

Almanac

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IN BRIEF

Clarification on ATO: The University has asked the Hon. Lois Forer of the Court of Common Pleas for clarification of her interim ruling "in the matter of Alpha Tau Omega vs. the University of Pennsylvania with a view towards a prompt rehearing of the matter within the University. Upon a satisfactory clarification of the order, the University expects to go forward with a rehearing in accordance with Judge Forer's ruling," President Sheldon Hackney told Council on Wednesday. Judge Forer's November 17 order (*Almanac* November 29) sets forth general requirements for a rehearing of the case which last spring resulted in a withdrawal of recognition that was later challenged by the fraternity in court.

Dining at Houston: President Sheldon Hackney said Friday that the question of Dining Service's entry into the Houston Hall space vacated by Hardee's is "not yet resolved" despite reports that Dining Service will pull out of the planning. At issue are a combination of financing and programmatic issues, with talks continuing this week.

Council: At the November 30 meeting, Council discussed four possibilities for bringing items to the floor for discussion outside the Steering Committee, with a view to voting on by-laws changes in January. Steering proposed three methods, none mutually exclusive: by written petition of 10% of a constituency, written petition of 15% of Council regardless of constituency mix, and/or by request at the beginning of a meeting (in which 20 minutes would be reserved for all such items of new business). From the floor, Dr. Phyllis Rackin proposed a set number instead of a percentage of a constituency; and GAPSA Chair Bette Kauffman argued that one concerned voice should be enough to warrant a hearing provided the issue was within Council purview and potentially resolvable through Council advice. Provost Thomas Ehrlich and others suggested that with one exception (student Frank Luntz's concern—*Almanac* November 8—that Council declined to hear an FAS matter) Council seemed to be seeking a solution for what might not be a problem.

Council also debated a report on how five former varsity sports have fared since conversion to club status in Spring 1982. For the special subcommittee of the Committee on Recreation and Intercollegiate Athletics, Dr. Paul Zingg reported continued strength of membership and competitive records in the Ivy

Trustees; Gifts, Budget and a Memorial to the Past

Gifts are up 29 percent over last year; the FY 1984 budget shows a modest surplus of \$378,000 projected despite deficits expected from a combination of five schools and one nonacademic program; and the former PGH nurses' residence will now have a name.

Blockley Hall is the name voted for the residence that Wharton School used for swing space during Steinberg-Dietrich construction—and the Hospital will use similarly as Phase IV gets under way. It will "memorialize our own past," President Sheldon Hackney said as he proposed the name, after the 19th-century farm on which PGH and the first five buildings of

Penn's "new campus" were built.

Performance: Savings—on salary costs, utilities and interest—are projected along with income gains in investments, indirect cost recovery, gifts and sales, to offset a collection of projected deficits totaling some \$1,300,000. Senior Vice President Helen O'Bannon reported to the Trustees Executive Board Friday. She identified graduate and special tuition shortfalls, among other factors in projected deficits for Veterinary Medicine, Arts and Sciences, Engineering, Fine Arts, and Social Work, and "unrealistic budgeting" in Intercollegiate Athletics.

Finance: The Executive Board passed two resolutions to fund renovations: one at \$1.14 million for "invisible investment" in wiring and plumbing for the fourth phase of Quadrangle restoration, and the other at \$48,862 to bring the Fine Arts' Gutman Center Barn in Bucks County up to a total of \$500,000.

Housekeeping: The Board also passed the enabling resolution for offering honorary degrees in the 1984 Commencement; authorized the Chairman of the Trustees to appoint representatives to the joint board with the Annenberg School; and reappointed Samuel H. Ballam as chairman of the Trustee Board of the Hospital, with four members reappointed to one-year terms (Charles D. Dickey, Jr. G. Morris Dorance, Jr., Margaret Mainwaring, and Anthony S. Minisi) and two reelected to five-year terms (W.W. Keen Butcher and William J. Shaw).

Faculty: Reporting for the Provost, Deputy Provost Richard Clelland cited one tenure-bearing action this month: the promotion of Dr. Janice A. Radway of American Civilization to associate professor. He highlighted a forthcoming book, a Lindback Award and service as undergraduate chair of the department.

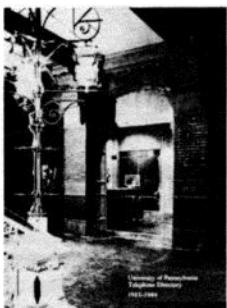
Senate Items: Reports and summations from the November 16 Fall Meeting, promised for this week, are being held for the December 13 issue so that two items *For Comment*—the Judicial Commission summary on page 7 and the full study on reenrollment and attrition introduced below and starting on page 3—can appear for timely response by the University community.

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Insert: The International Dimension

League, but UA's Chair Ken Meyers objected to the use of varsity vs. club status in the other Ivies as part of the criteria for status here. The subcommittee report will be summarized in a future issue.



Above: The Arthur Ross Gallery graces the new phone book.



The Handbook Is Out...

Penn's Handbook for Faculty and Academic Administrators: A Selection of Policies and Procedures of the University of Pennsylvania is starting into circulation in a new edition. Updated from 1979, the new version also has a changed format—brad-bound for continuous revision on future receipt of replacement pages or new ones. Produced by the Office of the Secretary, the 96-page reference covers University structure and Trustees' rules pertaining to faculty, codifies appointments and promotions rules, policies arrived at on recommendation of Council and Senate as well as those issued in administrative memoranda, and in some cases refers readers to auxiliary documents such as the Personnel Policy Manual and Research Investigators' Handbook. Copies are available upon request to the Office of Secretary, 121 College Hall/CO, Ext. 7007.

