

AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTS  
OF DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY  
ON THE GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND  
SELF-CONCEPT OF COLLEGE  
STUDENTS

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AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY  
ON THE GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND SELF-CONCEPT  
OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

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An Abstract  
Presented to  
the Graduate Council of  
Austin Peay State University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
Michael Long  
April 1981

## ABSTRACT

The present study attempted to assess the effects of the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program's psychology component, Psychology 100, on grade point average (GPA) and self-concept of 59 students who took Psychology 100 between fall of 1978 and spring of 1980. Experiment one compared GPA change between three groups over a two quarter period; fall 1978 to spring 1979. Group one consisted of 45 students who had taken Psychology 100. Group two consisted of 16 students who had taken a developmental course, excluding Psychology 100. Group three consisted of 31 students who had not taken any developmental studies courses. In addition, all 92 individuals had American College Testing (ACT) composite scores of 15 or below. Experiment two compared the self-concepts of students who took Psychology 100 to a group of students who took English 103. The Tennessee Self-Concept Scale was administered to both groups (14 Psychology 100 students, 16 English 103 students) at both the beginning and end of spring quarter, 1980. Analysis of covariance was used to assess effects of treatment in both experiments. Results were not significant in either experiment,  $p > .05$ . Findings were discussed in terms of both the past and current state of remedial education in the United States.

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April 1981



To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Michael Long entitled "An Evaluation of the Effects of Developmental Psychology on the Grade Point Average and Self-Concept of College Students." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Psychology.

Jean G. Lewis  
Major Professor

We have read this thesis,  
and recommend its  
acceptance:

Darland E. Blair  
Second Committee Member

Linda Rudolph  
Third Committee Member

Accepted for the  
Graduate Council:

William H. Ellis  
Dean of the Graduate School

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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

During the past several decades remedial/developmental programs have become the rule rather than the exception within the curriculum of American post-secondary institutions (Grant and Hoeber, 1978). Austin Peay State University has not been an exception. In the past three years, more than 250,000 dollars has gone toward the construction and maintenance of a basic skills program. In addition, the developmental staff has grown to include: thirteen faculty members, five paraprofessionals and two full-time secretaries.

Even superficial examination reveals that collectively a great deal of time, effort and dollars have gone toward equipping the university with a tool with which to assist the student who arrives at Austin Peay State University lacking in basic educational skills, i.e. math, English, reading and study skills. In the last three years many hurdles have been overcome, many questions answered, yet at least one question remains unanswered: "Is the program working?"

Initially this seems like an obvious question and one which is of vast importance. Yet as the literature on remedial education will attest, it is a question which is typically left unanswered (Roueche and Snow, 1977). A

nationwide survey done by these two individuals (1977) revealed that less than half of the 300 schools (150 junior colleges, 150 senior colleges) surveyed were able to make quantitative reports concerning success, or lack of it. What is often found in the literature is subjective evidence which sounds nice but is empirically unconvincing (Rank, 1979).

One of the problems faced by developmental programs is how to assess improvement in terms of the non-traditional student. If only 25% of the freshmen who enter college graduate (Roueche and Snow, 1977) then what percentage should we consider successful for students who arrive with what are often crippling deficits in the basic survival skills? After what is often a 12 year academic disadvantage, how much can we legitimately expect of developmental departments and staffs? In a 1976 paper concerning remedial efforts Roueche and Mink comment, "The concept of significance in the traditional sense does not apply in this field setting with a multitude of variables, many of which we were not able to control and/or measure to assess their effects" (p. 231).

#### Statement of the Problem

With these problems in mind the present study attempted to assess the effects of the psychology component (Psychology for College Success) of the Austin Peay State



University Developmental Studies Program on the grade point averages (GPA) and self concepts of a group of students who took Psychology 100 between the fall of 1978 and the spring of 1980. It was felt that if a practical difference in terms of collegiate survival was being made it should surface in one of these two areas.

As stated previously, up to the time of this writing, no attempt had been made to comprehensively evaluate the effects of the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program. Initially it was hoped that the present study could serve this purpose. Eventually it became apparent, however, that an evaluation of the developmental program as a whole, at least in terms of grade point average and self concept, would not be possible. This was due to the fact that, up to the time of the present study, no formal structure of tracking existed within the developmental department. Students typically entered developmental studies courses due to advice from instructors, advisors, concerned faculty, or other students. Some students participated in one developmental course, some in several. Thus it appeared inappropriate to attempt to evaluate a program, as a whole, which practically seemed to be functioning as four separate entities.

By the time of the present study several individually initiated attempts had been made to determine the effects

of specific classes upon students in terms of subsequent classes in the same areas. However, even if positive, these evaluations had overlooked an intrinsic quality of the new student that greatly limits any such singular results. The literature on the developmental student reiterates time and again the fact that learning deficits typically exist not just in one area, but in all areas of educational skills (Cross, 1971; Grant & Hoeber, 1978). Thus if a student is unprepared in reading he or she will generally be unprepared in English and math. By the same token a student weak in these former areas is typically unfamiliar with appropriate study habits and due to past failures typically arrives at college with a lower-than-average self-concept (Cross, 1971). Thus in terms of collegiate survival, evaluation of results within a single subject in terms of subsequent success within that subject lacks generalizability in terms of evidence that the program as a whole is being beneficial.

