicates that graduate respondents believed entry-level office occupations workers should have above average proficiency for operating these machines. High speed printers received a weighted mean of 2.6 indicating that entry-level office occupations workers need less than average proficiency for operation. Shared-logic and stand-alone text editors were both ranked with a weighted mean of 2.2. This also indicates that entry-level office

occupations workers need less than average proficiency for use of shared-logic and stand-alone text editors.

Table 13

Graduate Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Word Processing Equipment
N=85

Word Processing Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Dictating/transcribing	10	12	5	6	12	14	6	7	16	19	36	42
High speed printer	11	13	10	12	3	4	7	8	6	7	48	56
Shared-logic text editor	15	18	8	9	4	5	-	-	6	7	52	61
Stand-alone text editor	15	18	7	8	3	4	1	1	6	7	53	62

Appraisal by graduate respondents of proficiency levels required of entry-level office occupations workers on reproduction equipment is presented in Table 14. Responses indicated that entry-level office workers need high proficiency levels for operation of photocopy duplicating equipment--a weighted mean proficiency level of 4.1. Other equipment received below average proficiency ratings. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 12 - 18 are presented in Appendix E.

Table 14

Graduate Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Reproduction Equipment
N=85

Reproduction Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels										Does Not Apply	
	Novice 1		2		3		4		Expert 5			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Offset duplicating	11	13	10	12	4	5	5	6	10	12	45	52
Photocopy duplicating	4	5	7	8	7	8	13	15	44	52	10	12
Spirit duplicating	13	15	8	9	4	5	1	1	5	6	54	64
Stencil duplicating	20	24	3	4	4	5	5	6	4	5	49	56

The highest ratings shown in Table 15 were realized for mail opening equipment (a weighted mean of 3.2) and postage meter/scale (a weighted mean of 3.3). Ratings for folding and inserting equipment and labeling machine equipment resulted in a weighted mean of 2.8 each.

Table 15

Graduate Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Mailroom Equipment
N=85

Mailroom Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Address printer	15	18	2	2	2	2	5	6	4	5	57	67
Binder	14	17	2	2	2	2	8	9	3	4	56	66
Folding and inserting	12	14	1	1	2	2	9	11	5	6	56	66
Labeling machine	11	13	4	5	1	1	10	12	5	6	54	63
Mail opener	11	13	2	2	5	6	8	9	11	13	48	57
Postage meter/scale	15	18	4	5	-	-	8	9	20	24	38	44

Appraisal by graduate respondents of proficiency levels required of entry-level office occupations workers on telecommunication equipment is displayed in Table 16. The highest weighted mean score was obtained for the telephone at 4.7 indicating very near expert skill operation. The lowest weighted mean score was obtained for pneumatic tubes at 1.3 indicating very near novice or no prior skill necessary. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 12 - 18 are presented in Appendix E.

Table 16

Graduate Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Telecommunication Equipment
N=85

Telecommunication Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Facsimile	14	17	4	5	3	4	-	-	8	9	56	65
External transmission	12	14	4	5	2	2	1	1	4	5	62	73
Intercommunications	12	14	4	5	10	12	3	4	5	6	51	59
Pneumatic tubes	16	19	1	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	66	78
PBX	11	13	3	4	8	9	4	5	4	5	55	64
Telephone	-	-	2	2	7	8	9	11	65	77	2	2
Teletypewriter	13	15	2	2	5	6	9	11	9	11	47	55

Proficiency level requirements for recordkeeping equipment based on the reaction of graduate respondents are presented in Table 17. Above average skill requirement for use of electronic calculator equipment was indicated by graduate respondents with a weighted mean score of 4.1. Accounting machine equipment ranked second with a weighted mean of 2.8 which indicates near average skill requirement.

TABLE 17

Graduate Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Recordkeeping Equipment
N=85

Recordkeeping Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels										Does Not Apply	
	Novice 1		2		3		4		Expert 5			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accounting machine	8	9	5	7	1	1	1	1	8	9	62	73
Cash register	12	14	3	4	3	4	-	-	3	4	64	74
Electronic calculator	1	1	2	2	20	24	9	11	34	40	19	22

Reaction by graduate respondents to proficiency levels required of entry-level office occupations workers on data processing equipment is summarized in Table 18. Entry-level office workers need little skill in operation of interpreter (a weighted mean of 1.7), large computer equipment (a weighted mean of 2.1), reproducing punch equipment (a weighted mean of 2.1), verifier (a weighted mean of 2.1), and key punch equipment (a weighted mean of 2.3). Near average skill requirement was indicated for collator equipment and printer equipment with a weighted mean of 2.9 each. Microcomputer equipment received a less than average skill rating with a weighted mean of 2.6. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 12 - 18 are presented in Appendix E.

TABLE 18

Graduate Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Data Processing Equipment
N=85

Data Processing Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Collator	9	11	3	4	7	8	6	7	6	7	54	63
Interpreter	13	15	4	6	2	2	2	2	-	-	64	75
Key punch equipment	10	12	8	9	2	2	1	2	5	6	59	69
Large computer	15	18	5	6	2	2	3	4	3	4	57	66
Microcomputer	8	9	7	8	3	4	3	4	5	6	59	69
Printer	6	7	6	7	8	9	3	4	6	7	56	66
Reproducing punch	9	11	6	7	3	4	1	1	2	2	64	75
Verifier	10	12	4	5	4	5	1	1	2	2	64	75

Rankings of Component Elements

Research Question 4.c: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning component elements considered basic for office work?

Similar data concerning graduate respondent reaction to the ranking of component elements or tasks in seven categories or basic components are presented in Tables 19 - 25. Graduate respondents were asked to rank the top three component elements or tasks in each of the seven basic components. The Friedman two-way analysis of variance by ranks was used to determine final rankings within the seven categories or basic components. The Friedman statistic is computed by considering the number of responses across all ranks. For example data in Table 19 indicates 32 first place

responses for cooperating with others. When all ranks were considered, the 65 total responses for receiving and giving information ranked higher than the 48 total responses for cooperating with others.

Graduates were also asked to chart when they, as entry-level office employees, were first assigned responsibility for each of the top three component elements and when they relinquished responsibility for those elements or tasks. Although responses to this particular item were sparse, all data indicated that once employees were assigned responsibility for a particular task they continued to perform that task throughout the term of their employment.

Rankings by graduate respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with communicating with others in office work are displayed in Table 19. Receiving and giving information was ranked first in importance. Sixty-five graduate respondents (77 percent) ranked receiving and giving information as the most important component element or task in the basic component group across all ranks (first, second, and third).

Cooperating with others was ranked second in importance. Forty-eight graduate respondents (55 percent) ranked cooperating with others as the second most important component element.

Receiving visitors was ranked third in importance. Twenty-four graduate respondents (29 percent) ranked receiving visitors as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Rankings by graduate respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with sorting, filing, and retrieving in office work are shown in Table 20. Scanning for identity and content was ranked first in importance. Fifty-four graduate respondents

(63 percent) ranked scanning for identity and content as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 19

Graduate Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Communicating with Others in Office Work
N=85

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Receiving and giving information	1	26	31	26	31	13	15
Cooperating with others	2	32	37	8	9	8	9
Receiving visitors	3	9	11	5	6	10	12
Composing routine letters	4	4	5	8	9	10	12
Writing messages	5	4	5	9	11	8	9
Referring to files	6	4	5	6	7	8	9
Scheduling appointments	7	1	1	8	9	4	5
Discussing job problems	8	-	-	5	6	4	5
Discussing job procedures	9	2	2	-	-	5	6
Referring inquiries	10	-	-	-	-	6	7
Logging and listing (calls)	11	-	-	2	3	2	2
Referring to references	12	1	1	1	1	1	2
Compiling telephone lists	13	1	1	1	1	-	-
No response		1	1	6	7	6	7
Total		85	100	85	100	85	100

Searching and locating was ranked second in importance. Fifty-three graduate respondents (62 percent) ranked searching and locating as the second most important component element or task.

Cataloging, logging, and listing was ranked third in importance. Thirty-four graduate respondents (40 percent) ranked cataloging, logging, and listing as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 20

Graduate Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Sorting, Filing, and Retrieving in Office Work
N=85

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Scanning for identity and content	1	29	34	17	20	8	9
Searching and locating	2	19	22	20	23	14	17
Cataloging, logging, and listing	3	15	18	11	13	8	9
Counting and totaling	4	9	11	5	6	7	8
Stamping for identification	5	5	6	9	11	6	7
Matching (lists with files)	6	-	-	4	5	11	14
Batching (grouping items)	7	2	2	5	6	6	7
Fastening and unfastening	8	-	-	1	1	7	8
No response		6	7	13	15	18	21
Total		85	100	85	100	85	100

Rankings by graduate respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with typewriting in office work are revealed in Table 21. Proofreading and correcting was ranked first in importance. Sixty graduate respondents (70 percent) ranked proofreading and correcting as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Planning work was ranked second in importance. Forty-two graduate respondents (49 percent) ranked planning work as the second most important component element or task.

Composing from instructions was ranked third in importance. Thirty graduate respondents (35 percent) ranked composing from instructions as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 21

Graduate Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Typewriting in Office Work

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Proofreading and correcting	1	18	21	29	34	13	15
Planning work	2	29	34	6	7	7	8
Composing from instructions	3	11	13	13	15	6	7
Putting finished copy in order	4	1	2	7	8	22	26
Transcribing dictation	5	17	20	2	2	2	3
Scanning material	6	5	6	5	6	7	8
Delivering and mailing copy	7	-	-	6	7	12	14
Assembling materials	8	2	2	9	11	5	6
Making calculations and tallies	9	2	2	3	4	3	4
No response		-	-	5	6	8	9
Total		85	100	85	100	85	100

Rankings by graduate respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with checking, computing, and verifying in office work are displayed in Table 22. Proofreading was ranked first in importance. Fifty-seven graduate respondents (67 percent) ranked proofreading as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Examining for completeness was ranked second in importance. Forty-five graduate respondents (53 percent) ranked examining for completeness as the second most important component element or task.

Making routine decisions was ranked third in importance. Thirty-six graduate respondents (42 percent) ranked making routine decisions as the third most important component element or task.

TABLE 22

Graduate Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Checking, Computing, and Verifying in Office Work
N=85

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Proofreading	1	25	29	16	19	16	19
Examining for completeness	2	19	22	17	20	9	11
Making routine decisions	3	8	9	10	12	18	21
Compiling data from records	4	13	15	8	9	8	9
Balancing and reconciling accounts	5	3	4	1	2	11	13
Comparing documents	6	3	4	7	8	2	2
Establishing coding systems	7	-	-	5	6	3	4
Comparing requests with status	8	3	4	2	2	2	2
Keeping data records (sales)	9	4	5	2	2	-	-
Using mental arithmetic	10	1	1	4	5	2	2
Handposting items	11	1	1	3	4	2	2
Checking availability	12	2	2	2	2	1	2
No response		3	4	8	9	11	13
Total		85	100	85	100	85	100

Rankings by graduate respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with collecting and distributing in office work are shown in Table 23. Delivering and gathering items was ranked first in importance. Seventy-two graduate respondents (85 percent) ranked delivering and gathering items as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Logging, listing, and counting was ranked second in importance. Seventy graduate respondents (81 percent) ranked logging, listing, and counting as the second most important component element or task.

