AN EVALUATION OF THE BUSINESS CURRICULUM AT HELENA
VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL CENTER AS DETERMINED BY A SURVEY OF FORMER STUDENTS

by

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Approved:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Schools offering courses which purport to prepare students for particular kinds of employment should offer courses that are relevant to today's employment needs. Business courses should be evaluated each and every year to determine if the present curriculum is meeting the needs of employers in the business world. Future business needs should also be considered so steps can be taken to prepare for them.

New technology in business equipment is an example of change which causes change in business training. Large companies selling business machines can often predict the equipment becoming obsolete and the kind of equipment which will replace it.

In September of 1971, a survey was conducted evaluating electronic data processing curricula in a Michigan school (Ferguson & Ronan). Some of their findings related to equipment such as unit record equipment, accounting machines, collators, interpreters, reproducers, and sorters. They found this equipment was the most widely used equipment in data processing at the time. Accordingly people were being trained to operate this type of equipment. Yet their findings revealed that during the next five years a very rapid decline would take place involving the use of this equipment. It follows, the type of training and the course offering in electronic data processing had to change so
persons would not be trained to operate obsolete equipment. On the other hand, training and courses had to be introduced to meet the needs five years in the future when the new computers replaced much of this equipment.

It is reported the metric system of measurement will eventually replace our present system of measurement (Barbrow, 1972). If this should prove true, the schools should be encouraging teachers to learn the metric system so they will be prepared to teach metric courses if they are placed in the business curriculum.

Educators must keep abreast of the ever-changing aspects of business and effect changes in curriculums whenever necessary.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
The purpose of this research is to determine the relevancy of the present business curriculum at the Helena Vocational-Technical Center. The present course offerings will be evaluated in light of the student responses, and as they compare with other business curriculums throughout Montana and the United States.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY
There has not been a follow-up of business students from the Helena center in the six years the business department has been a part of Helena's Vocational Education Program. Extensive curriculum revision has taken place during those years, and many courses have been
added. The study is intended to determine if the courses are relevant or no longer meaningful, or if courses are not offered which should be added to the curriculum.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED

A cover letter and questionnaire was prepared and mailed to 42 students who have taken 4 or more business courses from the center. The cover letter explained the purpose of the questionnaire and encouraged students to assist in the evaluation of the business department's curriculum. The questionnaire asked the following information:

1. Name and address of firm where you were first employed after leaving the Helena Vocational-Technical Center.

2. Your present employer and address (indicate full or parttime).

3. Present job title and job description (please list the duties you perform most often).

4. Indicate the courses taken at the Helena center which helped you the least.

5. Indicate the courses taken at the Helena Center which helped you the most.

6. Describe additional courses which would be useful to you (consider your work experiences).

7. Use the remaining space for any additional comments you may wish to make regarding your training at the center.

The review of literature was undertaken to determine the evaluation methods used by others and the course offerings available in other business programs. These curriculums were then compared with the
business program at Helena's Vocational-Technical Center. The combination of the questionnaire results and the review of literature findings enable certain conclusions regarding the present business course offerings at the Helena center.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The students responding to the questionnaire attended the center before many of the current courses and programs in business were added. Therefore, an evaluation of the present curriculum would be even more meaningful when the students presently enrolled can be questioned.

The sample consisted of students who have attended in the past five years and who have taken four or more business courses at the center. Many students could not be sent a questionnaire because no current address could be found. Most of the students located are employed in Montana and the results are indicative of the needs of Montana's employers.

SUMMARY

As the needs of employers change, so must the educational programs change which provide the skills and knowledge to meet those needs. Teachers, counselors, placement personnel, and administrators must keep in contact with business to ensure students they are receiving the most relevant training possible.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In evaluating the business curriculum at the Helena Vocational-
Technical Center, a review of literature was undertaken to determine
the evaluation methods used by others and the course offerings available in other business curriculums.

Rodney Jurist was involved in a curriculum for a model business education program sponsored by the New Jersey State Department of Education. He said:

A model business curriculum is designed for meeting the vocational and personal needs of the business education students in order that he may become an effective worker, citizen, and consumer in our society.

Jurist pointed out there are two major purposes of business education: 1. Preparation of students for entrances into business careers, for rendering efficient service in their careers, and for the advancement to higher levels within their careers. 2. A concern with those principles and practices of everyday business relationships that aid in conducting one's personal business. The need for this type of education arises from the fact that everyone, regardless of occupations or economic status, engages in many activities of a business nature. Therefore, general business education is a form of education that every citizen should have.

