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A Study of the Administration of an Educational Institution.

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A STUDY OF THE ADMINISTRATION
OF AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

A Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Education
William and Mary College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
William J. Story, Jr.
March, 1949

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

A college, in its original meaning, is a body of colleagues, a corporation or society of persons, invested with certain rights and powers, performing certain duties or engaged in some common employment.¹ Colleges in America are included in this broad definition, but more specifically they are institutions of higher learning where students may study and learn under some master teacher or teachers. Colleges in America are commonly organized for a specific, educational purpose. A church, the state, or private individuals may organize a college to fulfil a definite purpose.

Since the founding of Harvard and William and Mary, the first two colleges in the country, colleges have grown rapidly in number. Today there are over seven hundred colleges and universities in the United States. The smallest college is Trinity College in Sioux, Iowa. It enrolls sixteen students. The largest university is New York University with thirty five thousand, seven hundred and eight students.²

The services that these colleges and universities

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, A College (Edition 1947, Volume 7), p. 253.

² World Almanac (Edition 1947), pp. 322-331.

have rendered and are rendering the country cannot be reckoned exactly. However, it is known that many national, state, and community leaders are college-trained men. Also, professional schools commonly require a certain number of years of college as a prerequisite for entrance. In addition, many of the better positions in every occupation seem to be open only to college-trained men.

The administrative organizations of state, church, and private institutions of learning are similar in many respects. The state-supported college receives funds from the state, and in turn carries out the mandates of the state by including in its curriculum certain courses and by following in its administrative policies the principles and tenets of the state. The church college upholds the principles of its founders. The privately endowed institution may, in respect to instructional and administrative policies, incorporate the wishes of those who endow it.

The control of colleges is usually vested in a board of trustees or a board of visitors. These boards represent the interests responsible for the college, and they control the school's administration. Although the boards do not appoint the faculty, they usually approve such appointments and may exercise a veto power controlling faculty selection. The chief executive officer is usually a president who is responsible to the board for the school's administration.

Atlantic University, founded in September, 1930, at Virginia Beach, Virginia, was unique in comparison with the average college or university. It had no buildings, no endowment, no permanent income, no traditions. It existed for only a year and three months. Yet, it was similar to other colleges in many ways. It had a board of trustees, a complete faculty, a full curriculum. It was authorized to confer the bachelor's and master's degrees, and to award honorary degrees. Because of the uniqueness of Atlantic University, it was decided to make it the subject of this study.

It was not feasible to investigate every phase of the organizational life of Atlantic University in this study. However the study does include a detailed investigation of the University's administration. It is believed that such a study will include the principal, relevant aspects of the University.

Importance of the study. A study that would give information as to effective methods of educational administration would be an important study. The administration of an enterprise usually is considered important in determining the outcome of a venture. This is indicated by the fact that in our capitalistic society executives are the highest paid individuals in business, while school administrators are the highest paid individuals in school

work.

The writer believes that the case history method is an important technique for discovering certain administrative principles. In the executed acts of the institution the validity of administrative practices can be assessed. By examining the administrative acts of a school's administration and by identifying for other administrators certain principles of administration that were fundamental to the success or failure of an enterprise, this report can make these individuals cognizant of certain principles that should be adhered to in order to be consistent with good administrative practice.

No history of Atlantic University has been written. The history of such an institution should be recorded.

Purpose of the study. It is the purpose of this study to examine and report the acts of the administration of Atlantic University in the light of acceptable criteria.

Procedure. In this study the writer proposes to develop acceptable criteria by which to appraise administrative practices in educational institutions. Six basic criteria for judging good administrative practice will be selected.

After establishing these criteria, it is proposed to develop an accurate case history of Atlantic University. In order that this case history may be as accurate as

possible, the writer will seek to avoid reliance upon hearsay and opinions. The University's administration will then be judged in relation to the criteria established. The judgment of the administrative acts in the light of the criteria will be done subjectively. There appear to be no objective means by which the acts may be compared with the criteria. This study treats the entire administration of Atlantic University in relation to each of the six criteria. The treatment is analytical, interpretative, philosophical, and comparative. It is the belief of the investigator that the emphasis that is thus placed upon the administration of Atlantic University will show to students of school administration effective and ineffective administrative practices.

Reasons for procedure. In attempting to study the administrative practices of Atlantic University, the writer considered several research methods. The first method considered was the questionnaire which could be sent to all the people who were present at Atlantic University and who had some knowledge of the administrative practices there. This method was not used because the school had been closed in bankruptcy for some sixteen years, and many persons connected with the school could not be located.

The interview technique was also a possible procedure. In this case, there was a reluctance on the part of

individuals located to disclose the full facts.

The case history method, with certain modifications, appeared to be the most practicable method for presenting the relevant facts. First, material for the writing of a case history of Atlantic University was available. Second, a case study, or history of a case, is a logical method of presenting pertinent facts concerning the subject studied. An attempt may be made to discover and interpret relevant facts. Third, the case study as a technique is well adapted for studying any subject that is so seriously maladjusted as to be considered a problem. The nature of Atlantic University, its conception, establishment and bankruptcy, indicate it to have been maladjusted. Fourth, the brief existence of the school would make it possible to present its entire administrative history. This is an important factor in studying the administrative practices through the case study method.

Sources of information: The information used in writing the case history of Atlantic University was gathered from a variety of sources. The contemporary newspapers carried accounts of many of the events concerning the University. Catalogues of the University were located and studied. The original charter of the University was located in the files of the State Corporation Commission. In the office of the clerk of the federal court at Nor-

folk, Virginia, were discovered the records of all of the bankruptcy proceedings. People who were available for interviews were located, and where permission was granted, the information given was used. The writer was a student at the University during its brief existence and therefore experienced much which is pertinent to the history.

Treatment of data. The data will be utilized in analyzing the administrative practices of Atlantic University and in comparing these practices with the criteria that are established. The writer will arrive at certain conclusions regarding the administrative practices in relation to the criteria. Finally, an attempt will be made to derive from this study certain principles concerning administrative practices in general.

CHAPTER II

SELECTION AND VALIDATION OF CRITERIA

Criterion I: A well-administered school is democratic.³

This criterion concerns the administration of a school in many of its aspects. One of the most important of these aspects is the democratic nature of faculty-administration relations. The administration works closely with the faculty, and such relations appear to be important factors affecting the success or failure of any educational institution.

There are many reasons which suggest that an administration which is democratic in its relations with the faculty will effectively accomplish its purposes. Teachers are responsible professional agents of society, and they should have a voice in determining the administrative policies of the school. Participation in the formulation of policies contributes much to the understanding and support of the policies. As Briggs has stated, "Teachers are responsible professional agents of society, not mechanical instruments to be used by their superiors."⁴ Since administration must have faculty support, it should provide for partici-

³ Paul R. Mort, Principles of School Administration (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1946), pp. 271-278.

⁴ Thomas J. Briggs, Improving Instruction (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1938), pp. 148-49.

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pation in policy determination by the faculty.

This does not necessarily mean that there is less need for leadership by the administration. The democratic administrator is a leader, but he expresses the common will resulting from the cooperative thinking of the entire faculty.⁶ He recognizes the value of the opinion of each individual member.

Americans are citizens of a nation organized on the principles of democracy. The social ideals of the nation are expressed in terms of democracy which should apply in all aspects of the national life - political, economic, social and educational. It follows, therefore, that governmental agencies and social institutions should operate in terms of the ideals of the society which supports the agency or institution.⁷ In view of these principles, American administrators should provide for democratic relations with their faculties if schools are to be well administered.

Criterion II: A well-administered school operates according

⁵ N. L. Bossing, A New Leadership for the Secondary Schools (Bulletin of Secondary School Principals, August, 1946), p. 138.

⁶ Briggs, op. cit., p. 146.

