EVALUATION OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE AND PROGRAM IN THE SCHOOL OF COMMERCE AT MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BY MASTER'S ALUMNI AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

by

RICHARD ALVIN HAGEMAN

A professional paper submitted to the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
in
BUSINESS EDUCATION

Approved:

Head, Major Department

Chairman, Examining Committee

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana
June, 1972
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th></th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Graduate Program</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purposes Of The Project</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Procedures</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Limitations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Definition Of Terms</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>REVIEW OF LITERATURE</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Advanced Degree Dilemma</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Research Controversy</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehensive Examinations</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Population</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sample Selection</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description Of The Variables</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Questionnaire Return Percentage</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Representative View Of The Respondents</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Utility Of The Master's Degree</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization And Administration Of The Graduate Program</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards and procedures for admission</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification as a prerequisite</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the graduate program</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration of the graduate program</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements for the system of core courses</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis of content for business education</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions for innovations in teaching or learning</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size and selection of graduate committees</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from graduate committees</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of research</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The comprehensive examination</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluations Of And Suggestions For Curriculum Content</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of existing courses</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of individual problems courses</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested curriculum additions</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Comments</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SUMMARY</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Procedures</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Of The Study</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling results</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative view of the respondents</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment utility of the master's degree</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and administration of the graduate program</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of and suggestions for curriculum content</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPENDIX A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPENDIX A</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Project Questionnaire</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 57 |
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-A. ALUMNI RESPONDENTS' MAJOR AREAS OF STUDY</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-B. ALUMNI RESPONDENTS' MINOR AREAS OF STUDY</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C. INSTITUTIONS WHERE RESPONDENTS RECEIVED UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-D. RESPONDENTS' UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-E. STATES WHERE THE ALUMNI ARE CERTIFIED TO TEACH</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-F. A SUMMARY OF ALUMNI RESPONSES REGARDING THE EMPLOYMENT UTILITY OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-G. COMMERCE COURSES RECEIVING GOOD AND POOR RATINGS</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The purposes of the research project were to attempt to determine the employment utility of a master's degree obtained through the School of Commerce at Montana State University; to evaluate the curriculum in the School of Commerce in search of additions and improvements; and to evaluate the organization and administration of the graduate program in the School of Commerce.

Data were collected by mailing questionnaires to 59 alumni who had received master's degrees between June 1966 and August 1971, and hand-delivering questionnaires to ten graduate students who were currently enrolled in the School of Commerce during March 1972. Forty three questionnaires were returned.

Alumni respondents had pursued occupations in the general fields of education, general business, and technology. Fourteen respondents felt that their possession of master's degrees had aided them in obtaining employment; seven respondents felt that their master's degrees had given them difficulty in obtaining employment. Twenty two respondents felt that the knowledge they gained while studying for their master's degrees was beneficial to them during the initial adjustment periods of their employment. Twenty five respondents felt that their gained knowledge was beneficial throughout their employment. The master's degree had enhanced the advancement opportunities of twenty two respondents. Twenty four respondents believed that their master's degrees were responsible for increased salary levels.

Five of the forty three respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the standards and procedures for admission to graduate school. Four of the five felt that the Graduate Record Examination should not be required.

Respondents were nearly equally divided on whether certification should be a prerequisite for a master's in Business Education.

Four respondents suggested that the School offer an MBA, possibly coordinated with the University of Montana.

Three respondents felt that too much "red tape" was involved with the graduate program.

A majority of respondents felt that individual graduate programs should emphasize business subjects rather than education subjects.

Many respondents were dissatisfied with the amount of guidance they had received from their graduate committees.

Twenty two respondents preferred a comprehensive exam consisting of a combination of oral and written tests.

It is recommended that: guidance activities for graduate students be examined; the administration of the graduate program be reviewed for possible simplification, and; the School of Commerce examine the possible use of the combination form of comprehensive exam.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions in all disciplines feel the need for constant self-examination in varying degrees. Just as new discoveries in the fields of science can create the need for revision and supplementation in the education of the physical sciences, the ever-changing environment of society causes need for reform, revision, and supplementation in the educational fields of business. The business schools' responsibilities in self-examination were expressed by J. Curtis Hall (7:2) when he wrote:

Our task...is to keep business education relevant. We can do so only by keeping careful watch over all our offerings. We Must make sure that we are preparing students for jobs that exist today or will exist in the future. We must concentrate on Preparing managers who will invent new systems for the future rather than relying on the application of old systems to new problems. Especially, we must be careful that the content of the basic business does not become obsolete.

Perhaps no other field can be affected by so many different factors ranging from legislative acts or national fads to new discoveries in the scientific areas.

While pondering the possibilities of the future with his soon-to-be obtained master's degree in Business Education, the writer decided to
find out what positions others who had graduated from the School of Com-
merce at Montana State University had taken in our capricious environment.
A research project of this nature carried with it the opportunity for exam-
ining the graduate program in the School of Commerce through the eyes of
the very people whom it was designed to serve.

The Graduate Program

Montana State University is a federal land-grant institution located
in Bozeman, Montana with an enrollment of approximately 8,000 students.
Instruction at the institution is administered through five colleges; the
largest of the five being the College of Professional Schools. The School
of Commerce is one of the divisions of the College of Professional Schools.

The School of Commerce has offered two post-graduate degrees dur-
ing the past five years. One of the degrees--the Master of Science in
Applied Science--was discontinued in March 1971. This degree was de-
cined as an interdisciplinary degree in that it contained the built-in limit-
ation of allowing no more than 50 percent of the credit requirements in any
one field. Prior to the development of the Master of Science in Business
Education degree in 1968, graduate students in Commerce sometimes
used the Applied Science degree for concentration in Business Education
courses.
The Master of Science in Business Education degree offers special emphasis in office education, distributive education, or basic business education. Graduates from this program may be certified as vocational coordinators and/or teachers on the high school and post-secondary level.

Two options are available under the master's program. Plan A requires 30 quarter-credit hours of course work, a written thesis, and a comprehensive examination. Plan B requires 45 quarter-credit hours, a written professional paper, and a comprehensive examination. The majority of the graduate students in the School of Commerce have graduated under Plan B.

A graduate committee comprised of three or more faculty members from appropriate areas of study is appointed for each graduate student. The duties of the committee are to advise, assist, and examine the graduate student's performance as he works toward his degree. Examination is achieved through the administration of a written comprehensive examination. In cases of questionable performance, an oral examination may also be administered.

Preferences of the graduate student and the instructional areas of the faculty members are major considerations in the selection of committee members. For those graduate students who studied for the Applied
Science degree, at least one committee member had to be from outside the student's major area of study.

**Purposes Of The Project**

The purposes of this project were (1) to examine the employment utility of the master's degree from the School of Commerce, (2) to evaluate the curriculum in the School of Commerce in search of improvements and useful additions, and (3) to evaluate the organization and administration of the graduate program in the School of Commerce.