... And the Phone Book

The New University Telephone Directory for 1983-84 is in distribution. It has a section listing for the first time in several years with the home addresses and/or phone numbers of faculty and staff who chose the option to be listed. These entries are in a second section of the "white pages." The book's green pages, where building codes and University services are always found, has been expanded with such topics as child care, children's services, a communications inventory, exhibition facilities and the Penn bus schedule. The cover photo (left) is by architectural photographer Robert Harris, Berry & Homer Photographics, and the design is by Rick Landesberg. Any omissions or changes should be sent to the Telecommunications Office, P-105 Franklin Building/16 to be incorporated in a list of corrected numbers in a future issue of *Almanac*.

On the Final Report on Reenrollment and Attrition

Last winter, George S. Koval, then Acting Vice Provost for University Life, established a work team to analyze data on undergraduate student reenrollment and attrition, and to continue the building of an analytic data base for year-to-year analyses. After months of cooperative efforts with the four undergraduate deans, two students, and representatives of the Admissions, Financial Aid, and Registrar's Office, Mr. Vince P. Conti, Chair of the team and Director of Student Data, submitted to me on November 29, 1983, his final report on reenrollment and attrition.

While the report reflects the detailed, thoughtful and careful handling of the fundamentally complex data on student reenrollment, it could not possibly show the unusual efforts that were required to obtain these data from thousands of electronic files and manual office records. Mr. Conti and his colleagues performed an excellent service for the University, for which we are all deeply appreciative and through which we are better informed about this critical measure of the quality of undergraduate education at Penn.

As a result of the group's work, the University has acquired an historical data base for entering first-year students which will support future retention studies. Additional information from succeeding classes can now be added to and compared with existing figures. The recent report also confirmed much that was reported in early 1983 about reenrollment and attrition.

The report makes clear several points that bear highlighting. For example:

- The overall rates of undergraduate graduation are high by national standards. Indeed, the graduation rates for the most recent classes for whom we have such data are even higher than the University's trend would have predicted.
- The graduation rates for most "Admissions Component" categories show significant increases. It is very encouraging to learn that these rising trends also hold for "Special Admits," those qualified students who by traditional measures are most academically at risk.
- The study shows consistently that most students who do not graduate from Penn leave the University voluntarily, often for personal, educational, or career-related factors that are not related to academic performance.
- There is very little difference in the graduation rates of women and men.
- Although the graduation rates for minority students improved, these young men and women show "significantly lower graduation rates than do white students." This fact should be a cause for continued concern to all of the Penn community and should prompt concerted efforts by us to understand the reasons, and to create on our campus educational environments that enable each student to achieve her or his full potential. The data show that we have much to do before such environments exist.

Among the many issues addressed, Mr. Conti's report suggests a complex relationship of financial aid to reenrollment patterns. Although cause and effect are not clear, financial aid data when combined with other information help to shed some light and we surely need to explore the relationship more fully.

The information provided through the work team's efforts points to the steps we must now take to address the issue of reenrollment

and retention. We must:

- (1) Evaluate our advising, counseling and other supportive services to determine the factors that lead to high graduation rates.
- (2) Explore, through cooperative efforts by the Director of Student Data and the Deans of each undergraduate school, individual school-related trends and attrition-related factors.
- (3) Institute consistent coding of academic drops and similar actions.
- (4) Examine the possible financial aid factors that may effect students' chances of graduating in a timely fashion.
- (5) Increase efforts to interview all exiting students and to ensure that adequate information is available for future studies.
- (6) Establish reenrollment and attrition studies as regular tasks for institutional research.
- (7) Develop improved relationships among students, faculty members, advisors and other resource persons, which will reduce the psychological size of the University and enable students to be advised and assisted at earlier stages of their difficulties.

In addition, there are other actions which should help us in our efforts to address retention and related matters. Although not specifically designed as portions of retention programs, both the recently announced Penn Plan for families and their children to finance higher education, and the proposed school-based service centers, should improve the delivery of services. The "stretch" courses offered by some departments in conjunction with the Tutoring Center, the counseling and monitoring provided by our successful PennCap program, and the availability of financial aid for students to attend summer school and to take courses as needed beyond their eighth semester all contribute to improved graduation rates. By continuing the University's participation in the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, the University can expect to gain further insights into the factors affecting minority attrition. Early in the next semester, I will appoint an advisory committee to assist with the preparation for "ongoing research and evaluation of our student services and support activities."

Increasing the chances for each student to complete successfully her or his education at Penn is a University-wide responsibility. To obtain as many views and suggestions as possible on how we can best discharge this responsibility, a copy of the Report on Reenrollment and Attrition will be publicized in *Almanac* and the following groups are among those which will be explicitly asked for comments on the report and the fundamental issues discussed therein:

Council of Undergraduate Deans
Council Committee for Admissions and Financial Aid
Council Committee on Recreation and Intercollegiate Athletics
Undergraduate Assembly
United Minority Council
Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

We encourage our colleagues to reflect carefully on this report and to share with us their ideas and suggestions so that Penn can extend its proud record of low attrition rates to all components of its student body.

—James H. Bishop, Vice Provost for University Life



Report on Reenrollment and Attrition

November, 1983

I. Introduction

Earlier in the year, Vince Conti, Director of Student Data, published "A Preliminary Report on Reenrollment and Attrition" (*Almanac*, February 1, 1983). Several basic points were made as part of that analysis:

1. Over a period of six years from date of entry, cohorts of matriculating freshmen showed a fairly constant graduation rate of around 80%.

2. The most significant single year attrition occurs in the freshman year, but there is also a sizeable percentage of students who ultimately do not graduate who continue their efforts into the junior and senior years.

3. One of the overwhelming facts of attrition suggested by the data is that most students who leave Pennsylvania before graduation do so voluntarily.

The publication of the preliminary report also announced the formation of a work team to begin a more detailed analysis of reenrollment issues. This report, submitted by the chair of the committee, is the product of that attempt to broaden our analysis; but it in no way should represent the conclusion of our efforts as an institution to understand the complex issues involved in attrition and reenrollment. The present analysis attempts to compensate for the lack of regular institutional research in this area of concern, but certainly any retention efforts which the institution might organize would have to depend upon an ongoing analysis of reenrollment patterns.

