

Graduates of Small High Schools Start Slowly But Catch Up Fast

By Myra Rotherham

The following was written for a University of Nebraska School of Journalism depth reporting class.

Students from Nebraska's smallest high schools may start out at the University of Nebraska behind their larger school counterparts, but it does not take them long to catch up.

Results of a four semester study of student performance showed students from the state's smallest high schools earned the highest average by their fourth semester at the university.

University of Nebraska representatives failed to find that the size of the high school affects student success at the university.

"It's the kind of person the student is, it's not the size of the high school," said John Aronson, director of admissions.

Aronson points out that small high schools are well represented on the honor rolls of the university. Small high schools are becoming better with state standards tightening up. Both programs and teachers are being raised to the standards of larger schools.

Lee Chatfield, director of Junior Division, offers a similar opinion. "We have no evidence that small high school students are at a disadvantage at the university."

If a student is in the top quarter of his high school graduating class no matter what its size, he has above a 90 per cent chance of earning a satisfactory grade average at the university, Chatfield said.

Honors Shared

Small high school graduates take their share of honors, too. A study done for the Junior Division on students earning high grade point averages revealed that the students were valedictorians and salutans of small high schools and those in the upper three to five per cent of their classes in large schools.

"High achievers do well

wherever they are. They do what they have to do to excel," Chatfield says.

Disadvantages to small high school graduates may lie in the area of depth and variety of courses. These students may be required to fulfill science and language deficits during their college career eliminating opportunity to take additional work in other areas, the Junior Division director said.

Harry Allen, director of Institutions Research, approached the problem from the dropout angle. A study of withdrawals in the 1964 freshman class found "no significant relationship between size of high school and withdrawal from the university."

More students from small schools who come to the university are in the upper half of their classes than students from larger schools.

Seventy-five per cent of the students entering the university are from the upper half of their classes, but only 57 per cent of students who withdraw from the university in about the same proportions as they enter.

Allen said factors other than size of high school were much more important in withdrawal rate. Two thirds of the students who withdrew were children of parents with no more than a grade school education.

Withdrawal rates are the highest for communities with less than 2500 population, followed by students from Omaha, with lowest rates for farm and ranch communities.

Reasons Given

Either grades or finances was given as main reason for withdrawal by nearly half of the students. Twenty-one per cent said finances, six per cent were on scholastic probation and another 16 per cent gave low grades as their withdrawal reason.

Earlton J. Lamberty used University of Nebraska students in his research for a doctoral thesis, "College Achievement in Relation to

Size of High School From Which Students Graduated", 1965. He found there was a difference in academic achievement in students from high schools of various sizes, but it was not always in favor of students from larger schools.

Lamberty used a sample of 1,020 students who enrolled in the university in September, 1960, and who were graduates of Nebraska high schools other than Omaha or Lincoln. The latter schools were omitted because they are not typical Nebraska high schools, according to the author's advising committee.

High schools were classified into five groups according to number of students: I, 10-75; II, 76-150; III, 151-300; IV, 301-750; V, 751-2,300.

Lamberty compared students from each group of schools on the basis of intelligence quotient, grade point averages for four semesters, and English and math grades for the first semester. Students who dropped out in the first semester were not included.

Abilities Compared

Sections of English and math in which the students were enrolled were noted. At the time of the study the university offered English A for students who needed grammar and English III for students capable of doing acceptable composition. Students in the study were enrolled in Math 11, 12, 14 or 18.

For all students in the sample Lamberty found that there was no significant differences

between intelligence quotient scores. This was also true for students enrolled in the various sections of math and English.

Dropouts were noted at the beginning of each semester for each school group. Group I, the smallest schools, had the largest per cent of dropouts each semester. Group II (76-150 students) through V (751-2,300 students) ranged from 33 per cent to 35 per cent while Group I had a 43.8 per cent dropout rate for the four semesters.

Total grade point average was lowest in the Group I (10-75 students) schools the first semester. Averages increased as the size of school increased. The same was true for English and math grades earned during the first semester.

The second semester only Group V (751-2,300 students) schools had a better average intelligence quotient, grade point averages for four semesters, and English and math grades than Group I (10-75 students) schools. Group II (76-150 students) had the best average followed by Group I schools in the third semester. In the fourth semester Group I had the highest average.

Grades Compared

First semester grades ranged from a low of 4.43 for Group I (10-75 students) to a high of 5.19 for Group V (751-2,300 students) with Groups II, III, IV, having at least a 4 of a grade point higher than Group I. University grade scale was from one, failing, to nine, perfect.

Group I, the smallest schools, had the greatest number of students needing remedial work. It also had the lowest percentage of students in English III, which is the advanced class.

Groups III (151-300) IV (301-750) and V (751-2,300) English B grades were significantly higher than those of Group I.

The smallest schools had the least percentage of their students in Math 11, which is designed for students with limited high school math training. That group also had no students enrolled in Math 18, an accelerated course.

Group IV (301-750) had the highest percentage of students enrolled in Math 14, which is also an advance course. Math grades showed no significant difference for any of the schools.

Lamberty concluded that size of high school is related to scholastic achievement at the university in only the first semester. Students from the smallest schools do not achieve as well in the first semester as students from other groups of schools. But after the first semester, scholastic achievement of students from the small schools was generally as good as that of students from the larger schools.

The percentage of dropouts from Group I schools was much greater than from any other group of schools. It could be that had the dropouts from Group I schools been less or the same as from other groups, the scholastic achievement in following semesters would have been different according to Lamberty.