**Project Procedures**

The sources of information used in this project were surveys involving former graduate students who had received their master's degrees from the School of Commerce, and graduate students who were currently enrolled in the School of Commerce during March 1972. The major sources of data were considered to be the former graduate students.

Questionnaires with explanatory cover letters were mailed to 59 former students who had received master's degrees from the School of Commerce. The questionnaire asked the respondents to evaluate the employment values of their degrees, to evaluate the curriculum, and to evaluate the graduate program in the School of Commerce. The question-
naire is contained in Appendix A.

Ten currently enrolled graduate students were given the same questionnaire in an attempt to determine their appraisals of and suggestions for the graduate program. The graduate students were asked not to answer the questions on employment utility.

Project Limitations

This project was limited to the study of the graduate program in the School of Commerce at Montana State University. Survey respondents were limited to currently enrolled graduate students and alumni who had received their master's degrees from the School of Commerce during the five year period between June 1966 and August 1971.

Definition Of Terms

All terms not otherwise defined will be used in accordance with their commonly accepted definitions.

Alumni as used in this report refers to those graduates who have received master's degrees in either Applied Science or Business Education from the School of Commerce at Montana State University.

Candidates are graduate students who were currently enrolled in the School of Commerce at Montana State University during the month of
March 1972 working toward one of the two master's degrees.

D.E. is the abbreviation for distributive education; the discipline which studies the wholesale and retail areas of product and service distribution in business.

DECA is the acronym for Distributive Education Clubs of America; a youth organization for students interested in business.

Individual graduate programs are outlined plans of subject areas to be studied by individual graduate students.

Individual problems is the title for courses offered at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in which a student can study areas of special individual interest under the guidance of a qualified faculty member.

Major refers to the subject area in which a student concentrates his studies.

Minor refers to a subject area in which a student may place some emphasis, but not as much as on his major. A graduate student is considered to have a minor if he carries 15 or more credits in the minor subject area.

O.E. is the abbreviation for office education; the study and practice of methods, procedures, and machine skills employed in business offices.
Population is the term used to define the total group of subjects to be studied by the researcher, all of which contain one or more common characteristics.

The graduate program refers to the procedures, requirements, and subject offerings which make up the organizational structure for the administration of graduate studies.

Variables are the pieces of information that the researcher wishes to study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A recent survey conducted for educational improvement at Mankato State College in Minnesota studied the preparation of business teachers. The survey was summarized by Finch and Calhoun (5:35) as follows:

Fitzgerald surveyed 150 business education graduates of the 1959-63 classes of Mankato (Minnesota) State College to get their evaluation of their preparation for business teaching. The courses considered of most value to their teaching by over 50 percent were advanced Gregg shorthand; methods of teaching typewriting, shorthand, and bookkeeping; and principles of accounting. Communications courses were listed by 51 percent of the graduates as being courses of general value. They suggested increasing emphasis on data processing in the business curriculum, then business English, then office management. Seventy five percent felt that journalism should be required of business education majors.

Finch and Calhoun (5:34) also summarized a doctoral thesis at Colorado State College which studied master's degree programs for business teachers:

Keller made a comparison of teachers' and educators' opinions regarding the most beneficial master's degree program for business teachers. He concluded that practice teaching should be done on the undergraduate level; that programs for the preparation of junior college teachers should concentrate on business administration courses, and those for the preparation of high school teachers should concentrate on business education courses. Both written and oral examinations were favored with no thesis or foreign language requirement.
Perhaps, however, business administration courses for junior college teachers are not enough. The growing number of and surging enrollments in junior and community colleges warrant special attention to the examination of graduate programs for junior college teachers. Lindsay (8:10) noted:

...according to the Annual HEW Report on Education Professions for 1969-1970, graduate programs are not well oriented to the philosophy of the junior college. Perhaps integration of more psychology and sociology into the curriculum is needed in developing understanding of the causes of learning disabilities and of ways of alleviating the handicaps.

The Advanced Degree Dilemma

The rapidly expanding junior and community college movement and the escalation of qualification requirements for employment positions have placed more emphasis on post-baccalaureate degrees. With this new emphasis has come concern over the requirements for graduate programs. Two areas causing particular concern and occasional controversy are admission requirements and curriculum adequacy in the graduate school.

The teaching profession is one area receiving an increasing amount of pressure for advanced degrees. According to Haines (6:126):

There is a strong and evident trend toward what may be described as continuing certificate programs. In some states these require that teachers complete a master's degree (or its equivalent) or a
major amount of planned course work (often 20 semester hours) beyond the first certification level. Local districts are increasingly demanding evidence of achievement in certain levels of course work.

A shift in the entire educational ladder was noted by Dearing and Lederer (3:7) in the following:

A premium placed upon holding an advanced degree for salary and job classification benefits, particularly in the field of education, assures that many students for whom a baccalaureate would once have been sufficient will undertake to complete at a minimum the master's degree. The general escalation of expectation, which tends to set the baccalaureate degree as a requirement that once could be met by a high school diploma or by a two-year associate degree, has the effect of elevating the requirement from a college diploma to a master's degree and from a master's degree to the doctorate in the ascending hierarchy of job descriptions and expectations.

The pressures for advanced degrees appear to be creating a dilemma for college educators and administrators. In his discussion of rising certification requirements, Haines (6:126-7) went on to say:

In net effect, this tells the teacher education faculty that a program of professional improvement to a certain level must be offered every certified teacher. The traditional admission standards for graduate work come under fire if they prevent a certified teacher from engaging in a program of professional improvement as required by law or policy. The issue will not be easy to resolve since no one wishes to compromise the standards of his graduate degree. Yet, the challenge to teacher education is clear--provide a program of professional improvement which meets individual needs and the requirements established by the profession.
An apparent laxity in standards was mentioned by Cardozier (1:150) when he noted that many graduate school deans are dissatisfied with the inclusion of junior and senior level courses in graduate programs. They also had doubts that graduate professors were requiring the level of knowledge and understanding necessary for post-graduate level study.

In addition to the inclusion of undergraduate courses in graduate programs, the value of courses labeled individual problems or special problems has been questioned. Dissatisfaction was pointed out by Cardozier (1:151) when he wrote:

Those who question "special problem" courses argue that they are frequently poor substitutes offered in institutions where the enrollment is insufficient to provide an adequate selection of course offerings. Further, they add, too often a "special problem" is simply a spurious way to "earn" graduate credits, that the study often involves the kind of activity which a good teacher should be doing as part of his regular teaching duties. Frequently, the learning—the only basis on which college credit can be awarded—is minimal or non-existent, or limited to findings which have ephemeral value.

The Research Controversy

A subject of growing controversy is that of the role of research in the graduate school. While some educators feel that research activities are deficient among both students and faculties in graduate schools, others feel that too much emphasis is already placed on research.