⁷ E. W. Burton, Education in a Democratic World (University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 11.

to administrative policies consistent with a sound philosophy of education; these policies should be understood by all who participate in the life of the school.⁸

Educational philosophy need not be abstract. Rather, it may be a practical, complete, ordered set of ideas which guides educators' activities. It is the interrelation of principles that gives the separate acts of administration meaning. The activities of a school program may not be consistent or sound unless the considerations which inspire them are based on a sound philosophy of education understood by all who are responsible for the educational program.

One of the important studies on secondary school standards is the Cooperative Study of Secondary Schools. In this study the soundness and clarity of the school's philosophy is considered an important factor in rating the school. For example, the school's philosophy of education is included in the basic information upon which the whole evaluation of the school rests.⁹

Each person connected with the school in some way contributes to the educational program. The school program cannot realize its full measure of success until each

⁸ Hollis L. Caswell and Doak S. Campbell, Readings in Curriculum Development (American Book Company, 1937), p. 693.

⁹ Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards (Evaluative criteria), (Wisconsin: George Bond Publishing Company), Part C.

of these persons understands the objectives and the purpose of the school's program. Briggs states it clearly,

Teachers are more and better influenced by clearly formulated and ordered ideals, by convictions and by vision of what they may become as effective contributors to the social good than by anything else.¹⁰

Criterion III: A well-administered school seeks to meet the needs of the community and the students it serves.¹¹

Schools are established because people in the community have a desire for their children to learn certain knowledge and skills. Society considers it important, also, that the cultural heritage of the past should be taught to children. In addition to these needs which society defines in terms of organized knowledge, there are other areas of need which are related to healthy growth and the development of well-adjusted personality on the part of students. A well-rounded program of education seeks to provide for growth and personality needs of youth as well as for those related to the acquisition of organized knowledge.

Educational practice in America suggests that all communities have formal educational needs. In America most states require children to attend school until they are sixteen years of age, and all children have the right to be

¹⁰ Briggs, op. cit., pp. 145-46.

¹¹ Caswell and Campbell, op. cit., pp. 194-95.

educated through high school at public expense. These regulations indicate that American society has recognized the need of children to be educated through secondary school.

Furthermore, some children can profit by being educated beyond the high school limit. The resulting benefits to society are recognized by systematic provision for college and university training with public financial aid. In order to serve as many as possible of those who could profit by the educational opportunities provided by a college, it would seem that a consideration of importance in choosing the location for the institution would be the density of population in immediate proximity. By making the college conveniently available to the larger numbers of prospective students than would reside in a sparsely populated area, the potential service of the institution to youth would be expanded. In judging the needs of a particular community, or in justifying the establishment of a new institution in that community, the number of potential students and the existing educational facilities would be matters of primary importance.

The criterion will be considered in the light of two questions: what educational facilities were available in the community at the time of the appearance of Atlantic University, and what other educational facilities were

needed by that community.

In the past, student needs have been largely determined by people other than the students themselves. The traditionalist's practice has emphasized programs of instruction and standards of behavior which have aimed at giving students a core of information and socially approved conduct. According to these educators, the pupils, themselves, have little idea of what they should study or how they should behave, and pupil needs were, to a large extent, determined either by custom or by the older people in the community. Other educators believe that the learner, himself, is aware of his own needs, in terms of the level of maturity which he has reached, and that his growth is accelerated when he sees that the needs of which he is aware are recognized by those who guide his education and that efforts are being made to meet them. The progressive educator believes that education is total growth and that needs other than the need for knowledge and the imposition of a standard of conduct must receive consideration.

The needs and demands of the environment as well as the interests and capacities of the pupils must... be taken into consideration. Education ... becomes the process of inducting pupils intelligently into the environment in which they are to live and to whose welfare they should be trained to contribute.¹²

¹² I. H. Kandel, Conflicting Theories of Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 38.

The whole child is the important consideration, and his needs should be characterized as including all those experiences which would contribute to his total growth. Since the number of categories into which the needs which contribute to the total growth of the whole child could be organized would be exceedingly large, it seems wise to limit the application of this criterion to certain selected categories, rather than attempt to cover the whole range of needs.

Criterion IV: In a well-administered school administration is recognized as a means to the end of improved student instruction.¹³

In all schools the needs of communities and students are met largely by means of programs of instruction. The important part of the educational process takes place at the point where the program and the teacher come in contact with the student.

The administration of an educational institution must be, therefore, the means to an end, and the end is better instruction of the pupil. The administrative aims in making instruction available for the child would be the same whether the school's philosophy was traditional

¹³ Arthur E. Moehlman, School Administration (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1940), pp. 139-140.

or progressive. The results to be achieved by instruction might vary from the traditional church school, which might prepare students for more effective service in church and state, to the modern public school program, which seeks to teach pupils to do better the desirable thing that they are going to do anyway.¹⁴ Administration must serve instruction by serving children in either case.

Although instruction is the more important consideration in administering the school, the correct management of the mechanical details of the school's organization is an important aid to the instructional process. The overloading of some teachers at the expense of others;¹⁵ too many classes per teacher; constant and unexcused pupil absences; lack of textbooks; and many other similar conditions would make it difficult for the instructional process to be carried on in the orderly atmosphere that is necessary to learning. It is the responsibility of administration to manage these details in such a way as to contribute to effective instruction.

The responsibility of employing the faculty usually devolves upon the administration. The way in which this responsibility is discharged is an important determinant

¹⁴ Briggs, op. cit., pp. 270-71.

¹⁵ Earl Hudelson, Class Size at the College Level (University of Minnesota Press, 1926), pp. 100-110.

of the nature of instruction and cogently affects the educational experiences students will have. ¹⁶

The administrator must also make provisions for the curricular program in terms of the objectives of the school. He must keep available the material and supplies necessary for instruction, and he should not allow outside activity to destroy the appropriate classroom environment.

In the final analysis the growth of the student should be the measure of all administration. That administration which makes the student a well-adjusted personality is good administration. Schools are made for the pupils who attend; and the curriculum, faculty, and the entire school community is important only as it serves the student.

Criterion V: A well-administered school makes provisions for adequate financial support from endowment, taxation, or operational revenue.

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Operating a school involves the spending of money. The services that the school renders cost money. The cost of instruction, administration, and maintenance of plant might quickly place a school in debt if the school were not properly financed. If a school is in debt, no pro-

¹⁶ Paul R. Mort and Walter C. Russer, Public School Finance (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1941), p. 117.

vision having been made for retirement of the debt, it is in serious difficulty. Such debts are damaging to a school's reputation, for people will interpret the situation of indebtedness as being indicative of improper management. Should the indebtedness continue, and be increased, the public will conclude that the management is so inefficient that the school should not be allowed to exist. If a school lacks public support and lacks the confidence of its creditors, bankruptcy will ensue.

The income of an educational institution usually can be accurately estimated. A budget is necessary in order that the estimated income can be fairly spent, and the expenditures of all departments limited to the budget. The National Committee on Standards in 1935 published a financial report for colleges and universities stating:

The income of educational institutions is practically fixed in advance. Budgetary control over all departments and activities is necessary in order to limit expenses to available income.¹⁷

One of the most important considerations in the making and the execution of the budget is the prudential principle. Mort and Russer in their book on public school finance give a good statement of what it is:

¹⁷ Financial Report for Colleges and Universities
National Committee on Standards, (University of Chicago, 1935), p. 2.

In brief, the prudential principle demands that the school system should be so organized, financed and managed that it will do the things agreed upon in such a way as to make sure that people are treated equitably, that discretion in action is not exercised by persons or agencies incapable of making good judgements, that funds are not lost¹⁸ or wasted and that the school is financially sound.

If this principle cannot be followed, the school will cease to function.

Criterion VI: A well-administered school makes provision for good public relations.¹⁹

The opinion of the public concerning the activities of any social enterprise may be considered an important force affecting the success or failure of the enterprise. This applies pertinently to schools.²⁰ People who support colleges or private schools must believe in them if they are to continue their support. Furthermore, it is evident that taxpayers will not give continuing support to public schools unless they believe the schools' programs worth while. Poor public relations in either case might cause a school to lose the backing of its supporters or the taxpayers and to close. Community understanding and appre-

¹⁸ Mort and Russer, op. cit., p. 104.