In an effort to overcome these limitations the current study, as already mentioned, examined change in overall GPA and self-concept in a group of Psychology 100 students over a one year, and one quarter period, respectively. Although still limited to a single subject, it was felt that if any subject should have an overall effect upon collegiate success it should be the survival course within



the program. In addition it was felt that GPA and self-concept were appropriate indices with which to evaluate change in overall academic survival skill.

Before the results of the present study are reported, several areas will be discussed in order to provide the reader with an historical and structural background in terms of remedial education as it has grown and matured. It is hoped that this brief overview will enable the reader to better assess the present evaluation of the psychology component of the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program.

It is the author's opinion that the subject of developmental/remedial education is one of vital importance within today's educational and social framework. As the next several chapters will reveal, there are still many questions left to be answered within the field of remedial education. For whatever reasons, today's institutions of higher learning find themselves called upon more and more each day to remedy the ills of primary and secondary education (Roueche & Snow, 1977). In order to do so, it appears that creativity and perseverance are vital (Cross, 1971). It is hoped that the present study will contribute in some sense to the collective effort that must take place if today's institutions of higher learning are to meet the challenge of the "new student."

## History

The American system of higher education was originally based upon the example brought by the first settlers from their European backgrounds. For many years this background had a marked influence on our institutions of higher learning (Rudolf, 1962). From the beginning, however, there seemed to be a stirring, a turmoil within the traditional system, caused by a uniquely American ingredient: the American belief that education should serve as a tool of expression for a democratic people (Brubacher & Rudy, 1958).

In 1636, the year the Massachusetts General Court passed the legislative act which led to the birth of Harvard College, the educational questions were not as difficult as they are today. Elitism was accepted as the standard. Most youth of the time were more concerned with surviving in a difficult and dangerous land than in studying the classics. Yet Harvard, and the universities like her which soon began to spring up within the colonies, served a purpose. For the people of the time, Harvard was necessary as a tool for social refinement (Rudolf, 1962). Harvard served as an umbilical between the European standards and mores that the pilgrims were understandably hesitant to sever. Originally, colonial institutions were created to produce the clergy, the schoolmasters, the political leaders, and the gentlemen for the colonies.

The general attitude concerning higher education and its role as seen by the original colonists is represented by the words of one of Harvard's commencement orators in the 1670's, "The ruling class would have been subjected to mechanics, cobblers, and tailors, . . . the law would not have been made by senatus consulta, nor would we have rights, honors, or magisterial ordinance worthy of preservation, plebiscite, appeals to base passions and revolutionary rumblings, if these our fathers had not founded the University. . . ." (Rudolf, 1962, p. 7).

For several decades, this elitist attitude, this leftover taste from a European diet would linger. With the passage of the American and French revolutions, however, with the success of freedom and democracy, the American educational systems found that they must change or be left behind. The new nation was expanding westward and at the same time experiencing an industrial and economic revolution in a land so abundant in natural resources that the only limiting factor in harvesting them was a lack of manpower and knowledge of the most efficient methods (Rudolf, 1962).

By the first third of the 19th century, the American institutions of higher learning were undergoing a transformation that is still in effect today, a transformation that accounts for their longevity. They were becoming



utilitarian institutions, not just for a select few but for the nation as a whole. To train the societal elite was no longer enough. A new country needed surveyors, scientists, agrarians, doctors, and mathematicians. Specialization was becoming widespread. To meet this need for knowledge, curricular expansion on a mammoth scale became necessary.

By the first third of the 20th century, the American college had evolved into an ideal. Education had become the path to improvement, to success, to opportunity through hard work and effort independent of social status. Americans had become openly and proudly committed to democracy in education. By the middle of the 20th century, more Americans were receiving some form of post-secondary training than any other peoples on the face of the globe (Brubacher & Rudy, 1958). The college population of the United States increased almost 1000 percent between 1900 and 1948 (Brubacher & Rudy, 1958). By the end of the Second World War, the idea of democratic opportunity in education was solidly and practically ingrained in the American consciousness. In 1947, the Truman administration expressed this equality of education concept in their national agenda. Their philosophy stated that "Equal education opportunity for all persons, to the maximum of their individual abilities and without regard to economic



status, race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or ancestry is a major goal of American democracy. Only an informed, thoughtful, tolerant people can maintain and develop a free society" (Linney, 1979, p. 2).

In the three plus decades that have followed, the trend has been toward greater and greater federal expenditures in support of higher education (Linney, 1979). In 1972, a Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program was created, which made the matter of access to higher education in America one of national policy. In 1977, federal programs of student assistance, categorical aid programs for higher education, and tax benefits for higher education totaled over 13.8 billion, with increases in this figure expected in subsequent years (Linney, 1979).

