

November 14, 1975
#28 of 1975

Archives
CNC
Community
CHRONICLE



dies solis

SUNDAY - November 16

MONDAY - November 17
2:15-Div.Coord., Conf. Room



dies lunae

TUESDAY - November 18



dies martis

WEDNESDAY - November 19

Noon - Faculty Theology Group
Faculty Dining Room

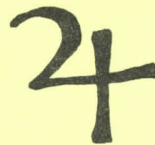


dies mercurii

2:30 - Chairpersons, Education &
Communication Division

THURSDAY - November 20

10:00 - President's Administrative Council



dies jovis

2:30 - Curriculum Committee
CC-229

FRIDAY - November 21

2:00 - Degrees Committee



dies veneris

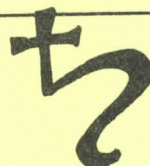
Mathematics-Physics Seminar, 2:00 P.M. G-202
Dr. Terry Straeter, NASA, will speak on
"Parallel Computing and Optimization"

Noon - FEC - Conf. Room

Noon - Business & Economics Division

SATURDAY - November 22

8:30 P.M. - Wine & Cheese Party
Hilliards



dies saturni

ADMISSIONS OFFICE

We wish to express our gratitude and appreciation to the following members of the faculty and administration who assisted us in this year's College Night tour:

Brenda Blount	Walter Knorr
Ross Brackney	Tim Morgan
Marvin Brown	Bill Polis
Carl Colonna	Alice Randall
Liz Daly	Larry Sacks
Bob Edwards	Steve Sanderlin
Dick Guthrie	Ruth Simmons
John Harwood	Bev Vaughan
Bruce Hoiberg	Glen Vought
Vivian Johnson	Bob Wildblood

We thank all concerned for their enthusiastic support and assistance.

Mary Hardman
Keith McLoughland

NOTICES

Holiday Leave

The College will observe the following holiday schedule for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

THANKSGIVING - The College will be closed on Thanksgiving Day and on Friday, November 28, 1975. Both days are authorized holidays and annual leave is not charged.

CHRISTMAS - The College will close at 12:00 Noon, December 24, and remain closed until 8 A.M., January 5, 1976. All of these days are authorized holidays with the exception of January 2. Annual leave will be charged for January 2nd and classified employees are required to submit a report of leave taken.

Employees required for necessary services on the above holidays are eligible for compensatory leave.

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WINE & CHEESE PARTY

Sponsored by the CNC Women's Association.

PLACE: Home of Jean & Hugh Hilliard
237 Falcon Drive, Newport News

TIME: Saturday, November 22 - 8:30 P.M.

RSVP: To the telephone committee when you are called or to Jean Hilliard (595-7434), by Wednesday, November 19.

MENU: Cheese, Bread, Crackers
Bring Your Own Wine

ACADEMIC INTEREST

SAT Scores

The letter which follows was written by an official representative of the College Entrance Examination Board.

October 29, 1975

Dear Colleague:

Because of the continuing widespread interest in the SAT score decline, I felt it would be timely and useful to send you this special issue carrying the full text of my remarks on the subject as presented to the Annual Business Meeting of the College Board in New York earlier this week.

SAT SCORE DECLINE

Last year I reported very briefly to you that the recent marked decline in verbal and mathematical scores on the SAT had at least temporarily halted. This year, as most of you know I am sure, that decline has resumed sharply, and has resulted in a considerable amount of concern among school and college people, among editorial writers, and the public in general. We have been criticized by some for releasing this information. Mindful of the discomfort and even angry debate that the information has generated, we feel certain that to have withheld this information, and sat upon it with a "what the public doesn't know can't hurt them" attitude, would have been an act of extreme irresponsibility.

Before discussing some of the public reaction, it might be useful to consider what the SAT is and what it does. First, let me suggest what the SAT is not. It was not designed as a measure of school performance and should not be used for that purpose. To single out the schools as being responsible for the decline is unwarranted, unfair, and scientifically unfounded.

Secondly, the SAT is not a measure of some innate and unchanging quality that somehow mystically categorizes people. It does not gauge the worth of a human being, of his or her capacity to function well or creatively in society.

What, then, is the SAT? It is a measure of developed verbal and mathematical reasoning and abilities. It measures those abilities that are most commonly needed for academic performance in colleges and universities. Therefore, how students perform on the SAT is a useful and well validated indicator of how they might do in one college or another. It is intended to supplement the school record and other information about the student in assessing competence to do college work.

It is a uniform measure of the same mental tasks, expressed on a common scale for all students. Thus it operates as a "leveling agent," or if you will, a democratizing agent, cutting across differences in local customs and conditions, and affording admissions officers a uniform measure that, taken together with other data, helps in the assessment of the academic potential of students in relation to the differing academic demands of institutions.