II. Information System Support

In our effort to understand academic progression and attrition, we have been severely hampered by the inability of our present computerized student data systems to support an integrated and a longitudinal analysis of student activity patterns. The incredible difficulties we encountered stand as further testimony to the need to make significant progress on the issue of administrative computing systems. Realizing that any such progress is a long-term effort, however, our work group's present activity also was directed at the creation of a longitudinal historical data base for entering freshmen cohorts which will help to support future analysis. This data base will allow us to add each new year of data to each cohort for which it is the sixth or less year of data. Thus, the results of the 1983-84 year will extend the 1978 cohort to six years, 1979 to five, 1980 to four and so forth. Next summer we will be in a position to extend our analysis into the 1979 and 1980 cohorts. The creation of this ability is one real achievement of our last few months of effort.

As in the preliminary report, we must acknowledge that problems still persist with our data base and that "noise" does and must exist in the data which underlie part of our analysis. The noise is somewhat greater in the earliest data since for cohorts prior to 1977, data had to be gathered from a larger number of distinct information sources. The expansion of the student data base for information on all cohorts from 1977 increases the reliability of detail data. We believe that the earlier data are basically correct in the aggregate, and that were the individual records that may contain errors to be corrected retrospectively, no fundamental change in our conclusions would be forced.

In our attempts to confirm that sense of comfort, we have looked at hundreds of manual records in various offices and compared them to the electronic records in our data base, electronic records which were drawn from several different computer data bases in the central service offices. The results of this extensive checking indicate that we can have reasonable confidence in our analysis. Trends with respect to detail data, however, will best be confirmed or denied based upon our ability to extend our analysis to new post-1977 cohorts.

III. Reenrollment and Attrition

Since the publication of the preliminary report, we have added the data for the 1982-83 academic year to our historical data base and have included graduation records through August, 1983. The result of this addition confirms a feeling identified in the preliminary report that our trend in attrition is improving overall. That report noted that the graduation rate for the class that entered in 1978 after four years of data was slightly better than the trend would have predicted. In fact we see a dramatic upturn in graduation rate with this cohort when we add the fifth year of data, and that trend is confirmed when we consider the cohort that matriculated in 1979 with four years of data. Consider the information in Table 1.

The significant upturn in graduation rates for the cohort of 1978 and 1979 is difficult to explain completely. A first concern must be the possibility that the trend is really an artifact of problems in the earlier data. However, fairly extensive detail examination of the 1976 and 1977 cohorts suggests that the earlier figures are indeed correct. Some examination of detail will help us determine where the upturn occurred and provide an insight into the nature of reenrollment and attrition on the campus.

One important fact to keep in mind when we discuss school graduation rates is that our statistics are based upon the school of matriculation even if eventual graduation is from another school of the University. Each cohort shows about 12% of the cohort is involved in internal transfer among schools. These students appear to graduate at rates slightly better than those of the overall cohort. The net flow of students in and out of Engineering and nursing is such that both schools remain about the same size relative to the overall cohort. Wharton gains in size by approximately 5% of the overall cohort with the College losing that percentage.

School graduation rates present one important way of looking at the trend in reenrollment. Table 2 illustrates the point. It is not surprising that the upturn in the over-all graduation rate is most significantly reflected in a dramatic increase in the college graduation rate. The College still accounts for almost two-thirds of the matriculating class and therefore dominates any averages for the cohorts. When considering the

	1. Freshman Cohorts						
	Six Years of Data			Five Years of Data		Four Years of Data	
	Sept. 73	Sept. 74	Sept. 75	Sept. 76	Sept. 77	Sept. 78	Sept. 79
Graduated	80%	81%	81%	81%	81%	85%	79%
Graduated after 4 years ²	71%	71%	71%	70%	71%	76% ¹	79%
Active ³	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	8%
Not Active	18%	16%	16%	17%	17%	13%	13%

¹ In the table presented in the Preliminary Report on Reenrollment and Attrition this figure was listed as 73%. The increase, a difference of approximately 30 students, came from students eventually graduated as August, 1982, even though the posting of the graduation date occurred well after the date.

² Includes graduates, in August of fourth year.

³ Includes those active in Fall 1983 Term for 78 and 79 cohorts.

	2. Freshman Cohorts: Graduation Rates by Matriculating School				
	Six Years		Five Years		Four Years
	1976	1977	1978	1979	1979
SAMP	85%	89%	—	—	—
COLLEGE	80%	80%	85%	80%	7%
NUR	88%	90%	95%	78%	19%
WH	85%	91%	89%	86%	5%
EAS	75%	73%	77%	67%	14%
OVERALL	81%	81%	85%	79%	8%

College, several points suggest themselves as causal factors. The first and most obvious point is a change in the composition of the matriculating class with an increase in 1978 over 1977 in the percentage of the class admitted Top Quarter and a corresponding decrease in the Diversity component. The special admissions component stayed basically the same in terms of its percentage of the class but performed dramatically better in terms of graduation rates.

For those not familiar with the terminology of component admissions, the McGill Report on Undergraduate Admissions set the components now in use and is the most useful guide. For purposes here, it is sufficient to note that Top Quarter Admits are the strongest academic admits in the institution; Diversity admits comprise the vast bulk of matriculating students, usually from three-fifths to two-thirds; and Special Admits, students admitted to a series of five special categories, are those students most academically at risk, although the Admissions Committee feels them capable of success at Pennsylvania. In many cases, Special Admits aid the University in maintaining some of its goals of diversity in the student body. One must continually keep in mind that the Special Admit categories—the five are Special Interest, Athletic, Socio-economically Disadvantaged, Alumni, and Faculty/Staff—do not contain all students who are sons or daughters of alumni or faculty/staff, for example. Students who qualify for regular admissions regardless of background or interest are admitted on a regular, not special basis. Thus it is the special categories that are used to admit that small percentage of students, usually with a target of 15% of the class, whom the University wishes to admit and who are most at risk in terms of the over-all academic credentials of the class.

