

10-1952

What Is An Adequate College?

Donald McNichols

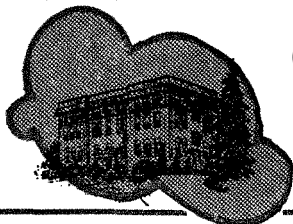
Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/gfc_journal

 Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McNichols, Donald, "What Is An Adequate College?" (1952). *George Fox College Journal, 1952-1966*. 2.
https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/gfc_journal/2

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives and Museum at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in George Fox College Journal, 1952-1966 by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolfe@georgefox.edu.



George Fox College

JOURNAL

VOL. I

OCTOBER, 1952

NO. 2

"Our principle is and our practices have always been to seek peace and ensue it; to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God; seeking the good and welfare, and doing that which tends to the peace of all."

Journal, George Fox, 1660

What Is An Adequate College?

BY DONALD McNICHOLS, DEAN

This question might be paraphrased to read, "When is a college adequately performing its task?" For such a small college to pose such a formidable question might indicate presumption; it could be interpreted to demonstrate overambition. The actual reason behind this discussion is to articulate something of the goal toward which George Fox College is consciously striving.

The Aim

The adequacy of a college is proportional to the accomplishment of its proposed ends, and the normative aims of other like institutions. Accepting this point of view, then, the first step in determining the adequacy of a college would be to discover the normative aim of college education, then proceed to define the aim of the particular school in question. When one initiates an inquiry to determine the normative aim of the college, one discovers that there is not a single aim for college education, but many. Central within these many goals have been two correlating emphases which have received varying amounts of stress depending upon the particular type of college represented; namely, the development of character and

the communication of knowledge. Even a cursory glance at the history of the American college will demonstrate the shift of emphasis upon these two facets of the college program.

Such a glance shows the church college as the father of American higher education. Prior to the Revolution, nine colleges were established in the colonies, only one of which was non-sectarian: Harvard (1737), Congregational; William and Mary (1693), Episcopal; Yale (1701), Congregational; Princeton (1746), Presbyterian; University of Pennsylvania (1749), non-sectarian; Columbia (1754), Episcopal; Brown (1764), Baptist; Dartmouth (1769), Congregational; Queens (1770), Dutch Reform. By 1796, twenty-five colleges had been organized and only eleven of these were non-sectarian.

During this early period the aim of the college was to produce men and women with high character as well as train their minds. However, the Ordinances of 1787, and the various state constitutions following the Revolutionary War provided for the foundation of the state-operated college and university. Within this situation there was a separation of church and state, thus wholly within their right the state institutions stressed the importance of subject matter. This, the secularizing influence in American education, set up a different aim for the college program. Soon the land-grant schools because of their more adequate finance began to set the pace for colleges generally. Caught thus within this pressure, the church-related colleges began to imitate the state program in many instances, in order to meet standardization demands or to secure endowment.

In changing its aim the Christian college lost its genius and primary contribution to higher education. In method these church colleges ceased to confront the student with the challenge of Christian living. Substituted in its place was an attempt to communicate religion by courses in religion and ethics, and such colleges were to learn what later was found to be true by Hartshore and May's well known study, that no correlation exists between a person's religious knowledge and his life.

During recent years the aim of the American college has turned back toward recognition of values, and this change has brought the state and private institutions closer together in basic objectives.

gram; however, in many instances institutions have possessed their strongest quality in an area that was overlooked by examiners, thus such a study cannot be considered comprehensive nor its findings valid.

Perhaps in the final analysis effectiveness of an educational institution can best be determined by critical studies which rest largely upon logical inferences in addition to statistical measurement.

Where else can one better look for logical inferences than to the product? What weaknesses or strengths have the graduates discovered within themselves for which the school is responsible?

The feeling for the college by the alumni for the contribution and influence of the school upon their lives was adequately expressed by the only living Ex-President of the United States, Herbert Hoover, who wrote in 1938, "As a young student there (Pacific College renamed George Fox College) for three years, I received whatever set I may have had toward good purposes in life."