Unfortunately, federal funds and equal opportunity legislation do not appear to have been enough. In the last 20 years, the university population at most post-secondary institutions has changed drastically (Grant & Hoeber, 1978). Increased aid and open admission policies have allowed students who previously would not have applied or who would not have been accepted to flood the campuses of America. The question today is what to do with these individuals once they reach college. What two decades ago appeared to be an "open door" has in actuality become a "revolving door" (Cross, 1971; Grant & Hoeber, 1978).

## The New Student

The United States Department of Commerce defines the "new" or "basic skills student" as someone who:

" . . .has not acquired the verbal and mathematical, and full range of cognitive skills required for collegiate level work. Generally he is a student whose grades fall in the bottom half of his high school class, who has not earned a (college preparatory) diploma, and is assigned to a high school which has a poor record for student achievement, or who has been tracked into a general, commercial or vocational high school program. . .Such a student will generally rank low on such traditional measures of collegiate admission as S.A.T. board scores, high school class average standing." (Gordon, 1976, p. 4)

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare more subjectively labels the developmental student as one who is typically culturally, economically, socially, and educationally handicapped (Kohrs, 1969).

Within this descriptive framework, one begins to see the enormity of the task facing the developmental assets at a university. There has been a great deal of evidence presented in support of the claim that developmental

programs have thus far been relatively ineffective (Cross, 1971; Grant & Hoerber, 1978; Chausow, 1979; Roeche & Snow, 1977). Cross (1971), who probably knows the developmental student as well as anyone, does not believe that they can be effectively handled within the confines of a traditional curriculum. In her 1971 book, Beyond the Open Door, she presents the opinion that institutions of higher learning are simply unprepared to deal with the new student. She suggests that to truly provide equal opportunity in education we must do more than simply adjust our admission standards. Currently the goals of higher education's developmental programs seem to be to prepare their students for regular college work. Cross openly attacks this idea. She points out that although motivation is typically high among remedial students, the trend of failure is often too well established to be reversed in one or two quarters. In addition, she argues that the new student's motivation is usually aimed at increasing his/her vocational rank and reaching a secure, rewarding vocational position. Developmental programs, on the other hand, appear to be aimed primarily at preparing their students for academia (Cross, 1971).

According to Cross (1971) the new student typically reaches college with poor study habits, inadequate mastery of basic skills, low I.Q., psychological motivational



blocks to learning and a negative sociological background. In most cases developmental programs attempt to reverse this trend in a one or two quarter period. Yet as Cross points out, no matter how sociologically and culturally biased we label our tests of intelligence, self-concept and potential, they are still our best indices of success. Thus even if we can somehow teach survival in such a short time and reverse the trend of failure we still do not in a certain sense, prepare the remedial student for what he/she desires (Cross, 1971). Thus even if statistically developmental programs increase their students' chance for collegiate survival, the question remains whether practically they prepare their students to compete in the job market.

Chausow (1979) in a position paper based upon extensive experience at the City College of Chicago refers to developmental classes as "penalty boxes" (p. 3) in which we segregate the new student in an attempt to protect our regular classes from deteriorating standards. By so doing we not only insinuate that these students cannot compete with their peers, but we also label them as remedial/developmental students. Chausow (1979) points out that analysis of data from the City College of Chicago shows that success in English classes is no more enhanced by remedial classes than by simply taking the same class twice. Unfortunately the new student appears to lose either way.



Chausow lists the results of several studies completed at the City of Colleges of Chicago in relation to the effectiveness of the remedial tracking approach:

1. Student achievement in remedial courses has not resulted subsequently in improved performance in regular college courses.
2. Student and institutional retention is very low in remedial programs.
3. Enrollment in remedial courses has a highly adverse effect upon the student's self-concept as well as upon his motivation for learning.

Thus we begin to see the dilemma of the new student. Although definitions vary and are still in the developmental stage, developmental students typically come from the lower third of their high school graduating class, are socioeconomically considered handicapped, and in practically all cases share a learning deficit in basic math and English skills (having generally not been tracked through college preparatory classes).

### Remedial Programs Defined

Although philosophically remedial program goals range from the ideal of providing equal opportunity to all to the more realistic goal of simply giving the developmental student a greater chance of collegiate survival (Roueche & Snow, 1979), the most common

approaches presently employed include: pre-college summer programs, programs concurrent with regular courses during the first semester or two, and holding or junior colleges where deficiencies must be corrected prior to regular admission (Grant & Hoeber, 1978).

Although pre-college summer programs typically have been beneficial, evidence reveals that they are the most expensive and most difficult to arrange, both in terms of staffing and in freeing students to attend. For the purposes of this paper, two and four year institutions will be considered collectively. Although junior colleges still appear to be somewhat more advanced in terms of remediation programs, the latter are becoming commonplace within the curriculum of senior colleges also. Roueche and Snow (1977) found that 77% of all senior colleges were offering some sort of remedial help to their students (p. 19).