Stuffing envelopes was ranked third in importance. Sixty-eight graduate respondents (81 percent) ranked stuffing envelopes as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 23

Graduate Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Collecting and Distributing in Office Work
N=85

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Delivering and gathering items	1	41	48	22	26	9	11
Logging, listing, and counting	2	25	29	33	38	12	14
Stuffing envelopes	3	7	9	15	18	46	54
No response		12	14	15	18	18	21
Total		85	100	85	100	85	100

Rankings by graduate respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with operating business machines in office work are revealed in Table 24. Preparing machines was ranked first in importance. Sixty-three graduate respondents (74 percent) ranked preparing machines as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Making minor adjustments was ranked second in importance. Fifty-three graduate respondents (62 percent) ranked making minor adjustments as the second most important component element or task.

Placing and taking materials was ranked third in importance. Forty-seven graduate respondents (56 percent) ranked placing and taking materials as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 24

Graduate Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Operating Business Machines in Office Work
N=85

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparing machines	1	38	45	17	20	8	9
Making minor adjustments	2	11	13	24	28	18	21
Placing and taking materials	3	19	22	14	17	14	17
Making minor repairs	4	1	1	7	8	20	24
No response		16	19	23	27	25	29
Total		85	100	85	100	85	100

Rankings by graduate respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with analyzing procedures and charting in office work are displayed in Table 25. Writing instructions was ranked first in importance. Fifty-eight graduate respondents (68 percent) ranked writing instructions as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Coding problems was ranked second in importance. Fifty-six graduate respondents (66 percent) ranked coding problems as the second most important component element or task.

Using mathematics was ranked third in importance. Fifty-six graduate respondents (66 percent) ranked using mathematics as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 25

Graduate Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Analyzing Procedures and Charting in Office Work
N=85

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Writing instruction	1	31	36	18	21	9	11
Coding problems	2	21	25	22	26	13	15
Using mathematics	3	12	14	15	18	29	34
No response		21	25	30	35	34	40
Total		85	100	85	100	85	100

The Role of Shorthand in Finding Employment

> Research Question 5: (a) What role did shorthand play in helping graduates find employment, (b) what was the minimum shorthand speed required for entry-level employment, and (c) what role does shorthand play in their daily office work?
>
> Research Question 5.a: What role did shorthand play in helping graduates find employment?

The majority of graduate respondents (51 percent) indicated that shorthand was a prerequisite for entry-level employment in office occupations. The largest sub-group, secretary (57 percent), indicated that they were required to possess shorthand skill prior to employment. Because of the brevity of the information, no table was constructed for the number and percentage of respondents for whom shorthand was a prerequisite.

> Research Question 5.b: What was the minimum shorthand speed required for entry-level employment?

Graduate respondents indicated the minimum shorthand speed necessary for employment as shown in Table 26. Fifteen graduate respondents (18 percent) indicated that their entry-level shorthand speed requirement was 80 words per minute. Ten (12 percent) indicated 70 words per minute; eleven (13 percent) indicated 60 words per minute.

TABLE 26

Minimum Shorthand Speed Necessary for Entry-Level Employment as Reported by Graduate Respondents N=85

Words per Minute	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
50	5	6
60	11	13
70	10	12
80	15	18
90	4	5
100	2	2
over 100	1	1
No Response	37	43
Total	85	100

Research Question 5.c: What role does shorthand play in their daily office work?

Graduate respondents indicated the percentage that their entry-level office occupations work day was spent using shorthand as presented in Table 27. Thirty-eight graduate respondents (45 percent) indicated that they spent from 1 to 15 percent of their entry-level office occupations work day using shorthand. Seven (8 percent) indicated that they spent from 16 to 30 percent of their work day using shorthand.

Table 27

Percentage of Graduate Respondents' Workday Spent Using Shorthand on Entry-Level Job
N=85

Percent of Workday	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1 - 15	38	45
16 - 30	7	8
31 - 45	4	5
46 - 60	2	2
61 - 75	2	2
76 - 90	1	1
No Response	31	37
Total	85	100

Office Work Experiences Compared to Office Administration Learning Experiences

Research Question 6: How do graduates compare their office work experiences and their office administration learning experiences?

Graduate respondent reactions to the statement "My education in office administration corresponds very closely to my experiences as an entry-level office worker" are shown in Table 28. Collectively, 70 percent of the graduate respondents indicated agreement with the statement. Only 15 percent of the graduate respondents indicated disagreement with the statement.

Table 28

Graduate Respondents' Agreement to the Statement that: "My education in office administration corresponds very closely to my experiences as an entry-level office worker." N=85

Degree	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Agree Strongly	24	28
Agree	36	42
Neutral	9	11
Disagree	8	9
Disagree Strongly	5	6
No Response	3	4
Total	85	100

Degree, Career, and Job Satisfaction

Research Question 7: (a) Are graduates satisfied with their degrees in office administration and (b) their careers and jobs in office occupations?

Research Question 7.a: Are graduates satisfied with their degrees in office administration?

The degree of satisfaction among graduate respondents regarding their degrees in office administration is revealed in Table 29. Collectively, 87 percent of the graduate respondents reported to be satisfied with their degrees in office administration. Only 6 percent reported to be unsatisfied.

Table 29

Graduate Respondents' Degree of Satisfaction with Degree in Office Administration
N=85

Degree	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Agree Strongly	34	40
Agree	40	47
Neutral	5	6
Disagree	5	6
Disagree Strongly	-	-
No Response	1	1
Total	85	100

Research Question 7.b: Are graduates satisfied with their careers and jobs in office occupations?

Graduate respondent attitudes concerning careers, degrees, and job satisfaction are displayed in Table 30. With the exceptions of opportunity for self-growth (21 responses or 25 percent) and degree helpful in salary increases (24 responses or 28 percent), graduate respondents most often indicated very satisfied for all categories. Working conditions (42 responses or 49 percent), nature of work (49 responses or 58 percent), and personal value in office education (46 responses or 54 percent) received an average response rate of 52 percent for very satisfied.

TABLE 30

Satisfaction Expressed by Graduate Respondents to Degree, Career, and Current Job

Factor	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Uncertain		Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied		No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Job security	34	39	18	21	9	11	4	5	16	19	4	5
Working conditions	42	49	20	24	7	8	5	6	8	9	3	4
Type of boss	34	39	15	18	16	19	5	6	9	11	6	7
Nature of work	49	57	13	15	11	13	5	6	4	5	3	4
Salary	28	32	15	18	5	6	14	17	19	22	4	5
Challenge of work	30	34	21	25	7	8	15	18	9	11	3	4
Opportunity for self-growth	20	24	11	13	17	20	11	13	21	24	5	6
Potential for advancement	18	20	17	20	16	19	14	17	16	19	4	5
Work schedule	35	41	23	27	11	13	6	7	5	6	5	6
New equipment	28	33	9	11	25	29	8	9	8	9	7	9
Knowledge helpful in promotions	33	39	17	20	15	18	1	1	11	13	8	9
Degree helpful in salary increases	22	26	15	18	13	15	6	7	24	28	5	6
Personal value in office education	46	53	26	31	6	7	-	-	3	4	4	5

Graduates' Impressions Concerning the Manner of Instruction

Research Question 8: How would graduates describe the manner in which instruction was offered in office administration classes at McNeese?

Graduate respondent opinions concerning the manner in which instruction was offered at McNeese State University in the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication are summarized in Table 31. Graduate respondents indicated agreement to positive impressions describing the manner in which instruction was offered by marking a one (1) on an eight item Semantic Differential scale. A neutral response was indicated by marking a two (2); agreement to negative impressions was indicated by marking a three (3). In each case, the mean response indicated positive opinions concerning the manner in which instruction was offered. The average mean response was 1.21 indicating general agreement with each positive impression. The most positive impression to describe the manner in which instruction was offered was satisfactory with 87 percent agreement and a mean response of 1.09. The most negative impression to describe the manner in which instruction was offered was kind with a mean response of 1.30--a positive response.

TABLE 31

Graduate Respondents' Opinion Concerning the Manner in Which Instruction was Offered at McNeese State University
N=85

Positive Impression	1 No.	1 %	2 No.	2 %	3 No.	3 %	Negative Impression	Mean Response	No Response No.	No Response %
Adequate	68	80	10	12	1	1	Deficient	1.15	6	7
Fair	63	74	16	19	2	2	Unfair	1.25	4	5
Important	64	75	14	17	1	1	Trivial	1.20	6	7
Kind	57	67	24	28	-	-	Cruel	1.30	4	5
Methodical	58	68	21	25	-	-	Haphazard	1.27	6	7
Patient	58	68	18	21	2	3	Anxious	1.28	7	8
Satisfactory	74	87	7	8	-	-	Poor	1.09	4	5
Skillful	70	82	11	13	-	-	Awkward	1.14	4	5

Sixty-three (74 percent) of those graduate respondents who indicated that they had found work in office occupations are presently working in office occupations. Twenty (24 percent) indicated that they are no longer employed in office occupations. Two did not report.

Ten of those no longer employed in office occupations indicated that they are now homemakers. Three reported holding new positions (one in computer science, one in social work, and one in management). One graduate respondent indicated that she was dissatisfied with office work, and one reported that she was unemployed and not looking for work in office occupations. Five of the graduate respondents who reported having ended their office occupations careers did not give reasons.

Analysis of Employer Data

Entry-Level Positions Suitable for Graduates

The job title administrative assistant was reported by 4 percent of the employer respondents as the entry-level position offered graduates who earned the Bachelor of Science degree in office administration from McNeese State University. Thirty-five percent indicated executive secretary to describe positions suitable for office administration graduates. Secretary was reported by 61 percent of the employer respondents. The results of this item are displayed in Table 32.

TABLE 32

Number and Percentage of Employer Respondents Reporting Job Titles Which Most Closely Describe Entry-Level Positions Suitable for Office Administration Graduates
N=46

Job Title	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Administrative Assistant	2	4
Executive Secretary	16	35
Secretary	28	61
Total	46	100

Classification of Businesses for Employer Respondents

The type of office where employer respondents were located are listed in Table 33. Of the available categories, employer respondents indicated that local government (13 percent), manufacturing (17 percent), and petroleum industry (28 percent) were the most common types of

business offices to employ entry-level office occupations workers who have graduated from McNeese State University.

TABLE 33

Number and Percentage of Employer Respondents Reporting Type of Business Office Employing Office Administration Graduates
N=46

Type of Business	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Agriculture	1	2
Communication	1	2
Federal government	3	7
Finance	4	9
Insurance	1	2
Local government	6	13
Manufacturing	8	17
Mining	1	2
Petroleum	13	28
Religion	3	7
Service	4	9
State government	1	2
Total	46	100

Courses to Incorporate into the Office Administration Curriculum

Employer respondent opinions regarding agreement for courses to be incorporated into the present curriculum in office administration

indicated that English/grammar, management, and word processing should be included in the curriculum. Table 34 is a report of ratings of courses by employer respondents. Eight of the courses which are presently included in the office administration curriculum received response rates of 90 percent or better. These courses were: business behavior, business communication, English/grammar, mathematics, office management, speech, typewriting, and word processing.

