

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE REGISTRARS

ENTRANCE AND COLLEGE CREDIT FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

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My purpose in this paper is to present data which have been collected at the University of Illinois in the ordinary course of business in the registrar's office regarding foreign school systems and their evaluations by different agencies. I do not pretend to be an expert in this matter, and I desire to point out at the start that statements made in this paper are based not on any exhaustive study, but rather on piece-meal evidence garnered from here and there as time has warranted.

Let me state briefly the sources of the information which has come to me and upon which this paper is largely based.

The most comprehensive and exhaustive published statement on the evaluation of foreign credentials of which I know is contained in Bulletin 677 of the New York Regents, published in December, 1918. It presents the deliberation of a conference held in 1916 by representatives of Columbia College and the State Department. .

Valuable material is contained in some of the reports of the Bureau of Education and in special bulletins published by the Bureau. Furthermore, the Bureau through its specialist in foreign educational systems, Mr. G. W. A. Luckey, is able to give very helpful suggestions. Mr. Luckey spent a year in Europe just prior to the war studying secondary education as found in the gymnasium, lycee, etc. The results of his study he expects to show in a bulletin. I do not think this has yet been published.

The Pan-American Union has published a bulletin on Latin-American secondary schools, setting forth the courses of study in the more important South American countries, which furnishes an excellent guide in' the determination of credits from these countries.

The American Medical Association, through its Council on Medical Education, has compiled a graphical representation of primary, secondary, and medical curricula in a large number of foreign countries.

Prof. Y. S. Kuno, of the University of California, has given

us a classification of universities and colleges in Japan, as compared with the universities of the United States, which is quite widely known and rather generally used, I believe. He has been preparing, and may possibly now have available, a new booklet dealing with all important educational institutions in the Orient.

The American Council in Education a year or so ago formed a special committee to study the rating which should be given holders of French degrees. The recommendations of this committee have gone out to substantially all institutions in the country, and I believe by many of them have been adopted. A second committee has made recommendations concerning the admission of holders of degrees from universities in the British Empire: From the same source it is my understanding we may soon expect a more general study of the standing of the educational institutions in those foreign countries that are sending the largest number of students to the United States.

A rather conclusive study of the practice of institutions, both in this country and in England, in accepting the examinations of the universities of South Africa, Stellenbosch, and Cape Town, was made recently by Assistant Dean J. A. James, of the University of Wisconsin.

Finally helpful suggestions have come to me through a questionnaire which I sent out about a year ago to institutions holding membership in the Association of American Universities, and from individuals, mostly on the faculty of the University of Illinois who have spent some time in foreign study.

Taking as a basis data obtained from the sources I have just indicated, and remembering that these data can hardly be considered as representing a fair criterion for final judgment, allow me to give you what seems to be the most generally accepted evaluation placed upon credentials from those foreign countries from which students are coming in the largest numbers, and to point out also certain evidences which indicate that in some instances evaluations have been too high.

Cambridge local senior examination. Cambridge previous examination. Oxford and Cambridge School or higher examination. Oxford local senior examination.

Oxford responsions.

Joint matriculation board examination of the Universities of Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield.

University of London higher school examination.

Senior grade examination of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland.

The exact amount of credit for any of these examinations will, however, vary in individual cases, depending upon the number of

CONTINENTAL EUROPE

Turning to the continental countries in Europe, the completion of the gymnasium or similar secondary school curriculum of the following countries when followed by the granting of the maturity certificate, or its equivalent where such is given, seems' to be rather generally recognized as entitling the candidate to a maximum of junior standing toward the A.B. degree:

Austria, Finland, France (though the New York Regents says one year, and in other cases distinction is made between the boys' Lycee and the girls' Lycee, only one year of credit being allotted to the latter), Denmark, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Norway and Sweden.

There is more variation in the credit allowed from the following countries, the variant being from one to two years of college work: Belgium, Italy, Russia, Switzerland.

The Bulgarian educational system seems to give more doubt than any other. The evaluations vary all the way from three years of high school work to freshman or sophomore standing.

It should be stated here there seems to be some feeling that former evaluations represented by the foregoing statement have been too high. The specialist in Foreign Educational Systems of the Bureau of Education gives this as his judgment; Dr. N. P. Colwell, secretary of the American Medical Association, does not believe that more than one year of college credit should be given for the completion of any European secondary school curriculum; and it was stated in several of the replies to the questionnaire

which I sent out. I think most institutions would not give as favorable a rating, under present practice, to medical or premedical students, with the possible exception of some of the Scandinavian countries.