What occurred between 1977 and 1978 was a shift, most significant because of absolute numbers in the College, in the differential graduation rate for Top Quarter vs. Diversity students. When added to an increased yield in Top Quarter students, we ended up with significant shifts in rates. The behavior pattern that characterizes the Top Quarter student is a tendency to have the highest graduation rate and the strongest drive to graduate in four years. The dramatic upturn in the graduation rates of both the Diversity component and the over-all Special Admit group is more difficult to explain.

Overall, the quality of the Diversity component was not significantly higher than 1977 as measured by the traditional objective measures. However, the most significant reasons probably have little to do with academic preparation. As the preliminary report made clear, attrition from Pennsylvania has been largely a voluntary activity. Students have elected to leave in much larger numbers than have been asked to leave. For each of these cohorts only about one-third of all the students who do not graduate have GPA's of 2.0 or lower. This frequently amounts to about 5% to 7% of the over-all class. Approximately 20% non-graduates leave Penn with GPA's of 3.0 or better, and the other students who leave Penn have satisfactory academic records. For some reason, beginning with the class that matriculated in 1978, less of the Diversity component elected to leave Pennsylvania. More on some possible reasons later.

Certainly the continuation of the trend for the class that matriculated in 1979 follows a similar pattern. With this cohort, the increase in the percentage of the final matriculating class in the Top Quarter seems directly related to the increase in the four-year graduation rate. With only four years of data, the Top Quarter students are graduating at the same 87% rate, yet they have increased from 17% of the over-all class in 1978 to 23% in 1979. The Diversity students for the 1979 cohort are graduating at lower rates than 1978, but this is again part of a pattern of rates that will rise after four years. Other confirmation that the trend is toward rising over-all graduation rates is apparent in comparisons of the activity of the cohorts after one and two years of enrollment, which shows the cohorts of 1980 and 1981 with a higher percentage of active students after one and two years than the cohort of 1977. The pattern of shifts in the composition of the class also holds.

One of the more encouraging factors in the upturn of rates in the 1978 cohort is the rising graduation rate for Special Admits. In both the 1977 and 1978 cohorts, the percentage of Special Admits as a portion of the class was roughly similar: 17% in 1978 and 18% in 1977. Yet the graduation rate rose significantly. This happened even though the frame of comparison for the 1977 cohort is six years of data vs. five years of data for the 1978 group.

When looking at each component of the Special Admit group, it is difficult to isolate the factors. The Special Interest, Alumni, and Faculty/Staff categories, which generally together equal about 5% to 6% of the over-all class are individually so small that wide shifts in percentage are easily possible. From 1977 to 1978, the two-percentage-point difference in the relative size of the over-all Special Admit group was concentrated in the Socio-economically Disadvantaged category, which moved from 8% of the over-all class to 5%. (In absolute numbers the decline was less, since the over-all class size was larger in 1978.) The Athletic component went from 5% to 4% of the class. It is in these two groups that the most significant upturn in graduation rates was registered, for these two groups represent more than one-half of the Special Admits. The upturn in rates for the Athletic component appears to be holding for the 1979 cohort, at 63% graduation rate for four years. Recently-announced plans of the Council Committee on Recreation and Intercollegiate Athletics to study, among other things, attrition among student athletes may illuminate the issue. Once again, it is important to remember that the Athletic component is a minority of the student athlete population. At this time it is difficult to evaluate the trend for the Socio-economically Disadvantaged component because of the tendency in this population to graduate later. For this component in the cohort in 1979, 58% have graduated, 11% are active, 12% have been dropped or have withdrawn, and 19% are on leave of absence, many of whom may return. We will know more about the nature of upturn in Special Admit rates displayed in 1978 when we add a fifth year to the 1979 cohort and a fourth year to 1980.

What the data on admissions components suggests is that there is some relationship between academic credentials at admissions and graduation rates and reenrollment patterns. This is not a terribly surprising observation. However, it is a bit more difficult to interpret in light of the voluntary nature of attrition at Pennsylvania. As stated earlier, only a small percentage of our students who leave do so with GPA's of 2.0 or less. The actions recorded by the Registrar show consistently only 3% to 4% of each cohort are dropped by the school. Unfortunately, the lack of consistency with which the schools use action indicators such as drop, withdraw and leave make it difficult to truly get at the issue of involuntary attrition, but all evidence supports the view that it is significantly less than one-half of all attrition.

The real issue in much of our attrition may very well relate more to perceptions of failure. The results of a number of surveys of our students consistently points to only about 15% who believe that the Bachelor's degree will be the highest academic degree obtained. Even many of those students who go directly into the work force indicate plans to return for further education. The actual number of our students who do go on past the B.A. is not a figure we have available, but the perception of our students is something we must take into account.

If some of our attrition is of students who leave us because they have failed in light of their expectations of what was needed to meet their aspirations for a career or other educational goal, we can direct appropriate programs of counseling, academic advising and career advising

(continued past insert)

ALMANAC, December 6, 1983

III. Freshman Cohorts: Graduation Rate by Admit Component

	1977	1978
Top Quarter	89%	88%
Diversity	83%	87%
All Regular	84%	87%
Special Interest	77%	79%
Athletic	61%	77%
Socio-Economically Disadvantaged	65%	74%
Alumni	91%	89%
Faculty/Staff	70%	72%
All Special	68%	78%

IV. Freshman Cohorts: Graduation by Minority Groups

	1976	1977	1978
Hispanic	45%	58%	65%
White	83%	84%	87%
Black	62%	65%	69%
Asian	76%	82%	82%
Overall*	81%	81%	85%

* Includes unknown group

at the problem. The issue for many of the students who leave us does not appear to be related to an inability to gain a Penn degree. For some of these students, academic support which takes the form of a strong, well-coordinated advising system may well speak to concerns for coping with expectations better than support programs of a traditional sense. Of course for students who elect to leave us, our best sources of information on what contributed to that decision are the students themselves. The potential advantages to a system of exit interviews are significant, and this report will return to that issue.

