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American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Committee on Personnel Testing

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### Recommended Citation

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Committee on Personnel Testing, "College accounting testing program bulletin no. 40; Results of the fall, 1960, college accounting testing program, February, 1961, and two brief research reports" (1961). *AICPA Committees*. 249.

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THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
COLLEGE ACCOUNTING TESTING PROGRAM

Bulletin No. 40

RESULTS OF THE  
FALL, 1960, COLLEGE ACCOUNTING TESTING PROGRAM  
*and Two Brief Research Reports*

Prepared by  
Committee on Personnel Testing  
21 Audubon Avenue  
New York 32, N. Y.

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Adrian College	Miami University
American Institute of Business	Midwest Institute of Business Adm.
Ashland College	Murray State College
Assumption University of Windsor	Nasson College
Ball State Teachers College	New York State Agricultural & Tech. Inst.
Bryant College	University of North Carolina
Cades CPA School	Northern Illinois University
Chico State College	College of the Pacific
Cumberland College	University of Pennsylvania
Davenport Institute	University of Pittsburgh
David Lipscomb College	Post Junior College of Commerce
De Paul University	Providence College
University of Detroit	University of Puerto Rico
Dickinson College	Queens College
Drake University	Randolph Macon College
Duke University	Riverside City College
East Carolina College	Rutgers University, School of Bus. Adm.
Eastern Washington College	Rutgers University, University College
Fordham University	St. Joseph's College
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Hamilton College	Skagit Valley College
Harding College	Southern Illinois University
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McIntosh College	Washington and Lee University
Memphis State University	West Virginia State College
	Wilkes College
	College of William and Mary
	University of Wisconsin
	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
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Ben D. Wood, *Director*  
Arthur E. Traxler, *Assistant Director*

Robert D. North, *Administrative Assistant*  
Thomas Mahorney, *Test Program Supervisor*

## INTRODUCTION

Seventy-five colleges, universities, and business schools participated in the fifteenth annual fall program of the AICPA College Accounting Testing Program series. The names of the participating institutions are listed on the preceding page. The scheduled testing period was September 12 to October 15, 1960.

As is customary in the fall program, aptitude testing was stressed, but provisions for achievement and interest evaluation were also offered. Some 8,408 tests were administered, which was 8.6 per cent more than the 1959 fall program total and close to that of the 1958 fall program. The record of participation and testing volume for the past five fall programs is shown in Table I.

TABLE I  
PARTICIPATION IN FALL COLLEGE ACCOUNTING TESTING  
PROGRAM DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS

YEAR	NUMBER OF COLLEGES	NUMBER OF TESTS
1956	76	9,550
1957	75	7,906
1958	82	8,586
1959	71	7,743
1960	75	8,408

A newly revised edition of the Orientation Test was introduced this fall, and this test accounted for about three-fourths of the total number of tests administered. As will be seen from Table II, the proportional amount of Level I Achievement Tests used increased from about 12 per cent last fall to nearly 16 per cent this fall. The Level II Achievement Test and the Strong Vocational Interest Blank together comprised about 9 per cent of the total this year, as compared with approximately 11 per cent last fall.

TABLE II  
USE OF THE VARIOUS TESTS IN 1959 AND 1960 FALL PROGRAMS

T E S T	FALL, 1959		FALL, 1960	
	NUMBER	PER CENT	NUMBER	PER CENT
Orientation Test	6,029	77.86	6,353	75.56
Achievement Test, Level I	891	11.51	1,314	15.63
Achievement Test, Level II	353	4.56	359	4.27
Strong Vocational Interest Blank	470	6.07	382	4.54
Total	7,743	100.00	8,408	100.00

Out-of-program forms of the aptitude and achievement tests administered during the program period but not included in the summary statistics in the above tables consisted of 69 Orientation Tests, 385 Level I Achievement Tests, and 20 Level II Achievement Tests. In addition, the new Form F of the Level II Achievement Test was administered experimentally to 332 students in 19 colleges and universities.



Liberal arts colleges continued to lead among the types of institutions represented by the program participants. The classification of the institutions this fall and last fall is shown in Table III. The 29 liberal arts colleges - two more than last fall - made up about 39 per cent of the total this year. Schools of business in colleges and universities numbered 27 this fall, as compared with 20 last fall, and comprised 36 per cent of the total. Fewer independent business schools took part in the program this year, but the number and proportion of participating technical, junior, and teachers colleges showed little change.