In general, a review of the literature concerning remedial techniques is confusing. Recent studies at different institutions have argued for both integrating and segregating remedial classes within regular curriculum (Roueche & Mink, 1976; Gordon & Wilkerson, 1966). Although it appears that the single remedial course is the least effective of all remedial efforts (Klugelhofer & Hollander, 1973) it remains as one of the most common methods in use (Roueche & Snow, 1977). A recent study by Roueche

and Mink (1976) indicates that classroom remediation alone unaccompanied by internal locus of control counseling is insufficient. Cross (1971) has gone so far as to condemn typical remake curriculum. In support of this opinion, Crossland (1971) considers the attempt to remediate a 16 year deficit in sixteen weeks unrealistic. Although it is difficult to generalize in terms of typical curricula within developmental programs, the most common components seem to be: "reading, grammar, math, science, ethnic studies, study skills, self-development, career/life planning" (Grant & Hoeber, 1978, p. 17). In addition, although facilitative attributes are at this point tentative at best, generally those developmental programs which we have been able to identify as beneficial have been concerned as much with the individual's affective growth as with his/her cognitive growth (Grant & Hoeber, 1978; Roueche & Snow, 1977).

Although facilitative attributes are difficult to isolate because of the interaction of so many individual as well as institutional variables, currently some of the most beneficial as summarized by Grant & Hoeber (1978) and Roueche & Snow (1977) appear to be:

1. Programs are physically located so as to be simultaneously separate and central to campuses.
2. Students' motivation and persistence are regarded as more important than traditional predictors of success.



3. Structured, pre-college, comprehensive orientation programs are essential.
4. Rules are established and articulated and often contracted by students.
5. Programs provide a positive environment for the development of a better self-image.
6. Support services are responsive and flexible.
7. First semester grade point averages are not regarded as all that important.

Attempts to define the "typical" developmental program have thus far been less than completely successful, as have attempts to conclusively assess success of individual programs. In both of these areas, the immediate future appears to hold little promise. One limiting factor lies in the fact that programs designed to meet the needs of the individual will be very hard to standardize. To attempt to define too precisely may destroy the flexibility that seems necessary to deal with the unique problems of the new student (Grant & Hoeber, 1978). Another hindrance seems to be a lack of appropriate means with which to assess progress made by the new student. As already mentioned, it has been questioned whether traditional statistical methods are even capable of this challenge. At the same time it seems unreasonable to base proof of improvement totally upon impressionistic data. In addition to both of



these problems, developmental programs must also overcome the subtle resentment which has arisen toward them from within the internal mechanisms of the university (Bekus, Note 1). Haphazard appearances and lack of empirical evidence pertaining to success only feeds this resentment (Rank, 1979).

The next section will briefly examine the workings and goals of the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program. Subsequently, two experiments will be presented which were completed in an attempt to assess the psychology component of the former.

#### Austin Peay Developmental Program Defined

As is patent from the preceding section, a general lack of standardization exists among developmental/remedial programs currently in existence in American higher education. The Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program should not, therefore, be viewed as "typical." What follows is merely a very general descriptive outline of one developmental program. It is presented both to lend structure to what has been presented thus far, and to allow the reader to assess the evaluation which was accomplished on part of it. The descriptive information which follows was obtained primarily from two personal interviews: one with the director of the Austin Peay State University

Developmental Studies Program (Bekus, Note 1); the other with the director of the Austin Peay State University Special Services Program (Lewis, Note 2). From these two interviews the following outline was obtained.

The Austin Peay Developmental Program, to include the Special Services branch, consists of courses in English, mathematics, reading, and psychology. Specific course goals are presented in Appendix A. Since Psychology 100 is the subject of the present evaluation, its course goals have been presented in greater detail. The combined staff is comprised of three English, four mathematics, two reading and three psychology instructors. Although the Special Services branch is essentially an extension of the original developmental program, it also offers a part-time counselor. Both programs receive a combination of federal and University funds. Percentage of funding varies per grant stipulation.

Administratively, the programs answer to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Although they are not officially separate departments within the university, their functions are, to a large extent, self-contained. Faculty selection is based upon interaction between developmental personnel and sponsoring department heads. Emphasis in selection is based on experience and desire to work with remedial students. The positions of faculty members within the

## Chapter II

### METHODOLOGY

As mentioned above, two tests were used in an effort to evaluate the effects of Psychology 100 upon its students. The first test to be discussed compared grade point average change between three treatment groups. All three groups were selected from a population of students who had ACT composite scores of 15 or below. Initially an attempt was made to subdivide the groups for longitudinal purposes into periods ranging from: fall 1978 to spring 1979, winter 1979 to spring 1979. Eventually this subdivision was abandoned when it became evident that no differences would be found.

The second test involved the comparison of the self-concepts of a group of Psychology 100 students to the self-concepts of a group of English 103 students. Although correlation was expected between academic success and self-concept, the researcher felt that perhaps the assessment of self-concept would serve as a more sensitive instrument than GPA change (Baugh, 1973; Rotter, 1954). Because of the difficulty typically encountered in terms of adequately assessing developmental programs, a perspectival approach was felt warranted (Roueche & Mink, 1976; Roueche & Snow, 1977).