We felt an obvious need to look at the reenrollment data in ways that did not conform to Admissions categories. Such a view points to one of our persistent problems and an area in need of attention. Although there seems to be very little difference between men and women in terms of graduation rates, minority students at Pennsylvania do have significantly lower graduation rates than do white students. We compared graduation rates with racial identifiers where students reported race. In most cohorts there is a 10% group that do not self-identify. This group tends to perform very similarly to the self-identified white population. Table 4 illustrates the problem of minority attrition.

The wide shifts in graduation rate for Hispanic students is a factor of the very small size of the population, ranging from a low of 26 students in the 1978 cohort to 48 students in the 1977 cohort. In each case, the figures are up for the 1978 cohort, but the absolute numbers of self-identified minority students in the cohort were down, with black students ranging from a high of 156 in the 1977 cohort to a low of 96 in the 1978 cohort. The performance of minority students in terms of graduation rates was difficult to evaluate across schools due to the fact that the largest percentage of minority students is in the College, in proportions even greater than the relative size of the College compared with other schools. The one exception to the rule is with Asian students, who have a greater representation than proportion alone would dictate in the School of Engineering. It is true that in almost all cases, minority students have better graduation rates in the College than in either Wharton or the School of Engineering, but this may be a factor of the smaller numbers in the other schools and the higher percentage of males outside of FAS. At least among black students, there is a tendency for higher graduation rates among women than men.

It is difficult to make judgments on what is a satisfactory rate of attrition. Clearly our goal cannot be nor should be 100% graduation. There is much that is positive in attrition. Manual searches of records showed that some students left us to pursue academic interests not offered at Pennsylvania. Others undoubtedly found a bad fit between personal needs and objectives and our large, frequently impersonal community. Our own Transfer Admissions program is clearly a means of offering positive alternatives to students at other institutions who seek a change of environment or program. Transfers who entered as part of the cohort of 1977 (September, 1977, or January, 1978) graduated at an 88% rate, and those who entered as part of the cohort of 1978 with 92% rate. We must as an institution decide if an over-all attrition rate for matriculating freshmen of 15% or 20% is acceptable or something to be attacked vigorously. However, there can be little doubt that we must address a situation in which specific segments of our minority student population have attrition significantly higher than the over-all rate of which they themselves are a part.

Traditionally, the first attempts to attack the problem of minority attrition take the form of special academic supportive services. This may very well be a useful way to address part of the problem of attrition of students academically at risk, minority and non-minority, but it ignores the fact that many minority students admitted without the benefit of special admissions categories have similar difficulties. Two years ago, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission conducted a study of black student progression with the cooperation of 24 colleges and universities, of which Pennsylvania was one. Many of our departments supplied aggregate data for the project, and random samples of black and white students were surveyed with a return of over 70%. Since the data analysis was based upon aggregate data over very dissimilar institutions, it is difficult to relate directly to Pennsylvania. However, it did suggest that factors of mean family income, racial representation on campus, and proportion of cohort race receiving financial aid were positively related to attrition in the early years of a student's college career. Academic predictors such as SAT scores were seen as significant predictors only in later years. Admitting the problems of applying this aggregate re-

search directly to Pennsylvania, it did raise the question of the relationship of attrition to issues of financial assistance for all students.

The preliminary report had also acknowledged the degree of relying too heavily upon academic performance data at the expense of information on financial aid. The difficulties of retrieving student financial aid data, especially back in the years of the late 1970's are real, and the tendency to attempt to examine an issue like reenrollment through the use of the data most readily at hand is strong. However, what we have been able to do by combining a number of sources of information suggests some concerns related directly to financial support.

The relationship between financial aid and reenrollment is not a simple one, and it is worthy of examination. The comparison of the 1977 and 1978 cohorts is suggestive. In the 1977 cohort approximately 45% of the class was on need-based aid, and that group graduated at approximately an 80% rate, slightly behind the 82% rate of the non-need students, but certainly no dramatic influence is apparent. In the 1978 cohort, approximately 40% of the class was on need-based aid in their freshman year, and they graduated with the same 80% rate. However, the non-need students, now 60% of the class, show a dramatic change from an 82% to an 88% graduation rate, accounting for the over-all graduation rate for the cohort of 85%. An interesting statistic, but hardly one that is clearly instructive. The cohort admitted in 1979 went back to 45% of the class on need-based aid, and our ability to add this group to our analysis with five years of data may begin to provide better insight.

We also considered the relationships of graduation rates to ranges of family income. A pattern does emerge that shows higher graduation rates for the students with higher levels of family income; that is, those students on need-based aid who generally have less need. There was also some tendency for family income to relate positively to higher academic credentials measured by standard admissions testing. Once again, causal variables are not clear. The issue of financial assistance is particularly complex since one should look at the year-to-year impact of financial need. Perhaps our worst data base for support of retrospective, analytical study is the financial aid computer file. However, a number of factors continues to suggest that we find ways to press on with the issue of the relationships of financial aid to reenrollment. Among these factors are the responses of our students to the survey conducted by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission mentioned earlier.

With respect to the survey data, we do have the ability to identify just the responses of our students, and thus this information presents no difficulty in terms of relating it to Pennsylvania. Remember that the survey went to separate random samples of white and black students. Consistently, one set of questions that differentiated these two populations was that set of questions that relates to financing education. Significant differences occurred when these two groups of students were asked questions regarding the experience of financial difficulties since enrolling in college, total family income, number of hours working while at college and other similar questions. However, both groups expressed the same level of commitment to reenroll, and neither indicated an experience of remaining out of school for financial reasons. An attempt to get at similar issues in an exit interview might be instructive. The differences in the way these questions were answered, however, did suggest that we look at the concern of minority attrition from the vantage point of our available information on financial aid.