Employers were asked to list additional desirable courses under the category other. Courses listed were: human relations, penmanship, and telephone equipment and techniques.

TABLE 34

Courses Which Employer Respondents Believed Should be Incorporated in the Present Office Administration Curriculum
N=85

Course	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		No Response		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accounting	24	52	22	48	-	-	-	-	46	100
Administrative procedures	41	89	5	11	-	-	-	-	46	100
Business behavior	44	96	2	4	-	-	-	-	46	100
Business calculations	29	63	17	37	-	-	-	-	46	100
Business communication	43	93	3	7	-	-	-	-	46	100
Business law	7	15	29	63	10	22	-	-	46	100
Calculus	-	-	4	9	42	91	-	-	46	100
Computer science	33	72	6	13	7	15	-	-	46	100
Economics	5	11	41	89	-	-	-	-	46	100
English/grammar	46	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	46	100
Finance	11	24	32	69	3	7	-	-	46	100
Machine transcription	35	76	10	22	-	-	1	2	46	100

TABLE 34 continued

Course	Agree No.	Agree %	Neutral No.	Neutral %	Disagree No.	Disagree %	No Response No.	No Response %	Total No.	Total %
Management	29	63	17	37	-	-	-	-	46	100
Management information systems	37	80	7	15	2	5	-	-	46	100
Management of word processing	39	85	5	11	2	4	-	-	46	100
Marketing	12	26	34	74	-	-	-	-	46	100
Mathematics	44	96	2	4	-	-	-	-	46	100
Office management	46	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	46	100
Organizational behavior	28	61	17	37	-	-	1	2	46	100
Records management	41	89	5	11	-	-	-	-	46	100
Shorthand	36	78	7	15	3	7	-	-	46	100
Speech	43	93	3	7	-	-	-	-	46	100
Statistics	4	9	26	56	16	35	-	-	46	100
Typewriting	45	98	1	2	-	-	-	-	46	100
Word processing	46	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	46	100
Other	3	7	-	-	-	-	43	93	46	100

Entry-Level Proficiency Requirements for Various Office Equipment

Similar data concerning employer respondent appraisals of entry-level proficiency requirements for a variety of office equipment are presented in Tables 35 - 41. The list of office equipment was grouped into functional categories, i.e., typewriter equipment. Employer respondents used a five-point Likert-type scale to indicate their opinions concerning entry-level proficiency requirements for each piece of equipment within each functional category. The scale ranged from a low of (1), to indicate no proficiency level requirements or novice status, to a middle of (3), to indicate average proficiency level requirements or average status, to a high of (5), to indicate high proficiency level requirements or expert status. A weighted mean was calculated for each piece of equipment within each functional category. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 35 - 41 are presented in Appendix F.

The number and percentage of responses indicating appraisal by employer respondents of proficiency level requirements for typewriter equipment are revealed in Table 35. The weighted mean for electric typewriter equipment was 4.0 indicating that employer respondents considered entry-level office occupations workers to need better than average skill to operate electric typewriters proficiently. A weighted mean of 3.6 was calculated for electronic typewriters and a value of 3.4 was calculated for memory typewriters. This indicates that employer respondents considered entry-level office occupations workers to need above average skill to operate electronic and memory typewriters proficiently. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 35 - 41 are presented in Appendix F.

TABLE 35

Employer Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Typewriter Equipment
N=46

Typewriter Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels										Does Not Apply	
	Novice 1		2		3		4		Expert 5			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Electric typewriters	-	-	-	-	8	17	30	66	8	17	-	-
Electronic typewriters	-	-	2	4	20	44	17	37	7	15	-	-
Memory typewriters	-	-	4	9	26	56	11	24	5	11	-	-

Appraisal by employer respondents of proficiency levels required of entry-level office occupations workers on word processing equipment is summarized in Table 36. The weighted mean for dictating/transcribing equipment ranked highest at 3.6. This indicates that employer respondents believed entry-level office occupations workers should have above average proficiency for operating this equipment. High speed printers received a weighted mean of 3.2; shared-logic text editors received a weighted mean of 3.4. These rankings indicate that employer respondents require above average proficiency levels for these pieces of word processing equipment.

TABLE 36

Employer Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Word Processing Equipment
N=46

Word Processing Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Dictating/transcribing	3	7	-	-	14	30	24	52	4	9	1	2
High speed printer	4	9	7	15	10	22	25	54	-	-	-	-
Shared-logic text editor	5	11	6	13	9	20	25	54	-	-	1	2
Stand-alone text editor	5	11	6	13	7	15	22	48	5	11	1	2

Appraisal by employer respondents of proficiency levels required of entry-level office occupations workers on reproduction equipment is presented in Table 37. Employer respondents indicated that entry-level office workers need high proficiency levels for operation of photocopy duplicating equipment--a weighted mean proficiency level of 3.9. Rating for stencil duplicating equipment fell near the average with a weighted mean of 2.7. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 35 - 41 are presented in Appendix F.

Table 37

Employer Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Reproduction Equipment
N=46

Reproduction Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Offset duplicating	6	13	24	52	9	20	1	2	-	-	6	13
Photocopy duplicating	2	4	-	-	19	41	5	11	20	44	-	-
Spirit duplicating	6	13	21	46	14	30	1	2	-	-	4	9
Stencil duplicating	6	13	5	11	28	60	3	7	-	-	4	9

The highest ratings shown in Table 38 were realized for mail opening equipment and postage meter/scale--a weighted mean of 2.5 each. Other equipment presented for employer respondent reaction received a weighted mean averaging 2.1.

TABLE 38

Employer Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Mailroom Equipment
N=46

Mailroom Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Address printer	14	30	13	28	15	33	-	-	1	2	3	7
Binder	14	30	16	35	12	26	-	-	1	2	3	7
Folding and inserting	11	24	13	28	18	39	1	2	-	-	3	7
Labeling machine	13	28	19	41	11	24	2	4	-	-	1	3
Mail opener	7	15	15	33	18	38	-	-	3	7	3	7
Postage meter/scale	8	17	18	39	14	30	2	5	4	9	-	-

Appraisal by employer respondents of proficiency levels required for entry-level office occupations workers on telecommunication equipment is displayed in Table 39. The highest weighted mean score was obtained for the telephone at 4.0 indicating above average skill requirement. The lowest weighted mean score was obtained for pneumatic tubes at 2.0 indicating below average skill requirement. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 35 - 41 are presented in Appendix F.

TABLE 39

Employer Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Telecommunication Equipment
N=46

Telecommunication Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels										Does Not Apply	
	Novice 1		2		3		4		Expert 5			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Facsimile	3	7	17	36	12	26	4	9	5	11	5	11
External transmission	7	15	20	43	10	22	1	2	5	11	3	7
Intercommunication	7	15	19	41	11	25	1	2	7	15	1	2
Pneumatic tubes	11	24	17	37	10	22	-	-	-	-	8	17
PBX	5	11	13	28	18	39	3	7	2	4	5	11
Telephone	-	-	-	-	18	39	12	26	16	35	-	-
Teletypewriter	5	11	5	11	14	30	13	28	4	9	5	11

Proficiency level requirements for recordkeeping equipment based on the reaction of employer respondents are presented in Table 40. Above average skill requirement was indicated by employer respondents for electronic calculator equipment with a weighted mean score of 3.9. This score indicates above average skill requirement. Employer respondent reaction to accounting machine equipment and cash register equipment paired at weighted means of 2.1 and 2.0 respectfully.

TABLE 40

Employer Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Recordkeeping Equipment
N=46

Recordkeeping Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels										Does Not Apply	
	Novice 1		2		3		4		Expert 5			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Accounting	16	34	14	30	9	20	-	-	4	9	3	7
Cash register	16	35	16	35	5	10	1	2	4	9	4	9
Electronic calculator	3	7	-	-	3	7	29	62	9	20	2	4

Reaction by employer respondents to proficiency levels required of entry-level office occupations workers on data processing equipment revealed that entry-level office workers need little skill in operation of reproducing punch equipment and verifier equipment--a weighted mean score of 2.0 each. Above average skill requirement was revealed for microcomputer equipment (a weighted mean of 3.3) and printer equipment (a weighted mean of 3.4). Table 41 summarizes these data. Tables showing weighted means for Tables 35 - 41 are presented in Appendix F.

TABLE 41

Employer Respondent Appraisal of Proficiency Levels Required of Entry-Level Office Occupations Workers on Data Processing Equipment
N=46

Data Processing Equipment	Range of Proficiency Levels: Novice 1 No.	%	2 No.	%	3 No.	%	4 No.	%	Expert 5 No.	%	Does Not Apply No.	%
Collator	11	24	6	13	22	47	1	2	3	7	3	7
Interpreter	11	24	16	35	12	26	1	2	2	4	4	9
Key punch equipment	8	17	6	13	24	52	4	10	2	4	2	4
Large computer	9	20	19	41	7	15	6	13	2	4	3	7
Microcomputer	5	11	6	13	10	22	20	43	4	9	1	2
Printer	3	7	8	17	9	20	21	45	5	11	-	-
Reproducing punch	14	30	19	41	6	13	1	3	2	4	4	9
Verifier	13	28	18	39	7	15	1	3	2	4	5	11

Employer Respondent Rankings of Component Elements

Similar data concerning employer respondent reaction to the ranking of component elements or tasks in seven categories or basic components are presented in Table 42 - 48. Employer respondents were asked to rank the top three component elements or tasks in each of the seven basic components. The Friedman two-way analysis of variance by ranks was used to determine final rankings within the seven categories or basic components. The Friedman statistic is computed by considering the number of responses across all ranks. For example data in Table 45, page 101, indicates 20 first place responses for proofreading. When all ranks were

considered, the 45 total responses for examining for completeness ranked higher than the 29 total responses for proofreading.

Rankings by employer respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with communicating with others in office work are displayed in Table 42. Receiving and giving information was ranked first in importance. Forty-five employer respondents (97 percent) ranked receiving and giving information as the most important component element or task in the basic component group across all ranks (first, second, and third).

Cooperating with others was ranked second in importance. Thirty-six employer respondents (78 percent) ranked cooperating with others as the second most important component element.

Writing messages was ranked third in importance. Seventeen employer respondents (37 percent) ranked writing messages as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 42

Employer Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Communicating with Others in Office Work
N=46

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Receiving and giving information	1	31	67	8	17	6	13
Cooperating with others	2	11	24	19	41	6	13
Writing messages	3	1	2	-	-	16	35
Receiving visitors	4	-	-	2	4	10	22
Composing routine letters	5	3	7	3	7	-	-
Discussing job procedures	6.5	-	-	3	7	2	4
Referring to references	6.5	-	-	3	7	2	4
Compiling telephone lists	8	-	-	3	7	-	-
Discussing job problems	9	-	-	-	-	3	7
Referring inquiries	10.5	-	-	2	4	-	-
Scheduling appointments	10.5	-	-	2	4	-	-
Referring to files	12	-	-	1	2	-	-
Logging/listing (calls)	13	-	-	-	-	-	-
No response		-	-	-	-	1	2
Total		46	100	46	100	46	100

Rankings by employer respondents of component elements in the basic component group associated with sorting, filing, and retrieving in office work are shown in Table 43. Scanning for identity and content was ranked first in importance. Forty-one employer respondents (89 percent) ranked scanning for identity and content as the most important component element.