¹⁹ Benjamin Fine, Educational Publicity (Harpers and Brothers, 1943), p. 13.

²⁰ James A. Gerow, The Principals' Public Relations Program (The Nation's Schools, December, 1946), Volume 38, pp. 31-32.

elation of the purposes of the school depend upon good public relations while a good public relations program will attract to the school a student body of the desired type. It is imperative, therefore, that well-administered schools have good public relations.

CHAPTER III

CASE HISTORY OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

On April 13, 1930, the people of the city of Norfolk and surrounding area were informed that a new university was to be started at suburban Virginia Beach. According to the Norfolk Virginian Pilot on that date, the university was to be one of the largest in the United States and was to be supported by a number of leading financiers of the East and West. The university was to open in September, 1930 with ten departments and with ten full professors. Freshman and sophomore classes were to be taught the first year, and the newspaper indicated that other courses would be added if there was sufficient demand. No mention was made of the administrative personnel in the preliminary publicity except for the naming of the president. On April 15th the university had not received its charter, but application had been made, and the news article indicated that it was merely a matter of time before the charter would be granted.²¹

Among the members of the board of trustees was a man who diagnosed physical ills by clairvoyance. There was apparently a tendency on the part of the public to

²¹ Local Dispatch, Norfolk Virginian Pilot, April 13, 1930.

associate the new university with the hospital which was used for treating his patients.²² In order to correct this impression in the public mind, the administration made the following statement to the press concerning the psychic division of the new university:

We shall try to discover the real facts about psychic phenomena in our laboratory. The approach will be scientific and the same general methods will be used as are utilized in all the other sciences. We are not interested in mediumism, clairvoyance, or any of the other known quackeries.²³

On April 18th another announcement appeared. It stated that the founders of the university expected to spent \$500,000 during the first year. Plans called for two temporary buildings to be built at the cost of \$200,000. This would appear to indicate that it was planned to use the remaining \$300,000 for operational costs.²⁴

Along with the financial publicity came an initial statement concerning the educational philosophy of the school. One of the important financial backers stated that:

The new university is dedicated to the proposition that within each individual exists potential ability which if developed properly will give these individ-

²² Thomas Sugrue, There Is a River (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1942), pp. 307-09.

²³ Local Dispatch, Norfolk Virginian Pilot, April 16, 1930.

²⁴ Local Dispatch, Norfolk Virginian Pilot, April 18, 1930.

uals their best expression for their greatest usefulness to the world and humanity. Every field of culture and learning will be taught.²⁵

Less than a month after the announcement in the newspaper of the founding of the new university it received its charter. The university was chartered as a non-profit corporation and was incorporated in the names of two board members and the president of the university. The aim set forth in the charter was as follows:

To establish and maintain an institution of learning in Princess Anne County, Virginia, for the instruction of students in the various branches of a thorough and liberal education, literary, scientific, professional and ornamental, with authority in the President and Trustees to confer any degrees in the arts, sciences, and professions, generally conferred upon persons in other colleges or universities, upon such persons as shall in their judgment merit the same, and in general to establish and conduct a college or university in all of the branches thereof.

In connection with the foregoing, the President and Trustees of the university shall have the authority to institute and conduct research courses in the arts and sciences and to conduct general extension courses.

The institution shall be forever maintained upon a most liberal plan for the benefit of the youth and other persons of both sexes and of every religious denomination, who shall be freely admitted to equal honors of the institution, according to their merit, and the President and Trustees of the institution shall be authorized to admit as students, all persons who in their judgment have proper moral and educational qualifications.

In connection with the foregoing and for the accom-

²⁵ Ibid., April 18, 1930.

plishment of the purposes of the corporation, the Trustees hereinafter named shall have the power to acquire, hold and control such real and personal property as may be necessary, subject to the limitation of law, for the proper equipment of the institution.

To provide for the accomplishment of the purposes of the corporation and to carry on the educational institution conducted by it, the Board of Trustees shall have the power to prescribe, from time to time, the rates to be charged students for instruction at the institution, but such institution shall not be conducted in any respect for the profit of any person or persons, natural or corporate.²⁶

Written statements by the president of the University and by members of the board of trustees indicate that all were anxious to found a university that would be of service to humanity.²⁷

The ideals of the faculty in regard to education were progressive and forward looking. Many of the faculty group had come to Atlantic University because they felt that the four educational aims of the University were forward steps in education, and they wanted to participate in the enterprise.²⁸

In an interview with the writer Dr. Mina Kerr, formerly Dean of Women at Atlantic University, stated that

²⁶ Atlantic University Charter (State Corporation Commission, Richmond, Virginia), May 30, 1930.

²⁷ Atlantic University Bulletin, Catalog and Announcements 1931-32 (Virginia Beach, Virginia, August 1931, Volume II, #1), pp. 16-17.

²⁸ Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, December 24, 1947.

the educational objectives of Atlantic University, as understood by the faculty, were as follows: The first aim was to use wherever possible the progressive educational idea of learning by doing. Students were to learn good government by participating in good student government. They were to learn to write creatively by attempting to write creatively. They were to learn tolerance by living in an environment in which tolerance was accepted.

The second aim of Atlantic University, as understood by the faculty group, was to promote good international relations. This was to be done by exchanging students with other countries and encouraging American students to learn to get along with students of other nations. It was the hope of the faculty that this would be reflected in the international relations of the several nations.

The third aim was that the faculty was to think in terms of the innate worth of each individual. Individuals are very different in abilities. The faculty of Atlantic University felt that each individual had some area in which he could be successful. The faculty wanted to establish an educational institution in which each individual could capitalize upon the area of his greatest potentialities.

The fourth aim of the faculty of Atlantic University was to experiment in intelligent psychic research.

There have been many attempts to develop psychic research to the point of a science. Men continue to try, however, to develop it further, and they are not without good reasons for so trying.²⁹

The implication of these statements in the interview was that the point of view of the University in regard to psychic research was somewhat similar to that of Jastrow when he said,

The sources of our mental life are indeed complex and do not lie on the surface; there are hidden springs of motive, wayward losses and recoveries. There are daylight and twilight phenomena. The field of operations which prompted belief in transcendence is real and significant: that it can be brought within the range of accredited principles is the position of modern psychology. Its impress upon the story of belief through the ages gives it added interest. The episodes are so diverse that their reduction to a common plot is itself an application of the new psychology.³⁰

In summary, it may be pointed out that the objectives of Atlantic University were not as particular and specific as are the objectives of some colleges. Few colleges have accepted the progressive ideal of learning by doing as Atlantic University did. In general the objectives of Atlantic University were broad to the extent of recognizing the human worth of each individual and included the fostering of the ideal of world brotherhood.

²⁹ Ibid, December 24, 1947.

³⁰ Joseph Jastrow, Wish and Wisdom (D. Appleton Century, 1935), p. 127.

Atlantic University was located at Virginia Beach, on the Atlantic Ocean, eighteen miles from the city of Norfolk. The country surrounding it not only was one of great historic importance but also possessed one of the most healthful climates. The town of Virginia Beach was (and still is) a lovely summer resort, with a charm all of its own. In winter the situation remains pleasant; the surf bathing is discontinued, but oyster roasting, horseback riding, and other activities replace it.³¹ The choice of the Virginia Beach location appears to have been wise in view of the fact that housing which was used by resorters in the summer was available for occupancy by the University in the winter.

