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A follow-up study of the 1940-1955  
business department graduates of  
Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs,  
New York

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Thesis  
MacDuffie, H.J.  
1956

BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY  
OF THE  
1940-1955 BUSINESS DEPARTMENT GRADUATES  
OF  
SKIDMORE COLLEGE,  
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK

Submitted by

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(A.B., Skidmore College, 1953)

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Education

1956

Boston University  
School of Education  
Library

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Studies**

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

The follow-up study of the business department graduates of Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York, from 1940 through 1955, was undertaken for two major purposes: (1) to determine the extent to which the business department graduates benefited from the curriculum which prepared them for their chosen fields of business; and (2) to provide a basis for improving the courses in the curriculum.

#### Analysis of the Problem

With the realization that competition in the business world is becoming keener with each passing day, the graduates of business schools and business departments within colleges and universities should be adequately prepared to meet the demands of business. In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, two main problems were borne in mind: (1) How well prepared were the business department graduates for their chosen fields of business, and (2) How might the staff of the business department at Skidmore College improve its courses to meet the demands of business. The following subordinate problems were included in the study:

1. To determine the number of graduates who are presently employed.
2. To determine the various positions held by Skidmore

business department students since graduation.

3. To determine the number of graduates who pursued advanced degrees or study.

4. To determine the types of organizations in which the graduates had been employed and the particular skills which aided in obtaining positions in these organizations.

5. To determine the means by which the graduates secured their first positions.

6. To determine the three business courses studied at Skidmore which proved most valuable in employment.

7. To determine the three non-business courses studied at Skidmore which proved most valuable in employment.

8. To determine the business knowledges and skills not acquired at Skidmore and which might have been defensibly included in the college program.

9. To determine the various dictating and/or transcribing activities performed by graduates.

10. To determine the various typewriting activities performed by graduates.

11. To determine the business machines which are used on the job.

12. To determine the extent to which selling and/or buying activities entered into the employment of graduates.

13. To determine the various phases of recordkeeping in which the graduates were employed.

14. To determine the amount of correspondence and/or reports

composed by graduates in employment.

15. To determine the activities performed by receptionists which were included in graduate employment.

16. To determine the aspects of work which consumed most of the graduates' time.

#### Justification of the Problem

Recognizing the responsibility of the school or college in the follow-up of its graduates, this survey was used to determine the adequacy of the business department curriculum of Skidmore College. The students, better than anyone else, know whether or not they were adequately prepared for the demands of business. They can tell where the weak points are as well as the strong points in course content and the methods of presentation.

The findings of this study may indicate the phases of the curriculum which need revision so that future graduates of Skidmore may enter the business world able to meet the competition and with as few limitations as possible.

#### Delimitation of the Problem

The study of the Skidmore College business department graduates was limited to the graduating classes from 1940 through 1955 for the following reasons:

1. To obtain an over-all estimate of the effectiveness of the curriculum offered by the business department during the last 15 years.

2. To compare the success of those graduating during the war years with those graduating during the post-war years.

3. To secure pertinent information from recent graduates in order to determine the effectiveness of curriculum revision made during the past ten years.

In this thesis, a follow-up study is one made in order to survey the employment of college graduates for the purpose of securing facts and data to determine the effectiveness of the college curriculum in undergraduate study.

#### Definition of Terms

In order to make the study more meaningful, definitions of the important terms seemed advisable. Unless otherwise indicated, these definitions will hold throughout the thesis. The definitions which follow were taken from the Dictionary of Education.<sup>1</sup>

Course - organized subject matter in which instruction is offered within a given period of time, and for which credit toward graduation or certification is usually given.

Curriculum - a systematic group of courses or sequence of subjects required for graduation or certification in a major field of study.

Business Education - an area of study dealing with the principles and practices of teaching business subjects.

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<sup>1</sup>Good, Carter V., (Editor) Dictionary of Education, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York and London, 1945.

## Statement of Organization

An introduction to the study is given in Chapter I. This chapter has been broken down into several parts: a statement of the problem of the thesis is presented; an analysis and justification of the problem is followed by the delimitation so that the reader will be familiar with the scope of the survey; a definition of the terms used is presented for clarification; and a statement regarding the organization of the chapters is herewith presented.