Searching and locating was ranked second in importance. Thirty-two employer respondents (69 percent) ranked searching and locating as the second most important component element or task.

Stamping for identification was ranked third in importance. Twenty-seven employer respondents (58 percent) ranked stamping for identification as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 43

Employer Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Sorting, Filing, and Retrieving in Office Work
N=46

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Scanning for identity and content	1	15	33	8	17	18	39
Searching and locating	2	13	28	19	41	-	-
Stamping for identification	3	13	28	6	13	8	17
Cataloging, logging, and listing	4	4	9	6	13	11	24
Batching (grouping items)	5	1	2	3	7	4	9
Matching (lists with files)	6	-	-	3	7	1	2
Counting and totaling	7	-	-	-	-	3	7
Fastening and unfastening	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
No response		-	-	1	2	1	2
Total		46	100	46	100	46	100

Rankings by employer respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with typewriting in office work are revealed in Table 44. Proofreading and correcting was ranked first in importance. Thirty-seven employer respondents (80 percent) ranked proofreading and correcting as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Composing from instructions was ranked second in importance. Twenty-five employer respondents (55 percent) ranked composing from instructions as the second most important component element or task.

Planning work was ranked third in importance. Twenty-four employer respondents (52 percent) ranked planning work as the third most important component element or task.

TABLE 44

Employer Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Typewriting in Office Work
N=46

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Proofreading and correcting	1	26	56	3	7	8	17
Composing from instructions	2	12	26	9	20	4	9
Planning work	3	5	11	11	24	8	17
Transcribing dictation	4	-	-	5	11	15	33
Putting finished copy in order	5	-	-	13	27	2	4
Assembling materials	6	-	-	5	11	8	17
Scanning material	7	3	7	-	-	-	-
Delivering and mailing copy	8.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Making calculations and tallies	8.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
No response		-	-	-	-	1	3
Total		46	100	46	100	46	100

Rankings by employer respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with checking, computing, and verifying in office work are displayed in Table 45. Examining for completeness was ranked first in importance. Forty-five employer respondents (98 percent) ranked examining for completeness as the most important component element in the basic component group.

Proofreading was ranked second in importance. Twenty-nine employer respondents (64 percent) ranked proofreading as the second most important component element or task.

Making routine decisions was ranked third in importance. Twenty-two employer respondents (48 percent) ranked making routine decisions as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 45

Employer Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Checking, Computing, and Verifying in Office Work
N=46

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Examining for completeness	1	10	22	12	26	23	50
Proofreading	2	20	44	5	11	4	9
Making routine decisions	3	13	28	3	7	6	13
Establishing coding system	4	-	-	13	28	-	-
Compiling data from records	5	1	2	6	13	7	15
Using mental arithmetic	6	-	-	6	13	-	-
Comparing documents	7	2	4	-	-	-	-
Comparing requests with status	8	-	-	-	-	3	7
Checking availability	9	-	-	-	-	2	4
Balancing and reconciling accounts	10	-	-	1	2	-	-
Handposting items	11.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Keeping data records (sales)	11.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
No response		-	-	-	-	1	2
Total		46	100	46	100	46	100

Rankings by employer respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with collecting and distributing in office work are shown in Table 46. Delivering and gathering items was ranked first in importance. Forty-six employer respondents (100 percent) ranked delivering and gathering items as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Logging, listing, and counting was ranked second in importance. Forty-five employer respondents (98 percent) ranked logging, listing, and counting as the second most important component element or task.

Stuffing envelopes was ranked third in importance. Forty-five employer respondents (98 percent) ranked stuffing envelopes as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 46

Employer Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Collecting and Distributing in Office Work
N=46

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Delivering and gathering items	1	27	59	19	41	-	-
Logging, listing, and counting	2	18	39	27	59	-	-
Stuffing envelopes	3	-	-	-	-	45	98
No response		1	2	-	-	1	2
Total		46	100	46	100	46	100

Rankings by employer respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with operating business machines in office work are revealed in Table 47. Preparing machines was ranked first in importance. Forty-six employer respondents (100 percent) ranked preparing machines as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Placing and taking materials was ranked second in importance. Forty-five employer respondents (98 percent) ranked placing and taking materials as the second most important component element.

Making minor adjustments was ranked third in importance. Thirty-two employer respondents (69 percent) ranked making minor adjustments as the third most important component element or task in the basic component group.

TABLE 47

Employer Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Operating Business Machines in Office Work
N=46

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparing machines	1	39	85	4	9	3	7
Placing and taking materials	2	5	11	28	61	12	26
Making minor adjustments	3	2	4	13	28	17	37
Making minor repairs	4	-	-	-	-	13	28
No response		-	-	1	2	1	2
Total		46	100	46	100	46	100

Rankings by employer respondents of tasks or component elements in the basic component group associated with analyzing procedures and charting in office work are displayed in Table 48. Writing instructions was ranked first in importance. Forty-six employer respondents (100 percent) ranked writing instructions as the most important component element or task in the basic component group.

Coding problems was ranked second in importance. Forty-six employer respondents (100 percent) ranked using mathematics as the second most important component element or task.

Using mathematics was ranked third in importance. Forty-five employer respondents (98 percent) ranked using mathematics as the third most important component element or task.

TABLE 48

Employer Respondent Rankings of Tasks Commonly Associated with Analyzing Procedures and Charting in Office Work
N=46

Tasks	Rank	First		Second		Third	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Writing instructions	1	42	91	-	-	4	9
Coding problems	2	4	9	21	46	21	45
Using mathematics	3	-	-	25	54	20	44
No response		-	-	-	-	1	2
Total		46	100	46	100	46	100

Employer Respondent Shorthand Requirements

Nine of the employer respondents (20 percent) revealed that they required shorthand as a prerequisite for employment of entry-level office occupations workers. Thirty-seven (80 percent) indicated that they did not require shorthand as an employment prerequisite. Because of the brevity of the information, no table was constructed for the number and percentage of respondents who did and did not require shorthand as an employment prerequisite.

Fourteen of the employer respondents (30 percent) revealed that they used shorthand with their entry-level office occupations workers. This figure represents 14 percent of those employer respondents who do not require shorthand as a prerequisite for employment of entry-level office occupations applicants. Thirty-two (70 percent) of the employer respondents indicated that they do not use shorthand with entry-level office occupations workers.

Employer respondents indicated the minimum shorthand speed necessary for employment as shown in Table 49. Six employer respondents (13 percent) indicated that their entry-level shorthand speed requirement was 50 or less words per minute. Four (9 percent) indicated 60 words per minute; five (11 percent) indicated 80 words per minute.

TABLE 49

Minimum Shorthand Speed Necessary for Entry-Level Employment as Reported by Employer Respondents N=46

Words per Minute	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
50 or less	6	13
60	4	9
80	5	11
90	1	2
100	1	2
No Response	29	63
Total	46	100

As can be seen in Table 50, employer respondents indicated that their entry-level office occupations workers generally spend no more than 30 percent of their work day using shorthand. Eight (17 percent) indicated that their workers spend between 1 - 15 percent of their day using shorthand. Nine (20 percent) indicated that their workers spend between 16 - 30 percent of their day using shorthand. One employer respondent (2 percent) indicated that entry-level office occupations workers spend 45 - 60 percent of their day using shorthand.

TABLE 50

Percentage of Employer Respondents' Workday Requiring Shorthand in Entry-Level Office Occupations
N=46

Percent of Workday	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1 - 15	8	17
16 - 30	9	20
31 - 45	-	-
46 - 60	1	2
61 - 75	-	-
76 - 90	-	-
No Response	28	61
Total	46	100

Employer Respondent Typewriting Requirements

Of the employer respondents, 44 (96 percent) indicated that they require typewriting as a prerequisite for employment of entry-level office occupations applicants. Two (4 percent) revealed that they do not require typewriting as a prerequisite employment skill.

All employer respondents indicated that they used typewriting with entry-level office occupations workers.

Employer respondents indicated the minimum typewriting speed necessary for employment as shown in Table 51. Seventeen employer respondents (37 percent) indicated that their entry-level typewriting speed requirement was 50 words per minute. Ten employer respondents

(22 percent) indicated 40 or less words per minute; sixteen (35 percent) indicated 60 words per minute.

TABLE 51

Minimum Typewriting Speed Necessary for Entry-Level Employment as Reported by Employer Respondents
N=46

Words per Minute	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
40 or less	10	22
50	17	37
60	16	35
70	2	4
No Response	1	2
Total	46	100

Most employer respondents (48 percent) indicated that their entry-level office occupations workers use typewriting 46 - 60 percent of their work day as shown in Table 52. Eight (17 percent) indicated that their workers spend between 31 and 45 percent of their work day using typewriting. Seven (15 percent) indicated that their workers spend between 61 to 75 percent of their work day using typewriting.

TABLE 52

Percentage of Employer Respondents' Workday Requiring Typewriting in Entry-Level Office Occupations
N=46

Percent of Workday	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0 - 15	4	9
16 - 30	3	7
31 - 45	8	17
46 - 60	22	48
61 - 75	7	15
76 - 90	2	4
No Response	-	-
Total	46	100

Comparison of Responses from Graduates and Employers

Research Question 9: (a) Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and component elements considered basic for office work?

Research Question 9.a: Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum?

Weighted means were calculated from graduate respondent and employer respondent ratings of courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum. Each set of weighted means was then rank ordered in order to calculate the rank-order correlation

coefficient (Spearman's rho). The resulting correlation coefficient was .845 and found to be significant at the .01 level. The correlation coefficient indicates a positive, significant degree of relationship between graduate respondent and employer respondent ratings of courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum.

> Research Question 9.b: Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning the entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment?

Weighted means from graduate respondent and employer respondent rankings of entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment were rank ordered in order to calculate the rank-order correlation coefficient (Spearman's rho). The resulting correlation coefficient was .597 and found to be positive and significant at the .01 level. The correlation coefficient indicates a significant degree of relationship between graduate respondent and employer respondent rankings of entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment.

> Research Question 9.c: Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning component elements considered basic for office work?

Freidman rankings were used to compare graduate respondent and employer respondent rankings of component elements considered basic for office work. The resulting correlation coefficient (Spearman's rho) was .882 and found to be significant at the .01 level. The correlation coefficient indicates a positive, significant degree of relationship between graduate respondent and employer respondent rankings of component elements considered basic for office work.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter presents a discussion of the responses from 94 office administration graduates of McNeese State University for the period 1970 through 1984 and 46 of their entry-level employers. The discussion is divided into summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

Summary

This study was a descriptive investigation of the education requirements for entry-level office occupations of the baccalaureate degree graduates of the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication at McNeese State University. It was based on a survey of the graduates who had found entry-level employment in office occupations and a survey of their entry-level employers. The problem of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the office administration training program at McNeese State University as it relates to employment experiences of its baccalaureate graduates.