Once again, the information is difficult to interpret. Minority students on need-based aid in the 1977 cohort graduated at the same rate as minority students not on need-based aid. This is true for each minority population separately and for the groups as a whole. In the 1978 cohort there is a slight difference, but this is true for all students on need-based aid, as the earlier data demonstrated. It is in the 1978 cohort that we see a difference in terms of graduation rates between all need-based aid students and non-need students. Of course, it is very important to note that the experience of financial need among minority students is much greater than among white students. Consistently, minority students have between two-out-of-three to three-out-of-four of their numbers on need-based aid while white students have between one-out-of-three to two-out-of-five of their numbers in this population.

Here one sees the relationships which the Tennessee study drew between percentage of cohort race on financial aid and attrition. The sub-populations that have the highest attrition rates also have overwhelming percentages on need-based aid. However, whether or not a

causal relationship exists here is very difficult to determine. These same populations have higher numbers in that group of students in need of academic support, and they are the population that must clearly negotiate a campus world dominated by non-minorities. To identify the complexities of the issue is safe but of little practical help. However, some important points about student perceptions can be made.

Attrition at Pennsylvania takes many forms. Just as obviously, any retention effort on our part must be multifaceted. When considering minority attrition issues, it is clear that some minority students, along with specific groups of white students, can make good use of well organized and managed efforts of academic support. But such efforts are hardly sufficient if they are the limit of a formal retention effort. A strong perception on the part of many of our minority students also suggests a relationship between academic difficulties and financial difficulties. The inconclusive nature of the minimal effort we have been able to make with the data does not really speak to that perception.

Conversations with minority students also suggest that the issue be broadened somewhat. Some concerns deal directly with the delivery of aid and not just with the presence or amount of aid. The case of the student who drops a course only to find a semester later that that action jeopardizes his/her eligibility for a Guaranteed Student Loan or other forms of aid is unfortunate. Good information systems should be able to alert the appropriate University officer at the precise moment the ill-fated decision is made and while it is still correctable. The student whose package is not calculated until September due to delay of one sort or another may receive a final package that meets need but only after a period of considerable anxiety. This is not an attack upon the financial aid office; in many cases the delay may have been necessary. However it is the case that the delivery of financial aid, like the delivery of many student services, often places an unnecessary burden upon students, especially those students most dependent upon those services. This has been recognized. The concept of student service centers and the proposed redesign of the Student Financial Aid information system are attempts to speak to the issue. While these efforts have not been formally conceived of as part of a retention strategy, student comments strongly suggest that such efforts may well have a beneficial effect in terms of retention.

The issue of financial aid's relationship to reenrollment patterns is a difficult one to approach. We initiated such an approach because of the strong concern on the part of specific groups of students. There is probably no clear relationship. This complex problem of reenrollment seldom lends itself to easy answers, and to draw such answers where they are inappropriate is dangerous. However, a better understanding of financial aid issues must be part of our continued concern with attrition and reenrollment. Along with this effort to learn more about financial assistance, we must find ways to understand the relationship between academic support services and success. To do this, we need appropriate ways to maintain student data with respect to use of these support services. At issue as well is a persistent claim by vocal groups of students that they too seldom are offered real academic advising concerning program or career choice.

Once again, one of our greatest difficulties comes from attempting to infer student concerns from available data retrospectively. We must begin now to collect the necessary data in forms that will support this form of analysis. One very helpful element would be an agreement on the part of the undergraduate schools to use a uniform set of action codes to differentiate an academic drop, mandatory leave or forced withdrawal from a requested leave of absence or voluntary withdrawal. Another important requirement is regular, on-going research and evaluation of our central student service and support activities. These are not formal retention programs in and of themselves. They are a framework that would help us measure our success and appropriately target scarce resources. We must keep in mind that most of our attrition is voluntary, and thus a concern for how our services are received by the major client for them, the student, is a proper concern in any retention effort.

In many ways, President Hackney's statement of the strategic importance of reducing the psychological size of the University may hold an important key to a strong retention effort. As stated in the preliminary report, a number of students leave us without any formal notice. This group of students may be giving us a strong sign of their lack of personal contact with faculty or advisors. In a more personal community, we should have an effective early warning system that helps us identify and help students before they complete the tasks of what the literature calls developing a rationale for attrition.

One of the sources of information most needed to help us evaluate the complex set of issues related to reenrollment is the results of exit interviews. A subgroup of the committee has volunteered to work on this concern, and it is the next task to which we as an institution must turn our attention. We are attempting now to identify other schools engaged in similar efforts in order to learn from their experience with such tools. Once again, it is important to reiterate the need to continue to refine our analyses and to significantly improve our information base with respect to these issues. The work done by this committee provides a groundwork for institutional research. The Office of Student Data will continue to work with each undergraduate dean in order to further our efforts.

Naturally, it is important to frame our understanding of reenrollment at Pennsylvania within some context of experience elsewhere. To this end, we polled a series of similar institutions in order to gather data. Our experience was interesting. In many cases we found other institutions in the same situation in which we found ourselves last year, with no available information. In a few cases, the replies indicated a desire to maintain that status! No school provided us with figures on minority attrition, and in at least one case it appeared that there was a definite decision not to collect such information. Since it was not always clear that schools were willing to have their precise data made public, let us represent it in this manner: Carnegie Mellon, Tufts, MIT, Northwestern, and Johns Hopkins all report data very close to our over-all cohort rates with similar upward trends suggested where trend data was available. The only school that responded to our request with significantly higher graduation rates was Harvard, which reported a 75% graduation rate after four years, 93% after 5 years and 97% after six years.