The factual history of Atlantic University began in May 1930. Two offices were opened at that time; one was located in Norfolk, while the other was located at Virginia Beach. By May 31st, the administration was able to announce that a portion of the faculty had been employed. A professor of modern languages, a professor of psychology, a professor of art, a professor of vocational guidance, a football coach, an instructor in physical education, and one administrative officer had been employed. The administration stated that it would be necessary to employ

³¹ Atlantic University Bulletin, Preliminary Announcements (Virginia Beach, Virginia, August 1930, Volume I, #3), pp. 21-23.

several more department heads before the University would have a complete staff.³²

During the summer, the administration mailed out catalogues, registered students, and made plans for the opening of the University. Housing accommodations for the University proved to be a problem, because the temporary buildings that the administration had expected to be ready by September were not completed. It was decided, in consequence, to house the University in one of the large hotels at Virginia Beach.³³

The catalogue, sent out in August, appeared complete and detailed. It stated that two large hotels had been rented until the permanent building program could be completed. It was stated that provisions had been made for a library, laboratories, and other facilities necessary for instruction. A complete athletic program and most of the other, common college activities were said to be provided for the students.³⁴

The University was divided into three schools; the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Fine Arts,

³² Local Dispatch, Norfolk Virginian Pilot, May 31, 1930.

³³ Ibid, May 31, 1930.

³⁴ Atlantic University Bulletin, Preliminary Announcements, op. cit., pp. 27-32.

and the Graduate School. The degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Master of Arts were offered, and the requirements for these degrees corresponded to the standard requirements of the average college.³⁵

By August, one may assume, the college had taken detailed form in the mind of the administration, and the catalogue that was distributed at that time showed that most of the important details of organization had been attended to. Student government, change of courses, promotions, grades, absences, vacations, examinations were all discussed in detail.³⁶

September 7th, the president of the University opened his office in the hotel that was to serve as the administration building. September 16th, two announcements were issued from his office. One concerned the new campus which was "about to be built," and the other concerned the faculty, the majority of whom had arrived.³⁷

A picture of the faculty was printed in the Norfolk newspaper. Of twenty seven original faculty members nine held doctors' degrees, four masters' degrees, and the remainder special training for their teaching respon-

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 52-57.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 60-66.

³⁷ Local Dispatch, Norfolk Virginian Pilot, September 8, 1930.

sibilities. The educational qualifications of the group³⁸ were high.

September 22nd, the University opened, and within the week, two hundred students had enrolled. The first convocation was held on September 24th in the Virginia Beach Presbyterian Church. Three speeches were made. One was made by an influential member of the board of trustees. Another speech was made by the mayor of Virginia Beach, and a third was made by the president of the University. The board member stated that the University was built on faith. The mayor was glad that the school was located at Virginia Beach, and the president stated that the mission of the University was to seek truth and produce creativeness.³⁹

In an editorial the following morning, the editor of the Virginian Pilot congratulated the founders on the lofty ideals they had expressed at the convocation. The editor expressed concern, however, over the lack of buildings and those permanent assets that are usually the attributes of a college.⁴⁰

The lack of permanent buildings was evident. The

³⁸ Atlantic University Bulletin, op. cit., pp. 8-17.

³⁹ Local Dispatch, Norfolk Virginian Pilot, September 23, 1930.

⁴⁰ Editorial, Norfolk Virginian Pilot, September 24, 1930.

total physical plant in the fall of 1930 consisted of three hotels, an office building, a store building, and the Presbyterian Church which contained all the classrooms of the University. The College Shop, which sold supplies and textbooks, was located in the front of a store building about one block from the main building, and chemistry and physics' laboratories were located in the rear of this building. The hotels served both as dormitories and as classrooms, and the church and office building were used for classroom space only. Many physical changes were made in the buildings in order to give the students sufficient classroom space.

In addition to the usual bulletins, brochures, and news releases, it would appear that the University relied heavily upon the football team and the orchestra to give it favorable publicity among the clientele it wished to attract. Scholarships were provided for members of the football team and for accomplished musicians who played in the orchestra. A football schedule of eight games was arranged for the first session.

The orchestra was composed of experienced musicians who had come to Atlantic University after having played in other college dance orchestras. The orchestra became known throughout Tidewater Virginia as an outstanding college orchestra, and this reputation advertised the University.

The Saturday night dances that the orchestra sponsored were well attended both by the University students and outsiders.

Of the two hundred students enrolled in the first year, one hundred and twenty-two were freshmen, eighty-one were sophomores, eight were juniors, two were seniors, and eight were graduate students. Most of the students came from Virginia, but the states of New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Alabama, Oklahoma, Connecticut, South Carolina, Kentucky, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Illinois, and Maryland were represented.⁴¹ The range of intelligence quotients revealed by the admissions testing program indicated that the student body ranged in ability from average to genius ratings.⁴²

The writer would judge the first week of the college's existence as one with an outward appearance of great prosperity. The College Shop was well stocked with supplies. Many of the athletes and the musicians were in school at no expense to themselves, and the hotel rooms which were used as dormitory rooms still had the summer rates of \$16 per day posted on the walls. All of these factors con-

⁴¹ Atlantic University Bulletin, Catalog and Announcements 1931-32 (Virginia Beach, Virginia, August 1931, Volume II, #1), pp. 135-145.

⁴² Atlantic Log (School Publication, Virginia Beach, Virginia), October 21, 1930.

tributed to the impression that there was available to the institution an adequate amount of financial resources.

October 11th was an important date in the history of Atlantic University. It was the day on which the administration of Atlantic University and the first board of trustees ended their formal association. It was impossible for the investigator to ascertain the reasons which caused this parting. A contract was drawn up at that time, however, which seems to be indicative of certain controversies between the two parties. The administration apparently wanted complete freedom in operating the school. The board of trustees was not prepared to finance the expensive project that had developed and wanted to be relieved of its financial obligations. From a study of this document that divorced them it appears that the contract was between the president and the board. Some of the salient points of this contract are as follows: since there was some difference of opinion between the president and the board as to how the funds should be spent, the board member who had assumed major financial responsibility was to fulfil his entire obligation to the president, not the institution, giving a total of \$60,000 at the rate of \$5,000 a month for each of the following departments: philosophy, psychology, English, history, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and

ancient and modern languages. The dispensing of these funds was to be the responsibility of the president, while the board member, who was also a member of the faculty, was still to have the right to conduct his class in metaphysics at the University.⁴³

This contract was a secret agreement between the president and the first board of trustees. The faculty of the University knew nothing of it, and it did not appear until brought to light in the bankruptcy proceedings. Yet, it must have been satisfactory to the administration and to the board of trustees, since each party got what it desired. The board of trustees was relieved of its heavy financial responsibility, and the administration secured complete control of all the affairs of the University.⁴⁴

Thereafter, the administration reorganized the board of trustees and began trying to make the University into an entirely local project. The first board of trustees had included people from outside Virginia Beach and Norfolk, Virginia. The new board was entirely local in personnel.⁴⁵

⁴³ Atlantic University Bankruptcy Proceedings, Federal Clerk's Office, Norfolk, Virginia, December 19, 1931.

⁴⁴ Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, December 24, 1947.

⁴⁵ Atlantic University Bulletin, Catalog and Announcements 1931-32, op. cit., p. 5.

Student life in the institution appeared in the main to follow the traditional college pattern. There were pep rallies, dances, college songs, and student pranks. Some of the latter were destructive and undesirable, though in general student conduct was little different from that in other similar institutions.

Evidence that much of student life was not meaningless may be observed in several constructive activities. The musical production entitled "The Shoe String Revue" was produced by students of the University. The Atlantic University Players put on Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew". Both of these productions were enthusiastically received by the audience and were judged by the writer to be above the average of similar productions of college groups.

There apparently was no immediate effect upon life at the University as a result of the contract of October 11th. Effects were slowly felt, however. Food in the dining hall began to be scarce, and rumors began to circulate among the students that the University was not financially sound.