TABLE III  
PARTICIPATION, BY TYPES OF COLLEGES, IN 1959 AND  
1960 FALL PROGRAMS

TYPE OF COLLEGE	FALL, 1959		FALL, 1960	
	NUMBER	PER CENT	NUMBER	PER CENT
Liberal Arts Colleges	27	38.03	29	38.67
Schools of Business in Colleges and Universities	20	28.17	27	36.00
Independent Business Schools	15	21.13	9	12.00
Technical Colleges	6	8.45	7	9.33
Junior Colleges	2	2.82	2	2.67
Teachers Colleges	1	1.40	1	1.33
Total	71	100.00	75	100.00

Twenty-eight states, Canada, and Puerto Rico were represented in the program this fall. The regional distribution within the United States was as follows: New England, 7; Middle Atlantic, 17; North Central, 22; South, 18; and West, 9. Pennsylvania had 9 participating institutions, New York and Virginia had 5 each, and the other 25 states had from 1 to 4 each.

In general, the characteristics of the fall program have remained relatively stable during recent years. Continued support of the program by the participants enables the Institute to provide nationally representative norms for the evaluation of the aptitude, academic progress, and interests of accounting students. The Committee on Personnel Testing and the Project Office will welcome inquiries and suggestions regarding the tests or the program procedures.

A research note on the high school Orientation Test and a report of the reliabilities of the Orientation Test, Revised, Form B, and the Level II, Form E, Achievement Test follow the summary of test results in this bulletin.

II  
SUMMARY OF TEST RESULTS

Distributions of the scores and college medians on the recommended forms of the Orientation and Achievement Tests are shown in the tables on the following pages. Summarizing statistics are reported at the foot of each table.

For those who are not familiar with this type of statistical presentation, a brief explanation of the entries may be helpful. Opposite the word "total" will be found the number of students tested and the number of participating institutions. The Q3, median, and Q1 points are the scores that divide the distributions into fourths.

In Table IV, for example, the Q3 entry of 46.7 in the "verbal" column signifies that one-fourth of the students tested had scores above that point and three-fourths of them fell below it. At the other end of this distribution, one-fourth of the students had scores below the Q1 point of 26.8. The median, or midpoint, in this same distribution is 36.5, and the range of raw scores is zero to 85. The 90th percentile and 10th percentile points shown in the last two rows of the table are the scores that separate the highest 10 per cent and the lowest 10 per cent of the distributions from the other 80 per cent.

The program median for each test is indicated graphically by the short horizontal line at the center of the distribution, and the range between the Q3 and Q1 points is marked by the vertical line. For the tests that were used in previous fall programs, the norm median based on the earlier results is shown by the broken line extending across the distribution column. In the distributions of college medians, quartiles are not reported where there are less than 15 colleges, and a median for the distribution is not shown for less than five colleges.

A synopsis of the results for the various tests is given below.

*Orientation Test, Form B, Revised.* - This revised test was used for the first time in the fall program this year. As will be seen from Table IV, the scores of the 5,734 first-year students were widely distributed. On only the quantitative part of the test, however, did any of the first-year students earn scores at the very top of the scale. The test appears to be suitable in difficulty for first-year students, and it also seems to have enough ceiling for use in the higher grades.

The distributions of Orientation Test scores for the small group of 60 students in their second or third years of accounting study are shown in Table V. As would be expected, the medians for this group are higher than those of the first-year students. The range of scores is wider in the first-year group, however.

*Achievement Test, Level I, Form B-S.* - This fifty-minute form of the elementary level of the Achievement Test was administered to 397 first-year students and 209 second-year students, with results as shown in Table VI. More than three-fourths of the first-year students had scores above the norm median based on the results of the fall programs of 1956 through 1959. The second-year median fell below the norm median by a little more than a point.

*Achievement Test, Level I, Form B.* - The distribution of scores for 241 first-year students who took Form B of the Level I Achievement Test, a two-hour test,

is shown in Table VII. The group's median score is three points above the previously established norm median.

*Achievement Test, Level II, Form E.* - The higher level Achievement Test, Form E, was taken by 247 seniors and by 84 students in the second and third years of accounting study. Since this form of the test was not used in previous fall programs, the 1960 spring program medians are shown in Table VIII to provide a basis for comparison. In the case of the seniors, the median this fall is about six points below the corresponding spring program median. The second and third-year students have a median score that is just about equal to that of the seniors tested this fall, and to the median of the second and third-year students tested last spring.

*Note:* A confidential, marked copy of this bulletin is being sent to each participating institution, showing the placement of its medians in the distribution of class medians.