The primary purpose of this study was to conduct a follow-up, through a questionnaire, of office administration graduates who graduated from McNeese State University between December, 1970, through July, 1984, to determine whether or not the courses they had taken had provided them with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of business and industry. Additional purposes of the study were: (1) to determine what general attitudes graduates have concerning the courses currently incorporated in the office administration curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and

component elements considered basic for office work, (2) to determine if the employers of graduates share similar opinions concerning the educational preparation of graduates, and (3) to present conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study which could aid in planning new programs or evaluating those which already exist.

Data for the study were gathered by means of mailed questionnaires which were developed specifically for this study. A total of 117 questionnaires were mailed to graduates, and a total of 70 questionnaires were mailed to the entry-level employers of graduates. The findings reported in this study were based on the usable responses of 94 graduates (80 percent) and 46 employers (66 percent).

This summary is presented in four parts: (1) demographic data of graduate respondents, (2) graduate respondent data addressing research questions, (3) employer respondent data, and (4) correlation of graduate respondent and employer respondent data.

Demographic Data of Graduate Respondents

Analysis of the demographic data of graduates respondents revealed the following findings:

1. The largest groups of graduate respondents (26 percent) graduated in 1980 and 1981. No data was collected to explain these large groups.

2. The majority of graduate respondents (53 percent) indicated that they were between the ages of 25 to 30 years of age.

3. The majority of graduate respondents (57 percent) indicated that they were married.

4. The most reported classification of business for entry-level positions in office occupations was the petroleum industry (24 percent).

Local government (8 percent) and manufacturing (9 percent) were the next most reported classifications of business for entry-level positions.

5. Most graduate respondents spent either less than one year (24 percent) or from one to three years (44 percent) in their entry-level positions.

6. Most graduate respondents (61 percent) reported less than one year between graduation and entry-level employment.

Graduate Respondent Data Addressing Research Questions

Analysis of the survey data relating to the specific research questions for this study revealed the following findings:

> Research Question 1: What number and percentage of graduates found entry-level employment in office occupations?

Eighty-five of the graduate respondents (90 percent) were employed in office occupations after graduation. Nine of the graduates respondents (10 percent) were not employed in office occupations.

> Research Question 2: (a) What were the most common entry-level job titles of graduates who found employment in office occupations, and (b) what additional training was provided by their entry-level employers?
>
> Research Question 2.a: What were the most common entry-level job titles of graduates who found employment in office occupations?

1. Three graduate respondents (4 percent) reported administrative assistant as their entry-level job titles.

2. Sixteen graduate respondents (19 percent) reported executive secretary as their entry-level job titles.

3. Forty-nine graduate respondents (57 percent) reported secretary as their entry-level job titles.

4. Seventeen graduate respondents (20 percent) identified other job titles as clerk, clerk typist, and receptionist.

Research Question 2.b: What additional training was provided by their entry-level employers?

Graduate respondents reported the most common type of additional training provided by entry-level employers was directions for tasks given by employers. The use of office manuals and supervision for specific tasks were ranked evenly as the second most popular methods of providing additional training.

Research Question 3: (a) What are the current job titles of the graduates, and (b) what are their current salaries?

Research Question 3.a: What are the current job titles of the graduates?

The most common current job titles reported by graduate respondents were secretary (38 percent) and clerk (10 percent).

Research Question 3.b: What are their current salaries?

Most graduate respondents reported current salaries as $10,000 - $20,000 (40 percent) and $20,001 - $30,000 (34 percent).

Research Question 4: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning (a) the courses currently incorporated in the office administration curriculum, (b) entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and (c) component elements considered basic for office work?

Research Question 4.a: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning the courses currently incorporated in the office administration curriculum?

1. All graduate respondents indicated that business communication and typewriting should be incorporated into the curriculum.

2. Most graduate respondents (average of 95 percent) indicated that the curriculum should incorporate: administrative procedures, business behavior, English/grammar, machine transcription, management, management information systems, management of word processing, office

management, organizational behavior, records management, and word processing.

3. Courses with low response rates: calculus and statistics.

Research Question 4.b: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment?

1. Graduate respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for typewriter equipment reveals that entry-level office occupations workers need to possess better than average skill to operate electric typewriters proficiently (weighted mean of 4.4). Weighted means of skill appraisal for both electronic and memory typewriters indicates that graduate respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need average skill to operate electronic typewriters (weighted mean of 3.1); and they believed that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly less than average skill to operate memory typewriters (weighted mean of 2.7).

2. Graduate respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for word processing equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly above average skill to operate dictating/transcribing equipment (weighted mean of 3.3). The weighted mean for high speed printer equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly less than average skill for operation (2.6). Both shared-logic and stand-alone text editors received weighted means of 2.2 which indicates that graduate respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need less than average skill to operate these pieces of text editing equipment.

3. Graduate respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for reproduction equipment shows that entry-level office

occupations workers need above average skill to operate photocopy equipment (weighted mean of 4.1). Weighted means for offset duplicating equipment (2.8), spirit duplicating equipment (2.3), and stencil duplicating equipment (2.2) indicate that graduate respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly less than average to little skill to operate these pieces of equipment.

4. Graduate respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for mailroom equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly above average skill to operate mail opening equipment (weighted mean of 3.2) and postage meter/scale equipment (weighted mean of 3.3). Appraisal by graduate respondents of folding and inserting equipment and labeling machine equipment received weighted means of 2.8 each. Weighted means for address printer equipment and binder equipment were 2.3 and 2.4 respectively which indicates that graduate respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need less than average skill for operation.

5. Graduate respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for telecommunication equipment shows that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly less than expert skill to operate telephone equipment (weighted mean of 4.7). Teletypewriter equipment received a weighted mean of 3.0 which indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need average skill for operation. Weighted mean appraisal of facsimile equipment (2.4), external transmission equipment (2.2), intercommunication equipment (2.6), and PBX (2.6), reveals that graduate respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly less than average skill for operation. The lowest weighted mean was for pneumatic tubes (1.3).

6. Graduate respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for recordkeeping equipment reveals that entry-level office occupations workers need high level skill to operate electronic calculator equipment (weighted mean of 4.1). Accounting machine equipment received a weighted mean appraisal of 2.8 which indicates that graduate respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need near average skill for operation. The lowest weighted mean skill appraisal was realized for cash register equipment (2.0).

7. Graduate respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for data processing equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need below average skill to operate interpreter equipment (weighted mean of 1.7), large computer equipment (weighted mean of 2.1), reproducing punch equipment (weighted mean of 2.1), verifier equipment (weighted mean of 2.1), and key punch equipment (weighted mean of 2.3). Near average skill requirement was indicated by graduate respondents for collator equipment and printer equipment (weighted means of 2.9 each). Graduate respondent appraisal of skill requirements for microcomputer equipment reveals a weighted mean of 2.6 indicating that they believed entry-level office occupations workers need less than average skill for operation.

Research Question 4.c: What general attitudes do graduates have concerning component elements considered basic for office work?

1. The three top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with communicating in office work were: (1) receiving and giving information, (2) cooperating with others, and (3) receiving visitors.

2. The top ranked component elements in the basic component group

tasks commonly associated with sorting, filing, and retrieving in office work were: (1) scanning for identity and content, (2) searching and locating, and (3) cataloging, logging, and listing.

3. Component elements in the top three ranks in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with typewriting in office work were: (1) proofreading and correcting, (2) planning work, and (3) composing from instructions.

4. The three top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with checking, computing, and verifying in office work were: (1) proofreading, (2) examining for completeness, and (3) making routine decisions.

5. The top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with collecting and distributing in office work were: (1) delivering and gathering items, (2) logging, listing, and counting, and (3) stuffing envelopes.

6. Component elements in the top three ranks in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with operating business machines in office work were: (1) preparing machines, (2) making minor adjustments, and (3) placing and taking materials.

7. The three top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with analyzing procedures and charting in office work were: (1) writing instructions, (2) coding problems, and (3) using mathematics.

> Research Question 5: (a) What role did shorthand play in helping graduates find employment, (b) what was the minimum shorthand speed required for entry-level employment, and (c) what role does shorthand play in their daily office work?

Research Question 5.a: What role did shorthand play in helping graduates find employment?

Fifty-one percent of the graduate respondents indicated that shorthand was a prerequisite for entry-level employment in office occupations.

Research Question 5.b: What was the minimum shorthand speed required for entry-level employment?

1. Thirteen percent of the graduate respondents reported that their entry-level shorthand speed requirement was 60 words per minute.

2. Twelve percent of the graduate respondents indicated that their entry-level shorthand speed requirement was 70 words per minute.

3. Eighteen percent of the graduate respondents indicated that their entry-level shorthand speed requirement was 80 words per minute.

Research Question 5.c: What role does shorthand play in their daily office work?

Of the graduate respondents who reported using shorthand in their daily office work, 45 percent indicated that they spend from 1 to 15 percent of their entry-level office occupations work day using shorthand.

Research Question 6: How do graduates compare their office work experiences and their office administration learning experiences?

Collective, 70 percent of the graduate respondents indicated that they agreed with the statement: My education in office administration corresponds very closely to my experiences as an entry-level office worker.

Research Question 7: (a) Are graduates satisfied with their degrees in office administration and (b) with their careers and jobs in office occupations?

Research Question 7.a: Are graduates satisfied with their degrees in office administration?

Collectively, 87 percent of the graduate respondents indicated agree strongly to agree when asked if they were satisfied with their degrees in office administration.

Research Question 7.b: Are graduates satisfied with their careers and jobs in office occupations?

Graduate respondents most often indicated very satisfied to satisfied to: job security (60 percent), working conditions (73 percent), type of boss (57 percent), nature of work (72 percent), salary (50 percent), challenge of work (59 percent), work schedule (68 percent), knowledge helpful in promotions (59 percent), and personal value in office education (84 percent).

Graduate respondents less often indicated very satisfied to satisfied to: opportunity for self-growth (37 percent), potential for advancement (40 percent), new equipment (44 percent), and degree helpful in salary increases (44 percent).

Research Question 8: How would graduates describe the manner in which instruction was offered in office administration at McNeese?

Graduate respondents indicated agreement to positive impressions of the manner in which instruction was offered in office administration at McNeese by marking an eight item Semantic Differential scale. These positive impressions were: adequate (80 percent), fair (74 percent), important (75 percent), kind (67 percent), methodical (68 percent), patient (68 percent), satisfactory (87 percent) and skillful (82 percent).

Employer Respondent Data

Job Titles in Entry-Level Positions

1. Most employer respondents (61 percent) reported that secretary was the job title which most closely describes the entry-level position suitable for office administration graduates.

