TEST ADMINISTRATION, COSTS, AND DATA ANALYSIS

Speakers: Alan Seder, *Educational Testing Service, Berkeley*
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Introducer/Recorder: John G. Cotter, *Encinal High School, Alameda, California*

Alan Seder noted that in administering a test, common problems, whether it be multiple choice or essay, seem to revolve around security and identification; students taking the test for others; and pre-test control of the printing and storage. Test administrators must also make sure that there are no missing test booklets, attend to proper seating of the test-takers, and eliminate the possibility of copying. In addition, they must concern themselves with issues such as faculty-*required* participation *vs.* reader honoraria; local "workday" readers vs central reading site with teacher travel; site and equipment rental; and management coordination and clerical costs.

Seder noted that in analyzing data, some things to consider are score distributions, means, standard deviation, essay score cross-tabulations, correlations, and reliability. In the matter of essay tests, there are such problems as how many essays should be read by individual readers, the number of charged discrepancies, the mean scores of essays read, the standard deviation, and correlations.

Next, Michael Ribaudo discussed CUNY's university-wide writing test. A competency test in writing is given to all students to determine their movement from lower to upper division at each campus of the City University of New York. Created by a faculty committee, the instrument is an essay test with a six-point scoring scale, and each essay is scored by two readers. A score of 4 is needed to pass; in the event of reader-impasse, a third reader is used. This test is also used as a placement test for incoming freshmen upon entering the University. Students failing the test must pass it before they have accumulated 61 credits enabling them to move into the upper divisions.

The cost ($2.19 per student) is normally borne by the English Department of the college in which the student is enrolled. In June of each year, a random sampling of 100 essays is submitted by each college for auditing, and a data analysis has shown an 85% correlation between the audited scores and the original scores.

Ribaudo concluded by noting that the CUNY test has proven to be a valid and reliable measure, but it is expensive to administer and score.