TABLE IV  
ORIENTATION TEST, FORM B, REVISED  
FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

V E R B A L			Q U A N T I T A T I V E			T O T A L		
RAW SCORE	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES	RAW SCORE	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES	RAW SCORE	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES
90			60	9		150		
87			58	16		145		
84	4		56	5		140	1	
81	5		54	38		135	7	
78	11		52	49		130	11	
75	11		50	76		125	11	
72	18		48	73		120	22	
69	38		46	55		115	34	
66	52		44	105		110	53	
63	84		42	142		105	71	
60	117		40	181		100	105	
57	171		38	194		95	162	
54	205		36	185	2	90	190	
51	246		34	230	1	85	271	
48	317	1	32	260	2	80	293	2
45	346	5	30	253	3	75	338	6
42	403	3	28	296	4	70	385	2
39	434	9	26	320	3	65	461	6
36	477	5	24	331	8	60	456	5
33	433	5	22	365	3	55	494	7
30	453	5	20	363	11	50	451	9
27	454	6	18	372	6	45	469	3
24	396	5	16	351	3	40	382	6
21	314	1	14	345	1	35	353	1
18	266	2	12	284		30	301	
15	199		10	265		25	182	
12	124		8	200		20	123	
9	90		6	156		15	62	
6	36		4	92		10	31	
3	18		2	50		5	10	
0-2	12		0-1	73		0-4	5	
Total	5734	47	Total	5734	47	Total	5734	47
Q3	46.7	41.1	Q3	33.4	28.1	Q3	77.0	68.5
Mdn.	36.5	35.7	Mdn.	23.7	23.7	Mdn.	60.0	58.2
Q1	26.8	28.9	Q1	15.8	20.3	Q1	44.8	51.0
Range	0-85	20.0 49.5	Range	0-60	15.5 37.6	Range	0-140	35.4 83.8
90 %ile	56.1	45.8	90 %ile	41.9	32.3	90 %ile	92.5	77.8
10 %ile	19.1	25.0	10 %ile	10.0	18.2	10 %ile	32.7	43.1

TABLE V  
 ORIENTATION TEST, FORM B, REVISED  
 SECOND-YEAR AND THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS, COMBINED

V E R B A L			Q U A N T I T A T I V E			T O T A L		
RAW SCORE	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES	RAW SCORE	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES	RAW SCORE	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES
90			60	1		150		
87			58			145		
84			56	1		140		
81			54	1		135		
78			52			130		
75			50	1		125		
72			48	5		120	1	
69			46	1		115	1	
66			44	2		110	3	
63	4		42	3		105	1	
60	1		40	6		100	1	
57	3		38	2		95	3	
54	2		36	5	2	90	3	
51	4		34	8	1	85	9	
48	7		32	7		80	8	2
45	5	1	30	2		75	2	1
42	7	1	28	2		70	13	
39	5		26	2		65	3	
36	7	1	24	3		60	4	
33	4		22	2		55	2	
30	4		20	1		50	1	
27	2		18	1		45	1	
24	1		16	2		40	1	
21	3		14	1		35	1	
18			12			30	1	
15			10			25		
12			8			20	1	
9			6			15		
6			4	1		10		
3	1		2			5		
0-2			0-1			0-4		
Total	60	3	Total	60	3	Total	60	3
Q3	50.6		Q3	42.0		Q3	88.9	
Mdn.	43.3		Mdn.	35.5		Mdn.	80.0	
Q1	36.0		Q1	30.0		Q1	70.0	
Range	4-65	38.5 45.5	Range	4-60	34.0 37.0	Range	21-124	75.0 82.5
90 %ile	59.0		90 %ile	49.2		90 %ile	105.0	
10 %ile	28.5		10 %ile	22.0		10 %ile	55.0	

TABLE VI

## ACHIEVEMENT TEST, LEVEL I, FORM B-S

RAW SCORE	FIRST YEAR		SECOND YEAR	
	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES
60	2		1	
58	3			
56	4		3	
54	3		1	
52	9		11	
50	15		9	
48	19		13	
46	24		7	
44	26		12	
42	20		18	1
40	34	2	15	2
38	29	4	10	
36	35	1	10	1
34	27	1	9	
32	23	1	18	
30	16	1	13	1
28	31	1	9	1
26	22		11	
24	8		8	
22	13		12	
20	11		5	
18	7		5	
16	3		3	
14	4		1	
12	2		2	
10	3		2	
8	3		1	
6	1			
4				
2				
0-1				
Total	397	11	209	6
Q3	44.4		44.8	
Mdn.	37.4	38.3	37.1	39.0
Q1	29.4		28.5	
Range	7-60	29.9 40.3	9-60	29.6 43.0
90 %ile	49.6		50.9	
10 %ile	22.9		22.3	