By Christmas the University was behind in paying all its obligations, and as indicated in the records of the bankruptcy proceedings, many of the creditors were anxious for their money. They were demanding payment of the University, and the administration was facing either the

closing of the University or the making of additional arrangements in order to continue.⁴⁶

Shortly after Christmas, a faculty meeting was called. About ten of the professors had letters from a member of the board of trustees personally guaranteeing their salaries for one year. These professors were the heads of their departments, and the October 11th contract provided for them. The twenty other people who had been employed by the administration appeared to have little chance of being paid. At this faculty meeting the financial situation at the University was made clear to all. The administration stated that ten of the professors had the legal right to their full salary, but in order for the University to continue, these professors would have to share their salaries with the other people employed by the University. The question placed before the group was this: would the professors having contracts share or would the University close? The other employees of the University had to live, so the faculty members who had a legal right to their salaries agreed to share with the others.⁴⁷

From February, 1931, everyone connected with the

⁴⁶ Atlantic University Bankruptcy Proceedings, op. cit., December 19, 1931.

⁴⁷ Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, December 24, 1947.

University felt that its existence was doubtful.⁴⁸ If every student had paid his tuition, there would have been only \$15,000 a semester from this source.⁴⁹ The \$5,000 a month that was to be received during the current school year from the former board member could not be depended on the following year.⁵⁰ In short, the school was heavily in debt, had no new financial supporters, and no buildings. Moreover, there was a decreasing student body.⁵¹ Practically everyone connected with the school felt that the first year would be the last.⁵²

This feeling persisted, but appeared to be modified when the administration issued the announcement of the summer session and at the same time announced that the University would operate for the session 1931-32.⁵³

In spite of evidence which indicated disaster, Atlantic University closed its first year as it had begun, with an air of grandeur. The first annual commencement

48 Ibid, December 24, 1947.

49 Atlantic University Bulletin, op. cit., pp. 135-144.

50 Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, December 24, 1947.

51 The writer recalls that many students dropped out of school during the first academic year.

52 Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, December 24, 1947.

53 Atlantic Log (School Publication, Virginia Beach, Virginia), May 8, 1931.

began May 22nd, and ended on June 1st. Excerpts from the commencement program follow:

8:00 P. M. - Commencement Dramatic Production, Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew", Maury High School, Norfolk, May 22.

8:30 - 10:00 P. M. - Reception for trustees, faculty, and students, May 30.

10:00 P. M. - Torchlight procession and celebration by student body, Boardwalk and Beach, Saturday, May 30.

11:00 A. M. - Baccalaureate Exercises, First Presbyterian Church, Sunday, May 31. Sermon - The Rev. P. Roland Wagner, Pastor, Central Baptist Church, Norfolk.

11:00 A. M. - First University Commencement, First Presbyterian Church, Monday, June 1.

12:30 P. M. - Reception to graduates and their friends, Waverley Hotel, Virginia Beach.

3:00 P. M. - Semi-Annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, Waverley Hotel.

Candidates for Degrees: Bachelor of Science - One; Bachelor of Arts - one; Master of Arts - One.⁵⁴

The administration of Atlantic University decided to have a summer school. The Oceana High School, a school not far from Virginia Beach, had been made available for classrooms and administrative offices, and the Virginia State Board of Education had agreed to recognize the work of the University in renewing teachers' certificates.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Atlantic University's First Annual Commencement Program, May 22 - June 1, 1931.

⁵⁵ Atlantic University Bulletin, op. cit., p. 123.

Virginia Beach was an attractive location at which to attend summer school, and seventy-eight students availed themselves of the opportunity for summer study.⁵⁶

During the summer of 1931, most of the administration of Atlantic University was attempting to get money for the fall term. There is no record of the actual number of people contacted for this purpose or the offers and counter proposals that were made. Nineteen hundred and thirty-one was a difficult year in which to raise money for anything, for people were facing the worst depression in the country's history. People with money evidently were thinking in terms of preserving their fortunes rather than in terms of aiding educational institutions. Very little money was raised.⁵⁷

The catalogue for the 1931-32 session was issued and distributed in August. It contained about the same information that was contained in the catalogue published a year earlier. The catalogue indicated that the University definitely would continue. Indeed, a new school had been added, the school of optometry, and the number of people employed by the University had increased to thirty-seven.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 143.

⁵⁷ Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, December 24, 1947.

⁵⁸ Atlantic University Bulletin, op. cit. pp. 5-11.

The University began its second and final year in September, 1931. Classes were conducted and regularly attended, and students talked about the time that the University would move to a new location.

Ninety-three students had paid in a total of \$7,437.12 during the second year of the school. The rent for the hotel building had to be paid out of this amount, as well as all other operational costs. The small balance had to be divided among the thirty-seven employees, allowing very little salary for each.⁵⁹

Some of the professors had large families, and because their salaries were not paid, they had run into financial difficulties. Many such families had exhausted their credit in the local stores, and they had no financial means. One day a fish market donated a truck load of fish, and the bursar paid the faculty members in fish.⁶⁰

Finally, everyone connected with the University had to face the fact that there was absolutely no money and there was no prospect of receiving money. On December 19th, 1931 Atlantic University went into voluntary bankruptcy. The University had gone in debt rapidly: the student body

⁵⁹ Atlantic University Bankruptcy Proceedings, op. cit., December 19, 1931.

⁶⁰ Thomas Sugrue, op. cit., p. 321.

had decreased, and the creditors had been trying to collect their money. Under the circumstances the University had not done what it was supposed to do for the students, community, or the faculty, and there seemed little reason to support its continuation.⁶¹

There was some effort made to try to operate the University until the end of the semester in order to allow the students to get credit for their semester's work. The total lack of money or resources and the destitute condition of the faculty convinced the trustee in bankruptcy, however, that it was unwise to continue the school at all.

When the University finally was closed and the settlements were made, liabilities were heavy. Of the total \$117,115.67 owed, \$84,335.51 was due for salaries to the professors and \$32,561.16 was due to other people. The bills filed in the bankruptcy proceedings include a wide variety of purchases, and they date from the beginning of the University. In a year and three months the University had cost approximately \$254,000.⁶²

⁶¹ Atlantic University Bankruptcy Proceedings, op. cit., December 19, 1931.

⁶² Ibid., December 19, 1931.

CHAPTER IV

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY COMPARED WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE CRITERIA

The administration of Atlantic University compared to Criterion #1: a well-administered school is democratic. It is difficult to make a single statement in regard to the democratic attitude of the administration of Atlantic University that will be entirely correct. There were probably many separate acts which would indicate that the administration of Atlantic University was democratic. Nevertheless, the decisions that had such a definite effect upon the life of the University and the lives of the faculty members were not brought up by the administration for discussion before the faculty.⁶³ The disastrous financial circumstances were kept quiet as long as possible, and the introduction of new courses and the hiring of new faculty members, even though it involved a possible reduction in the salaries of those already employed, were not disclosed for faculty consideration. Moreover, the faculty had no voice in determining the offerings of the curriculum.⁶⁴ The curricular aims of the institution had been delineated

⁶³ Supra, p. 33, lines 6-11.

⁶⁴ Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, Dec. 24, 1947.

by the administration, especially in relation to psychic research, before the school opened. A further example of the lack of democratic administration may be observed in the manner in which the decision to operate a summer session (1931) was reached. Neither the student body nor the major number of faculty members were aware that such a decision had been made by the administration or acquainted with the considerations which led to it.⁶⁵ These situations indicate that the administration of Atlantic University so far as its relations with the faculty were concerned was not democratic.

The history of Atlantic University would seem to indicate that the University presents itself best to the scrutinizing investigator when it is considered as high adventure. For all practical purposes it was an educational adventure after October 11, 1930. In the judgment of one of the administrative officers, from that date the best chance the school had for success was for the administration to allow complete democracy within the institution. Democratic action could have provided inner strength through cooperation among faculty, students, and administration. The entire school might have joined together in an adventure in education.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Supra, p. 37, lines 23-24.

⁶⁶ Interview, Dr. Mina Kerr, December 24, 1947.

It is possible that if, on October 11th, 1930, the administration had revealed to the faculty and the student body the exact financial situation, the school might have closed at the end of the first semester. Had the school closed, the responsibility for closing the school then would have rested upon the members of the board of trustees who had withdrawn their support. Without this communication, the responsibility for continuing the school must be placed on the administration since it continued the operation of the school on its own initiative and without proper financial backing.