*Vincent P. Conti, Director of Student Data: Chair
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Lawrence Eisenberg, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education and Special Programs, School of Engineering and Applied Science
Diane McGivern, Associate Dean and Director of Undergraduate Studies, School of Nursing
William M. Schilling, Director, Office of Student Financial Aid
John J. Smolen, Jr., University Registrar
Matthew J. Stephens, Vice Dean and Director, Wharton Undergraduate Division
Michele Blackwell, Junior, Wharton
Susan Keiffer, Senior, College*



The Final Report of the President's Commission on Judicial Procedures: A Summary by the Chairman

The President's Commission on Judicial Procedures, appointed in May, 1982, to review and evaluate the University's grievance and disciplinary systems, has released its Final Report. Almost 100 pages in length counting appendices, the Report describes existing procedures, examines the operating experience of the various mechanisms, and makes recommendations designed to strengthen them. The Commission has distributed copies of the Report to officers of the Faculty Senate, the University Council, the A-1 and A-3 Assemblies, the Undergraduate Assembly, and the Graduate and Professional Students Assembly, as well as to administrators with responsibilities in this area and the editors of *Almanac*, *The Daily Pennsylvanian*, and *The Penn Paper*. Five copies have been placed on reserve in Van Pelt Library.

The Commission, composed of ten faculty members, four non-academic staff employees, two undergraduate students and two graduate students, concerned itself with major policy issues, not with the detailed wording of the various procedures. It noted that the University has followed a quasi-judicial model in developing the grievance and norm-enforcement mechanisms available to its various constituent groups. Such a model is characterized by extensive opportunities for informal resolution in its early stages, notice of the charges, representation by advisors, formal hearings before a panel with the opportunity to testify, offer witnesses and cross examine, a disinterested decision maker, a record, a reasoned decision and an opportunity to appeal. Noting that other approaches might have been used, the Commission observed that the judicial model was doubtlessly chosen because of the widely held conviction that it provided greater protection for the individual in a context where an adverse decision might have serious consequences. The Commission concluded that the University should continue to follow the quasi-judicial model.

The Commission's major recommendations are as follows:

1. Concerning students:

- a. Strengthen the officer who presides over student judicial hearings by selecting the chair from a panel of persons who have experience or professional training that qualifies them for the job.
- b. Respondents' advisors should be drawn from the University community, including lawyer members thereof, and they should be allowed to take part in the proceedings.
- c. Deans should receive notice of the disposition of a complaint against one of their students.
- d. Confidentiality provisions similar to those pertaining to disciplinary proceedings should be adopted for Honor Code hearings. In appropriate situations, hearings may be closed at the request of the complainant.
- e. A streamlined student employee grievance procedure should be established.
- f. The power of the appropriate University official to suspend students who threaten injury to others should be affirmed.

2. Concerning non-academic staff:

- a. The coverage of the grievance procedures should be extended to embrace permanent part-time, temporary, and part-time staff.
- b. Grievances should be defined to include only interpretations and applications of University policies and procedures as applied to the employee, and to exclude the policies and procedures themselves.
- c. Advisors should be members of the University community, including lawyers, and should be able to participate fully in the procedures.
- d. The coverage of the University's policy for High Ranking Administrators should be clarified.

3. Concerning faculty:

- a. A contingency fund should be established to be used to facilitate the implementation of Grievance Commission decisions that are favorable to the complainant.
- b. Central administration officials should avoid adversarial involvement in grievance proceedings wherever possible.
- c. There should be greater coordination between the Committees on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of the respective schools and the Faculty Grievance Commission.
- d. There should be greater administrative and budgetary support for the Faculty Grievance Commission and its panels.
- e. A faculty member should have standing to initiate a grievance while employed or within two years of being formally advised of a change in employment status, whichever is longer. The tenure clock should be stopped during the pendency of a successful grievance.
- f. Retaliation for filing a grievance should be the basis of a grievance.

4. General recommendations:

- a. An Office of Judicial and Grievance Administration should be established to administer all such procedures.
- b. Judicial procedures should be revised biennially for the purpose of keeping the system up to date in light of changes in University administrative structure and external legal requirements.

—John C. Keene

Membership of the Commission

Faculty:

- Jacob Abel, engineering;
- Paul Bender, law;
- William M. Evan, sociology
(after January 7, 1983);
- Larry Gross, communications;
- John Keene, city and regional planning, chair;
- Victoria Kirkham, Romance languages;
- Barbara Lowery, nursing;
- Janice Madden, regional science
(until November 30, 1982);
- Kriss Sjoblom, SPUP;

Ralph Spritzer, law;

- Administrators:
- Ira Harkavy, vice dean, FAS;
- Jacqueline Wade, associate director, Student Life;
- A-3 Assembly:
- Una Deutsch, Chaplain's Office;
- Joseph Kane, Radiation Safety;
- Students:
- Lisa Blumenfeld, Wharton '83;
- Robert Wojtowicz, College '83;
- Lloyd Gelwan, Law '83;
- Joia Johnson, Law '85.

Outline of the Full Report

The first 40 pages of the Commission's report contain separate sections on each of the topics above—in each case discussing first the existing procedures of the University, then the proposals for change. The remainder consists of appendices:

- A. Charter of the University Student Judicial System
- B. Code of Academic Integrity
- C. Student Grievance Procedure
- D. Grievance Mechanism for Non-Academic Staff
- E. Report of the Non-Academic Grievance Procedure Task Force
- F. Policies for High Ranking Administrators (Policy 706.1 and 706.22)
- G. Procedures for Suspension or Termination of Members of the Standing Faculty for Just Cause
- H. Faculty Grievance Procedure
- I. School Committees on Academic Freedom and Responsibility
- J. AAUP Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure (1982)

The full document is in very limited supply. The five copies on reserve at Van Pelt Library are available to all for examination and may be reproduced at the reader's expense.

Update

DECEMBER ON CAMPUS

Changes: The Christmas carol singing will be on Tuesday, December 13, at 5 p.m., a day later than announced in the pullout calendar. Sponsored by the Vice Provost for University Life, the holiday caroling will start at the steps of College Hall with the Penn Glee Club, Counterparts, the Gospel Choir, The Penn Singers, Pennsylvania 6-5000, and the Quaker Notes. Donuts and hot cider will be served afterward in front of a roaring fire in Houston Hall.

