

THE ACADEMIC MOTIVATIONS OF
GENERAL COLLEGE STUDENTS
PRELIMINARY REPORT #2

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Our previous report (The Academic Motivations of General College Students: A Preliminary Report, Research Center Reports, November 1979) presented data showing that GC and CLA students differed in motivational structures as measured by AMI. Further analysis of ~~the~~^{their} data indicates that GC students not only differ from CLA students in their academic motivations but are more difficult to predict grades for as well. CLA students' GPA's can be predicted fairly well by their scores on the AMI's sixteen scales, whereas GC students' GPA's cannot be reliably predicted by AMI scores. For these reasons we decided to develop two new AMI scales specifically for GC students.

The scales were developed to predict two variables of primary importance to the General College--grades and staying in school. We developed the scales by determining which of the AMI's 90 items individually and in combination best predicted first, Fall 1978 and Winter 1979 grades of new students registering Fall 1978, and second, whether or not these students were still registered at the University in Spring 1979.

It became apparent early in this process that males and females differed significantly in their grades and continuance motivations. Males in the sample tend to be concerned about doing well in school primarily to enhance their abilities and social position. They tend to be motivated to stay in school by a desire to increase their social mobility. Females, on the other hand, demonstrate no clear, single motivation for continuing in school other than their grades. More so than males, females tend to continue in school if their grades are good. Generally speaking, females cannot be classified as staying in school for any single motive or group of motives identified by the AMI. Because males and females differ in this way, their scores on the scales should be analyzed separately. It should also be noted that because there were too few minority students in the sample for adequate analysis, the results reported here may have to be restricted to white students.

The two new empirical scales will be referred to as a Grade Point Average (GPA)--how well the scale predicts the student's grades, and continuance--whether the student stays in school or drops out. For males the GPA Scale correlates .39($p < .001$) with earned GPA and for females it correlates .37($p < .001$). For males the Continuance Scale correlates .32($p < .001$) with staying in school and for females it correlates .34($p < .001$). These correlations are fairly substantial and even though the findings are very tentative and must be cross-validated before further development is possible, we feel that the empirical scales show a great deal of promise for predicting two very important areas of student behavior. We hope that these scales may eventually be of use to the College in indentifying and helping students who might otherwise have done poorly or dropped out of school.

of intellectual functioning. (See William Perry, Jr., Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1970)).

Learning Development consultants will team with two to three faculty members in the following sequential phases: (1) completing specific task analysis of the content materials of the college courses; (2) identifying relevant dimensions of individual differences of students; (3) designing classroom intervention modules; (4) implementing and testing preliminary intervention modules; (5) training additional faculty members to utilize the services; and (6) evaluating the total program.

The WORKSHOP ON THE ASSESSMENT OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING is associated with the work of the Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning (CAEL) project sponsored by the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, with initial funding from the Carnegie Corporation. The Workshop will assist faculty in developing procedures for the assessment of student learning that takes place when an individual participates in a variety of social, artistic, political, on-the-job, or cross-cultural activities off the college campus.