Classes Begin



The Nebraska Union and likewise the University of Nebraska comes to life as students begin classes for the summer sessions.

Nebraska State Museum Develops and Expands

The University of Nebraska State Museum was founded 96 years ago in University Hall, where a room was set aside for cabinets and a request was sent out for specimens.

Since 1871 the museum has grown and has occupied one new building after another. In 1927 the museum's collections were moved to their present location in Morrill Hall.

In 1939 the Ralph Mueller Planetarium wing was added to Morrill Hall, and research collections were housed in four additional university

buildings because of limited space.

Originally a "curator of the cabinets" was appointed, and display specimens were obtained through purchases, donations and field collections made by university staff members.

Collections Increase

Today there are more than 2.5 million specimens in the collections, which have become valuable scientific research and resource materials. Nebraska Hall houses some of the museum's systematic research collections relieving storage problems.

With the addition in 1960 of a talking, transparent model of a woman, the Ralph Mueller Health Galleries increased in educational importance and popularity.

In 1961, the University of Nebraska Trailside Museum opened at Ft. Robinson State Park near Crawford. The theater building of the old fort has been transformed into a museum and educational exhibits have been installed.

Exhibits Displayed

These exhibits interpret the paleontology and geology of the Ft. Robinson region, known as a good area for collecting Tertiary fossil mammals. It also includes exhibits of the animals and plants which inhabit the region today, and the geologic history of cattle and other domesticated animals.

Visitors have increased at the fossil and modern exhibits, the health galleries and the planetarium at the museum.

A sound system is available to all visitors for better interpretation of the exhibits through recordings. Earphones and loudspeakers enable the staff to handle periods of increased attendance.

Astronaut and Judge Coming to Campus

A NASA astronaut and a state supreme court judge will be the guest speakers of the World News and Views this summer, said Frank E. Sorenson, director of Summer Session.

"This two part series will give summer students a proper introduction to space and conditions in large cities," Sorenson said.

The judge lives in a large city with all the problems of youth, and many of these problems end up in the courts, Sorenson mentioned.

Fred W. Haise, Jr., a NASA astronaut in training, and

the Honorable Henry J. Latham of New York are the speakers who will be talking to students and faculty on June 21 and July 20, respectively, at Love Memorial Library.

Haise is in training for future manned space flights at the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston, Tex. Previously he was a research pilot at Edwards, Calif., and at NASA Lewis Research Center in Cleveland, Ohio.

He has written several papers on aviation and aircraft and was a recipient of the A. B. Honts Trophy as the outstanding graduate of class 64A from the Aerospace Research Pilot School in 1964.

Supreme Court Judge Henry J. Latham is serving his ninth year in the state of New York. He has served as a member of the New York State Assembly and was an officer in the U.S. Navy.

For 14 years beginning in 1945 Justice Latham was a member of the U.S. Congress serving for seven years on the Rules Committee.

Justice Latham has been associated with Edwin A. Link, aerospace scientist and undersea explorer, in studies pertaining to deep sustained diving operations and archeology.

Nebraskan Strives To Meet Challenges

The Summer Nebraskan will display the opportunities of cultural and recreational activities in Lincoln and the surrounding areas, as well as portraying campus life during the summer session.

The maturity of a summer session program that is designed to stimulate thought and to supplement the backgrounds of the students involved with its activities will hopefully be maintained by the newspaper.

The demand for a higher education is reflected in the increasing enrollment of summer sessions. As the university community develops, its scope and variety of interests and resources broaden.

The Summer Nebraskan strives to meet the challenges

of a higher education through experimentation with page designs, headline styles, and picture presentations as well as story content. It also provides journalism laboratory students with the opportunity to have some of their stories printed.

Book reviews by university faculty, ideas for weekend tours in Nebraska, cultural events, and perhaps some new concepts in education will be features highlighted by the newspaper in addition to weekly campus news.

Entirely separate from the Daily Nebraskan printed during the regular school term, the Summer Nebraskan will be issued every Tuesday during the eight-week summer session.

Seminars Varied

Seminar sessions offer concentrated workshops in education, most of which are designed for the college graduate with teaching experience, said Frank E. Sorenson, director of Summer Sessions.

A NASA Spacemobile with its lecturer is scheduled to spend two weeks or more with "Aerospace Education for Teachers" seminar participants, Sorenson said.

This seminar gives teachers the opportunity to become acquainted with Nebraska aerospace leaders, facilities and services, especially those needed to enhance the teaching process.

Qualified teachers of the deaf will acquire experience in the development of teaching materials according to needs of handicapped children.

Effects of recent federal legislation including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and state legislation including the Educational Service Units (LE301) is another summer seminar topic.

Specific events for teachers participating in the seminars

have been scheduled and are listed in the summer sessions calendar, Sorenson said.

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Collections Displayed

Nebraska Art today, a special Centennial Invitational exhibition, will open at the University of Nebraska Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery Sunday, June 18.

Fifty-two present and former Nebraska painters, sculptors and graphic artists will be represented in the display. Centennial purchase awards made by the Nebraska Art Association will also be shown for the first time at the Centennial exhibition. The display will continue in galleries D-E-F at Sheldon through July 30.

The exhibit has been organized by the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha and the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery for the Nebraska Centennial Commission. The Nebraska Arts Council is assisting with the exhibition.

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