(14 states launch new college entrance tests)

IOWA CITY, IOWA, Sept. 8 -- Colleges and universities in 14 states will embark Nov. 7 on a new admissions, placement, scholarship and guidance testing program for college-bound high school seniors.

The new venture, called the American College Testing (ACT) program, was announced here this (Tuesday) morning by E.F. Lindquist, director of the Iowa Testing Programs and a renowned test authority at The State University of Iowa, and Ted McCarrel, registrar and director of admissions at the University.

ACT will operate in 200 to 300 public and private colleges and universities this fall, said McCarrel, who is general director of the program. Offices have been established for program coordinators in the following states in which ACT has been inaugurated: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Wisconsin. California will begin participating in the program early in 1960, he said.

The program was started, McCarrel explained, to provide comparable intellectual data on all high school seniors seeking entrance to colleges in these states, regardless of where they may live or attend school.

Test results will be used by participating colleges for admissions and placement of students, for granting scholarships, loans, and other awards, and for counseling purposes, McCarrel said. Scores also will be made available to high school students and their advisors to aid in making sound vocational and college choices, he said.

High school students will pay a $3 fee for the test, according to McCarrel.

The first testing will be administered at specified colleges in the participating states next Nov. 7. (more)
With the number of college freshmen expected to increase from 711,000 this year to 1,267,000 in 1969, Dr. Lindquist observed, the nation's colleges are faced by the serious problem of selecting students who may profit most from higher education and of placing them in classes where they may fulfill their academic promise.

"The bulge in our teen-age population," said Dr. Lindquist, "will squeeze our colleges to the limits in the next few years. In part, the colleges will have to decide a crucial question: Who shall go to college?

"ACT will make a major contribution toward the answer," he said. "It will provide high schools and colleges with a uniform, yet flexible, admissions program and give them reports that are now costly and hard to obtain. The continuous research that will result from ACT will be helpful to high schools and colleges--and, ultimately, to students themselves."

The ACT plan evolved out of the statewide Iowa Testing Program in which all senior Iowa colleges have cooperated during the past two years, Dr. Lindquist noted. "The success of the Iowa program makes all the cooperating states confident that ACT will work well and reap valuable rewards, especially in savings to colleges and students," he said.

Tests used for ACT will assess general intellectual capacities in English, mathematics, social studies and natural sciences. The total score on the four-test battery will yield an indication of the student's general academic ability--and thus offer a key clue to his potential for success in college.

The tests will be edited under the supervision of Dr. Lindquist and the program policies will be determined by a committee of state coordinators. Science Research Associates of Chicago, which also serves the National Merit Scholarship Corp., the Navy ROTC program and the National Science Foundation, will provide the needed tests and administrative services.

"One of ACT's chief advantages," McCarrrel pointed out, "is that it will provide colleges with comparable ability data for students enrolling from other states--information they now get for only a very few students." He expects the English (more)
and mathematics scores to be used by colleges for determining class or section assignments for freshmen.

Participation in ACT thus will enable colleges to eliminate the growing variety of separate entrance, scholarship, and placement exams now used throughout the participating states—all aimed at testing general intellectual capacity and potential for college work, McCarrel said.

"The bewildering array of tests today with a similar purpose is costly and frustrating to educators, to parents, and to students themselves," he said.

McCarrel said that, in addition to receiving reports of ACT scores, participating high schools will get grade reports on their graduates when these students become college freshmen. This "feedback" information service will enable schools to provide more effective guidance and counseling to college-bound students and to appraise their own teaching and curriculums, he said.

All test scoring and reporting will be handled by the high-speed electronic "brains" of Measurement Research Center, Inc., a non-profit corporation directed by State University of Iowa officials and devoted to research to advance modern methods of educational testing.

More than 2,500,000 test answer sheets were scored last year on MRC equipment. The electronic test scoring apparatus marks and reports 6,000 answer sheets an hour with astonishing accuracy.

Individual test results will be sent to the colleges selected by the participating high school seniors, as well as to their own schools, within a short time after the annual test date, McCarrel said.

Cost of the ACT program will be offset entirely by test fees, said McCarrel, and participating schools and colleges will not have to share any program expenses. The low fee is made possible, he said, by widescale testing and the use of electronic scoring methods.

(more)
(14 states launch new college entrance tests -- 4)

Tests will be held on Saturdays to avoid overburdening already crowded high school class calendars, McCarrel said. Students who fail to take the Nov. 7 tests may take another form of the examination at a winter date to be announced later. Students from states not participating in ACT may take the tests for placement, research, and counseling purposes when they arrive at the ACT college of their choice in the fall of 1960 or afterward, he said.

According to Dr. Lindquist and Science Research Associates, questions for use in the test for next November already have undergone controlled try-outs on high school seniors.

Basic policies affecting ACT will be determined by a committee of the coordinators of individual state programs. This committee now includes: Dean W.F. Adams, University of Alabama; Registrar Carter Short, University of Arkansas; Dr. Robert T. Littrell, Head of the Office of Testing and Institutional Research at Long Beach (Calif.) State College; Dr. Lyle Edmison, Associate Dean of Students at State College for Alameda County (Calif.); John Phillips, Jr., Director of Testing, Boise Jr. College, Boise, Idaho; Harold Temmer, Associate Dean of Admissions & Records at the Navy Pier, University of Illinois; Registrar E.M. Gerritz, Kansas State University; Registrar Charles Elton, University of Kentucky; Professor Wilbur L. Layton, University of Minnesota; Director of Admissions R.M. Keefe, St. Louis University; Registrar Leo Smith, Montana State University; Dr. T. G. Sexton, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education; Dean R.F. Thomason, University of Tennessee; Registrar Paul L. Trump, University of Wisconsin, and O.W. Hascall, Boulder, Colorado.