

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENT OF  
DELAND HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES UNDER THE  
SEMESTER AND THE TRIMESTER PLANS

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Since the state of Florida effected the trimester calendar, the value of compressing the years normally devoted to higher education has been questioned. This study was designed to determine whether there is any significant difference in the first term or second term scholastic achievement of DeLand High School graduates who attended the University of Florida and Florida State University under the trimester system and those of comparable ability who attended the same universities under the semester plan. As there was no available trimester research on DeLand High School graduates and little, if any, on graduates of other schools, the data compiled should be helpful in counseling more effectively with DeLand High School students regarding college choice even though there are only twenty-nine research subjects. No attempt was made to measure the social and related factors that affect success in college, nor was participation in extra-curricular activities and time in part-time employment considered.

#### Procedure

The subjects of the investigation were drawn from those members of the classes on 1961 and 1962 who enrolled at the University of Florida and Florida State University. The nineteen subjects in the class of 1961 were on the semester plan, and the ten subjects of the class of 1962 were on the trimester plan. The 1961 group was equated with the 1962 group by total rank on the state twelfth grade test scores (TGT), overall high school scholastic average (HSGPA), college grade point average (CGPA), and the number of hours attempted. The records that the students made in college were determined by their grades in those courses which were defined as academic subjects. The data necessary for the study were obtained from college grade reports to the high school and the permanent record of each subject.

## Results

A Comparison of the two groups at each college indicated that the course load of the 1962 group was as arduous as that of the 1961 group. The academic records of the 1961 sample appear in Table 1 and the academic records of the 1962 sample appear in Table 2.

Table 1

Academic Records of 19 DeLand High School Graduates of the Class of 1961 Who Enrolled in the University of Florida and Florida State University

Student	Sex	Univ.	TGT	HSGPA	First Term Hours	CGPA	Second Term Hours*	CGPA*
1.	M	Fla.	431	3.42	17.0	1.94	12.0	2.08
2.	F	Fla.	432	3.63	17.0	2.65	17.0	2.65
3.	F	Fla.	246	2.94	16.0	1.63	----	----
4.	M	Fla.	318	2.24	15.0	1.40	12.0	2.00
5.	M	Fla.	408	1.48	13.0	1.92	18.0	1.83
6.	M	Fla.	373	2.18	15.0	1.80	18.0	1.27
7.	M	Fla.	410	2.24	16.0	0.81	----	----
8.	M	Fla.	450	3.73	17.0	2.59	15.0	2.60
9.	M	Fla.	386	2.94	15.0	1.20	15.0	1.46
10.	F	Fla.	425	3.59	17.0	3.12	17.0	2.70
11.	F	Fla.	290	2.13	14.0	0.79	----	----
12.	F	Fla.	411	3.23	16.0	2.00	15.0	1.00
13.	F	Fla.	434	3.48	17.0	3.18	17.0	2.82
14.	F	Fla.	287	2.79	14.0	2.00	14.0	1.50
15.	F	Fla.	412	3.48	18.0	3.06	17.0	3.05
16.	F	FSU	470	3.81	16.5	3.76	16.5	3.76
17.	F	FSU	462	3.50	15.5	2.03	16.5	2.18
18.	F	FSU	427	3.32	13.5	1.48	16.5	1.61
19.	M	FSU	318	2.54	14.0	1.90	16.5	1.45
MEANS			389	2.98	15.6	2.07	15.81	2.12

\*N = 16

Table 2

Academic Records of 10 DeLand High School Graduates of the Class of 1962 Who Enrolled in the University of Florida and Florida State University

Student	Sex	Univ.	TGT	HSGPA	First	Term	Second	Term
					Hours	CGPA	Hours*	CGPA*
1.	F	Fla.	441	3.39	14.0	3.50	16.00	3.12
2.	M	Fla.	487	2.95	16.0	2.06	19.00	2.47
3.	F	Fla.	414	3.22	14.0	2.21	14.00	2.28
4.	M	Fla.	446	2.45	15.0	2.33	15.00	1.80
5.	F	Fla.	390	2.59	16.0	1.81	14.00	2.00
6.	M	Fla.	359	2.52	12.0	1.66	-----	-----
7.	M	Fla.	471	3.43	18.0	2.05	18.00	1.33
8.	F	Fla.	456	3.39	14.0	3.00	17.00	2.41
9.	F	FSU	375	3.42	12.0	3.50	-----	-----
10.	F	FSU	449	3.16	17.5	1.80	16.00	0.75
MEANS			429	3.05	14.85	2.39	16.13	2.02

\*N = 8

The criteria for equating the two groups are presented in Table 3. The t-test was the statistic used to determine the significance of the differences reported in the table.

Table 3

Data Used in Equating the Two Groups

Criterion	1961		1962		SD	t*
	N	Mean	N	Mean		
12th Grade Test	19	389.00	10	429.00	58.30	1.75
HSGPA	19	2.98	10	3.05	.59	.30
Hours Attempted First Term	19	15.60	10	14.85	1.70	1.15
Hours Attempted Second Term	16	15.81	8	16.13	1.80	.41

\*None significant at the .05 level of confidence.

The sample population reduction for hours attempted second term was the result of five withdrawals, two subjects in the class of 1962 and three in the class of 1961.

Statistical tests of the significance of each equating criterion revealed that the two groups were representative of a common population.

A statistical comparison of the first-term CGPA for the 1962 and 1961 samples was conducted. The 19 students in the 1962 sample earned an average first-term CGPA of 2.39. The 10 students in the 1961 sample received an average first-term CGPA of 2.07. A t-test of the significance of the difference between these two means yielded a t-ratio of 1.06 which was not significant.

A similar test was conducted for the second term CGPA's. The eight students in the 1962 second-term sample earned a mean CGPA of 2.02, while the sixteen students in the 1961 second-term sample earned an average CGPA of 2.12. The resulting t-ratio of .05 was not significant.

#### Discussion

Statistical tests of the significance of the differences between the mean scholastic achievement of first and second term trimester attenders and the mean scholastic achievement of first and second term semester attenders revealed differences to be insignificant. Achievement of DeLand High School graduates appears to be similar under either university calendar. Although the number of DeLand graduates who had attended a Florida university under the trimester calendar was small at the time of the study, the comparisons discussed in this report are based on fairly well matched samples. The reader is warned against overinterpreting results that are based on the academic grade average as the only criterion of achievement.

This type of follow-up research is an essential function of high school guidance personnel, especially since they must counsel students on the choice of college.

#### Summary

This study was an attempt to determine whether there were differences in the scholastic achievement of DeLand High School graduates in their first year of college under the semester and trimester systems. Twenty-nine graduates constituted the sample:

nineteen in the class of 1961 and ten in the class of 1962. Treatment of the data revealed that the groups were well matched. The evidence revealed no statistically significant difference in the first term or second term scholastic achievements of 1961 and 1962 DeLand High School graduates who attended the University of Florida and Florida State University under the trimester system and those of comparable ability who attended the same universities under the semester plan.