The three Asiatic countries from which students are flocking to our institutions are China, Japan, and India.

As I understand the present educational scheme in China, graduation from the middle school represents eleven years of study. After this and before the student may enter the best colleges and universities of that country he must spend two more years in a university preparatory course, though some institutions admit directly from the middle school.

Formerly it was a rather uniform practice to admit to freshman standing here a Chinese student who had graduated from a middle school, but more recently there has been a tendency to consider such a student as short about one year of the equivalent of a four-year high school course. A Chinese boy who after graduating from the middle school has finished a two-year university preparatory course should unquestionably be admitted to college work.

I believe that the work of collegiate institutions in China which require a preparatory course after the middle school can be accepted very nearly at par. It is necessary just at present, however, to accept with some caution credentials which cover the period of the recent student strikes.

There are also in China a large number of so-called technical colleges which maintain three-year curricula above the middle school. I do not believe graduates of these schools are ready for very advanced work along technical lines in this country. At the University of Illinois they have done rather poorly.

The situation in Japan is much like that of China. Middle school graduation represents eleven years of work. Then comes the university preparatory course of about two years or a higher school course of three years. Most institutions, I believe, use Dr. Kuno's classification of Japanese schools as a basis for action. This was, of course, published some years ago (1914). He

states

that since that time the educational scheme has been greatly modified.

India

India is typical of the English examination system. There is at the end of the secondary school course, which according to the best authority I have been able to find, covers from nine to eleven years of instruction, a matriculation examination conducted by the government universities, which, until very recently at least, have been examining bodies only. After two more years of study comes an intermediate examination, and, finally, on the completion of two more years, a B.S. or B.S. examination.

I am quite sure of my statement that universities have rather uniformly been granting freshman status to students who have passed the matriculation examination, junior status as a maximum where the candidate comes with the intermediate examination, and graduate status, though with reservations as to candidacy for an advanced degree, to students who have passed the bachelor's examination.

Now comes rather convincing evidence that here again American administrative officers have been too liberal. When the New York Regents made its classification of foreign school system, it rated the Indian matriculation examination as the equivalent only of two years of high school work. From the Pacific Coast comes a statement from as good an authority on education in the Orient as Dr. Kuno that the evaluation of the matriculation examination as equivalent to freshman status is too high; from the specialist in Foreign Educational Systems of the Bureau of Education, a conclusion that "many of these certificates mean little in the way of education, or scholarship, covering but few subjects that depend almost wholly on memory work," though he states further that "there has been a strengthening of the examination system within the past three years," and then adds, "But the requirements are still low as compared to most countries;" and, finally, on good authority-an officer of the English Board of Education -a statement (furnished me by Mr. Dorcas, of the University of Iowa) that the matriculation examination in Indian universities is low, that the University of London admits as an undergraduate a student coming from an Indian university who has passed the Indian *Intermediate* examination, but will not accept such a student for advanced standing. From the specialist in Foreign

Educational Systems at Washington, I also have a statement that "the intermediate examination is not usually accepted in England as fulfilling college or university entrance requirements without further examination. "

South Africa

Turning to South Africa, the practice of considering the matriculation examination of the universities of South Africa, Stellenbosch and Cape Town as equivalent to freshman standing is quite uniform, and is substantiated by the fact that the English universities, if we may assume that the practice at Oxford is typical, grant similar recognition. Furthermore, Oxford grants a reduction of one year of the normal residence (three years) required of candidates for the Oxford B.A. degree, to a person who has pursued a course extending over a two-year period at the universities of South Africa, Stellenbosch or Cape Town, and has passed all the examinations connected with the course.

From my study of the material which has come to me regarding the school systems in the countries which I have mentioned in this paper, it seems to me evident that we need to act cautiously in accepting as the full equivalent of junior standing the completion of the secondary school curricula of European countries, though this rating of them seems fairly uniform, and that There is immediate need for further study and quite possibly a decided revision of practice downward in the matter of credits from the Orient. I believe, also, that it is from this source that we will receive the greater number of students during the next few years.

It seems to me that this Association might do a valuable service if it should appoint a committee to collect data, particularly respecting China, Japan and India, and report these data in detail at a future meeting, not so much with a view to recommending a procedure to be followed as with the object of presenting material which the individual registrar could take back with him for the consideration of the proper authorities at his particular institution.