The second chapter presents a survey of some of the related literature which was reviewed for reference study. Chapter III explains the background of the study. The methods and procedures followed are presented in Chapter IV while Chapter V discusses the analysis and interpretation of the information received on the questionnaire. Chapter VI contains the summary and conclusions based on the data obtained. Recommendations may be found in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER II  
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature for this study includes surveys of high schools and business colleges as well as follow-up studies of college graduates who were enrolled in business departments.

In 1948, William J. Josko<sup>1</sup> made a follow-up study of the business administration graduates of the University of New Hampshire in which 148 of the 361 questionnaires mailed were returned. In his attempt to set up a means of measuring the effectiveness of the program planning and the present curriculum, Josko found that for the most part graduates obtained positions in the field for which they were prepared and that such positions were generally obtained within a three-month period after graduation. The outstanding sources from which the business administration graduates obtained their initial positions are stated below:

1. University placement office
2. Professor or advisor
3. Family or relatives
4. Friends (greatest single source - 14 per cent)
5. Answer to an advertisement
6. United States Employment Service

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<sup>1</sup>Josko, William J., A Follow-up Study of the Business Administration Graduates of the University of New Hampshire, 1940-1948, Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1948, p. 47.

7. Private employment agency

8. Announcement of competitive examination<sup>1</sup>

In 1948 Reginald H. Quinn<sup>2</sup> surveyed students who had attended a private business school and found that 50.8 per cent of the former students received their initial positions from the placement service of the school. A rather interesting finding is the fact that 26.2 per cent received initial positions through Civil Service. The remaining 23 per cent named diversified sources of initial employment.

A survey of the business administration graduates of the University of Scranton was undertaken in 1949 by Lawrence R. Juckett<sup>3</sup> for the purpose of determining the extent to which the business administration students benefited from the education and how the courses of instruction might be improved. Sources by which the graduates obtained their initial positions varied. The most effective procedure was through personal application. This source proved most productive for 25.4 per cent of the graduates, while friends ranked second as a source, with parents ranking third. Only 2.5 per cent of the graduates received their initial positions through the university placement services.

In a study of the 1943-1950 business graduates from Regis College,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>Quinn, Reginald H., A Follow-up Study of the Students Who Attended the E Private Business School, Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1948, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup>Juckett, Lawrence R., A Follow-up Study of the Business Administration Graduates of the University of Scranton, 1941-1948, Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1949, p. 36.

Sister M. Ellenice Donovan<sup>1</sup> analyzed the data in order to draw conclusions on which to base her recommendations for curriculum revision. In her study of the data, Sister Ellenice found 56 of the 133 respondents married, with 70 per cent of them marrying within a three-year period after graduation. The findings indicated that the Regis graduates had little difficulty in obtaining employment, with 61.7 per cent employed within a month after graduation. By September of the same year, 127 of the 133 respondents were employed and drawing salaries.

With the exception of 11 students, Quinn<sup>2</sup> found that the graduates felt the curriculum practical and lacking no important vocational training. The 11 students suggested the following improvements:

1. A course in auditing
2. Theory on the Social Security Law
3. More time on short cuts in figuring

The Josko<sup>3</sup> survey revealed a need for additional training in the areas listed below:

1. More emphasis on vocational training
2. A definite program of vocational guidance
3. More general business training

In his study of the graduates of the University of Scranton,

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<sup>1</sup>Donovan, Sister M. Ellenice, A Follow-up Study of the 1943-1950 Business Graduates of Regis College, Weston, Massachusetts, Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1951, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup>Quinn, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>3</sup>Josko, op. cit., pp. 67-68.

Juckett<sup>1</sup> found the need for the following courses:

1. Insurance
2. Taxation
3. Business and office management
4. Personnel management
5. Statistics
6. C.P.A. problems
7. Salesmanship
8. Business education

Carolyn A. Thatcher<sup>2</sup>, who made a study of the graduates of Gardner High School, discovered the areas where the department lacked sufficient training and recommended the following:

1. The typewriting teachers in the Gardner High School should plan the content of the typewriting courses to develop skill in performing the typing activities most frequently performed.
2. Since filing ranked highest in total frequency, more training should be offered in this area.
3. Gardner High School should have a separate office machines laboratory.

The business graduates of Regis College indicated a need for more speech training and teacher training; they also recommended that business English receive major importance in setting up the curriculum.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Juckett, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>2</sup>Thatcher, Carolyn A., A Job-Activity Analysis and Follow-up Study of 1947, 1948, and 1949 Graduates of the Gardner High School, Gardner, Massachusetts, Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1950, pp. 69-70.

<sup>3</sup>Donovan, op. cit., p. 47.