2. Thirty-five percent of the employer respondents reported executive secretary, and 4 percent reported administrative assistant to describe the entry-level position suitable for graduates.

Type of Business Office Employing Graduates

Employer respondents indicated that local government (13 percent), manufacturing (17 percent), and petroleum industry (28 percent) were the most common types of business offices to employ graduates.

Courses to Incorporate in the Present Curriculum in Office Administration

1. All employer respondents indicated that English/grammar, management, and word processing should be included in the curriculum.

2. Business behavior, business communication, English/grammar, mathematics, office management, speech, typewriting, and word processing received response rates of 90 percent or better.

Entry-Level Proficiency Requirements for Office Equipment

1. Employer respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for typewriter equipment reveals that entry-level office occupations workers need to possess better than average skill to operate electric typewriters proficiently (weighted mean of 4.0). Weighted means of skill appraisal for both electronic and memory typewriters indicate that employer respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need above average skill to operate both electronic typewriters (weighted mean of 3.6) and memory typewriters (weighted mean of 3.4).

2. Employer respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for word processing equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly above average skill to operate dictating/transcribing equipment (weighted mean of 3.6). The weighted mean for high speed printer equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly above average skill of operation (3.2). Shared-logic and stand-alone text editors received weighted means of 3.2 and 3.4 respectively. This appraisal indicates that employer respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly above average skill to operate these pieces of text editing equipment.

3. Employer respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for reproduction equipment shows that entry-level office occupations workers need high proficiency levels to operate photocopy equipment (weighted mean of 3.9). Stencil duplicating equipment received a weighted mean of 2.7 which indicates that employer respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need just slightly below average proficiency for operation. Weighted means for offset duplicating equipment (2.1) and spirit duplicating equipment (2.2) indicate that employer respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need little skill to operate these pieces of reproduction equipment.

4. Employer respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for mailroom equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need less than average skill to operate mail opening equipment (weighted mean of 2.5). Other equipment received a weighted mean averaging 2.1 which indicates that employer respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need little skill for operation.

5. Employer respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for telecommunication equipment shows that entry-level office occupations workers need high level skill to operate telephone equipment (weighted mean of 4.0). Teletypewriter equipment received a weighted mean of 3.1 which indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need average skill for operation. Weighted mean appraisal of facsimile equipment (2.8), external transmission equipment (2.5), intercommunication (2.6), and PBX 2.6) reveal that employer respondents believed that entry-level office occupations workers need slightly less than average skill for operation. The lowest weighted mean skill appraisal was found for pneumatic tubes (2.0).

6. Employer respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for recordkeeping equipment reveals that entry-level office occupations workers need high level skill to operate electronic calculator equipment (weighted mean of 3.9). Accounting machine equipment and cash register equipment received weighted mean appraisals of 2.1 and 2.0 respectively which indicates little skill proficiency.

7. Employer respondent appraisal of entry-level proficiency requirements for data processing equipment indicates that entry-level office occupations workers need little skill to operate reproducing punch equipment and verifier equipment--a weighted mean score of 2.0 each. Above average skill requirement was revealed for microcomputer equipment (weighted mean of 3.3) and printer equipment (weighted mean of 3.4). Collator equipment, interpreter equipment, key punch equipment, and large computer received weighted mean appraisals averaging 2.5. This average weighted mean appraisal indicates that employer respondents

believed entry-level office occupations workers need slightly below average skill for operation.

Employer Respondent Rankings of Component Elements

1. The three top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with communicating in office work were: (1) receiving and giving information, (2) cooperating with others, and (3) writing messages.

2. The top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with sorting, filing, and retrieving in office work were: (1) scanning for identity and content, (2) searching and locating, and (3) stamping for identification.

3. Component elements in the top three ranks in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with typewriting in office work were: (1) proofreading and correcting, (2) composing from instructions, and (3) planning work.

4. The three top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with checking, computing, and verifying in office work were: (1) examining for completeness, (2) proofreading, and (3) making routine decisions.

5. The top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with collecting and distributing in office work were: (1) delivering and gathering items, (2) logging, listing, and counting, and (3) stuffing envelopes.

6. Component elements in the top three ranks in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with operating business machines in office work were: (1) preparing machines, (2) placing and taking materials, and (3) making minor adjustments.

7. The three top ranked component elements in the basic component group tasks commonly associated with analyzing procedures and charting in office work were: (1) writing instructions, (2) coding problems, and (3) using mathematics.

Use of Shorthand in Entry-Level Office Occupations

1. Twenty percent of the employer respondents indicated that they required shorthand as a prerequisite for employment of entry-level office occupations workers.

2. Thirty percent of the employer respondents indicated that they used shorthand with their entry-level office occupations workers. This represents five employer respondents more than the nine who require shorthand as a prerequisite for employment.

3. Six employer respondents (13 percent) indicated that their entry-level shorthand speed requirement was 50 or less words per minute. Four (9 percent) indicated 60 words per minute; five (11 percent) indicated 80 words per minute.

4. Employer respondents indicated that their entry-level office occupations workers generally spend no more than 30 percent of their work day using shorthand.

Use of Typewriting in Entry-Level Office Occupations

1. Ninety-six percent of the employer respondents indicated that they required typewriting as a prerequisite for employment of entry-level office occupations workers.

2. All employer respondents indicated that they used typewriting with entry-level office occupations workers.

3. Ten employer respondents (22 percent) indicated that their entry-level typewriting speed requirement was 40 or less words per

minute. Seventeen (37 percent) indicated 50 words per minute; sixteen (35 percent) indicated 60 words per minute.

4. Forty-eight percent of the employer respondents indicated that their entry-level office occupations workers generally spend between 45 - 60 percent of their work day using typewriting.

Correlation of Graduate Respondent and Employer Respondent Data

> Research Question 9: (a) Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and component elements considered basic for office work?
>
> Research Question 9.a: Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning the courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum?

The correlation coefficient (Spearman's rho) of .845 is significant at the .01 level and indicates the degree of relationship between graduate respondent and employer respondent ratings of courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum is a significant relationship.

> Research Question 9.b: Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning the entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment?

The correlation coefficient of .597 is significant at the .01 level and indicates a significant relationship between the responses of graduates and the responses of employers rankings of entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment.

> Research Question 9.c: Do graduates and their employers share similar opinions concerning the component elements considered basic for office work?

The correlation coefficient of .882 and found to be significant at the .01 level. The correlation coefficient indicates a significant

degree of relationship between graduate respondent and employer respondent rankings of component elements considered basic for office work.

Conclusions

The conclusions which follow were derived from the data collected through the structured questionnaires completed by 94 office administration graduates and 46 of their entry-level employers and are applicable to the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication at McNeese State University. Based upon the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The office administration degree is a viable educational program for office occupations workers since 90 percent of the graduate respondents were employed in office occupations after graduation.

2. Employment in office occupations will most likely be offered with the job title of secretary rather than executive secretary or administrative assistant since 57 percent of the graduate respondents were employed as entry-level office occupations workers with the job title of secretary.

3. Students need to be effective listeners and questioners since graduate respondents reported the most common type of additional training provided by their entry-level employers as directions for tasks given by employers.

4. It is appropriate that the curriculum for the preparation of office occupations workers include: administrative procedures, business behavior, business communication, English/grammar, machine transcription, mathematics, management, management of information systems, management of word processing, office management, speech, organizational behavior, records management, typewriting, and word processing. The large number

of graduate and employer responses indicating agreement that these courses should be incorporated into the curriculum and the positive, significant evidence of a strong relationship between those responses is evidence upon which to make this conclusion. The requirement of calculus and statistics in the curriculum for office occupations workers is questionable as indicated by graduate and employer respondents.

5. Graduates need to be expertly proficient in the use of electric typewriters, photocopy duplicating equipment, telephone equipment, and electronic calculator equipment as indicated by graduate and employer respondents.

6. Graduates need to be moderately proficient in the use of electronic typewriters, memory typewriters, dictating/transcribing equipment, high speed printer equipment, offset duplicating equipment, folding and inserting equipment, labeling equipment, mail opener equipment, postage meter/scale equipment, intercommunication equipment, PBX equipment, teletypewriter equipment, accounting machine, collator equipment, microcomputer equipment, and printer equipment as indicated by graduate and employer respondents.

7. Graduates do not need to be proficient in the use of shared-logic text editor equipment, stand-alone text editor equipment, spirit duplicating equipment, stencil duplicating equipment, address printer equipment, binder equipment, facsimile equipment, external transmission equipment, pneumatic tubes, cash register equipment, interpreter equipment, key punch equipment, large computer equipment, reproducing punch equipment, and verifier equipment as indicated by graduate and employer respondents.

8. Graduates need to be able to perform well those tasks or component elements which were ranked highest by graduate and employer respondents as most basic for office work. Those tasks were: receiving and giving information, cooperating with others, receiving visitors, writing messages, scanning for identity and content, searching and locating, cataloging, logging, and listing, stamping for identification, proofreading and correcting, planning work, composing from instructions, examining for completeness, making routine decisions, delivering and gathering items, logging, listing, and counting, stuffing envelopes, preparing machines, making minor adjustments, placing and taking materials, writing instructions, coding problems, and using mathematics as indicated by graduate and employer respondents.

9. Shorthand is still important in helping graduates find employment in office occupations since 51 percent of the graduate respondents indicated that shorthand was a prerequisite for entry-level employment in office occupations.

10. The office administration program is appropriate for the preparation of entry-level office occupations workers as evidenced by the responses of graduates who agree that their education in office administration corresponds very closely to their experiences as entry-level office occupations workers (70 percent) and by the responses of graduates who are satisfied with their degrees in office administration (87 percent).

11. Instruction is offered in a professional environment as reflected by the positive responses of graduates to describe the manner in which instruction was offered.

12. The office administration curriculum adequately prepares graduates for office occupations positions as there is a positive, significant relationship (significant at the .01 level) between the responses of graduates and the responses of employers concerning courses currently incorporated into the office administration curriculum, entry-level proficiency requirements for various office equipment, and component elements considered basic for office work.

Recommendations

Based upon the summary and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made to the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication at McNeese State University and similar office administration programs:

1. The relationship of the responses of graduates and those of their employers were found to be significantly correlated and since graduate response (80 percent) to the follow-up study was better than employer response (66 percent), therefore, it is recommended that further studies concentrate only on graduates.

2. Research should be conducted to determine the educational preparedness of associate degree programs (associate degree in office administration and associate degree in word processing).

3. A reexamination should be made of the courses which received low ratings for incorporation into the present curriculum: calculus and statistics.

4. A systematic study should be completed at least each five years in order to keep course content and skill standards relevant and to determine the effectiveness of the overall program as seen by its products, the graduates.

Suggestions for Further Research

The following suggestions are based on this study and indicate the need for further research:

1. Since the respondents of this study were of a homogeneous background, research should be conducted which obtains the perceptions of office occupations workers sampled from a broader population.

2. Periodic surveys should be conducted by faculty and business people to determine the knowledge and skills most needed by office occupations workers.