It seems evident that if democratic principles of administration had been followed, there would have been one of two possible outcomes. Atlantic University might have continued in existence and become an effective and successful educational enterprise. On the other hand, if such principles had been followed, the school might have closed earlier, causing less hardship and financial loss. Since democratic action was not practiced, however, the degeneration of the organization caused much personal hardship and ultimate bankruptcy.

Since all educational institutions, secondary schools as well as colleges, have institutional organizations comprising administration, faculty, and students, it is indicated that the principle of democratic administration would

apply equally to all schools.

The administration of Atlantic University compared to Criterion #2: a well-administered school operates according to administrative policies consistent with a sound philosophy of education: these policies should be understood by all who participate in the life of the school.

For the purpose of discussing this criterion the existence of Atlantic University will be divided into two parts. The first part has to do with the University conceived and supported by the first board of trustees. The second part has to do with the University after the first board had withdrawn its support on October 11th, 1930, until the closing of the school in mid-December, 1931.

All the evidence indicates that the first board of trustees wanted a small school primarily in which metaphysics could be studied.⁶⁷ The administration was not opposed to the idea of studying metaphysics, or of psychic research being done scientifically, but the administration thought that "institutional respectability" should be gained first. Evidence indicates that the board agreed to this. However, there was no agreement as to the method of obtaining respectability. The board thought the administration was extravagant. The two parties agreed on words, but actually there was no meeting of the minds concerning

⁶⁷ Supra, p. 32, lines 3-24.

the meaning of "respectability". Thus it is evident to the student of administration that the situation which led to the resignation of the first board of trustees might have been avoided had the administration and the board of trustees formulated a clear philosophy of education in general and of education at Atlantic University in particular. Moreover, it is indicated that a philosophy which was thoroughly understood by both parties and was thereafter applied consistently might have prevented the subsequent schism.

After October 11th, at which time the first board of trustees resigned, a new board composed of local people was appointed. The philosophy of the University from that time was largely the philosophy of the school's administration. The administration was responsible for the board that was appointed and the board acquiesced in all the administration desired.⁶⁹ From that date the objective of the administration should have been to create an educational institution of such worth to the community that the community would support it. This is a sound educational aim and might have been successfully achieved if a careful study of community needs and resources had been undertaken. If on October 11th the administration had told the com-

68 Thomas Sugrue, There Is a River (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1942), pp. 307-11.

69 Interview, Dr. Roland Wagner, December 26, 1947.

munity and the people connected with the college what the financial circumstances were, it is possible that the school might have been saved. Instead, the community, the students, and the faculty were in ignorance of the actual situation. The people of Norfolk and the Virginia Beach area who might have rallied to the support of the college were not told the truth. The impression of a large, well-endowed school seemed to persist. The nature and number of the claims recorded in the bankruptcy proceedings suggest that there was no insistence upon the economy that was so urgently needed if the University was to be a successful local endeavor. The problems facing the administration of the University after losing its financial backers were first, what educational philosophy will best satisfy the educational needs of the Norfolk area, and how best may the school operate consistently with this philosophy? Second, how can the people of the community and the students of the college be made to realize that the philosophy of the University meets the needs of the area? Instead of facing the problems, the administration persisted in embracing a philosophy which aimed at pretentiousness and idealism. There was no evidence of practical planning in relation to these aims.

Atlantic University might have continued to exist if the philosophy of meeting the needs of the local commu-

nity and students had been practically administered. This meant the school needed economical administration, student support, faculty support, and community support. Actually there was no economy, confused student and faculty support, and only slight community support. A great deal of this confused thinking and confused activity seems to be traceable to the confused philosophy, the inconsistent application of the early philosophy, and the ignorance of all parties save the administration of the true purposes and aims of the school.

On the evidence available it appears that the operation of the school had little relation to the stated aims and philosophy. It appears also that there was no understanding by the parties involved of the administrative practices. Finally, when it became necessary to make the University a local endeavor, a philosophy based upon local needs and resources was not adapted, nor were efforts made to make understandable to the community the actual, pretentious objectives of the school.

The administration of Atlantic University compared to Criterion #3: a well-administered school seeks to meet the needs of the community and the students it serves.

The question of how well Atlantic University met the needs of the community it served cannot be answered scientifically at this late date. In order to answer this

question accurately it would be necessary to make a survey as of the time at which the University started. This, of course, is impossible and an estimate of the situation must be made subjectively, using such data as are available.

In 1930 the Norfolk area was well-populated and needed a college, but, the apparent need was for a junior college rather than a great university. This the University recognized when in its initial announcements it indicated that it planned to concentrate on the work of the freshman and sophomore years. Virginia was well supplied with existing higher educational institutions. Moreover, most of the juniors and the seniors in the area were already in colleges and were not willing to transfer. This is evident from the disproportionately small size of the junior, senior, and graduate student body at Atlantic University.⁷⁰ Thus, it appears that provisions for freshman and sophomore classes would have met the higher educational needs of the area for two years at least.

In addition, there was no demonstrated indication that the Norfolk area needed a graduate school or a school of optometry. Had the administration eliminated the last two years of the college and the graduate school, the student body would have decreased by only eighteen members.

⁷⁰ Supra, p. 31, lines 3-7.

One of these eighteen persons was the only student in the school of optometry.⁷¹ The number of classes that the University offered would have been lessened considerably. There would have been a large decrease in the size of the faculty and a proportionately large reduction in expenses. Atlantic University did meet some of the needs of the Norfolk area, but events appear to indicate that it went too far in providing for the imaginary needs of a group that did not exist.

Although Atlantic University failed to meet the needs of the community it served, it would have been possible, nevertheless, to meet certain needs of the students enrolled. The view is held by many educators that a curriculum which contributes to the adjustment of the whole student personality is the best means of meeting the needs of the student of any university. How well did the curriculum of Atlantic University meet these total needs?

To the modern educator the student's personality is never departmentalized. What affects the mind affects the body, and there is some indication that the strong mind and strong body go together.⁷² Instincts, attitudes, mind,

⁷¹ Atlantic Log (Student Publication, Virginia Beach, Virginia), October 21, 1930.

⁷² Lewis M. Terman's Genetic Studies of Genius (California: Stanford University Press, 1926), pp. 169-171.

and body are treated as a unity.⁷³ However, men become experts and specialists in given fields of knowledge. Instruction in higher educational institutions has tended to follow this specialization, and instruction in schools has been departmentalized.

It becomes necessary, therefore, to appraise the way in which instruction is offered in relation to student needs. For this purpose the writer has chosen five of many possible categories in order to determine the adequacy of Atlantic University's curriculum in meeting student needs. These five categories are: (1) use of language; (2) health and recreation; (3) occupational preparation; (4) social activities; (5) brotherhood of human race. In attempting to meet the needs of the students in these categories Atlantic University offered the following program:

(1) The University attempted to establish a curriculum that would teach the students to use well the English language, both written and oral. Not only was English taught with some emphasis on creative writing, but classes were offered in public speaking, dramatics, and poetic

⁷³ I. H. Kandel, Conflicting Theories of Education (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1938), p. 95.

Thomas M. Risk, Principles and Practices of Teaching in Secondary Schools (New York: American Book Company, 1941), pp. 62-77.

readings.⁷⁴

(2) Atlantic University's curriculum stressed the importance of health and physical activity. There were health classes and classes in physical education as well as intramural games for both men and women. All students, both men and women were required to take the health and physical education classes. The stated objective of health classes was to inculcate good health habits and knowledge of the principles of healthy living.⁷⁵ Physical education included the games of high and low organization, calisthenics, folk-dancing, and so forth. There was, however, the difficulty of finding a suitable gymnasium and playing field. The football team had to go two miles to practise, while the basketball team used a high school gymnasium three miles away. Many things were lacking in the health and physical education program. The deficiencies, however, appeared to be due to the general lack of funds and facilities and not to the conception of the program.