One might ask, "Does George Fox College make a distinctive contribution to its students that other neighboring colleges could not offer?" This unique contribution is difficult to define for it is a spiritual quality. The Society of Friends believes and teaches through its institutions that a man is only educated as his heart is trained. The seat of man's ambitions and motivation—his inner self—must respond openly to the Creator, then his life will flow outward to the beneficence of society. The alumni roll is rich with those who were thus motivated to use their training for making the world better: physicians, dentists, nurses, ministers, missionaries, educators. The percentage of its graduates who have won distinction in their chosen career remains as a monumental testimony to the distinctive quality of the college's educational process. It must not be inferred from this observation that the college is content with its program. The present program is only a foundation upon which to begin the erection of an academic structure that will cause the college to become one of the most thorough small colleges in the Northwest.

vision curriculum provides broad backgrounds to the arts humanities, science, and social sciences. Work is required from each of these areas with particular stress on the basic communications. Thus the upper division courses provide specific study within the chosen major; this program is designed to prepare the student for further specialization on the graduate level.

How is the material to be taught? The professor in a Christian college must demonstrate a competency in his field equivalent to his colleague in the state college if the Christian school is to provide adequate instruction. The ratio of teachers to students on the George Fox campus is approximately one to five, thereby making it possible for each teacher to maintain a personal interest in the progress or lack of progress of every student. Assistance can be given when it is needed, and more capable students can be encouraged to forage beyond the class room requirements. Briefly stated, the personality of the student is of primary importance. Knowledge is not treated as an end in itself, but as an indispensable aid to living.

Determining Effectiveness

It was stated in the outset that the adequacy of a college is to be determined by the degree to which it accomplishes its aims, and the normative aims of like institutions. What is the contribution to its students? A statistical answer based on a study of the alumni would be helpful, and it is hoped that such a study will be completed for a report within a year. Yet statistics are not wholly adequate because of the limitation inherent within the method.

There are many complex factors involved in educational effort: basic curriculum, admissions, maximum utilization of facilities; therefore measurement of these areas alone is an inadequate tool. Certainly the statistical method of determining effectiveness is helpless to examine policy. Where such a study is made policy must be considered in relation to the total aims of the school, and to education as a whole.

Accrediting associations attempt to determine the effectiveness of an institution by isolating certain arbitrary aspects of its program for observation. This represents an honest attempt to be comprehensive in measuring an educational pro-

What is the particular aim of George Fox College? Its underlying attitude is that the valid aim of an education for today is to meet the needs of men and women and teach them how to live. Stated in Ruskin's words, "Education does not mean teaching people what they do not know; it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave." It is the task of general education to impress upon young people a consciousness that they are part of something far bigger than themselves, to teach loyalty and service, personal responsibility, honesty, and to introduce them to a cause and Master which will serve as the motivating factor and focal point toward which they expend energy. In brief, the program at George Fox attempts to recognize its responsibility as a liberal arts college through earnestness in academic endeavor and honesty toward truth. As a Christian college it seeks to express the highest in Christian idealism, and as a Quaker college it attempts to remind its students that first they should discover the immediate experience of God, then proceed to study man's discoveries.

What Are the Tools for Accomplishing Its Aim?

Every area of the college serves as an agency in the total task, yet central to its purpose is the instructional effort. A college needs athletics, it should sponsor a worthwhile social program, an interest in the arts must be sustained, but its reputation can be won or lost in accord with the level of its instruction. This is the core of the college and for it the school exists.

The first problem of instruction is, what is to be taught? or curriculum content. A curriculum possesses three qualities: breadth or scope, arrangement, and length or duration. The curriculum at George Fox is limited primarily to general education with majors leading toward several of the professions. It seeks to satisfy the needs of its students, but remains within the bounds of its physical equipment such as laboratory facilities and library resources. Eight majors are offered (Education and Psychology, Home Economics, Music, English, Biology, Mathematics, Religion, and Social Science), for the offering of a few strong majors appears to be more in keeping with the aims of the college than many weak ones. Courses are so arranged that for the most part the lower di-

CALENDAR

- October 24-26—Junior and Senior Girls' Retrea
27-31—Christian Emphasis Week, Dr. C
Dorr Demeray, speaker.
- November 11—George Fox College Homecoming
26—Thanksgiving Vacation begin
4:00 p. m.
- December 2—Classes Resume, 8:00 a. m.
12—Major Dramatic Production, 3
Act Play, Wood-Mar Hall Aud
torium, 8:00 p. m.
14—Handel's "Messiah" by the Com
munity Chorus, Newberg Hig
School Auditorium.
-

*Published bi-monthly by George Fox College at Newberg, Ore
gon, by the Public Relations Office in cooperation with
the Office of the Dean.*