As Roueche and Mink (1976) point out, disadvantaged youth typically have manifest maladaptive behaviors, including delinquency, hostility, unrealistic levels of aspiration, lack of problem-solving skills and lack of experience. Thus even if the results of the first experiment proved non-conclusive in terms of GPA improvement some justification for the amount of effort expended by both the developmental staff and its students could be found if self-concept improvement could be evidenced.

Self-concept assessment was made through the use of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, developed by Fitts (1965). For the purposes of the present study only overall self-concept was assessed. Test-retest reliability for this portion of the test (total p) is .92 (Fitts, 1965).

## Experiment 1

### Subjects

Subjects consisted of 92 college students from Austin Peay State University who had ACT composite scores of 15 or below. Individuals were assigned to one of three treatment groups. Treatment group one consisted of 45 individuals who had completed as a minimum the Psychology 100 component on the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program. Treatment group two consisted of 16 individuals who had completed at least one class within the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program, but who had



not participated in any classes within the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program.

Treatment group one consisted of 16 males and 29 females. Mean age within the group was 20.7. Ethnic composition consisted of 21 white, 23 black, and 1 Oriental.

Treatment group two consisted of 9 males and 7 females. Mean age within the group was 18.8. Ethnic composition consisted of 11 white and 4 black.

Treatment group three consisted of 9 males and 22 females. Mean age within the group was 18.1. Ethnic composition consisted of 22 white and 9 black.

### Procedure

Pretreatment GPA's were gathered at the end of fall quarter 1978. Post-treatment GPA's were gathered at the end of spring quarter 1979. The post-treatment GPA's of the three groups were compared using an analysis of covariance with pre-treatment grade point averages used as the covariate.

Prior to computing the analysis of covariance the three treatment groups were compared by ACT's using an analysis of variance to insure that no significant initial difference existed between groups in this area. No significant difference was found. Table 1 shows means and standard deviations between groups as per ACT and pre- and post-grade point averages.

## Results

Results of the analysis of covariance were not significant,  $F(2,88) = 1$ . Although slightly more than 30% of the variance between pre- and post-grade point averages was left unaccounted for by the covariant, only .006% of that 30% could be attributed to treatment.

### Experiment 2

#### Subjects

Subjects consisted of 68 Austin Peay State University students who were given the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale at both the beginning and at the end of spring quarter 1980. Forty of the original 68 were English 103 students. The remaining 28 were Psychology 100 students.

All subjects were briefed by the experimenter concerning the nature of the test and informed that results were to be used in an effort to assess a part of the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program.

Due to the nature of the test, it was stressed that participation was strictly voluntary. Of the original 68 students, 30 completed both pre- and post-tests and provided enough information for subsequent matching of tests. Of these 30 participants, 16 were from the English 103 group and 14 were from the Psychology 100 group.

The English 103 group consisted of six males and 10 females. Mean age within the group was 18.2. Ethnic

composition consisted of 11 white, three black and one Spanish.

The Psychology 100 group consisted of four males and 10 females. Mean age within the group was 19.6. Ethnic composition consisted of five whites and nine non-whites.

### Procedure

The Clinical/Research form of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, developed by Dr. William Fitts (1965), was used in an attempt to assess the effects of treatment on the participants in the second experiment.

Both groups of students were tested during the second week of spring quarter and again during the next to last week of spring quarter 1980, thus approximately eight weeks passed between pre-test and post-test. During the first test, they were informed that they would be given the same test near the end of the quarter.

At the beginning of each testing session, the directions were read aloud by the administrator of the test and questions concerning procedure were addressed. Students were requested to fill in each answer, and it was explained that due to the nature of the test the administrator would be unable to aid them on any of the answers. Students were also requested to provide as much descriptive data as they felt comfortable giving on the test answer

sheet. All tests were given in the morning between nine and twelve in the classrooms ordinarily used by the class. Regular class periods were used.

Although the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale divides self-concept into 15 categories and yields several other scores, the only score used in the present comparison was the total P score which represents overall self-concept.

Tests were scored by hand by the administrator and an analysis of covariance was used to assess the effects of treatment. The pretest was used as the covariate.

### Results

Results from the analysis of covariance were not significant,  $F(1,26) = 0.699$ . The treatment accounted for .016% of the variance between groups.



### Chapter III

#### DISCUSSION

Theses, research papers and journal articles are theoretically concise, definitive and objective. Up to this point in the present paper, the author has attempted to stay within these bounds. However, after 18 months of intimate relationship with the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program, and in general with the literature concerning developmental/remedial education in the United States, the researcher would feel this paper incomplete if it did not at least mention the subjective aspects involved in remedial education.

Statistically the two experiments in the present study provide little evidence to justify the efforts and funds currently being invested in the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program.

In terms of grade point average and self-concept, it appears that students are no better prepared after having taken the survival course within the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program than they would have been had they simply taken a "regular" curriculum class. In many ways, the findings of the present study are discouraging, yet it will be even more discouraging, at least to the researcher, if the results of the present study are ignored. For the last decade reports such as

those found in the present study have been abundant in the literature concerning remedial education (Grant & Hoeber, 1978). Several experts within the field have reiterated the fact that a program, such as the one which has been in existence at Austin Peay for over three years, simply cannot work (Cross, 1971; Roueche & Snow, 1977). Those who appear to know the most within the field of remedial education have told us time and time again that it is impossible to significantly overcome a 12-year academic deficit in seven to ten weeks.