(3) Atlantic University sought to prepare its students for occupational competency to the same extent as in many other liberal arts colleges. No trade courses were offered.

⁷⁴ Atlantic University Bulletin, Catalogue and Announcements, 1931-32 (Virginia Beach, Virginia, August 1931, Volume II, #1), pp. 81-84.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 95.

No professional courses were offered except optometry. During the first year of the school's existence, a counselor was employed whose responsibility it was to counsel with students concerning vocational problems and aptitudes.⁷⁶ However, there was no obligation for students to consult the counselor. It appears that by reason of the fact that the institution was concerned, primarily, with the liberal arts vocational training, per se, was not a primary concern of the administration.

(4) The program of Atlantic University provided social activities for all of the students. Clubs, extra curricular activities, dancing, parties, and social gatherings were encouraged. The students ate together in the dining hall located in the hotel building and each night after dinner the large hotel lobby provided a place for excellent social contacts.⁷⁷

(5) Atlantic University may have been ahead of its time in attempting to prepare the students for the brotherhood of man. More and more it has become evident that this is one world and that all men and all nations must cooperate. Frontiers are still in existence, and national governments still promote nationalism. However, the atomic bomb and

⁷⁶ Atlantic University Bulletin, Preliminary Announcements (Virginia Beach, Virginia, August 1930, Volume I, #3), p.11.

⁷⁷ Supra, pp. 30-31.

rapid communications are helping men to realize that people of the world must live in peace or run the risk of being annihilated. The brotherhood of man becomes more than a dream; it has begun to be a necessity.

The curriculum at Atlantic University was forward-looking in this respect. The statement of aims, the positive policy of including foreign students in the student body would appear to indicate that systematic efforts were made to develop tolerance in the attitude of the faculty and the students toward students who were of a different religion, national, or racial background. Many of the courses that were taught in philosophy and sociology stressed the unity of the human race,⁷⁸ and there was much social fellowship in the comparatively small student body. The curriculum at Atlantic University took into consideration the great unifying force of Christianity and other great religions, the brotherhood of man.⁷⁹

The administration of Atlantic University compared to Criterion #4: a well-administered school is student centered, and administration is recognized as a means to the end of improved student instruction.

The administration of Atlantic University appeared

⁷⁸ Atlantic University Bulletin, Catalog and Announcements 1931-32, op. cit., p. 91 and 104.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 93-94.

to make an intense effort to establish and maintain the instructional process at a high level. The most important part of this instructional process is the part contributed by the teacher in classroom instruction. One may judge from the qualifications of the faculty members which were employed that the administration made every effort to secure an efficient and a competent faculty.⁸⁰ Moreover, the present subjective judgment of the investigator is that the faculty members with whom he came in contact as a student were of high professional ability. This indicates that the administration was well aware of, and endeavored to maintain this aspect of the instructional program.

Not only did the administration employ an efficient faculty, but it endeavored, also, to institute modern educational practices. The administration not only stated the objective of educating the whole student, it made certain specific arrangements to such an end. An expert in the field of guidance was employed and given faculty rank. At the time, this was unusual for a school no larger than Atlantic University. Furthermore, the statement of educational policy emphasized functional learning and active rather than passive participation by the student in his own

⁸⁰Supra, pp. 28-29.

learning experience.⁸¹

That aspect of the instructional process dependent upon environment, physical equipment and plant, was poorly provided for. Buildings were makeshift and classrooms were inadequately equipped.⁸² The buildings were too far apart for the most effective organization of classes and tardinesses to class were more frequent than in most schools because of this distance.⁸³ These inadequacies appear to have been distinctly detrimental to the instructional process.

It is apparent that the high level of instruction at which the administration aimed was not maintained throughout the life of the school. The insecurity felt by the faculty members because of non-payment of salaries, and the general feeling of uncertainty concerning the continuance of the school had its demoralizing effect which was reflected in less efficient instruction.

A student-centered school provides for the welfare of each individual student. The administration of Atlantic University attempted, in many instances, to make it a student-centered school. The aims of the University as pro-

⁸¹ Atlantic University Bulletin, Catalog and Announcements 1931-32, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

⁸² Supra, pp. 29-30.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 30.

claimed in the charter and in the college catalogue were stated in terms of serving students. The large size of the faculty as compared with the size of the student body, the guidance and counselling service offered are indicative of the administration's desire to center the college's program on the student.

Social activities were provided for the students as were physical and spiritual activities. The faculty in addition to the administration was always willing to make curricular adjustments for the benefit of an individual student if the student could show that such consideration would further his education.⁸⁴ Such a policy was in keeping with the avowed purpose of the school in respect to the philosophical statement that it was the University's aim to help each individual discover that area in which he or she could best serve humanity.

The administration of Atlantic University compared to Criterion #5: a well-administered school makes provision for adequate financial support from endowment, taxation, or operational revenue.

There have been many rumors relative to what the

⁸⁴ Atlantic University Bulletin, Preliminary Announcements 1930-31, op. cit., p. 43.
Atlantic University Bulletin, Catalog and Announcements 1931-32, op. cit., p. 60.

board of trustees advised the University's administration concerning the amount of money available for the school. It is impossible for the writer to find the actual directive given to the administration by the board of trustees in regard to finance. In view of the conflicting impressions the finances of the University will be discussed, therefore, from two points of view. The first point of view assumes that the first board of trustees asked the administration to found a great university - a university in which expense was not to be spared. The second point of view is that in which the board expected moderation, and the administration, on its own initiative, overstepped its bounds and went beyond its jurisdiction in all things relative to finance.

If the board of trustees directed the administration to create a great university, the College Shop, football team, the large number of administrative personnel, the orchestra, and the expensive faculty might be considered initial investments in a great enterprise. If these instructions had been given to the administration by the board of trustees, the administration made a great error when it allowed the board to resign and be released from the heavy obligations occasioned by the founding of a large university upon the meagre payment of \$60,000.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Supra, pp. 32-33.

It should be noted here that the decision to continue the University after October 11th, 1930, was that of the administration. It is possible that the administration expected money from other sources, but the responsibility for continuing the University must be placed upon the administration.

On the other hand, if the board of trustees had expected moderation in expenditures and the administration spent immoderate amounts of money on its own initiative, it was a serious administrative error.

In either case, the administration must be considered as failing to practice the principle that a well-administered school must be well-financed.

The record of financial transactions of the University as revealed in the bankruptcy proceedings, suggests that the financial policy of the institution was not clearly defined and understood by the administration, or if defined and understood by the administration that adequate controls of expenditures were not maintained. In either case accepted business practice would have been violated.

After the contract of October 11th, at which time the board members who had started the University were able to avoid their obligations, the need for economy certainly was real. Economy was necessary in order to put the University in a favorable light to potential local financial

backers. In addition, simple justice demanded that professors who had left good positions deserved as much of their salaries as could be realized by means of economy in all the University's operations. The only way the administration could have achieved such economy would have been to make an accurate estimate of expected income and to build a budget thereon. With no new revenue expected, the way to balance such a budget would have been to economize in the number of employees, salaries, and housing.

The administration apparently did not deal effectively with the need to economize in its operations. The number of people employed by the University steadily increased, and it was December 26, 1930 before an effort was made to reduce salaries.⁸⁶ The extravagant housing of the University did not change to something less extravagant until the beginning of the second semester, 1931.⁸⁷ The people of the area were not informed of the financial status of the University immediately in order that they might rally to its support.⁸⁸

The financial administration of Atlantic University can be compared with that of similar institutions. The average cost per student in thirty-two accredited colleges

⁸⁶ Supra, p. 35.

⁸⁷ Supra, p. 35.

⁸⁸ Supra, p. 34.

89
was \$266 in 1926. In 1930-31 the cost of educating a student at Atlantic University was approximately \$800. Even if due allowance be made for possible increase in costs between 1926 and 1930 and the high per capita cost characteristic of small enrollments be taken into account, the impression remains that Atlantic University represented an unusually expensive operation.

