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# Backlog

## ADMISSIONS RULING LEAVES NO ROOM FOR STANDARDS

GROWING up can be a slow and painful process—one which can be made even slower and more painful by those who fail to recognize the need for growing up. The University of Oklahoma—in fact, the entire system of higher education in Oklahoma—seems to be facing such well-meaning opposition.

Last month the Regents for Higher Education rejected an attempt by O.U. and O.S.U. to establish the most elementary form of admissions limitations. They refused to grant these institutions the right to require entering freshmen to come from the upper 3/4 of their high school graduating classes (upper 1/2 for out-of-staters). The universities' contention that below average high school students are unprepared for college work was considered unreasonable.

Even had this mild limitation been approved, however, the door would not have been completely closed to students who fell below the requirement. They could still have been admitted by scoring well on achievement and aptitude tests, by satisfactorily completing summer school work following their high school graduation, or by deferring entrance for a year in which they could study at a smaller school.

This proposal to control admissions could hardly be termed stiff. Yet it was too strong for Oklahoma. The Higher Regents' decision reflects a remarkable lack of confidence in the ability of our high school students to measure up to higher standards. Rather than welcoming the effort of the state's universities to upgrade academic requirements, the Higher Regents seemed to feel that such a move would endanger the smaller schools by sending them second-rate students. Actually, the improved entrance requirements should improve the quality of students in all the colleges by increasing the pressure on the high school student to prepare himself for college.

The University expects a sizeable increase in enrolment this fall, and the increase is expected to continue for most colleges in the years to come. It is not so much a question of the University's ability to accommodate these students; rather it is that to spend the time, money and energy of the University and the state on students who are not ready for college is an inexcusable waste. Higher education has been asked to pull in its belt and make do without an adequate increase in appropriations. At the same time the colleges are being asked to take all comers regardless of qualifications—a situation which is as unfair to the students as it is to the institutions.

No one is being denied the *right* to a college education under the proposed form of controlled admissions. But there is no reason why such an education should be handed to unqualified high school veterans as service fringe benefit from the State of Oklahoma.

There was a time when prospective freshmen were given up to three years in the University Preparatory School to get ready for college. But this was in 1892 when many areas of the territory did not have high school facilities. Things had changed enough by 1910 to do away with the prep school—and it is safe to assume that progress has been made since then.

In 1910 the state was obviously anxious to grow up—a desire which seems to have diminished over the years.

—CJR