Orlich (9:41) feels that the faculties are not performing as they
should in the role of research. He writes:

If any university is serious about graduate work, its faculty must be encouraged—and for smaller state universities, perhaps recruited—to conduct either basic or applied research. Faculty members interested in scholarship and research must be allocated large blocks of time to carry out effectively their scholarly endeavors.

Many advanced degree-granting institutions have graduate facilities that are not exhibiting the very traits they profess to be promoting in their graduate students, i.e., scholarship and research. No university graduate program should be eligible for national or regional accreditation until the specific departments show an organized concern for faculty scholarship and research. This criterion would eliminate non-scholarly oriented departments from being recognized as worthy academic contributors.

Dearing and Lederer (3:7) noted charges opposing emphasis on research, especially for doctoral candidates when they wrote:

This requirement is frequently deplored and responsibly accused as a wasteful and fruitless endeavor, as the cause for the multiplication and elevation of scholarly trivia, and as the reason for many worthy candidates balking at finishing their degrees.

Dykstra (4:100) voiced dissatisfaction with faculty standards as well as research requirements by writing:

One looks in vain...for evidence that the professorial contingent is...eager to eliminate artificial barriers to admission into the realm of college teaching. The myth continues to be nurtured that only those who have overcome the obstacles posed by a Ph.D. program are fully qualified. Those lacking the Ph.D. may be given low-level teaching assignments, but it is made abundantly clear that their status is marginal, and advancement is impossible. The Ph.D. mystique, which is institutionalized into policy in our colleges and universities, has the latent function of protecting Ph.D. mediocrities from competition from those whose wisdom was acquired from alternate and non-sanctioned experiences.
In clarification of his views on standards, he went on to say:

...it is not lower standards that are needed, but more relevant standards. The quality of service being rendered in the most crucial professions is being depressed by the creation of artificial scarcities.

Haines (6:121-2) took a more moderate view. In discussing teacher education he felt that some form of research should be part of the teacher education program, if for no other reasons, to generate new knowledge to contribute to the profession or enhance its own instructional and service program. Three basic forms of research that he offered in which the teacher might engage are (1) formal research, (2) curriculum development research, and (3) controlled writing.

Another reason for research by teachers was offered by Cardozier (1:151) when he wrote:

Those who support the thesis for the terminal master's degree see advantages in it for the teacher who never expects to conduct another scientific study. By planning and conducting research at the level required for the thesis, the individual will gain an understanding of research that cannot be gained through studying about research. Further, this understanding will help him to develop the ability to analyze critically the quality of research both in education and the social sciences and in agriculture.

Even though he supported the research viewpoint, Haines (6:122) later warned:

A word of caution is due. There is no need for every institution to engage in large-scale, formal research or seek out large research grants. Nor is there a need to presume that every professor
is capable of or desirous of undertaking formal research. Nor should there be an assumption that research must be a large part of every teacher education program. But there is need for the institutional administrator to see the research function as an integral part of the teacher education program and subsequently recognize the need to devote a portion of the budget resources to it.

Comprehensive Examinations

Another area of graduate programs to receive attention is that of comprehensive exams. Casciano-Savignano (2:524) surveyed 401 accredited institutions in an effort to determine prevalent policies concerning the use of comprehensive exams. Some of her conclusions are as follows:

1. Master's programs most frequently required a comprehensive examination.
2. Where exams were optional, the most frequent alternative was a thesis in lieu of an exam.
3. The most frequent requirements were general comprehensive exams and exams in major areas.
4. By far, the most frequent were written examinations.
5. Most exams consisted solely of essay questions.

Summary

In view of the controversy, dissatisfaction, and pleas for revision in graduate programs, one might question the nature of the master's degree of the future. Dearing and Lederer (3:7) seemed to believe that a major metamorphosis is not forthcoming. They summarized the trend in graduate
education as follows:

The principle conclusions... (are) to indicate that the master's is neither on its way out as a discredited degree nor one which can be substituted for the Ph.D. by prolongation or by heaping up additional requirements.
CHAPTER III

ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH

The Population

The population that was studied consisted of university alumni and currently enrolled graduate students. The alumni had all received Master of Science degrees in either Applied Science or Business Education through the School of Commerce at Montana State University. The currently enrolled graduate students, hereafter referred to as the candidates, were studying for Master of Science degrees in either Business Education or Applied Science in the School of Commerce at Montana State University.

Sample Selection

Two samples were taken from the population. The alumni sample consisted of 59 graduates and included all the graduates who had received master's degrees between June 1966 and August 1971. The candidate sample consisted of 10 of the 23 candidates currently enrolled in the School of Commerce during March 1972. The ten candidates were selected subjectively.
Description Of The Variables

The variables studied were grouped into five areas. These areas are:

1. A representative view of the respondents.
2. The utility of the master's degree to the respondents in view of their employment.
3. The respondents' views on the organization and administration of the graduate program.
4. The respondents' evaluations of and suggestions for the subject content of the School of Commerce curriculum.
5. The respondents' miscellaneous comments relative to the master's degree and/or the master's program.

Inquiries into six areas were made in a attempt to obtain a representative view of the respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate:

1. Their graduation dates.
2. Their major and minor areas of study.
3. The institutions where they had received their undergraduate degrees and what their undergraduate majors were.
4. Whether or not they were certified in any states to teach in the secondary or vocational schools; and if so, in which states.
5. Whether or not they were studying or planned to study for a doctorate degree; and if so, in which fields.
6. Their reasons for pursuing a master's degree.

The employment utility of the master's degree was analyzed by asking the respondents:

1. The titles of their first positions in employment after receiving their master's degrees.
2. The titles of their present positions if different from their first positions.
3. Whether or not their possession of master's degrees aided them more so than undergraduate degrees would have in obtaining employment.
4. Whether or not they had difficulty in obtaining employment or had to consider employment outside their fields because of their possession of master's degrees.
5. Whether or not the knowledge they obtained while studying for their master's degrees aided their performance at the beginning of their employment and throughout their employment.
6. Whether or not their advancement opportunities in employment were enhanced by their possession of master's degrees.
7. Whether or not their possession of master's degrees increased their salaries at the beginning of or during their employment.

The respondents' views of the administration of the graduate program were obtained by asking:

1. If they approved of the standards and procedures for admission to graduate school; and if not, what changes they would suggest.
2. Whether or not certification to teach in the secondary or vocational schools should be a prerequisite for obtaining a master's degree in Business Education.
3. What improvements they might suggest relative to the organization of the graduate program.
4. What improvements they might suggest relative to the administration of the graduate program.
5. What improvements they might suggest for the system of core courses in the graduate program.
6. Whether they felt that the concentration of study for a master's in Business Education should be on business subjects, Education subjects, or both.
7. What suggestions they might have for innovations in teaching or learning.
8. What improvements they might suggest for the size and selection of graduate committees.
9. Their evaluations of the assistance they received from their grad-
uate committees and their suggestions for improvement of committees.