The new/developmental/remedial student has been defined as an individual typically lacking in emotional, intellectual and sociocultural exposure and maturity (Cross, 1971). Common sense alone would indicate that one or even two quarters is simply not enough time to change these trends of failure.

During the last decade several concerned and ambitious individuals have spent a great deal of time and effort investigating and describing what works within remedial education (Cross, 1971; Roueche & Snow, 1977; Roueche & Mink, 1976; Chausow, 1979). Perhaps the results of the present study, together with the general lack within the literature of evidence indicating success of remedial education in the United States, indicates that we have not listened very well to these individuals. It

would be nice if we could attribute this lack of attention simply to ignorance. It is the writer's opinion, however, that the actual problem is one rather of degree of commitment. As was pointed out earlier, the system of higher education within the United States reflects the desires and goals of its people. During the last decade, the record of developmental/remedial education has been one primarily of failure (Grant & Hoeber, 1978), yet we continue to spend tremendous funds and man-hours toward what appears to be the pursuit of failure. Perhaps the American people, as a whole, are more concerned about paying lip-service to equality of education than actually ensuring its existence. It is the writer's contention that when and if the American public truly becomes concerned with the quality of education in America the problem of remediation will cure itself. According to Roueche and Snow (1977) one of the major contributors to the need for remediation at the college level is the lack of quality of education at the secondary level. To what do we attribute this seeming decrease in quality over the last several decades? A story related to the author by his father, who served for over 20 years as a high school superintendent in various school districts in the state of Ohio, may provide insight. The before-mentioned superintendent was surprised to find over 300 enraged citizens at a monthly



school board meeting (although the public was encouraged to attend there was seldom much of a turn-out) involving the contract renewal of the school district's head football coach, who although a good teacher did not seem to be able to come up with a winning season. The citizens of the school district had attended to ensure that this coach was not rehired. In retrospect, one month earlier, when an individual's contract whom the superintendent felt to be one of the finest teachers in the district had come up for renewal, only two citizens from the district had attended the board meeting. In addition it seems these two had come only to observe. Against the recommendations of the superintendent, the school board failed to renew the individual's contract because he had "appeared to be too progressive and liberal." In addition he had lived with a woman for a short period of time, "out of wedlock" (Long, Note 3).

It is not the writer's intention to exonerate college or high school staffs and faculty of the responsibility of success of educational endeavors. It is the writer's desire, however, to expose the lack of commitment to successful remedial education that currently exists within the country as a whole. For the last decade, we have accepted failure as though it were our only alternative. We have been satisfied with knowing that we were trying.

It is the writer's belief that the time has come to



either make a true commitment to remedial education or quit acting as if we are accomplishing something. Success is possible. Programs can be found within the literature which quantitatively evidence disproportionate improvement among remedial students as compared to nonremedial students (Roueche & Snow, 1977). Yet these programs are scarce. What one typically finds in terms of assessment is a qualitative report that all the students like the extra attention, and the teachers and everyone is sure somebody is getting some good out of something.

The findings of the current study indicate that students who pass the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program's survival course are no better off than similar students who take a regular curriculum course. This in itself is disappointing. Yet the real danger, it would seem to the writer, is that today's educators will continue to accept failure as the standard. There are certainly many other methods of assessment available to concerned individuals besides those employed in the present study. As Roueche and Mink (1976) have pointed out, the problem of assessment of improvement within remedial education is in itself a challenging problem. Yet the author does not believe that they intended to imply that because difficult, these evaluations should be abandoned.

During the past 18 months, several impressions have

been left indelibly upon the author as a result of the examination of the effects of the Austin Peay State University Developmental Studies Program psychology component upon the grade point averages and self-concepts of a group of its students, these being:

1. Remedial education will not succeed unless increased support is received from all levels of the educational hierarchy, especially those controlling budgeting and student tracking. In order for this to occur, it would seem that college administrators (and certainly state and federal legislators) must become aware of the enormity of the task faced by typical developmental departments.
2. Students must be given an appropriate amount of time (appropriate being defined individually by need) for success. It is unrealistic to expect an individual who has become intimately acquainted with failure over what is often an 18 year period to realize overnight that this trend can be reversed.
3. Until something better is found, quantitative analysis must replace qualitative analysis as a determinant of success within remedial education, and educators must be willing to accept failure within this analysis without losing sight of the fact that success is indeed possible.

During the last 18 months the author has lived continually with the questions which considerations of remedial education generate. Many questions remain unanswered. Certainly they are all complex and difficult. Yet one general impression has been left more strongly than any other. It is the author's sincere belief that until the entire educational system within the United States decides that remedial education is not simply a token, that it is in-and-of-itself worthwhile and beneficial, that remediation is doomed to failure. If we are to expect developmental personnel and staffs to reverse the trend of failure of an individual who has typically failed every step of the way up-to-and-including age 18, we must be willing to make a total commitment. Before this commitment can be made we must, in addition, believe that success is possible.