3. Research should be conducted to determine if graduates are being adequately prepared to perform those tasks or component elements considered most basic to office work.

4. Research should be conducted to determine the purpose of using shorthand as a prerequisite for entry-level employment in office occupations since most employer respondents (80 percent) do not require shorthand for entry-level employment.

5. Research should be conducted to determine those skills necessary for office occupations workers to be considered proficient in the use of various office equipment.

6. Research should be conducted to determine if the tasks performed by entry-level office occupations workers change over the period of employment.

Appendix A

Cover Letter to Graduates

McNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY
LAKE CHARLES, LA 70609

DEPARTMENT OF OFFICE SYSTEMS
AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

August 1, 1984

Dear Graduate:

What do secretaries do? Should secretaries be collegiately educated? As a graduate of the Department of Office Systems and Business Communication, you are one of the most logical choices to answer these questions. Accountants, bankers, lawyers, and other professionals probably hold very different ideas concerning secretaries and the work secretaries do.

This letter is an urgent appeal for you to participate in a follow-up study of all office administration graduates of McNeese State University who hold the bachelor degree. The purpose of this follow-up is to obtain information upon which to assess the office administration major in the light of today's business demands. Only you, the professional secretary, can tell us what the work patterns and the employment opportunities are for the office administration graduate. A reply from every graduate is important--including those who have not sought employment and those who have entered other career fields.

Please answer the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the envelope which is addressed and stamped for your convenience. A return by August 15 would be very much appreciated.

Please help in this effort to upgrade the image of the secretary by promptly responding to this request. Some day the world of work will appreciate the many fine attributes of collegiately educated secretaries in a collegiately-competitive, business-oriented society.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Goings, Director
Follow-Up Research Project

Enclosures

Appendix B

Graduate Questionnaire

McNeese State University
Department of Office Systems and Business Communication
Lake Charles, Louisiana

This questionnaire is part of a survey designed to collect opinions about the effectiveness of the Bachelor Degree in Office Administration offered by McNeese State University. We need to know how well our program prepares entry-level personnel for office occupations. Please answer each question as accurately and completely as you can. Your individual responses will be kept confidential. When you finish the questionnaire, put it in the enclosed, addressed, stamped envelope and drop it in the mail. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

1. In what year did you graduate with a degree in Office Administration? _____

2. Did you enter an office occupation after graduating from McNeese?

___Yes ___No If yes, in what year? _____

3. If not, why?

___ Marriage/family obligations
___ Preference for other work (state field of work _____)
___ Decision to continue education
___ Salary too low
___ Other_____

4. Which of the following job titles comes closest to describing your first position in an office occupation after graduating from McNeese.

___ Administrative Assistant: aids executive in a staff capacity in the coordination of services and analysis and interpretation of policy.

___ Executive Secretary: performs secretarial and administrative duties of top-level personnel.

___ Secretary: carries out general office and some administrative duties for middle management.

___ Other: _____

5. How long did you stay on your first job? _____ years _____ months

Please give the name and address of the company where you were first employed in an office occupation:

Company_____ Supervisor_____
Address_____ Title_____
_____

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6. Rank, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing most common and 5 representing least common, each of the following methods provided by your employer for additional training or on-the-job training.

_____ Office manuals
_____ Regular classes for office employees
_____ Supervision for specific tasks
_____ Directions for tasks given by employer
_____ Evening classes (tuition paid)

7. To what extent do you agree that a collegiate program, which prepares entry-level office employees, should incorporate the following courses into its degree requirements? Check the space that best represents your opinion.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Accounting	_____	_____	_____
Administrative Procedures	_____	_____	_____
Business Behavior	_____	_____	_____
Business Calculations	_____	_____	_____
Business Communication	_____	_____	_____
Business Law	_____	_____	_____
Calculus	_____	_____	_____
Computer Science	_____	_____	_____
Economics	_____	_____	_____
English/Grammar	_____	_____	_____
Finance	_____	_____	_____
Machine Transcription	_____	_____	_____
Management	_____	_____	_____
Management Information Systems	_____	_____	_____
Management of Word Processing	_____	_____	_____
Marketing	_____	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____	_____
Office Management	_____	_____	_____
Organizational Behavior	_____	_____	_____
Records Management	_____	_____	_____
Shorthand	_____	_____	_____
Speech	_____	_____	_____
Statistics	_____	_____	_____
Typewriting	_____	_____	_____
Word Processing	_____	_____	_____
Other_____	_____	_____	_____

8. How proficient did you need to be in the use of the following equipment at the time of your entry-level office employment? Circle the number that best represents your opinion for each piece of equipment.

	N/A	Novice				Expert
Typewriters	___					
electric typewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
electronic typewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
memory typewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
Word Processing Equipment	___					
dictating/transcribing machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
high speed printer	___	1	2	3	4	5
shared-logic text editor	___	1	2	3	4	5
stand-alone text editor	___	1	2	3	4	5
Reproduction Equipment	___					
offset duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
photocopy duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
spirit duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
stencil duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
Mailroom Equipment	___					
address printer	___	1	2	3	4	5
binder	___	1	2	3	4	5
folding and inserting machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
labeling machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
mail opener	___	1	2	3	4	5
postage meter/scale	___	1	2	3	4	5
Telecommunication Equipment	___					
facsimile equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
external transmission equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
intercommunications equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
pneumatic tubes	___	1	2	3	4	5
PBX	___	1	2	3	4	5
telephone	___	1	2	3	4	5
teletypewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
Recordkeeping Equipment	___					
accounting machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
cash register	___	1	2	3	4	5
electronic calculator	___	1	2	3	4	5
Data Processing Equipment	___					
collator	___	1	2	3	4	5
interpreter	___	1	2	3	4	5
key punch equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
large computer	___	1	2	3	4	5
micro computer	___	1	2	3	4	5
printer	___	1	2	3	4	5
reproducing punch equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
verifier	___	1	2	3	4	5

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9. Listed below is a series of tasks commonly associated with office work. The tasks have been arranged in categories. In the column at the left, rank the task within each category as you see the importance of the task in the performance of entry-level office work. Use "1" for the highest level priority and rank only the three most important tasks. After ranking, chart when you as an entry-level office employee first became responsible for each of the tasks and when you were released from that responsibility. Do this by starting a line in the block that corresponds to the year, i.e. '75, when you first became responsible for a particular task and draw the line until you reach the termination point for that responsibility. If the responsibility is on-going, draw your line through the block for '83.

Example: 3 Referring inquiries

70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83

Years

Communicating With Others (13)

	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83
____ Receiving/giving information														
____ Writing messages														
____ Scheduling appointments														
____ Logging/listing (calls)														
____ Composing routine letters														
____ Referring to references														
____ Referring to files														
____ Compiling telephone lists														
____ Receiving visitors														
____ Referring inquiries														
____ Discussing job procedures														
____ Discussing job problems														
____ Cooperating with others														

Sorting/Filing/Retrieving (8)

	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83
____ Scanning for identity/content														
____ Stamping for identification														
____ Counting/totaling														
____ Cataloging/logging/listing														
____ Matching (lists with files)														
____ Batching (grouping items)														
____ Fastening/unfastening														
____ Searching/locating														

Typewriting (9)

	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83
____ Scanning material														
____ Assembling materials														
____ Planning work														
____ Transcribing dictation														
____ Composing from instructions														
____ Making calculations/tallies														
____ Proofreading/correcting														
____ Putting finished copy in order														
____ Delivering/mailing copy														

Checking/Computing/Verifying (12)

70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83

____ Examining for completeness
____ Making routine decisions
____ Comparing documents
____ Proofreading
____ Comparing requests with status
____ Checking availability
____ Compiling data from records
____ Keeping data records (sales)
____ Establishing coding system
____ Handposting items
____ Balancing/reconciling accounts
____ Using mental arithmetic

Collecting/Distributing (3)

70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83

____ Delivering/gathering items
____ Stuffing envelopes
____ Logging/listing/counting

Operating Business Machines (4)

70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83

____ Preparing machines
____ Making minor adjustments
____ Making minor repairs
____ Placing/taking materials

Analyzing Procedures/Charting (3)

70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83

____ Coding problems
____ Writing instructions
____ Using mathematics

10. **Was skill in shorthand a prerequisite for employment when you were hired as an entry-level office employee?** ____Yes ____No

11. **Did you use shorthand in your entry-level office position?** ____Yes ____No

12. **If yes, what percent of the workday did you use shorthand?** ____%

13. **If yes, what minimum speed was necessary for employment?** ____words a minute

14. **To what extent do you agree with the following statement? "My education in office administration corresponds very closely to my experiences as an entry-level office worker." Circle your answer.**

Agree Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree Strongly

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15. **Rate the following statements on how you think they reflect your own career/ job. Use a scale of 1 to 5 (1 representing strongly agree, 5 representing strongly disagree, and 3 representing no opinion). Place your number choice in the blank beside the statement.**

____ A. One of the good features of my job is the security it offers me.
____ B. Working conditions at my job help make it a desirable position.
____ C. My boss is one reason that I am satisfied with my job.
____ D. I like the type of work I am doing.
____ E. My salary is commensurate with the amount of responsibility I have.
____ F. I find my work very challenging.
____ G. The opportunity for growth on the job adds to my job satisfaction.
____ H. There is potential for advancement on my job.
____ I. The hours of work make my job more satisfying.
____ J. Newer electronic equipment could make my job easier.
____ K. Knowledge gained from courses in Office Administration helped me
____ gain job promotions.
____ L. My degree has helped me get increases in salary.
____ M. The education I received has been useful in my personal life.

16. **At the time of your entry-level office employment, what was your impression of the manner in which instruction was offered while you were a student in Office Administration classes? For each pair of words check the space which most closely corresponds to your feelings of "How was instruction offered?". check the appropriate space for each pair of words.**

Adequate	_____	_____	_____	Deficient
Fair	_____	_____	_____	Unfair
Important	_____	_____	_____	Trivial
Kind	_____	_____	_____	Cruel
Methodical	_____	_____	_____	Haphazard
Patient	_____	_____	_____	Anxious
Satisfactory	_____	_____	_____	Poor
Skillful	_____	_____	_____	Awkward

17. **Have you ended, for any reason, your career in an office occupation?**

___ Yes ___No If so, why? _____

18. **How satisfied are you with your degree in Office Administration? Circle your answer.**

Very Satisfied Satisfied Neutral Unsatisfied Very Unsatisfied

19. Generally, in what type of company were you first employed in an office occupation. Check one.

____ Agriculture
____ Communication
____ Construction
____ Education
____ Federal Government
____ Finance
____ Insurance
____ Local Government
____ Manufacturing
____ Mining
____ Real Estate
____ Retail Trade
____ Service
____ State Government
____ Transportation
____ Utilities
____ Wholesale Trade
____ Other_____

20. What is your current job title? _____

21. Please indicate into which category your age falls:

___ under 25
___ 25 to 30
___ 31 to 35
___ 36 to 40
___ 41 to 45
___ 46 to 50
___ over 50

22. What is your marital status?

___ Single
___ Married
___ Widowed
___ Divorced
___ Prefer Not To Answer

23. Please indicate into which category your annual income falls:

___ under $10,000
___ $10,000 - $20,000
___ $20,001 - $30,000
___ $30,001 - $50,000
___ over $50,000
___ Prefer Not To Answer

Appendix C

Cover Letter to Employers

McNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY
LAKE CHARLES, LA 70609

DEPARTMENT OF OFFICE SYSTEMS
AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

September 21, 1984

Dear Employer:

How proficient are the people you interview and ultimately hire to perform secretarial tasks? Does your organization lower its standards and hire less than adequately skilled secretarial personnel and then spend a good deal of time and money to bring their entry-level skills up to meet your needs? What do you think about the educational institutions who claim to prepare highly skilled secretarial personnel?