The foregoing discussion leads one to conclude that Atlantic University was not well-financed. Moreover, the poor financing resulted from the violation by the administration of basic administrative principles: there appeared to be no consistent financial controls. If a budget existed, it was not followed or was poorly conceived and was relatively extravagant.

The administration of Atlantic University compared to Criterion #6: a well-administered school makes provision for good public relations.

The opinion of the public concerning educational institutions ordinarily is affected in two ways; first, by means of systematic publicity originated by the institution itself, and second, by the impressions acquired by people coming in contact with the institution.

In the former category, planned publicity, Atlantic

89 William Huber Hurt, The College Blue Book, (Deland, Florida, 1939).

University published its catalogues and provided newspaper articles and bulletins. These appear to be similar to comparable materials issued by other colleges. Public speeches made by the administrative staff and the faculty were designed to give the public a favorable impression of the work of Atlantic University.

The orchestra and the football team brought the name of the University before the public on many occasions.⁹⁰ Yet at times some of the members of both of these organizations were guilty of activity which detracted from the public's opinion of the school.⁹¹

In instances of the latter type, the people who came in contact with Atlantic University were not always favorably impressed. Consequently, the adverse public opinion which resulted was detrimental to the institution. The number of people who were agents for good will appeared to decrease as the evidence of poor organization, lax financial administration, and confusion increased.⁹²

One may conclude that part of the public relations program served to enhance the public's opinion of the University. However, part of the program served to bring poor

⁹⁰ Supra, p. 30.

⁹¹ Supra, p. 34.

⁹² Supra, pp. 34-36.

opinion and ridicule. The reason for this seems to have been the superficiality of the program in relying too heavily upon a football team and dance orchestra as agents of good will for an institution of higher learning.

The public relations program which has a lasting effect is the program that systematically interprets important aspects of the aims and content of the school's program. Atlantic University's public relations program apparently did not succeed in doing this.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It was the purpose of this study to examine and evaluate in the light of acceptable criteria the administrative practices at Atlantic University. The criteria that were set up were six in number, and they covered the following fields of administrative activity: 1-democratic administration, 2-effective educational philosophy, 3-educational needs, 4-instruction, 5-finance, and 6-public relations. In the case of each criterion the effort was made to establish its validity by both logic and documentation.

A case history of Atlantic University was then developed. All of the available material was gathered together. Newspapers, bulletins, interviews, and the author's own memory were utilized in writing that history. While this study was concerned primarily with administration, it was necessary to describe the general development of the school in order that the administrative acts might be seen in their proper relationship to the life of the school.

In examining the administration of Atlantic University in light of Criterion #1 (a well-administered school is democratic) the following pertinent facts were revealed:

1. Lack of a democratic attitude was shown when the

administration of Atlantic University did not bring up for faculty discussion important issues that affected the entire group;

2. That the apparent absence of full cooperation was to some extent due to a lack of participation by all the personnel in the formulation of school policies;

3. That lack of democratic attitude and practice on the part of the administration contributed significantly to the failure of Atlantic University;

4. That all of these circumstances lend support to the idea expressed in the criterion that a successfully administered school is democratic.

In examining the administration of Atlantic University in relation to Criterion #2 (a well-administered school operates according to administrative policies consistent with a sound philosophy of education; these policies should be understood by all who participate in the life of the school) the following pertinent facts were revealed:

1. During the first month of the school's life policies were not clearly stated nor clearly understood by the administration and the first board of trustees.

2. The confused activity of the early period might be traced to the fact that the philosophy which was to control the operation of Atlantic University was variously conceived by the several most interested people, and lacked

unity and consistency.

3. When it became necessary for the school to become a local endeavor, a philosophy and policies developed in terms of local needs were not adopted.

4. The above facts indicate that in order to create an educational institution whose activity is purposeful and educationally effective, that institution must operate under administrative policies consistent with a sound philosophy of education, and policies which are consistently followed by all who participate in the life of the institution.

In examining the administration of Atlantic University in light of Criterion #3 (a well-administered school seeks to meet the needs of the community and the students it serves) the following pertinent facts were revealed:

1. The administration of Atlantic University failed to make an accurate estimate of the educational needs of the community.

2. The administration provided for courses on a high scholastic level and specialized courses for which there was little student demand.

3. This failure to recognize existent community needs resulted in an expense out of proportion to the service rendered the community. This expense contributed to the failure of Atlantic University.

4. In the five categories considered as necessary to supply student needs (1. use of language; 2. health and recreation; 3. occupational preparation; 4. social activities; 5. brotherhood of human race) Atlantic University met the needs of its students to this extent:

a. Atlantic University did not function as a professional or vocational school.

b. For instruction in the use of language, both spoken and written, in social activities, in health and physical education, Atlantic University made provisions comparable to those of other colleges.

c. The administration of Atlantic University was forward-looking in attempting to prepare students for the brotherhood of man.

d. The curriculum offerings of Atlantic University indicate that the administration gave consideration to the needs of students.

5. One may conclude from these considerations that in meeting the total educational needs of both the community and the students, the administration was only partially successful.

In examining the administration of Atlantic University in relation to Criterion #4 (a well-administered school is student centered, and administration is recognized as a means to the end of improved student instruction) the

following pertinent facts were revealed:

1. The administration of Atlantic University recognized the importance of the instructional program when it employed a well qualified faculty.

2. The administration of Atlantic University practiced guidance and gave consideration to the needs of the total personality.

3. Physical inadequacies of the plant appear to have been detrimental to the instructional program.

4. There existed a feeling of insecurity on the part of faculty members and of the student body.

5. This insecurity throughout the school appeared to result in a lower level of instruction than if there had existed feelings of security.

6. The history of Atlantic University seems further to validate the principle that the administration should seek to maintain a high level of instruction. However, a high level of instruction cannot be achieved if the administration fails to provide adequate physical facilities and if a feeling of insecurity is allowed to prevail.

In examining the administration of Atlantic University in relation to Criterion #5 (a well-administered school makes provisions for adequate financial support from endowment, taxation, or operational revenue) the following pertinent facts were revealed:

1. Apparently a system of financial controls which was understood by the board of trustees and the administrative officers was not established, or, if established, was ineffective.

2. The decision to separate the administration from the first board of trustees was unwisely accepted by the president in light of later developments.

3. The decision to continue the University after October 11th was made by the administration alone without consultation with those whose interests were seriously affected thereby.

4. In order to continue the University after October 11, 1930, economy of operation was necessary.

5. The administration hired new employees without assured means to pay them.

6. When the first board of trustees had withdrawn the administration failed to make an accurate estimate of income and build a budget thereon.

7. Atlantic University had no dependable income from endowment, taxation, or operational revenue.

8. The failure of the school was hastened by a lax financial policy which included no effective budget, and extravagant expenditures.

9. The financial collapse of the University gives validation to the criterion.

In examining the administration of Atlantic University in relation to Criterion #6 (a well-administered school makes provision for good public relations) the following pertinent facts were revealed:

1. The planned publicity of Atlantic University, insofar as it relied upon the orchestra and the football team was of a superficial sort.

2. The planned publicity of Atlantic University, such as bulletins and catalogues was comparable to that of many colleges.

3. Lax financial administration and increasing debts tended to diminish the good will towards the institution and alienate the support of those who had dealings with the University.

4. It may be concluded that the public relations program of Atlantic University was not systematically planned to interpret effectively the objectives and purposes of the school to the public.

5. The resulting publicity, some favorable and some unfavorable, may have contributed to the failure of the school, since possible financial backers were not given the best picture of the school.

In the case of Atlantic University one may see demonstrated administrative errors that contributed to the failure of the enterprise. While other conditions than

those subject to administrative control, however sound that administration may be, may have constituted the critical factors in the failure of the institution to survive, this study suggests that the prospects of successful survival are significantly increased when the administrative principles expressed in the criteria used herein are consistently followed. The implications of this study should have significance for administrators of schools in whatever type of situation they may be employed.

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