- - - Median, combined fall programs, 1956 through 1959

TABLE VII  
 ACHIEVEMENT TEST, LEVEL I, FORM B  
 FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

RAW SCORES	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES
176		
172		
168		
164	1	
160		
156		
152		
148	1	
144	1	
140	2	
136	1	
132	2	
128	1	
124	6	
120	6	
116	5	
112	12	
108	8	
104	13	1
100	15	
96	14	
92	10	1
88	11	
84	15	1
80	14	1
76	13	1
72	15	1
68	12	
64	7	
60	5	1
56	12	1
52	5	
48	9	
44	5	
40	3	
36	5	
32	3	
28	2	
24	2	
20	3	
16	1	
12	1	
8		
4		
0-3		
Total	241	7
Q3	103.7	
Mdn.	84.9	78.0
Q1	66.4	
Range	14-167	57.0-104.3
90 %ile	117.5	
10 %ile	47.3	

- - - Median, combined fall programs, 1956 through 1959

TABLE VIII

## ACHIEVEMENT TEST, LEVEL II, FORM E

RAW SCORE	SENIORS		COMBINED SECOND AND THIRD YEARS	
	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES	SCORES OF INDIVIDUALS	MEDIANS OF COLLEGES
78				
76				
74				
72				
70				
68				
66				
64				
62				
60	1		1	
58				
56				
54	2		1	
52	1			
50	4		1	
48	3		1	
46	5	1		
44	5		1	
42	4		2	
40	7		3	
38	11		2	
36	5		4	
34	13	1	5	
32	14		4	
30	17		4	1
28	21	1	10	1
26	18		4	1
24	18	2	4	
22	16	3	5	1
20	15		5	
18	15	1	7	1
16	12		7	
14	11		1	
12	12		3	
10	9		6	
8	3		2	
6	3			
4	1			
2	1		1	
0-1				
Total	247	9	84	5
Q3	33.9		34.0	
Mdn.	26.8	24.5	26.5	27.0
Q1	19.3		18.3	
Range	2-61	19.3-46.5	3-61	19.0-31.5
90 %ile	42.2		41.1	
10 %ile	13.3		11.8	

A NOTE ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THE HIGH SCHOOL ORIENTATION TEST  
SCORES AND COLLEGE ACCOUNTING COURSE GRADES

By

Robert D. North

Since 1953, the Institute has offered a high school level of the Orientation Test for use in counseling high school students who wish to consider accounting as a career choice. Several reports of research on this test have been published,<sup>1</sup> but evidence of the test's validity as a predictor of success in accounting has been difficult to obtain because of the problems involved in gathering follow-up data for students after they leave high school.

For the past three years, the Kansas Society of Certified Public Accountants has sponsored the use of the High School Orientation Test in Kansas high schools, and some of the students who were tested in this program have now completed one or more courses in accounting in college. Through the courtesy of Professor William F. Crum, chairman of the Department of Accounting at the University of Wichita, course grades were obtained for the students who had taken the Orientation Test as juniors or seniors in high school and who had enrolled in accounting courses at the University of Wichita.

The courses that the students take in their first and second years of accounting study at the University of Wichita are as follows: Introductory I (3 hours) covering first half of the Pyle and White text; Introductory II (3 hours) covering last half of Pyle and White text; Intermediate I (3 hours) covering first half of Finney and Miller text (5th edition); and Intermediate II (3 hours) covering last half of Finney and Miller text (5th edition).

The relation between the High School Orientation Test percentile ratings and the accounting course grades is shown in Table I. Most of the students had taken the aptitude test in their senior year of high school, but a few had taken it as juniors, and their percentiles are based on norms for that grade classification.

TABLE I  
RELATION BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL ORIENTATION TEST PERCENTILES AND  
ACCOUNTING-COURSE GRADES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WICHITA

HIGH SCHOOL ORIENTATION TEST PERCENTILE (TOTAL TEST)	ACCOUNTING COURSE GRADES								
	1ST SEMESTER (N = 24)			1ST YEAR (N = 15)			2ND YEAR (N = 8)		
	N	AV. GRADE*	RANGE	N	AV. GRADE*	RANGE	N	AV. GRADE*	RANGE
75-100	8	B	C to A	6	B	D+ to A	5	B	C to A
50-74	9	C	F to A	5	C+	C to C+	3	C	C- to C
25-49	4	C	D to C	2	D+	D to C			
0-24	3	C	D to C	2	D	F+ to D+			

\*Cumulative

While the samples are small, the data suggest that there is a substantial relation between the percentiles and course grades. For the first-semester course, where the correlation between the percentiles and grades for twenty-four

<sup>1</sup>A list of research references is given at the end of this article.

students is .80, the average grade for the eight students who ranked in the top quarter of the High School Orientation Test norms was B. The groups of students whose scores fell in the other three-quarters of the norms had average grades of C. None of the seven students who ranked below the 50th percentile on the Orientation Test earned grades above C in the first-semester accounting course.