10. Their evaluations of the amount of research expected of the faculty and of the graduate students.

11. What form of comprehensive examination they felt best evaluates the graduate student.

In an attempt to determine the respondents' evaluations of the subject content of their individual programs, they were asked to rate each course they had studied in the School of Commerce. Ratings made use of a numerical scale from zero to three. A course receiving a rating of zero was considered to be of little or no value, while a course receiving a rating of three was considered to be very useful.

The respondents were also asked if their studies in any 570 (individual problems) courses were appropriate for their degrees, met graduate standards; and what comments they might have relative to the 570 courses.

A third question regarding the subject content of their graduate programs asked the respondents to list any areas of study not offered in the School of Commerce that would have been of value to them.

In an effort to note subjects for possible enrichment of graduate programs, respondents were asked to list courses they had studied outside the School of Commerce curriculum at MSU and at institutions other than MSU.
The final category of variables was included to solicit any suggestions for or evaluations of the graduate program in the School of Commerce that did not receive consideration in any of the prior categories.

Data Collection

The instrument used for collecting data was a printed questionnaire. A sample questionnaire is contained in Appendix A. Copies of the questionnaire with explanatory cover letters were mailed March 20, 1972 to the 59 alumni in the sample. One follow up letter was mailed to those alumni whose completed questionnaires were not received within two weeks after the mailing date.

Copies of the questionnaire were hand delivered to the ten master's candidates in the sample during the following two weeks.

Data from the alumni were tabulated separately from the data from the candidates for comparative purposes. Data from the respondents who majored in areas of business education were also separated from the data from those who did not major in a teaching area.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The Questionnaire Return Percentage

Thirty four of the fifty nine alumni returned questionnaires for a return of 57.7 percent. Nine of the ten hand delivered questionnaires, or 90 percent, were returned by the candidates.

A Representative View Of The Respondents

Nineteen of the thirty four alumni who returned questionnaires received their master's degrees in 1970; three each in 1969, 1968, and 1967; and one in 1966.

Eight of the candidates who completed questionnaires plan to receive their degrees in 1972, and one plans to receive his in 1974.

Nineteen of the alumni respondents received master's degrees in Applied Science and fifteen received master's degrees in Business Education. Six of the alumni respondents who received the Applied Science degree majored in areas of business education while thirteen of the fifteen alumni respondents who received Business Education degrees majored in areas of business education.
Table 4-A contains the number of alumni respondents majoring in particular subject areas for each degree and the total number of alumni respondents majoring in each subject area.

Table 4-A

ALUMNI RESPONDENTS'
MAJOR AREAS OF STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Number of Respondents with Applied Sci. degree</th>
<th>Number of Respondents with Applied Sci. degree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Business</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Business Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. One respondent with an Applied Science degree had a double major in accounting and management.

b. One respondent with an Applied Science degree had a double major in DE and OE; one respondent with a Business Education degree had a double major in DE and OE.

Eight of the nine candidate respondents were studying for the master's degree in Business Education. The candidate respondent who was studying for the Applied Science degree had a double major in management and
accounting. Three of the Business Education candidates were majoring in office education, four in basic business education, and one each in accounting and marketing. One Business Education candidate had a double major in office education and distributive education.

Twenty three of the alumni respondents carried fifteen or more credits in a minor area of study. Table 4-B lists the minor areas of study and the number of respondents studying in the areas.

Table 4-B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Area of Study</th>
<th>Number of Respondents Studying the Minor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial &amp; Management Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five candidate respondents had minor areas of study. Their minor areas were:
1. Accounting.
3. English.
4. Transportation Economics.
5. Sociology.

Slightly more than half of all the respondents received their undergraduate degrees at Montana State University, and more than 80 percent had majored in some form of business or business education at the undergraduate level.

Table 4-C lists the institutions in ranking order by the number of respondents who received their undergraduate degrees at those institutions.

Table 4-C

INSTITUTIONS WHERE RESPONDENTS RECEIVED UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Montana State University</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Montana College</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Montana</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickinson State College (North Dakota)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Michigan University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Montana College</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado State College</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington State University</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern State College (South Dakota)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grove City College (Pennsylvania)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Penn College (Iowa)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xavier University (Ohio)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4-D lists the undergraduate majors for the alumni and candidate respondents. Majors entitled commerce, business, and general business were combined under the term business.

Table 4-D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Education</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Business</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Technology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty one alumni respondents were certified to teach in the secondary or vocational schools in one or more states. Seven of the candidate respondents were certified to teach; all in Montana. One candidate respondent was eligible for certification but was not currently certified.

Table 4-E lists the number of alumni respondents that are certified in the various states.
Eleven alumni respondents planned to work toward or were working toward a doctorate degree. One respondent had completed work on and had received a Doctor of Education degree. Two respondents were uncertain about working toward a doctorate degree. One candidate respondent indicated plans to continue studies toward a doctorate degree in Education. Three of the eleven alumni respondents planned to continue work in Education, three in vocational business education, and one each in distributive education, resource economics, counseling, forestry, and finance.

Reasons given by both alumni and candidates for pursuing a master's
degree were many and varied, but most can be grouped under four general categories. The categories were: (1) educational needs for teaching, (2) education for better employment, (3) educational interest, and (4) personal satisfaction. The responses were paraphrased and are listed under the four categories as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational-Interest</th>
<th>a. Educational Needs For Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>Needed it to teach college (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liked school</td>
<td>To be enabled to teach D.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in business education</td>
<td>Needed it for certification (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in D.E.</td>
<td>Needed a background in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn more about business</td>
<td>Needed further study in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To refresh after a lapse in teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further background in vocational education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Education For Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher entry level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better employment (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlarge job field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better advancement (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better prepared for occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easier entry into management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare for a CPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt a need for a master's degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further study in accounting and data processing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rounded education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A feeling of importance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. A number in parentheses following a particular reason indicates the number of respondents (if more than one) that gave the reason.
Three miscellaneous reasons given by the respondents for pursuing a master's degree were:

1. I didn't want to be an accountant.
2. I had the opportunity.
3. I was waiting for my husband to finish college.

**Employment Utility Of The Master's Degree**

Data relative to the employment utility of the degree were obtained only from the alumni respondents.

The alumni respondents' first position titles after obtaining their degrees have been grouped under three general headings: Education, General Business, and Technical. Two respondents' positions were not included under the headings as they had entered the armed services after obtaining their degrees. The position titles are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>General Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-Coordinator (7)</td>
<td>Operations Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Education Teacher (3)</td>
<td>Assistant Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Instructor (2)</td>
<td>Management Auditor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Instructor (2)</td>
<td>Administrative Trainee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (4)</td>
<td>Account Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Instructor</td>
<td>Management Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretarial Instructor</td>
<td>Real Estate Sales and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Director of Vocational Education</td>
<td>Property Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**a.** A number in parentheses following a position title indicates the number of respondents that obtained the position.
The three technical position titles were:

1. Associate Test Engineer.
2. Research Analyst.
3. Computing Center Employee.

Ten of the respondents advanced or changed to different positions. One respondent returned to graduate school to study earth science. The titles of the ten respondents' new positions were:

1. Teacher Educator.
2. Adult Education Instructor.
3. Instructor. (Two respondents)
4. Chairman of the Marketing Department.
5. Department Head and Coordinator of Vocational Education. (Two respondents)
6. Assistant Professor.
7. Quality Control Testing Engineer.
8. Accountant for Non-Appropriated Funds.