The SAT is both supplemental and incremental, and can effectively improve the prediction of college grades when combined with high school records and achievement test scores. Thousands of colleges, public and private, large and small, have proven this to their own satisfaction, and continue to today. Therefore, let me emphasize that the SAT still does what it was designed to do just as well as ever--probably better, for reasons of constant validation over the years. The predictive validity of the SAT in helping forecast college per-

formance remains as strong and as high as it has been in past decades; the decline in scores has not affected this function of the test, and I want to stress that fact.

Let me emphasize that we do not know the reasons for the decline, but we take very seriously our responsibility to try to explain the phenomenon as dependable evidence is assembled.

Most of the speculation falls under four general headings: 1) the psychometric qualities of the test; 2) the nature of the population sitting for the test; 3) factors bearing on the nature of secondary education; 4) factors bearing on conditions of society during the past decade.

Clearly, the psychometric qualities are under continual scrutiny and quality control by the Board and by our colleagues at Educational Testing Service. Our research efforts to date convince us that there is nothing basically wrong with the way the test is constructed, administered, evaluated, and scored.

Apart from the psychometric issues to be scrutinized by the experts are the educational and social issues that I mentioned earlier, and these are the more difficult to weigh, for they are complex, elusive, provoke spontaneous explanations from many segments of the population: students, parents, administrators, editorial cartoonists, and the ever-respected man in the street. Everyone has an opinion, and is quite willing to express it.

Some of the many theories concern the nature of the population sitting for the test, factors bearing on the nature of secondary education, and factors relating to the conditions of society.

Is the score decline peculiar or unique to those students who take the SAT? Some say that progress toward the national goal of equalizing opportunity for postsecondary study has brought more educationally disadvantaged students into the pool. Because these students tend to generate scores toward the lower end of the scale, their scores function to bring down the average. This explanation seems plausible until it is pointed out that the changes in the numbers of such students are still small relative to the total populations tested and that there has also been a concomitant reduction in the scores in the upper ranges--over 600--so in truth the depression of the averages is a function of both more lower scores and fewer higher ones.

I have already referred to speculations about the quality of secondary education in America. Some say that this quality is somehow deteriorating, and specific explanations include the following: the decline in score gains earned by repeaters; the decline in reading and writing abilities; the encroachment of constraining agreements on the teaching profession, which could limit teacher initiative, and might be cutting down on the number of contact hours including "after-hours" between teacher and student; the encroachment of the courts--and bussing and its related stresses; finally, the economic situation and the taxpayer resistance which reduce expenditures for education and hence adversely affect its quality.

These latter speculations spill over into the fourth area of hypotheses for explaining score decline--the factors relating to the broader social conditions. Teachers attribute lack of discipline and rigor in the classroom to parental permissiveness at home. The phenomenal increase in TV viewing over the past decade persuades some observers that students are now more tuned into the oral-aural approach than they are to the printed word. Some would add that the decreasing competition for college admission in a buyer's market has reduced the motivation of the test taker.

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The question of SAT score decline, with all that it connotes for this organization, for the schools, colleges, and individuals that it serves, remains a serious one that we are examining intensely, but not with a sense of panic or hastily developed explanations. In the spirit of accountability, it is our full intention to keep you and the public at large advised by all appropriate means as additional information and clarification become available. At this time, we have no substantial evidence that enables us to attribute the score decline to any single cause or any particular set of causes.

Sincerely,

S. P. Marland, Jr.

FACULTY NEWS

ROSS BRACKNEY attended the meetings of the South Atlantic Association of Departments of English and the South Atlantic Modern Language Association in Atlanta last week.

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PROFESSOR COLONNA gave a speech entitled "Inflation and Unemployment" at the Newport News Kiwanis Club's monthly meeting.

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MARSHALL BOOKER appeared on the "Midday" Show, WVEC (Channel 13) on Tuesday, November 11. Dr. Booker's topic was "The Economy Is Getting Better."

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JOHN E. JENKINS served as a member of the evaluation team for Churchland Junior High School in Portsmouth on October 21-24, 1975.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Faculty Advisory Committee

Reminder:

The deadline for applications for Faculty Development Grants is November 17. For details see CNC Community Chronicle, #24 of 1975, October 17.

Teddy Bostick

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Ad Hoc Committee on Merit Pay Policy

The task of developing a merit pay policy for CNC faculty is proving to be one of formidable complexity. The problems associated with legislating objectivity seem to be virtually unsolvable.

The Committee feels that it needs further guidance from the faculty. You will receive soon a paper describing in broad outline the alternatives which seem to be before us. These alternatives range from the design of an elaborate review structure to a policy based primarily upon traditional evaluation and recommendation to the abandonment of the idea. The Committee will then proceed in accordance with your response.

Bill Parks

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Ad Hoc Committee on Tenure Policy

After several months spent studying the tenure policies of both Virginia and out of State colleges and other literature the Committee is now in the process of writing a proposed policy for CNC. It is our intention to invite your critique of our proposal before it is offered for formal adoption. We will inform you of our estimated completion date as soon as possible.

Bill Parks

