

NEW COLLEGE NEWS RELEASE

F.C.A.

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FURMAN C. ARTHUR — INFORMATION

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Twenty-four second-year students at New College have scored well on an examination given normally to college seniors as a prerequisite to graduate school.

The Advanced Tests of the Graduate Record Examination were given April 11 to all second-year New College students specializing in literature or philosophy. They are normally given in the fourth year of college.

Of this group of New College students, four scored better than 97 per cent of the seniors in selected colleges used as a reference group by the test-makers, Educational Testing Service of Princeton, N.J. Three had scores at least one hundred points above the highest norm listed.

Dr. Arthur R. Borden Jr., chairman of the Division of Humanities, under whom both tests were administered, said that the Graduate Record Examinations were given as a means of testing the whole field of knowledge for each student either in literature or philosophy.

"We used them diagnostically," he said, "to find out what were the gaps in the students' knowledge."

The gaps, he acknowledged, were fewer than were anticipated.

The tests were given in the two fields to students on April 11 as a part of their qualifying examinations. Students take qualifying examinations at the end of the second term of their second year at New College as a preliminary means of determining their progress and their academic fitness to continue planned courses of study.

College Examiner Dr. John W. French said that the results normally could have been expected to have been around the median point, but that results showed that of the 24 students who took the examination, all but five were above the median, many of them well above it.

He said that of the eight students majoring in philosophy, the average of their scores was above the 97th percentile, the highest norm on the comparison chart provided by the test-maker.

"This indicates that we have some bright students," said Dr. French, "and that they have learned something from their classes."

Philosophy students at New College, said Dr. Borden, would be expected to score better than others, because all eight have been taking philosophy seminars since their first year.

These eight, said Professor of Philosophy Dr. Douglas C. Berggren, have completed at the end of their second year the equivalent courses many philosophy students take in four years of college.

The results of the testing, President John Elmendorf said, indicate that the academic program of New College definitely helps students to become better prepared.

"We tell the students that the responsibility for learning is theirs, and then offer them the opportunities for learning at their own pace," said President Elmendorf.

"The results tell us that some students are indeed taking their responsibilities seriously and show that our program permits them to rapidly come to grips with even the difficult areas of study."

He noted that on the basis of the examination results, most of the students who took the test are qualified in their major field to go on to graduate school.

"When they reach the third year, with its advanced project in the major field," said Dr. Elmendorf, "they may obtain both greater depth in their specialized field which is necessary to continue work in it, and a breadth which helps make them first rate scholars."