First-year accounting course grades were available for fifteen of the students who had taken the High School Orientation Test. None of the nine whose scores fell below the 75th percentile had average grades above C+ for the year. The six students who ranked in the top quarter of the high school norms had average grades ranging from D+ to A, with an average of B for the group.

It is interesting to see that all eight students for whom second-year accounting course grades were available had High School Orientation Test percentiles in the top half of the norms. The single student who had an average grade of A for the two years of study ranked at the 98th percentile on the Orientation Test, and the other three students who had average grades above C had Orientation Test percentiles of 94, 89, and 78. The fifth student who ranked in the top quarter of the Orientation Test norms had a two-year grade average of C and a percentile of 80.

It might be inferred from this small study that students who rank below the top quarter of the High School Orientation Test norms are unlikely to earn better-than-average grades in accounting courses at the University of Wichita. This finding, if supported by further data, may be helpful to high school counselors who are using the High School Orientation Test results in the Kansas program.

The Institute's testing Project Office will welcome opportunities to evaluate the predictive validity of the High School Orientation Test for accounting courses in other colleges and universities.

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RELIABILITIES OF THE ORIENTATION TEST, FORM B (REVISED)  
AND THE LEVEL II ACHIEVEMENT TEST, FORM E

By

*Robert D. North*

To bring its standardized tests up to date, the Institute's Committee on Personnel Testing recently authorized the Project Office to prepare revisions of the three forms of the higher level of the Orientation Test and to assist in the construction of two new forms of the Level II Achievement Test.

Revisions of Forms A, B, and C of the Orientation Test were completed this fall under the editorship of Geraldine Spaulding, measurement consultant to the Educational Records Bureau and the Project Office staff. Form B (Revised) was used in the college program this fall, Form C (Revised) is scheduled for use in the midyear program, and Form A (Revised) will be introduced in the spring program. The revised forms are similar to the older ones in format and content, but a number of new items have been substituted, principally in the vocabulary part. Some items were changed from one form of the test to another to improve the equivalence of the forms.

The items for Forms E and F of the Level II Achievement Test were written by Vinton S. Curry of the University of Colorado, with the editorial assistance of the Committee on Personnel Testing. Both of these forms are two-hour tests. Form E was used in the college program last spring and this fall. Form F was used experimentally by a few colleges this fall, and it will be offered for regular program use next spring if the publication schedule permits.

As the first phase of research on the new tests, reliabilities of Form B (Revised) of the Orientation Test and Form E of the Level II Achievement Test were computed from the fall program results. These reliabilities are reported in Table I, with reliabilities of other forms shown for comparison.

TABLE I  
RELIABILITIES OF THE ORIENTATION TEST, FORM B (REVISED),  
AND THE LEVEL II ACHIEVEMENT TEST, FORM E,  
WITH RELIABILITIES OF OTHER FORMS SHOWN FOR COMPARISON

TEST	FORM	SAMPLE	SCORE	NO. OF ITEMS	WORKING TIME (MINUTES)	RELIABILITY (SPEARMAN-BROWN)
Orientation	B(Revised)	200 1st. Yr. Students	Verbal	90	25	.92
			Quantitative	30	25	.90
			Total	120	50	.94
Orientation	B	210 1st. Yr. Students	Verbal	100	25	.93
			Quantitative	30	25	.89
			Total	130	50	.94
Achievement, Level II	E	200 Seniors	Total	78	120	.85
Achievement, Level II	C	435 Seniors	Total	57	120	.88
Achievement, Level II	D	216 Seniors	Total	100	120	.94

The reliability of the part and total scores of Form B (Revised) of the Orientation Test range from .90 for the quantitative part to .94 for the total test. These reliabilities are in the range (.90 or higher) that is generally considered desirable for scores that are to be used for individual diagnostic or evaluative purposes. It is worth noting that these reliabilities are about the same as those of the earlier form, even though the new test contains ten less items.

The reliability of .85 for Form E of the Level II Achievement Test is not quite as high as those of the two older two-hour forms of the test. While the Form E reliability compares favorably with the reliabilities of many other widely used achievement tests of comparable length and testing time, an attempt will be made to improve it by making some minor revisions in the items before the test is reprinted.

Further research reports on the new tests will be published in this series of bulletins from time to time as additional data become available.