Fourteen of the alumni respondents felt that their possession of master's degrees aided them more so than an undergraduate degree would have in obtaining employment. Eight respondents felt that the possession of the degree did not help them and twelve respondents were uncertain.

Seven respondents had difficulty in obtaining employment or had to consider employment outside their fields because of their possession of master's degrees. Twenty four respondents did not encounter any difficulty due to their possession of master's degrees and three respondents were uncertain.
Twenty two respondents felt that the knowledge they gained while studying for their master's degrees was beneficial to them during the initial adjustment periods of their employment. Twenty five respondents felt that their gained knowledge was beneficial throughout their employment. Six respondents felt that their gained knowledge was not beneficial to them during the initial adjustment periods of their employment, while only four respondents felt that their gained knowledge was not beneficial throughout their employment.

Twenty two respondents felt that their master's degrees had enhanced their employment advancement opportunities, while ten respondents felt that their degrees had not.

Twenty four respondents believed that their possession of master's degrees had increased their salary levels either at the beginning of or during their employment. Eight respondents did not believe so.

Table 4-F on page 31 summarizes the alumni responses to the questions relative to the employment utility of their degrees.

Organization And Administration Of The Graduate Program

Standards and procedures for admission. Three of the thirty four alumni respondents did not approve of the standards and procedures for admission to graduate school at MSU. All three felt that the Graduate Record
### Table 4-F

A SUMMARY OF ALUMNI RESPONSES REGARDING THE EMPLOYMENT UTILITY OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Degree aided in obtaining employment</th>
<th>Degree detrimental to obtaining employment</th>
<th>Gained knowledge beneficial at beginning of employment</th>
<th>Gained knowledge beneficial during employment</th>
<th>Degree enhanced advancement opportunities</th>
<th>Degree increased salary level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>70.5%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examination should not be required for admission. One respondent also said that the standards and admission procedures should be standardized. Another respondent felt that graduate students admitted on a probationary basis should be allowed to carry partial credit loads.

Two candidate respondents did not approve of admission standards. One respondent felt that the Graduate Record Examination requirement should be dropped. The other respondent felt that graduate credits earned before official admittance to graduate school should be accepted for individual graduate programs.

Certification as a prerequisite. Respondents were nearly equally divided on whether certification should be a prerequisite for a master's degree in Business Education. Of the fifteen alumni respondents who answered the certification question, eight felt that certification should be a prerequisite and seven felt that it should not be. Four candidate respondents felt that certification should be a prerequisite while three felt that it should not be.

Organization of the graduate program. When asked to suggest improvements for the organization of the graduate program, the candidates and alumni responded with a host of varied answers. Only one particular recommendation was suggested by more than one respondent. The recommendation, suggested by four respondents, was to offer a master's degree
in Business Administration. Two of these respondents suggested coordinating the MBA program with the University of Montana. The twenty one other recommendations included several similarities, but for the most part were quite varied. Those responses were:

1. Be sure the student knows why he wants the degree.
2. Develop a wider variety of offerings.
3. Offer a Doctor of Business Administration degree.
4. Review the course offerings.
5. Offer more course work in a specific area.
6. Offer more courses in an area of specialization.
7. Provide flexibility for student differences.
8. Allow individual programs to vary as to student needs.
9. Give the students more initial guidance.
10. Explain course requirements to beginning graduate students.
11. Allow graduate credit only for strong courses taught by strong teachers.
12. The instructors should possess practical business experience.
13. Give more attention to methods of research.
14. Keep the overall program close to the School of Commerce and away from the School of Graduate Studies.
15. Offer more graduate level courses.
16. Offer more courses in a specific field rather than occasional "special topics."
17. Improve course sequences.
18. Provide more complete information in the departments.
19. Option B should not require a professional paper.
20. More graduate level courses should be offered during the school year rather than only in the summer.
21. What organization?

Some of the responses would have been more meaningful had they been answers to other questions regarding the program. Several other responses contained varying degrees of ambiguity or cynicism and are left to the reader for interpretation.
Administration of the graduate program. Responses in relation to the administrative procedures involving the graduate program were mostly concerned with student advising. Several instances of cynicism were again present. The responses were:

1. There is too much "red tape" involved. (Three responses)
2. Give the student more help in setting up his program.
3. Make the student aware of what is expected of him.
4. Release more information about the graduate program to the students.
5. Sit down with the student and work out the courses that will benefit him.
6. What procedures?
7. There is too much "B.S." with the College of Graduate Studies.
8. Employ more interdepartmental coordination.

Improvements for the system of core courses. The respondents' suggestions for improvement of the system of core courses included contradictions and ambiguities. The responses were:

1. They are definitely needed and should be organized.
2. They are good, but perhaps the faculty could be upgraded in some areas.
3. Include a seminar worth one to three credits for all graduate students where they can have discussions, air gripes, etc.
4. They should be set, or else give alternatives.
5. The student should have freedom of choice.
6. They should be structured to individual needs.
7. More specific courses should be required for a master's degree in Business Education.
8. The system of core courses should have more organization.
9. There should be more core courses.
10. The system should include more 500 level courses in place of 400 level courses.
11. The system of core courses should be expanded.
12. The system should be flexible; at present there are too many required business education courses.
13. The student should be allowed to take any courses related to his goals.
14. The system should be used only with extreme care.

**Emphasis of content for business education.** Seventeen alumni responded to the question about emphasis of content. Thirteen respondents felt that individual programs should emphasize business subjects rather than education subjects. One respondent believed that education subjects should be emphasized, while three respondents felt that both subject areas should receive equal emphasis.

The significant majority response of the alumni in favor of emphasizing business subjects was not quite mirrored by the candidate response. Of the five candidates who answered the question, four said that business subjects should be emphasized, one said education should be emphasized, and two said both subject areas should receive equal emphasis.

**Suggestions for innovations in teaching or learning.** Most of the responses for innovations were not suggestions for innovation as such. Rather, the respondents gave many suggestions that were either generalizations or indirect evaluations of faculty personnel and course offerings. The responses were:
1. Employ constant experimentation.
2. Stress innovations.
3. Offer courses that study innovation.
4. Offer more internship programs.
5. Require more faculty research that involves graduate students.
6. Offer small group assignments in current field studies.
7. Offer night classes.
8. Reduce class sizes and grade graduate students separately from undergraduates.
9. Develop courses for graduate students further.
10. Go deeper into subjects rather than offering survey courses.
11. Offer courses, to be taught by business instructors, that emphasize teaching methods.
12. Quality is lacking in instruction.
13. Require instructors to attend more workshops and seminars for new ideas.
14. Upgrade the faculty.
15. Faculty should be required to possess Ph.D.'s and practical experience.