To achieve the first purpose Jurist says business educators,
guidance personnel and school administrators need to know the occupations available to students in their communities, the duties and specialized knowledge required of the workers, and the attitudes, habits and personal characteristics and human relation skills that will contribute to the development of an acceptable employable personality. They must also know the skills and knowledges necessary for workers to advance on the job.

To achieve the second purpose he suggests these same people must know the business activities in which all citizens of their community engage and the kind of knowledge these citizens need to possess (Jurist, 1967:10).

The New Jersey Business Education Association sponsored a study entitled Business Education Curriculum Guides for the 70's. In it they said the school must offer organized experiences designed to enable the student to acquire skills that will be needed for employment, to give him an opportunity to obtain knowledges in areas related to these skills, and to provide an opportunity for him to acquire the attitudes and work habits needed for success in employment.

Their curriculum guides stressed behavioral objectives for each course taught, a description of course content, an outline of learning experiences and activities, a suggestion of materials of equipment to be used, resources to be used by teachers, and procedures for student evaluation.
The study divided business subjects into three areas, quantitative, social and secretarial. The quantitative subjects were designed to provide students with an exposure to, and an understanding of, the basic skills of each discipline for an entry-level position in business. They consisted of subjects such as record keeping, business math, bookkeeping-accounting, and data processing.

The social business subjects were described as a variety of subjects which deal with the American Enterprise System, which identify and explain the role of a business as an American economic institution, and which explain the concept of consumer education. They consisted of subjects such as business law, business organization, consumer economics and general business.

The secretarial courses were to provide for the acquisition of skills in typewriting, shorthand, transcription, and business machine operations. They were to provide for the integration of skills in the performance of office related activities; and for the development of personal competencies and qualities desirable for successful vocational experience. The secretarial courses were shorthand I-II and transcription, typing I-II, office machines, clerical office practice, secretarial office practice, personal typewriting and personal notetaking.

The study pointed out the skill subjects were arranged so students follow an entire sequence. Individualized instruction was also recommended (Business, 1970).
When considering change in a program Eugene Wyllie in his An Evaluation Plan for Business Education Programs in High School said:

Before changes in curriculum, instructional practices, course content, or other facet of a departmental program leading to improvement in business education can take place, an objective appraisal of what condition and practices (both strengths and weaknesses) currently exist must be made.

Wyllie recommended and developed a questionnaire and check list which he suggested should be filled out by staff members to determine the needs of a particular business education program (Wyllie, 1963:1).

Frank Harwood assisting local schools in modifying their business education programs surveyed business supervisors in the business area. These supervisors suggested the following for their administrative and management personnel in order to prepare them more adequately in business fields. 1. Give an awareness and some capability to appreciate and/or handle first echelon management problems (cost concepts, discipline, growth development, initiative development, leadership, responsibility and safety). 2. Develop communicative skills. 3. Improve human relations knowledge, skills, and understandings. 4. Demand more in the traditional business education subjects such as bookkeeping, office machines and typewriting. 5. Place more emphasis on applied mathematics. 6. Broaden the base of distributive and diversified occupation to move management perspective.

Harwood suggested adding to the curriculum business operational
administrational training beginning as early as the 9th grade. (Harwood, 1972:18).

In 1972 a follow-up study was done with Culbertson, Montana high school students. The findings indicated the graduates felt typing was their most useful course, followed by bookkeeping, general business and business law. They were asked which courses they would prefer if offered and assuming they were again in high school. Their selections in the order of preference were typing II, office machines, shorthand, salesmanship, business math, business English, and introduction to data processing. The students were asked to make suggestions for improving the curriculum. Some of the responses were form a DECA club, encourage more juniors and seniors to take business subjects, offer more secretarial training for students not planning to attend college, and offer more shorthand. Several suggested jobs were hard to find due to a lack of additional shorthand training (Halseide, 1972).

Another Montana school was reviewed because they had been involved in setting up a model business education curriculum. This was a project to advance creativity in education and was sponsored by the Office of Education in Washington D.C. It was entitled Vocational Curriculum Designed for Grades 9-12 and intended for the Fort Benton High School. The project group set forth the following basic goals relating to vocational education:

1. Develop an appreciation of vocational technology.
2. Develop an insight and understanding for employment opportunities.