We are making a survey of McNeese State University office administration graduates and their employers from whom we hope to make an analysis of the relative value of subjects taken in school and tasks frequently encountered on the job. This will aid us in making curriculum adjustments which will be of help to future students and employers.

Will you please help by filling out, as completely as possible, the enclosed questionnaire, and mail it back in the enclosed envelope. We would appreciate your response by October 1.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Goings

Appendix D

Employer Questionnaire

McNeese State University
Department of Office Systems and Business Communication
Lake Charles, Louisiana

This questionnaire is part of a survey designed to collect opinions about the effectiveness of the Bachelor Degree in Office Administration offered by McNeese State University. We need to know how well our program prepares entry-level personnel for office occupations. Answer each question as accurately as you can; your individual responses will be kept confidential. When you finish, place the questionnaire in the addressed, stamped envelope and drop it the mail. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

1. **If a person with a degree in Office Administration applied for a job in your organization, which of the following job titles comes closest to your thoughts as to what position that person should be hired to perform.**

   ___ Administrative Assistant: aids executive in a staff capacity in the coordination of services and analysis and interpretation of policy.

   ___ Executive Secretary: performs secretarial and administrative duties of top-level personnel.

   ___ Secretary: carries out general office and some administrative duties for middle management.

2. **To what extent do you agree that a collegiate program which prepares entry-level office employees should incorporate the following courses into its degree requirements? Check the space that best represents your opinion.**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Accounting	____	____	____
Administrative Procedures	____	____	____
Business Behavior	____	____	____
Business Calculations	____	____	____
Business Communication	____	____	____
Business Law	____	____	____
Calculus	____	____	____
Computer Science	____	____	____
Economics	____	____	____
English/Grammar	____	____	____
Finance	____	____	____
Machine Transcription	____	____	____
Management	____	____	____
Management Information Systems	____	____	____
Management of Word Processing	____	____	____
Marketing	____	____	____
Mathematics	____	____	____
Office Management	____	____	____
Organizational Behavior	____	____	____
Records Management	____	____	____
Shorthand	____	____	____
Speech	____	____	____
Statistics	____	____	____
Typewriting	____	____	____
Word Processing	____	____	____
Other_____	____	____	____

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3. **Listed below is a series of tasks commonly associated with office work. The tasks have been arranged in categories. Rank the tasks within each category as you see the importance of the task in the performance of an office occupation. Use "1" for the highest level priority and rank only the three most important tasks.**

Example: Operating Business Machines (4)

__1__ Preparing machines
__2__ Making minor adjustments
____ Making minor repairs
__3__ Placing/taking materials

Communicating With Others (13)

____ Receiving/giving information
____ Writing messages
____ Scheduling appointments
____ Logging/listing (calls)
____ Composing routine letters
____ Referring to references
____ Referring to files
____ Compiling telephone lists
____ Receiving visitors
____ Referring inquiries
____ Discussing job procedures
____ Discussing job problems
____ Cooperating with others

Typewriting Tasks (9)

____ Scanning material
____ Assembling materials
____ Planning work
____ Transcribing dictation
____ Composing from instructions
____ Making calculations/tallies
____ Proofreading/correcting
____ Putting finished copy in order
____ Delivering/mailing copy

Collecting/Distributing (4)

____ Delivering/gathering items
____ Stuffing envelopes
____ Logging/listing/counting
____ Dispersing items

Operating Business Machines (4)

____ Preparing machines
____ Making minor adjustments
____ Making minor repairs
____ Placing/taking materials

Sorting/Filing/Retrieving Tasks (8)

____ Scanning for identity/content
____ Stamping for identification
____ Counting/totaling
____ Cataloging/logging/listing
____ Matching (lists with files)
____ Batching (grouping items)
____ Fastening/unfastening
____ Searching/locating

Checking/Computing/Verifying (12)

____ Examining for completeness
____ Making routine decisions
____ Comparing documents
____ Proofreading
____ Comparing requests with status
____ Checking availability
____ Compiling data from records
____ Keeping data records (sales)
____ Establishing coding system
____ Handposting items
____ Balancing/reconciling accounts
____ Using mental arithmetic

Analyzing Procedures/Charting (3)

____ Coding problems
____ Writing instructions
____ Using mathematics

4. **How proficient should entry-level office employees be in the use of the following equipment? Circle the number that best represents your opinion for each piece of equipment.**

	N/A	Novice				Expert
Typewriters	___					
electric typewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
electronic typewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
memory typewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
Word Processing Equipment	___					
dictating/transcribing machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
high speed printer	___	1	2	3	4	5
shared-logic text editor	___	1	2	3	4	5
stand-alone text editor	___	1	2	3	4	5
Reproduction Equipment	___					
offset duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
photocopy duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
spirit duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
stencil duplicating machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
Mailroom Equipment	___					
address printer	___	1	2	3	4	5
binder	___	1	2	3	4	5
folding and inserting machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
labeling machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
mail opener	___	1	2	3	4	5
postage meter/scale	___	1	2	3	4	5
Telecommunication Equipment	___					
facsimile equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
external transmission equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
intercommunications equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
pneumatic tubes	___	1	2	3	4	5
PBX	___	1	2	3	4	5
telephone	___	1	2	3	4	5
teletypewriter	___	1	2	3	4	5
Recordkeeping Equipment	___					
accounting machine	___	1	2	3	4	5
cash register	___	1	2	3	4	5
electronic calculator	___	1	2	3	4	5
Data Processing Equipment	___					
collator	___	1	2	3	4	5
interpreter	___	1	2	3	4	5
key punch equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
large computer	___	1	2	3	4	5
micro computer	___	1	2	3	4	5
printer	___	1	2	3	4	5
reproducing punch equipment	___	1	2	3	4	5
verifier	___	1	2	3	4	5

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5. Is skill in shorthand a prerequisite for employment in your organization for entry-level office employees? ____ Yes ____ No

6. Do entry-level office employees use shorthand? ____ Yes ____ No

7. If yes, what percent of the workday do they use shorthand? ____ %

8. If yes, what minimum speed is necessary for employment? ____words a minute

9. Is skill in typewriting a prerequisite for employment in your organization for entry-level office employees? ____ Yes ____ No

10. Do entry-level office employees use typewriting? ____ Yes ____ No

11. If yes, what percent of the workday do they use typewriting? ____ %

12. If yes, what minimum speed is necessary for employment? ____words a minute

13. Generally, in what type of business is your organization? Check one.

____ Agriculture
____ Communication
____ Construction
____ Education
____ Federal Government
____ Finance
____ Insurance
____ Local Government
____ Manufacturing
____ Mining
____ Real Estate
____ Retail Trade
____ Service
____ State Government
____ Transportation
____ Utilities
____ Wholesale Trade
____ Other _____

Appendix E

Tables Showing Weighted Means for Tables 12 - 18

TABLE 53

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 12
N=85

Typewriter Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Electric typewriters	4.4	84	99
Electronic typewriters	3.1	47	55
Memory typewriters	2.7	42	49

TABLE 54

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 13
N=85

Word Processing Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Dictating/transcribing	3.3	49	58
High speed printer	2.6	37	44
Shared-logic text editor	2.2	33	39
Stand-alone text editor	2.2	32	38

TABLE 55

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 14
N=85

Reproduction Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Offset duplicating	2.8	40	48
Photocopy duplicating	4.1	75	88
Spirit duplicating	2.3	31	36
Stencil duplicating	2.2	36	44

TABLE 56

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 15
N=85

Mailroom Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Address printer	2.3	28	33
Binder	2.4	29	34
Folding and inserting	2.8	29	34
Labeling machine	2.8	31	37
Mail opener	3.2	37	43
Postage meter/scale	3.3	47	56

TABLE 57

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 16
N=85

Telecommunication Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Facsimile	2.4	29	35
External transmission	2.2	23	27
Intercommunications	2.6	34	41
Pneumatic tubes	1.3	19	22
PBX	2.6	30	36
Telephone	4.7	83	98
Teletypewriter	3.0	38	45

TABLE 58

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 17
N=85

Recordkeeping Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Accounting machine	2.8	23	27
Cash register	2.0	21	26
Electronic calculator	4.1	66	78

TABLE 59

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 18
N=85

Data Processing Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Collator	2.9	31	37
Interpreter	1.7	21	25
Key punch equipment	2.3	26	31
Large computer	2.1	28	34
Microcomputer	2.6	26	31
Printer	2.9	29	34
Reproducing punch	2.1	21	25
Verifier	2.1	21	25

Appendix F

Tables Showing Weighted Means for Tables 35 - 40

TABLE 60

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 35
N=46

Typewriter Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Electric typewriters	4.0	46	100
Electronic typewriters	3.6	46	100
Memory typewriters	3.4	46	100

TABLE 61

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 36
N=46

Word Processing Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Dictating/transcribing	3.6	45	98
High speed printer	3.2	46	100
Shared-logic text editor	3.2	45	98
Stand-alone text editor	3.4	45	98

TABLE 62

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 37
N=46

Reproduction Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Offset duplicating	2.1	40	87
Photocopy duplicating	3.9	46	100
Spirit duplicating	2.2	42	91
Stencil duplicating	2.7	42	91

TABLE 63

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 38
N=46

Mailroom Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Address printer	2.1	43	93
Binder	2.2	43	93
Folding and inserting	2.2	43	93
Labeling machine	2.0	45	97
Mail opener	2.5	43	93
Postage meter/scale	2.5	46	100

TABLE 64

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 39
N=46

Telecommunication Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Facsimile	2.8	41	89
External transmission	2.5	43	93
Intercommunications	2.6	45	98
Pneumatic tubes	2.0	38	83
PBX	2.6	41	89
Telephone	4.0	46	100
Teletypewriter	3.1	41	89

TABLE 65

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 40
N=46

Recordkeeping Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Accounting machine	2.1	43	93
Cash register	2.0	42	91
Electronic calculator	3.9	44	96

TABLE 66

Weighted Mean Responses for Table 41
N=46

Data Processing Equipment	Weighted Mean Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Collator	2.5	43	93
Interpreter	2.2	42	91
Key punch equipment	2.7	44	96
Large computer	2.4	43	93
Microcomputer	3.3	45	98
Printer	3.4	46	100
Reproducing punch	2.0	42	91
Verifier	2.0	41	89

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