Table 1  
Means and Standard Deviations on ACT's, Pre-Grade Point  
Averages and Post-Grade Point Averages of Groups in  
Experiment 1

Group	1	2	3
Mean ACT	11.4	11.6	12.0
S.D. ACT	3.51	2.50	2.90
Pre-test GPA			
Mean	1.69	2.29	2.02
S.D.	0.55	0.50	0.77
Post-test GPA			
Mean	1.79	2.17	2.11
S.D.	0.50	0.61	0.64



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3. Long, F. Personal communication, December 1979.



Appendix A: Course Objectives For Classes Within The  
Austin Peay State University Developmental  
Studies Program

Psychology for College Success  
Psychology 100  
Developmental Studies Program

### INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

Psychology for College Success has been designed to foster the development of academic attitudes and habits which are necessary for success at a University.

Who should take this course? Freshman students who have experienced academic difficulties in high school or who have scored below 15 on their ACT College tests should enroll. Upper-level students who have experienced academic difficulties in college may enroll only with the permission of the instructor.

Who should NOT take this course? Students who are not experiencing academic difficulties should not take this course. Students who have had high Grade Point Averages in high school and college and who have scored above 15 on their ACT's are advised to drop this course and take another course in its place.

Psychology 100 does not provide credit towards a major or minor in Psychology. It does provide 3 university hours of general elective credit.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF COURSE

It is hoped that this course will help students improve in the following areas:

1. motivation to succeed in college
2. ability to follow directions
3. ability to organize work and time
4. ability to listen to others
5. identification of skills which need improvement
6. formulation of plans to improve skills
7. increased self-confidence and self-esteem
8. clarification of values

## TOPICS

The topics which will be covered in Psychology 100 are listed below. The order in which they will be covered may vary.

1. Listening and communicating
2. Study habits
3. Coping with stress, and reducing test anxiety
4. University attitudes, rules, and procedures
5. Problem-solving
6. Value clarification
7. Career and life planning
8. Choice of units, including:
  - (a) preparation for test taking
  - (b) study habits - further work
  - (c) concentrating
  - (d) note-taking
  - (e) memory and retention
  - (f) library skills

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Textbook: Williams, Robert L. and Long, James D. Toward A Self-Managed Life Style, (second edition). Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1979.
2. One looseleaf notebook, standard size, 3-ringed.
3. Looseleaf notebook paper.
4. Austin Peay State University Undergraduate/Graduate Bulletin (1978-1979). Free at the Office of Admissions and Records, Browning Building.
5. One pen (to be brought with you to each class).
6. One pencil (to be brought with you to each class).

## STRONGLY RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

It is suggested that all University students own the following:

1. A dictionary of the English language. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary is a good one. If you cannot afford this one, buy a paperback dictionary.

2. A book or pamphlet about term papers.
3. A thesaurus.

### COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: It is essential that you attend classes regularly and participate in class discussions and exercises. It will be difficult for you to complete out of class assignments and to prepare adequately for tests if you do not attend class ON TIME and routinely.

Tests: There will be several exams during the quarter. These tests will cover the material given in classroom lectures and in the textbook with special emphasis on how well you can apply this information. Illness (a physician's note may be requested), family crisis, or a similar situation are the only legitimate reasons for missing a test. If you know you will be unable to take an exam, please call the instructor.

### GRADES

The final grades will be based on the number of points you earn on tests, and on completing exercises and homework as assigned. PLEASE NOTE: If more than five (5) assignments are not handed in or are handed in late (after the class meeting when the assignment was to be collected) 50 points will be automatically subtracted from the total points you earn. Exceptions to the above include illness and family crisis.

<u>Points</u>	<u>Grade Earned</u>
500 or more	A
450	B
400	C
350	D
200	Progress or F
299 or lower	F

Students who earn between 300 and 349 points may decide to take a grade of Progress (PR) or F. If you take a Progress grade you must continue in the course next quarter.

The instructors will tell you if they are assigning a group project (in or out of class) in which it is



permissible to work together. If you miss a class, it is expected that you will copy a friend's notes (if any were taken).

Quality: In all college courses a certain level of quality is expected in completed assignments. Complete sentences should always be used. The grammar of the sentences and the spelling should be correct.

### A FINAL THOUGHT

The instructors in this course want you to be successful in college. They care about you and are willing to give you as much time as you need for skill improvement. Meet them halfway, by letting them know when you are experiencing difficulties with any aspect of the course.

Please realize that the Course Policies are not arbitrary. The instructors have attended school for many years and know what is demanded of a student. They want you to be prepared. They hope you will try to do your best and at the same time, enjoy your college experiences.

### Objectives for Special Services & Developmental Studies English 101

1. Provide students with a review and/or introduction to the principles of Standard, edited American English.
2. Provide frequent opportunities for writing in a variety of forms, including journals, essay examinations, a variety of formal, expository essays, summaries, reports, reviews, and critiques.
3. Introduce students to the writing process, including drafting, revising and editing compositions.