3. Develop the ability and enthusiasm for continuous learning.

4. Develop the insight with which the student can become aware of his capabilities.

5. Develop basic skills in the proper and safe use of common tools, machines, and processes used in the vocational areas.

6. Develop desirable social relationships.

7. Develop consumer attitude where as students can select, buy, use, and maintain the products of industry more intelligently.

8. Develop marketable skills and vocational competence to meet the needs of the students.

9. Develop technical skills that can be applicable to the student for personal use.

10. Develop an insight into the world of work and its place in our culture.

11. Develop the abilities and enthusiasm for creative expression.

12. Develop the abilities for problem solving.

13. Develop an understanding of industrial processes and the practical application of scientific principles.

The following program was suggested by the group for the Fort Benton High School Business Department: Typing (personal, skill building, productions and vocational career) two years, bookkeeping one year, accounting one year, consumer economics one semester, shorthand (basic, dictation, speed building and transcription) two years, introduction to business one semester, business machines one semester,
business law one semester, clerical office procedures, simulated office practice, business communications, secretarial office practice, and business cooperative education (working in the community) each for nine weeks (Fort Benton, 1971).

John Roman conducted a study on business curriculums for South-Western's Monograph 100. One of the areas he considered involved programs for business education at the adult level. Programs which could be offered during the day as well as the evening. He said "Due to the emphasis on general education in the high school which will cause the postponement of specialization training in the business education for the academic-level student as well as the below average student curriculum for adults are about identical to those available in the larger high schools." Roman outlined a curriculum which represents one of the largest vocational programs offered in many states. The curriculum consisted of the following courses: Typing, shorthand (all levels), bookkeeping, accounting (beginning and advanced), small business bookkeeping, office machines, business math, general business, business English, investments, salesmanship, data processing (beginning and advanced), computer programming, key punch, income tax preparation, personality development, stenograph machines, economics (consumer and basic), business organization, business law, comptometry, business psychology, and introduction to credit unions (Roman, 1966).

In 1971 Ferguson and Ronan evaluated the electronic data processing
curriculum in the Dearborn Michigan Public Schools. They surveyed
data processing managers and former data processing students. They
found approximately 30 percent more people were employed as systems
analysts, analyst/programmers and programmers than as computer oper-
ators and tabulator equipment operators. The initial training for
these jobs was primarily on-the-job training programs followed in
order by schools sponsored by equipment manufactures, private business
schools, colleges, technical schools, and high schools.

The weaknesses relating to their training which were most pre-
valent were (the lack of): 1. practical experience 2. technical
skills 3. good work habits 4. positive attitude toward work 5.
ability to follow directions 6. communicative skills 7. initiative
for self improvement.

The languages being used in order of most popular use were:
Cobol, BAL, RPG, Fortran, Autocoder, BASIC, Easy Coder, SPS and Pl/1.
The beginning salaries for data processing employees on a per week
basis were as follows: 1. systems analysts $224 2. analyst program-
mer $204 3. programmers $174 4. computer operator $144 5. tab
operator $125 6. control clerk $124 7. key punch operator $112
8. key tape operator $107 9. verifier $106.

The authors concluded emphasis in training should be in systems
design, programming, magnetic disc systems, and computer operations
(Ferguson and Ronan, 1971).
Maurice Roney and others suggested a two year post high school curriculum for computer programmers and business applications analysts. Their curriculum study was sponsored by the Office of Education and was completed in 1966. The curriculum they suggested is as follows:

FIRST YEAR: data processing, math I, introduction to business data processing, electric accounting machines, accounting I, communication skills I, data processing II, math II, data processing applications, computer programming I, accounting II and communications skills II.

SECOND YEAR: computer programming II, programming systems, statistics, business organizations, cost accounting, business system design and development, advanced programming systems, data processing field project, and social science (Roney, 1966).

The intent of the review of literature was to determine what others have considered important in evaluating curriculum, and to study other business programs which have been suggested or implemented in schools offering business courses similar to those offered at the Helena Vocational-Technical Center.
CHAPTER III
BACKGOUND

Vocational education in Helena dates back to the 1930s when the first classes in aviation mechanics were conducted. The first classes in aviation were held in the old Helena auditorium (since torn down) and were available to high school students and adults. Flying and related activities gained popularity, and in 1935 the first of several buildings was constructed at the site of the present Helena airport. In 1939 the airport school was designated an area trade school by the State Department.