Size and selection of graduate committees. Responses were contradictory over changes in the size and selection of graduate committees. The responses were:

1. The size is unimportant.
2. Keep the committees small.
3. The committees should be small (three members) and consist of two members in the student's major field and one member in the students minor field.
4. Committees should consist of four members.
5. Students should be free to choose their committee members. (Three responses)
6. There should be more departmental control over the selection of committee members.
7. Committee members should be Ph.D.'s and familiar with the student's work.
8. The members should have expertise in the students field.
9. Make it easier to replace committee members.

**Assistance from graduate committees.** Eleven of the alumni and candidates indicated dissatisfaction with the amount and type of assistance they received from their graduate committees. Many of the dissatisfactions were in relation to initial guidance. Suggestions for committee activities were:

1. Spend more time with the student and explain requirements.
2. Designate time availability and have more contact with the student.
3. Initially, go over course requirements.
4. Work with the student.
5. Insure that the student's program does not consist of unrelated areas.
6. Become more aware of the procedures for completing degree requirements.
7. Give more assistance to students who are not familiar with MSU.
8. Meet as a committee.
9. Have more duties than just approving a student's program and submitting comprehensive exam questions.
10. Become more aware of the master's program.
11. Look more closely at professional paper topics.
12. Give more guidelines for the professional paper.
13. Be more open in regard to questions that will appear on the comprehensive exam.
14. Give more assistance in the procedures for presenting a thesis.

**The role of research.** Thirteen of the twenty two respondents that chose to evaluate faculty research requirements in the School of Commerce felt that the faculty did not accomplish a sufficient amount of research. Seven of those thirteen respondents had majored or were majoring in non-teaching
areas. Eight of the twenty two respondents felt that the faculty did accomplish a sufficient amount of research. All eight of those respondents had majored or were majoring in a teaching area. One respondent felt that research was stressed too heavily for the faculty.

Two respondents commented that faculty research should never take priority over instruction.

Respondents could not agree on the role of research for graduate students. Of the thirty nine respondents who chose to evaluate research requirements for graduate students, seventeen felt that the requirements were insufficient, twenty respondents indicated that the requirements were adequate, and two respondents felt that the requirements were too stringent.

The comprehensive examination. A comprehensive examination consisting of a combination of oral and written tests was the respondents' most preferred form of examination. Twenty two of the forty three alumni and candidates preferred a combination exam, while seven respondents preferred a written exam and five respondents preferred an oral exam.

Two respondents felt that a master's candidate should not be required to take a comprehensive examination. Four suggested alternate forms were a written exam: (1) plus an oral defense of the professional paper or theses, (2) with an optional oral exam to replace the written exam,
(3) with an oral exam when necessary, and (4) with a Graduate Record Examination in the candidate’s major field.

Three procedures suggested in lieu of an exam were: (1) a brief oral defense of the professional paper, (2) an oral defense of the candidate’s philosophy of education, and (3) a seminar with at least two committee members to be held during the candidate’s last quarter of attendance.

Evaluation Of And Suggestions For Curriculum Content

Evaluation of existing courses. The respondents' evaluation of many of the courses offered by the School of Commerce were gross contradictions. Many courses received approximately the same number of both good ratings and poor ratings.

Rating procedures were as follows:

1. The respondents gave a rating value of zero to those courses they had studied and felt were of little or no value and should be deleted from the curriculum.
2. The respondents gave a rating value of one to courses not useful to them but of possible use in areas of study other than their own.
3. The respondents gave a rating value of two to those courses that had been useful to them.
4. The respondents gave a rating value of three to those courses that had been very useful to them.

For analytical purposes, values of zero and one were combined for poor ratings and the value of three was considered a good rating. Courses
were considered for analysis only if five or more respondents had rated them as either good or poor. Courses were considered to have contradictory evaluations if at least one third of the ratings they received were of a valuation opposite to the other ratings.

Nine courses in the School of Commerce curriculum received five or more non-contradictory evaluations of either good or poor. Table 4-G contains the courses and ratings received by each.

Table 4-G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number and Title</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>No. of &quot;zero&quot; values</th>
<th>No. of &quot;one&quot; values</th>
<th>No. of &quot;three&quot; values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>304G Business Data Processing</td>
<td>poor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>306G Advanced Accounting I</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>308G Risk and Insurance</td>
<td>poor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>408G Org. &amp; Admn. of OE &amp; DE</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>411G Coord. Practices in OE &amp; DE</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>413G, 414G, 415G Business Law</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>416G Quantitative Methods</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>504 Research in Bus. Ed.</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>570 Professional Paper</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. This course has been reclassified as Commerce 121 and is no longer offered for graduate credit.

b. This series has been reclassified as Commerce 325G, 326G, and 327G and is still offered for graduate credit.
Evaluation of individual problems courses. Respondents who had taken 570 courses for studying individual problems other than the professional paper were asked if they felt that the material they covered was appropriate for their degrees and met graduate standards. Thirty respondents answered "yes" and three respondents answered "no." Nine respondents wrote in comments about the 570 courses. Those comments were:

1. I would never get away with it now.
2. There were no guidelines for the course.
3. The course standards vary from one instructor to another.
4. These were some of my most valuable courses; the limit on 570 credits is too stringent.
5. The course should be completely flexible to meet student needs.
6. The course is great at the graduate level.
7. The course is good experience for any graduate student.
8. The professional paper was valuable, but should not be required.
9. You get out of it what you put into it.

Suggested curriculum additions. The respondents listed fourteen subject areas and procedures that they felt would be useful additions to the curriculum. The suggestions were:

1. Refresher courses oriented to teaching.
2. Methods in specific areas.
3. Instructional improvement in basic business.
5. Actual hands-on training.
6. Funding (such as for vocational education).
7. School administration.
8. Philosophy of education.
9. Advance courses in salesmanship.
10. Advance courses in merchandising and real estate.
11. Extensive management and marketing programs.
12. Advanced advertising.