### Objectives for Special Services & Developmental Studies Math 110

This course is designed for those students who need remediation in arithmetic before taking other college mathematics courses. Credit in this course will not apply toward graduation.



Objectives for Developmental Studies Math 111/112

1. This course is designed for those students who need a review of or an introduction to elementary algebra before taking their required mathematics courses. Math 111/112 is a two-quarter algebra sequence. Math 111 is a pre-requisite for Math 112.
2. These courses are especially helpful in preparing students for college algebra (Math 121 and 122) and for Business Administration 101 and 102.
3. Those students who have had two years of algebra in high school or have successfully completed a college mathematics course will not receive credit for Math 111 or 112 unless they obtain written approval prior to enrolling in these courses. Such approval may be obtained from Dr. William Stokes, Chairman of the Department of Mathematics, Clement 248.

Objectives for Special Services Education 101 (Reading)

1. Increase comprehension to minimum level for ability to manage college reading (approximately Grade 10)
2. Become an "efficient" reader (recognizing purpose for reading, adapting approach to reading, depending on purpose and the nature of the material)
3. Increase capacity to read critically, draw conclusions, form judgments
4. Increase capacity to read in specific content areas
5. Increase study skills ability
6. Increase reading rate

Appendix B: Admission Policy At Austin Peay State University  
Scheduled To Go Into Effect As Of Fall 1981

- a) REGULAR ADMISSION is for applicants who meet any one of these standards:
- 1) composite score of at least 16 on the ACT;
  - 2) high school grade point average of at least 2.25 on high school transcript when it is submitted to APSU, except that if graduation was from a school which is not state approved or regionally accredited, the required high school grade point average is 2.5;
  - 3) passing scores on the supplemental tests prescribed by APSU for applicants who fail to meet either of the preceding criteria.
- b) RESTRICTED ADMISSION is for students who do not qualify for Regular Admission but who pass one or two of the three supplemental tests. These students must register for specific courses and sections as outlined in their academic advisement. Upon completion of the courses specified by the adviser with grades of C or higher, the Restricted Admission status will be removed.
- c) PROBATIONARY ADMISSION is for students who do not qualify for Regular or Restricted Admission. They will be counseled regarding the advisability of their registering for college courses. Those who still wish to register will be placed on Probationary status immediately. They must 1) follow the advice of specially designated academic counselors; 2) register for no more than thirteen quarter hours; 3) register for all four of the courses especially designated for them; 4) continue to enroll in these courses each quarter until they earn grades of at least C; in no instance, however, may students receive the grade of PR more than twice for the same class; and 5) fulfill requirements of the University's retention standards as published in the University Bulletin in the section on Scholastic Standards and Probation.

#### OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Students enrolled in specially designated sections of Mathematics, English, Psychology, or Reading who are overqualified for such sections as shown either by scores

on tests used under this policy or by qualification levels determined by specially designated departmental faculty will not receive credit for such courses.

2. Academic advisers will assist students, particularly those with restricted and probationary admission, in making judicious choices by encouraging or discouraging course and program selections. Furthermore, advisers will help students identify goals and plan for movement toward their educational objectives, which often are subject to change. Academic advising will be a continuous process throughout the year, not limited to a specified time preceding registration and not necessarily restricted to purely academic matters. Students will be expected to keep in touch with their advisers; advisers, likewise, will be expected to keep in touch with those students for whom they have a responsibility. Together, adviser and student will agree on their expectations of each other regarding academic counseling and live up to those expectations. Many factors enter into the success or failure of college students; among the important considerations is academic counseling--its quality, its appropriateness, its tone, and its concern both for the student and for the academic program.

3. An appropriate number of faculty members, primarily from departments offering core courses, will be relieved



of other advisement duties and assigned to advise students who enter the University with Restricted or Probationary status. Only faculty members who indicate an interest in working with these students will be assigned these duties. All records, test scores, and other assessment data will be provided in sufficient time to permit advisers to become acquainted with the material and the students to be advised.

4. The number of specially designated sections will not exceed 6 in English, 8 in Mathematics, 4 in Psychology, and 4 in Reading per quarter. Each section should accommodate approximately 25 students. The supplemental tests should be used to fill out these sections with the appropriate students.

5. No distinction will be made in undergraduate admission standards between in-state and out-of-state students.

6. Applicants over twenty-one years of age will be encouraged but not required to take the ACT test and the APSU supplemental tests. They are exempt from the high school grade point requirement.

7. First year application of these standards will be limited to students applying for on-campus programs.

8. The Academic Division of the University, in applying these undergraduate admission standards, should



ensure the adequate scheduling and functioning of ACT-residual and supplemental tests with special reference to ACT permission for residual tests, funding, and timely access to test dates and test results.

9. University publications, including standard letters and forms, should emphasize the requirement to take the ACT test and to submit results in advance of the required dates.

10. Once implemented, the provisions of this recommendation should be reviewed within two years by an appropriate committee of the University.