Due to the increased need for aircraft personnel during World War II, the Helena Aeronautical School became an important supplier of trained welders, mechanics, machinists, and sheet metal workers. While the civilian pilots training program was in operation the school supplied the mechanics and equipment to maintain and overhaul approximately thirty seven planes.

Also in the 1940s, the school was associated with the National Youth Administration in training young people in skilled trades such as welding, aircraft mechanics, machinists, radio mechanics, and auto mechanics.

In 1943 the Navy's V-5 Cadet Flying Program required men and equipment to maintain, overhaul, and repair some thirty five single engine planes being flown daily by the cadets.
Following World War II, the school continued to train returning veterans and other students in aircraft engines, machine shop, auto mechanics, radio mechanics, and welding. Additional courses were added including an institutional-on-the-farm-training course along with diesel engine mechanics.

The aircraft portion of the Helena Vocational-Technical Center is still in operation, although the demand for aircraft mechanics and other related aircraft courses has decreased in the past six years.

From the late 1950s through the late 1960s, several additional courses were started, many of which are currently taught. In 1959 a course in building trades began. This program requires students, under the supervision of journeyman carpenters, to build homes in the Helena area. Six houses have been constructed and one more is presently under construction.

A nurse's aide course began during this time and at present is so popular students are turned away each term. A few courses such as flight training for airline transport pilots were initiated when needed and subsequently discontinued when the quotas were filled.

As the need for Vocational Education increased funds were raised and a new school was constructed in 1967. With the added building space the school was able to expand their curriculum. New programs offered, in addition to those previously mentioned, include training in agricultural mechanics, consumer electronics, industrial electronics, small
engine repair, avionics, drafting, business data processing, and secretarial science. Courses in graphic arts and small business machine repair are presently being considered along with other programs as additional building space becomes available.

From 1967 through 1972 the school offered vocational courses to high school as well as post-secondary students. Approximately 1200 students per day attended one or more courses. The business students numbered about 500 students, the majority of which were high school students. In addition to the day programs there is an active vocational adult education program evenings.

Pre-vocational education courses were initiated into the Helena School System effective during the 1972-73 school term. As a result the Helena center became entirely post-secondary, and courses are now available to high school graduates from throughout the state. A nominal tuition charge and tool and supply fee is the only school cost paid by the students. Students from outside the State of Montana are charged a much larger tuition. The current enrollment is approximately 500 students, which exceeds the building capacity by about 150 students. Legislation is pending regarding the building expansion plans of all the designated vocational centers in Montana.

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

There are at present seven full-time teachers and one part-time teacher in the post-secondary business programs. Five business teachers
hold Masters degrees, two hold Bachelor degrees, and the part-time
teacher is a key-punch specialist.

The business department has approximately 2,000 square feet of
space in the main building. The computer and other hardware are lo¬
cated in one room, and the secretarial courses are offered in a large
room with movable folding partitions. An additional 2,400 square feet
of space is in the form of classroom trailers located on the premises
and divided into four separate classrooms, each about 600 square feet.

The business curriculum offers two main programs, secretarial
science and business data processing. The secretarial science curriculum
is broken into five options including executive secretarial, office
specialist, private secretarial, medical secretarial, and legal secre¬
tarial. There are presently 24 courses; 20 of which take 60 hours to
complete; two courses are 90 hours; one course is 180 hours; one is
30 hours; and one course is 400 hours. The 400 hour block is entitled
office management procedures and consists of 18 additional courses
ranging in length from 5 to 60 hours.

A complete option in the secretarial science field generally
takes from one to two years to complete. Many of the courses are
individualized and the time for completion varies with each student.
Students may enter the individualized courses any school day of the
year, whereas other courses require entry at designated time intervals.

The business data processing program takes two years to complete.
The program stresses accounting and programming. The program is broken into 3 quarters of data processing, 1 quarter of Machine language and SPS programming, 1 quarter of RPG, 2 quarters of FORTRAN, and 2 quarters of COBOL. The specific accounting courses are individual proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, cost accounting, auditing, income tax, and computerized accounting systems.

Students may also specialize in the accounting courses and related courses in data processing, COBOL, RPG, and business law if they wish training as an accounting assistant.