Suggestions for study outside the curriculum. The respondents had studied many subjects at MSU that they felt were particularly useful to them. The suggested subjects were offered in six different disciplines as follows:

**Education**
- Audio-Visual Education (5)
- Introduction to Guidance (2)
- Tests and Measurements (2)
- Education Psychology (2)
- Supervising Student Teachers (2)
- Research Design
- Methods & Materials in D.E.
- Foundations of Adult Education
- Business Ed. in School Curriculum

**Industrial & Mgmt. Engineering**
- Management Principles
- Engineering Contracts
- Operations Research
- Personnel Supervision
- Engineering Economy
- Planning and Controlling
- Quantitative Techniques
- Human Factors in Industry
- Management Theory
- Sociology
- Sociology of Leadership
- English
- Technical Writing
- Economics
- Money and Banking
- Principles of Economics
- Comparative Economic Systems
- Insurance and Investments
- Agricultural Economics
- Quantitative Methods in Economics

a. A number in parentheses following a course title indicates the number of respondents that suggested the course.
b. This subject has since been included in the Commerce curriculum.
c. Includes "special topics" courses.
The respondents also listed twelve useful business and education courses that they had studied at institutions other than MSU. The course titles are listed as follows:

**Business Subjects**
- Labor Problems
- Public Finance and Taxes
- Personal Finance
- Family Finance
- Math of Economics
- Math of Finance

**Education Subjects**
- Ethics
- Adult Education Programs
- Instruction For Coordinators
- Coord. Practices & Probs. in DE
- Preparation of Instructional Objectives

**Miscellaneous Comments**

Many respondents used the "comments" section to air grievances about, give suggestions for, and state observations about the master's program and degree. The values of any individual comments are left to the reader for assessment. The comments, which were paraphrased for purposes of condensation, were:

1. I resented being "taught down to."
2. Employ more variety in learning/teaching techniques.
3. Make use of individual instruction and non-failing techniques.
4. Make use of special speakers, group sessions, and field assignments.
5. Use more innovation.
6. Instructors should take a more realistic approach to teaching.
7. Students should be allowed to student teach at junior colleges.
8. The School of Commerce is putting too much emphasis on business education; the other departments are losing out.
9. Faculty salaries should be enhanced to attract the leaders.
10. Don't drop the master's paper.
11. The research requirement for graduate students is unnecessary.
12. The scheduling of courses limited student choices.
13. There were too many unnecessary required courses.
14. The graduate committee tested on some subjects that were not studied.
15. I was quite displeased with my program, the administration of the comprehensive exam, committee feedback, and the "red tape" involved.
16. MSU was more than fair throughout the entire ordeal and I really enjoyed myself.
17. Data processing would have been helpful for me, but no one could teach it successfully.
18. I would like to see the school offer an advanced marketing degree.
19. The discontinuance of the Applied Science degree was a step in the right direction.
20. The master's degree creates poorer employment opportunities than does the bachelor's degree.
21. The Business Education degree is less valuable for finding a job than a Business Administration degree is.
Chapter V

SUMMARY

Research Procedures

The purposes of the research project were to attempt to determine the employment utility of a master's degree obtained through the School of Commerce at Montana State University; to evaluate the curriculum in the School of Commerce and search for additions and improvements; and to evaluate the organization and administration of the graduate program in the School of Commerce.

Examination of the variables was expected to yield:

1. A representative view of the respondents.
2. The utility of the master's degree to the respondents in view of their employment.
3. The respondents' views on the organization and administration of the graduate program.
4. The respondents' evaluations of and suggestions for the School of Commerce curriculum.
5. The respondents' miscellaneous comments relative to the master's degree and/or program.

Data were collected by mailing questionnaires to 59 alumni who had received master's degrees between June 1966 and August 1971, and hand-delivering questionnaires to ten graduate students who were currently enrolled in the School of Commerce during March 1972.
Results Of The Study

Sampling results. Questionnaires were returned by 57.7 percent of the alumni and 90 percent of the candidates for a total of forty three respondents.

Representative view of the respondents. Twenty respondents received or planned to receive master's degrees in Applied Science; twenty three respondents received or planned to receive master's degrees in Business Education.

Six of the respondents who had received Applied Science degrees majored in some form of business education while four of the respondents who had received or were studying for Business Education degrees majored in non-education areas.

Slightly more than half of the respondents had received undergraduate degrees at Montana State University and more than 80 percent had majored in some form of business or business education at the undergraduate level.

Twenty eight of the respondents were certified to teach in the secondary or vocational schools. Twenty one of the respondents held certificates from Montana.

The respondents had pursued master's degrees for four general reasons: (1) educational needs for teaching, (2) education for better
employment, (3) educational interest, and (4) personal satisfaction.

Employment utility of the master's degree. Alumni respondents pursued occupations in the general fields of education, general business, and technology. Ten of the respondents had advanced or changed to new positions.

Fourteen respondents felt that their possession of master's degrees had aided them in obtaining employment; eight felt that it had not. Seven respondents felt that their master's degrees had given them difficulty in obtaining employment.

Twenty two respondents felt that the knowledge they gained while studying for their master's degrees was beneficial to them during the initial adjustment periods of their employment. Twenty five respondents felt that their gained knowledge was beneficial throughout their employment.

The master's degree had enhanced the advancement opportunities of twenty two respondents. Twenty four respondents believed that their master's degrees were responsible for increased salary levels either at the beginning of employment or during employment.

Organization and administration of the graduate program. Five of the forty three respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the standards and procedures for admission to graduate school. Four of the five respondents felt that the Graduate Record Examination should not be a required
Respondents were nearly equally divided when asked if certification should be a prerequisite for obtaining a master's degree in Business Education. Twelve respondents felt that certification should be a prerequisite and ten respondents felt that it should not be.

Suggestions for improving the organization of the graduate program were many and varied. Only one particular recommendation was offered by more than one respondent. The recommendation, suggested by four respondents, was to offer a master's degree in Business Administration. Two of those respondents suggested coordinating the MBA program with the University of Montana.

When asked to comment on the administration of the graduate program, three respondents said that too much "red tape" was involved. Several other respondents indicated that an inadequacy exists in student advisement procedures.

Seventeen respondents felt that individual programs should emphasize business subjects rather than education subjects. Two respondents said that education subjects should be emphasized, and five respondents said that both business and education should receive equal emphasis.

Eleven respondents said they were dissatisfied with the assistance
they had received from their graduate committees. Many of the dissatisfactions indicated a lack of guidance activities.

Twenty two respondents preferred a comprehensive examination consisting of a combination of oral and written tests. Seven respondents preferred a written test only, and five respondents preferred an oral test only. Two respondents felt that master's candidates should not be required to take a comprehensive examination.

Evaluation of and suggestions for curriculum content. Nine courses in the Commerce curriculum received evaluations that were significant enough to rate them as either good or poor. Seven courses that the respondents rated as good were:

1. 306G Advanced Accounting I.
2. 408G Organization and Administration of Office and Distributive Education.
3. 411G Coordination Practices in Office Education and Distributive Education.
5. 416G Quantitative Methods.
6. 504 Research In Business Education.
7. 570 Professional Paper.

Two courses that were rated poor by the respondents were (1) 304G Business Data Processing, which has since been reclassified as 121, and (2) 308G Risk and Insurance.

Thirty respondents said that the "individual problems" they had
studied were appropriate for their degrees and had met graduate standards. Three respondents felt that the "individual problems" they had studied did not meet graduate standards.

When asked to suggest areas of study that would have been beneficial to them but were not included in the Commerce curriculum, respondents recommended fourteen areas of study. Eight areas were related to education and six areas were related to business administration.