The Faculty Club reopens Tuesday, January 3, and will be serving luncheon and cocktails only through Monday, January 16.

TALKS

7 Shouldn't You be Using a Personal Computer?: John Abercrombie, research associate, religious studies, E. Gerald Hurst, associate professor of decision sciences; Peter Knutson, associate professor of accounting; Burton Paul, ASA Whitney Professor of Dynamical Engineering and professor of mechanical engineering; noon-2 p.m., Club Room, Faculty Club (Faculty Club Program Committee).

A Panel Discussion: Crisis in Minority Recruitment, Matriculation and Retention: Dr. Charles Willie, Harvard; Dr. Roland Smith, Carnegie Mellon; Dean Lee Stetson, Dr. Marion Oliver, and Dr. Valerie Cade; 7 p.m., Dubois College House (Afro-American Studies Program).

12 Two Views of Literary Change: The Prague School vs. The Bakhtin Circle: Miroslav Prochazka, Czechoslovak Academy of the Sciences, Prague; 4 p.m., West Lounge, Williams Hall (Slavic department, Programs in Theatre Arts).

15 The Valley of Oaxaca: Arthur G. Miller, director, Mayan Art Program; 5:30 p.m., Classroom 2, Museum (University Museum).

Additions, changes and cancellations for the weekly On Campus Update must be received by noon Tuesday prior to the Tuesday of publication. The deadline for the February pullout calendar is noon, January 17. Address: 3601 Locust Walk (second floor of the CA).

JOINING IN

Live in the Devon/Wayne Area?

University Vanpool #4 has space for another rider. Interested faculty and University employees may contact me at Ext. 7293 for additional information.

—Stuart Watson, Contracts Administrator
Research Administration

To all A-3's at Penn

You may have noticed an announcement of the A-3 Assembly's annual Holidays party scheduled for December 14, 12 to 2 p.m. Bring your own lunch and we'll provide dessert, coffee and tea. We look forward to some "sing-along" led by our own John Walters, and Janet Rhoads, one of our own A-3's, as well as Jacqueline Sartoris, a student and a member of the Penn Singers. We hope you have marked your calendar. Please call Inga Larson, Ext. 4560, or Margaret Sabre, Ext. 5285, if you can bring a dessert. Many thanks.

—Margaret Sabre
Program Committee, A-3 Assembly

WHYY-TV Penn Night

A big thanks to the lively group of volunteers (below) who worked on-camera and behind the scenes Sunday from 6-11 p.m. at WHYY-TV. "Penn Night" was the second of 15 sessions in which Channel 12 will try to raise \$550,000. Sunday's goal of \$46,000 was exceeded when the total jumped to \$53,573 about 15 minutes before the program ended.

—Ron Francis, Special Projects Coordinator, Communications Services

Marstin Alexander	Isabel Mandelbaum
Ann Bailey	Chris Markunas
Corky Casas	Betty Maxwell
Francesca Chapman	Pat Miller
Ann Duffield	Don Myers
James Evans	Sekar Nagaswami
Linda Fischer	Hugh O'Doherty
Karen Gaines	Ilene Pearl
Donna Hamlin	Marion Pond
Helene Hamlin	Frank Scott
Theresa Harger	Sally Sorenson
Arnold Jackson	Anthony Tomassone
Ann Lewis	Rita Tomassone
Frank Lobo	Mary Lou Webber
Glynn Lobo	Ross Webber
	Tim Winant



The Potato People display lively action and rambunctious humor in The Piggyback Caper at the Annenberg Center December 20-22.

DEATHS

Elizabeth Burdick, a former professor in the department of physical education and research investigator for Project Big Ben in 1953, died September 17 at the age of 76. Ms. Burdick started at Penn in 1930 as an assistant instructor and soon became an instructor in the physical education department. She was named assistant professor in 1946 and retired in 1974. She is survived by a sister, Peggy Purcell.

Dr. Judith Mausner, an adjunct associate professor of research since 1976 and internationally-known authority in the public health field, died of cancer on November 2 at the age of 59. Dr. Mausner also held the position of professor of preventive medicine at the Medical College of Pennsylvania and only weeks before her death had traveled to Germany to pursue her studies in epidemiology.

Dr. Mausner's research into the causes and spread of disease and the potential for epidemic development was explored in her book *Epidemiology: an Introductory Text*, written in 1974 but recently revised and updated with co-authors Dr. Shira Kramer, CHOP, and Dr. Richard Morton, Albert Einstein Medical Center in New York. A definitive work widely used in public health classes, it is soon to be reissued by W.B. Saunders Co.

Trained as a specialist in internal medicine at Queens and New York Medical Colleges and the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Mausner studied the smoking habits of physicians and medical students, the prevalence of breast cancer, and of suicide by physicians. Recent work included a review of hypertension in infants. She also served with the U.S. Food and Drug

Administration and a number of other national panels. She is survived by two daughters, Rachel Safer and Sarah Wright.

Dr. Robert C. McElroy, emeritus clinical associate professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the School of Medicine, died on August 27 at the age of 71. Dr. McElroy came to the University in January of 1942 as an assistant instructor. In July of the same year he became an instructor. He was an associate from 1947 until 1963, when he was named clinical associate professor. He became an emeritus clinical associate professor in July of 1980. He is survived by his two sons, Robert and Stephen.

Dr. Harry M. Vars, an emeritus professor of biochemistry in the Medical School, died on November 22 at the age of 80. He joined the staff of the Harrison Department of Surgical Research in 1934 as a Merck Fellow in Physiological Research. He was named an associate in 1936, and in 1940 an assistant professor of biochemistry in surgical research; associate professor in 1948, and professor in 1972. He is survived by a son, Harry T. Vars, and a daughter, Jocelyn Colony.

Almanac

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ALMANAC, December 6, 1983