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Under Cover

By DAVID BURR, '52ba

IF YOU HAVE a son or daughter graduating from high school this spring, the information contained in this column may be the most important you have ever received in *Sooner Magazine*. Seldom do we offer information that has such a direct bearing on your personal happiness and the happiness of your children.

A problem you may face, and one the University of Oklahoma has been facing for many years, is how to solve the riddle posed by inadequately prepared students. It is your problem if your son or daughter fits the inadequately prepared category.

Regardless of how hard you may have tried to see that your child was prepared, school activities, outside interests, or one of a hundred reasons may have kept him from spending enough time on academic subjects to be adequately prepared for college work.

One fact stands out: Each year the University loses hundreds of freshman students due to academic failure. Many of these could have succeeded with better preparation.

This summer the University begins a new course of action that is designed to help the student who is poorly prepared to catch up; to be able to keep pace with other college freshmen next fall.

Beginning June 13 and continuing to August 9, O.U. will offer a College Readiness Program. As far as university authorities can determine, the course of study is the only one of its kind in the nation. The 8-week program consists of work in reading, writing, vocabulary building and mathematics review.

College officials have found that these four areas are general points of weakness for many freshman students and the cause of many academic failures.

Consider the reading problem of many youngsters. The two major facets of reading weakness are reading speed and comprehension. A new college student will be expected to read thousands of words in the course of his freshman work. He literally may not be able to read fast enough to keep up. Or, just as important, he may have trouble with reading comprehension—a potential cause of failure. A reading weakness does not necessarily reflect the intelligence of the child or of his ability to do college work once the problem has been removed.

The respective parts of the program will be interwoven for the benefit of the student. One problem many students have with mathematics is traceable to a lack of reading comprehension. And reading comprehension may be traced to a limited vocabulary. Hence, it becomes necessary to relate closely the improvement

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of vocabulary, reading comprehension and mathematics problems.

The College Readiness Program will work on these separate difficulties simultaneously. In the vocabulary building portion of the course, words and phrases common to mathematics will be emphasized.

Although not taught specifically, the student will also have an opportunity to adjust to campus life in the relative calm of summer school. The vastness of his new endeavor will be more easily assimilated.

To give you some idea of how important this new program can be, I talked with a number of college students about the idea. I asked them, "Do you feel that this type of program would have helped you?" Without exception the answer was an emphatic "Yes."

This is the trial year of the program. As a pilot group, the University has limited enrollment to 50 high school seniors who plan to enter O.U. next fall. Tuition for the 8-week course is \$100.00. Housing and meals will be under University supervision at a cost of \$125.00.

There are several openings still available to children of alumni. Parents who are interested should do the following: Any weekday or Saturday morning bring your son or daughter to Norman. Have them take the aptitude tests administered by the University Guidance Center. (It's located in the old Education Building.) While on the campus, indicate to University College personnel that you are interested in having your child enrolled in the summer course if the tests indicate a need. A great many applicants have been discouraged from taking the Readiness Program when their tests indicated that they were thoroughly capable of doing good college work without it.

If your child needs the program, I strongly urge you to consider the merit of this new idea. If your child can be spared needless academic failure by a summer of preparation, you will have difficulty placing a value on the service.