

ADMISSION STANDARDS

50% or 60%?

Press Release

July 14, 1960.

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Admission standards in the Kingdom of God are easy but graduation requirements are hard. The reputation of a great University or College is not founded on what goes in but on what comes out. Waterloo University College admits to the first year any high school student that has Grade XIII or equivalent standing in six papers, including three complete subjects. A student will be given an opportunity to make up his course deficiencies. Some colleges and universities are closing their doors to high school students with averages between 50% and 60% - or even higher. Waterloo University College opens its doors to any student that has passed not nine papers with a 50% average but even goes the extra mile and gives an opportunity to high school students who have Grade XIII standing in six papers, including three complete subjects and ^{freshmen} ~~they~~ are given an opportunity to make up their course deficiencies at the college.

Canada needs more high school students proceeding to college and university, not less. Three or four times as many high school students should proceed to a college or university this fall as will likely do so. The ones that are prevented or discouraged from continuing their education by a 60% admission rule are an unfortunate and unnecessary loss to the nation.

High school students in Canada should not be written off and banned from higher education on the basis of a 60% admission rule on the mistaken belief that the high percentage admission rule in itself is any gauge of the standards of the college or university. The standards of Waterloo University College are established at Waterloo University College and not at every high school in the province of Ontario. The

iniquity of a 60% rule is that all high schools do not have the same level of teaching proficiency and yet all high school students must pass one province-wide exam. A high school student may get low marks partly because his high school teachers may not have prepared him adequately for an exam set by someone else somewhere else.

Academic standards are not necessarily raised in a particular subject or a particular college because the high school students that are accepted have a higher over-all average. First, college work differs from high school work. Second, motivation at college differs from motivation at high school. Third, the college curriculum differs from the high school curriculum. Fourth, colleges and universities themselves differ. Students with a high school average based on proficiency in Mathematics and Science will usually do better in a technical institute; students with a high school average based on languages and the humanities will usually do better in a liberal arts college. The over-all high school average will not predict success in either case nor will it by itself assure higher standards of advanced work.

Colleges and universities are still concerned with educating human beings as individuals or persons and not as statistical averages. Students can drown in a pool with an average depth of 6" and good students can be lost forever to higher education by the 60% rule.

Waterloo University College admits the existence of differences in backgrounds of high school students from different schools not only in Ontario but elsewhere in Canada and the world. It is more blessed to give the many an opportunity to acquire knowledge and wisdom than to

receive only the few. A bright student from a backward high school may get only a 50% average where he might have got a 60% average in a ^{good} bright high school. It is not contended that the 50% rule solves the problem of differential standards in high schools but it is contended that the 60% rule aggravates the problem. The 60% rule creates a situation where it is more likely that students from poor high schools will be denied the opportunity to continue their education.

Waterloo University College contends that there appears to be a moral obligation in colleges and universities to admit high school students who have according to province-wide standards "passed" their university entrance requirements. From the high school students point of view they are eligible to continue their education. It is distressing and demoralizing for students who have "passed" to learn that they are not admitted to some universities. Such students should be advised by parents, teachers, or counsellors that they will most certainly be admitted to Waterloo University College. It will honor the implied promise of the "passing" grade in senior matriculation.

The 50% rule is democratic: the 60% rule is aristocratic. The 50% rule means that more high school students go to college: the 60% rule means that less go to college. The 50% rule implies education for the many: the 60% rule implies education for the few. The 50% rule is used by colleges that wish to encourage enrollment: the 60% rule is used by colleges that wish to discourage enrollments.