Recommendations

Recommendations are made for the area of organization and administration of the graduate program.

In view of the dissatisfaction expressed by respondents with the amount of guidance received, it is recommended that the orientation and guidance activities for graduate students be evaluated for possible improvement.

Dissatisfaction of respondents with the "red tape" involved in obtaining a master's degree prompts the recommendation that the College of Graduate Studies review its admission and administrative activities for possible simplification.

The responses relative to comprehensive examinations suggest that the School of Commerce study the combination form of examination.
APPENDIX A

The Project Questionnaire
1. Which degree did you obtain from Montana State University? (Check One)
   Master of Science in Applied Science
   Master of Science in Business Education

2. On what date did you receive your master's degree? ________________________

3. What was your major area of study? (Check one)
   Finance
   Management
   Office Ed.
   General Business
   Other (Please specify)

4. Did you have 15 or more credits in one particular minor area of study?
   Yes   No
   If so, what was your minor? _____________________________________________

5. Where did you receive your undergraduate degree? ________________________

6. What was your undergraduate major? ____________________________________

7. What were your reasons for pursuing an advanced degree? ________________________

8. Are you certified to teach in the secondary or vocational schools? Yes   No
   If so, which state(s) are you certified in? __________________________________

9. Do you plan to work on, are you working on, or have you completed work on a doctoral program? Yes   No
   a. If so, what field is or will be the area of study for your doctor's degree?

10. What was the title of your first position in employment after obtaining your master's degree? _____________________________________________

11. What is the title of the position you presently occupy? ________________________

12. Did your possession of a master's degree aid you more so than an undergraduate degree would have in obtaining employment?
   Yes   No   Undecided

13. Did you have difficulty obtaining employment or did you find it necessary to consider employment outside your field because of your possession of a master's degree? Yes   No   Undecided
14. Has the knowledge you obtained while pursuing your master's degree aided you in the performance of your duties:
   a) during the initial adjustment period of your employment?
      Yes____ No____ Undecided____
   b) throughout your employment? Yes____ No____ Undecided____

15. Has the possession of a master's degree enhanced your advancement opportunities in your employment? Yes____ No____ Undecided____

16. Has the possession of a master's degree increased your salary at the beginning of or during your employment? Yes____ No____ Undecided____

17. Do you approve of the standards and procedures for admission to graduate school at MSU? Yes____ No____

   If not, what changes would you advise?

18. (For Education majors) Do you feel that certification should be a prerequisite for a Master's in Business Education? Yes____ No____

19. (For Education majors) For the Business Education degree, do you feel that:
   a) Emphasis should be put more on business subjects rather than education subjects?____
   b) Emphasis should be put more on education subjects rather than business subjects?____
   c) Both education and business should receive equal emphasis?____

20. Were you satisfied with the amount and type of assistance you received from your major advisor and graduate committee? Yes____ No____

   If not, what improvements do you feel could be made?

21. What changes (if any) would you suggest in the size and selection of graduate committees?

22. Which form of comprehensive examination do you feel best evaluates the graduate student in the School of Commerce?

   Written exam_____ Oral exam_____ Combination_____
23. What are your views on the role of research at the School of Commerce?
   a) The faculty does not accomplish a sufficient amount of research._____
   b) Research is stressed too heavily for the faculty._____
   c) The faculty does an adequate amount of research._____
   d) Research requirements for graduate students are insufficient._____
   e) Research requirements for graduate students are adequate._____
   f) Research requirements for graduate students are too stringent._____

24. If you studied a 570 course (Individual Problems) do you feel that the
    material you covered was appropriate for your degree and met graduate
    standards? Yes____ No____
    Comments:______________________________________________________
    ____________________________________________________________

25. What improvements (if any) would you suggest for each of the following:
   a) Organization of the graduate program?__________________________
      ____________________________________________________________
   b) System of core courses?_______________________________________
      ____________________________________________________________
   c) Administrative procedures involving the program?________________
      ____________________________________________________________
   d) Innovations in teaching or learning?____________________________
      ____________________________________________________________

26. On the following two pages is a complete list of Commerce courses offered
    for graduate credit between 1935 and 1971. Please check those you have
    studied (as either an undergraduate or a graduate) and indicate the value
    of each course experience to you in your employment. The rating values
    are as follows:
    0 -- Little or no value--should be deleted from the curriculum.
    1 -- Possibly of value to some areas of study.
    2 -- Useful for my area of study.
    3 -- Very useful--should be required for my area of study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grad Undergrad</th>
<th>Course No. and Title</th>
<th>Rating Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>304G Business Data Processing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>306G Advanced Accounting I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>307G Cost Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>308G Risk and Insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>312G Advertising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>313G Merchandising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>315G Principles of Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>318G Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>319G Accounting for Mgmt Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>320G Personnel Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>321G, 322G Business Data Processing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>341G Computer Programming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>342G Business Systems Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>400G Seminar (Subj: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>406G Advanced Accounting II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>407G Office Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>408G Org. &amp; Admn of Office &amp; Distr Ed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>411G Coord Practices in Office &amp; Dist Ed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>413G, 414G, 415G Business Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416G Quantitative Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>419G Business Finance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>421G Life and Health Insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>422G Principles of Real Estate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>424G Business Personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>425G, 426G Income Tax Accounting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>427G Auditing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>428G Retail Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>429G Project Programs in Distr Ed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>430G Financial Institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>436G Accounting Systems &amp; Procedures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>437G Advanced Auditing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>441G Business Syst Dvlpmnt &amp; Design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>442G Adv Bus Syst Dvlpmnt &amp; Design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>445G Retail-Advertising &amp; Sales Promotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>455G Business Research Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>457G Marketing Research &amp; Strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>458G Adv Prin of Mgmt &amp; Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>459G Finance Policy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>500G Seminar (Subj: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>502 Admin &amp; Supervision in Bus Ed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>503 Business Education Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>504 Research in Business Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>508 Trends in Business Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>511 Post-Secondary Programs in D. E.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad</td>
<td>Under grad</td>
<td>Course No. and Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>516</td>
<td>Marketing Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>517</td>
<td>Retail Buying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>522</td>
<td>Business Data Processing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>525</td>
<td>Instructional Improvement in Vocational Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>570</td>
<td>Individual Problems (Subj: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>580</td>
<td>Special Topics (Subj: )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Of the courses outside the Commerce curriculum that you studied at MSU, which do you feel were particularly useful to you in your employment? Please list subjects and curriculum titles or, if you can recall them, course numbers, course titles, and curriculum.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

28. Please list any courses that you may have taken at any time at some institution other than MSU (such as a university, junior college, business college, correspondence course, etc.) that you feel were of particular value to you in your employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. What subjects which might have aided you in your employment or your search for employment do you feel could be offered that were not offered at MSU during your attendance there? Please include any subjects which may also appear in (the list in) question 26.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

30. Any additional comments:
BIBLIOGRAPHY