The majority of the courses are available to students not wishing to enroll in a continuous program, but who are seeking skill training in specific areas. Key punch, typing, office machines, shorthand, basic accounting, and filing are among the more popular courses for part-time students. Regular and special business courses are provided students who are training in other vocational areas. Each trade area program requires some related business training.
CHAPTER IV

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE

A cover letter and questionnaire was prepared and mailed to 42 students who have taken four or more business courses from the Helena center in recent years. The questionnaire sought information regarding their present employment and information concerning the business curriculum at the Helena Vocational-Technical Center.

There were approximately 100 post-secondary students who had taken four or more courses from 1969 through 1972. Reliable addresses could be located for thirty former students. The remaining questionnaires were sent to their last known address.

TABLE I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaires Mailed</th>
<th>42</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires Not reaching Students</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires returned (45.2%)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As previously mentioned, the questionnaire sought information regarding the students present employer, job title, and main duties of the job. This information is summarized in Table II, page 20. The employers are listed of all 19 respondents even though a few are not presently working at business related occupations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Main Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Fire Marshal Bureau</td>
<td>Clerk-Steno II</td>
<td>Typing, accounting, transcribing, telephone, shorthand, &amp; office machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena Vocational-Technical</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Typing, duplicating, telephone, &amp; tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Highway Department</td>
<td>Computer-Operator</td>
<td>Operation of 370/145 IBM computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Computer Corporation</td>
<td>Computer-Operator</td>
<td>Operates 1419 magnetic character reader, card reader &amp; printer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana Department of Highways</td>
<td>Control Desk Clerk</td>
<td>Logging jobs, cost coding, key punch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana Physicians' Service</td>
<td>Key Punch Operator</td>
<td>Key punches claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana Hardware &amp; Implement</td>
<td>Computer Operator</td>
<td>Daily runs of tapes, end of month statements, key punch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Army</td>
<td>None listed</td>
<td>Says &quot;Not working at any skills&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Rock Cafe</td>
<td>Waitress</td>
<td>Serving customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranching</td>
<td>None listed</td>
<td>None listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprus Industrial Minerals</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Payroll, dictation, typing, &amp; accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Rehabilitation Service</td>
<td>Acctg Clerk II</td>
<td>Reviews cases, Compiles, statistical reports, &amp; warrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School District No. 1</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Typing, transcription, duplicating machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Hilton Inn</td>
<td>Night Manager</td>
<td>Catering, bartending, cashier, desk clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Paint Company</td>
<td>Data Processing</td>
<td>Sets up and programs jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana Hardware &amp; Implement Association</td>
<td>Manager, Dealer Services</td>
<td>Computerized acctg, merchandising, &amp; consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowland, Thomas &amp; Company</td>
<td>Key punch operator</td>
<td>Key punch &amp; runs NCR computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lohman Motors</td>
<td>Secretary-Bookkeeper</td>
<td>Accounting, telephone, receptionist, &amp; typing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st National Bank of Helena</td>
<td>Bookkeeper</td>
<td>Filing, savings &amp; checking records, microfilming &amp; telephone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students were asked which courses were the most helpful, the least helpful, and what courses might be added which were not available when they attended the center. These results are summarized in Table III with numbers indicating the frequency a particular course was mentioned. Many of the respondents were former computer programming students and did not respond to the most helpful question. It is obvious from the nature of their jobs and duties the course computer programming was essential.
**TABLE III**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSES</th>
<th>Most Helpful</th>
<th>Least Helpful</th>
<th>Add Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Machines</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Communications</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Processing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Math</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorthand</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Programming</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll Accounting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Punch</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicating Machines</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stenoscript</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Economics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Etiquette</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Simulation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Tax Accounting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trips</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The last question on the questionnaire encouraged additional comments regarding their training at the Helena center. The following are some of the comments from the students.

"I wish that I had taken secretarial courses along with my data processing course. Since data processing is so common now I think that any general knowledge a person can get in this won't hurt them at all."

"The school helped me in many ways, one for getting me out of my shell. The teachers were very concerned about you, compared to the high school teachers, helping you whenever you needed it and being more of a friend."

"Make the programming course longer and do more jobs based on outside requests."

"I think the best course for me at vo-tech was being around people as in most offices you are around many people and how you can adjust daily to various situations that may arise and how you as a person can help and know what to do. I think field trips are a great help."

"As far as my training while at the Vo-tech, I felt that it was very good. I wish there would have been a shorthand class, instead of stenoscript, even though the stenoscript has helped me very much with the job I now have. Other than that I feel that the courses I did take helped me very much."

"I think on the whole I received a very good background, but not
because I was that terribly ambitious but because of the teachers' attitudes for which I am grateful! My boss was really impressed by my resume and said so when I interviewed for the job. . . . . I do think as far as the key-punch course, it would help if the students could punch a few more actual work jobs to get more of an idea of what actual punch work is like."

"I feel I got a very good education from Helena Vo-Tech. The year 72-73 I feel was good. It was set on an individual work basis." "I felt that the courses I took were very informative and well taught. Except for one, which was a very important one. I feel if the teacher that taught this class was shown that a little more thoughtfulness and consideration for the students, things would have been much better."

"All the education in the world is no good unless you have some get-up-and-go. If you don't have any ambition you're wasting time, employees are looking for ambitious workers, anyone can learn to do a job, but not everyone can learn to become ambitious. Try to get this drive started in your students early."

"The training I was getting was excellent. The learning enjoyable, which is hard to find in many schools. Hopefully I will be able to come back and finish what I started in both secretarial and computer science." "The training I had at school was good in the business math and
accounting, but the stress on shorthand was too much."

"A course on guidance in desire to do a complete job."

"The instruction is great, more modern equipment should be available."

"I wish I would have taken more key punching, because I had a lot of problems. But I kept trying and I enjoy my work and I am doing real well."

The summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study are presented in the following chapter.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The intent of this research was to evaluate the business curriculum at the Helena Vocational-Technical Center. A questionnaire was sent to exactly forty-two percent of the former post-secondary students who enrolled in four or more business courses, and attended school between 1969 and 1972. The information received from the students along with the findings from the review of literature were used to evaluate the present business curriculum.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Business curriculums in Montana and throughout the United States were researched as part of the Review of Literature. The findings revealed the evaluation methods used by others, and the course offerings available in schools offering business programs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The respondents included forty-five percent of the population. Sixteen of the nineteen respondents are working in training related occupations. Ninety-five percent of the respondents live in Montana, and the majority live and work in the Helena area.

Accounting and typing were listed most often as the most helpful course taken at the Helena center. Shorthand was listed as the least helpful course.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The business curriculum at the Helena Vocational-Technical Center compares very favorably with those researched in the Review of Literature. All courses falling under the "add course" section in Table III have been added since the particular respondent attended the center. The computer hardware has been up-dated in terms of capacity and job relevancy. The equipment used in the secretarial science program has been, and is, superior equipment in quantity and quality. The present programs combine individualized instruction with formal instruction so the best of each instruction method is available to students.

A basic course in data processing should be required for students in the secretarial science program. More field trips should be scheduled, along with additional outside "real" projects for key punch and other subject areas which can do outside work.

The author suggests the program involving "accounting assistants" be evaluated to determine if the instruction is meeting the needs of employers, and to determine if employers, do indeed, exist.

Future surveys would be easier and more effective if the school kept closer track of former full-time students.

In conclusion, the author believes vocational training can best be evaluated in light of placing and keeping students on the job. In this regard, the Helena Vocational-Technical Center has been very successful.


APPENDIX
February 25, 1974

We need your help in conducting a study evaluating the business curriculum at Helena Vocational-Technical Center.

We are interested in determining whether you are working in areas relating to your former business training. Your responses will help us improve our present business curriculum. The types of employers and the nature of your job duties will be of interest to our present students.

As former students and present employees you are in the best position to evaluate the training you received at our center. Therefore, I am enclosing a short questionnaire and ask that you return it as soon as possible.

Please feel free to make any comments you think would be helpful to the Vo-tech business department. The source of all information will remain confidential.

Sincerely yours,

Jay Harding
1. Name and address of firm where you were first employed after leaving the Helena Vocational-Technical Center.

2. Your present employer and address (indicate full or part-time).

3. Present job title and job description (please list the duties you perform most often).

4. Indicate the courses taken at the Helena center which helped you the most.

5. Indicate the courses taken at the Helena center which helped you the least.

6. Describe additional courses which would be useful to you (consider your work experiences).

7. Use the remaining space for any additional comments you may wish to make regarding your training at the Helena center.

YOUR name and present address