In an attempt to ascertain graduates' present positions and activities, Quinn<sup>1</sup> found that 67.3 per cent were employed in business while the remaining 32.7 per cent were either married and at home or enrolled in institutions of higher learning.

Josko's<sup>2</sup> study reveals that the selling field attracted 24 per cent of the graduates. Twenty-two per cent of this number obtained positions as sales-trainees. Retail salesmen were engaged in the field of insurance, milk, ice cream, soft drinks, groceries, tires, and haberdashery. Wholesaling activities included the sale of gas, oil, machinery, real estate, and liquor.

Josko further mentioned that 19 per cent of the business administration graduates were employed in the clerical field. Such positions as bank clerks, general clerks, office clerks, production and control clerks, hotel clerks, and stenographers were included in this category.

In the same study, 10 per cent of the graduates were employed as accountants or bookkeepers. The percentage here is not as low as it would ordinarily seem, as such positions are not usually open to recent graduates without considerable experience in the field. Some of those mentioned in the clerical field perform several bookkeeping or accounting activities in their roles as clerks. The majority of the graduates have remained in the business field and are advancing, with only 13 of the 82 respondents unsatisfied with their present positions.

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<sup>1</sup>Quinn, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>2</sup>Josko, op. cit., p. 39.

Juckett<sup>1</sup> discovered that the present positions of business administration graduates from the University of Scranton were diversified, with accounting heading the list. Twenty-eight per cent of the graduates were employed as accountants, with clerking ranking second with 9.8 per cent, and insurance agencies ranking third with 6.2 per cent. Teachers and bookkeepers were fourth in the list and various other positions made up the total of 82 presently employed.

Of the Regis College graduates, only 85 of the 133 respondents were employed full time. Forty-five were housewives; two were working part time; one was furthering her education. The majority of the graduates entered the field in which they were trained. The classification was:

1. Secretary - 61.3 per cent
2. Teacher - 15.1 per cent
3. Accountant - 9.8 per cent
4. Service representative - 6.0 per cent
5. Diversified occupations - 7.8 per cent

The leading types of institutions in which graduates were employed included public schools, insurance companies, United States Government, wholesale distributing companies, American Telephone and Telegraph Company, automobile industry, banking, research, film companies, and credit companies.

The job turnover of the 32 employed respondents was low. Turnover in positions was one of the subordinate problems in Sister Donovan's<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Juckett, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Donovan, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

study, and it was revealed that 13 were still in their initial positions; 10 had been employed by two companies; five had worked for three companies; four had found employment with four companies.

The courses found most valuable in employment are as follows:

1. University of Scranton - accounting, business law, economics, taxation, business mathematics, and finance (Thirty-eight per cent of the graduates indicated they had received adequate vocational training; 34 per cent indicated they had received partial training.)<sup>1</sup>
2. Nashua High School - typing, filing, office machines, duplicating machines<sup>2</sup>
3. Gardner High School - bookkeeping, stenographic program, office machines<sup>3</sup>
4. University of New Hampshire - accounting, economics, English, law, military science<sup>4</sup>
5. Regis College - shorthand, typewriting, accounting, business English, business machines, business organization, business law, economics<sup>5</sup>

Based upon the findings and conclusions of their studies, the authors of the theses herewith presented have made recommendations for improvements of programs and curricula revisions. Juckett<sup>6</sup> made the

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<sup>1</sup>Juckett, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>2</sup>Ryan, Mary A., A Job-Activity Analysis and Follow-up Study of the 1946, 1947, and 1948 Business Department Graduates of the Nashua High School, Nashua, New Hampshire, Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1949, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup>Thatcher, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

<sup>4</sup>Josko, op. cit., p. 58.

<sup>5</sup>Donovan, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>6</sup>Juckett, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

following suggestions:

1. Improve the placement service.
2. Improve the coordination of the supervised work experience with classroom instruction.
3. Plan systematic follow-up studies to enable the faculty to keep close contact with the demands of business.
4. Add courses which have been lacking in the opinion of former graduates.

The specific purpose of Mary A. Ryan's<sup>1</sup> survey was to determine which skills and abilities were most commonly used by the business graduates of Nashua High School. From this study, Miss Ryan hopes to ascertain whether or not their school preparation was adequate for reasonably satisfactory job adjustment. Of the 150 business graduates contacted, 134 responded. Her recommendations are as follows:

1. Emphasize the general clerical activities as these duties and office activities in the community far outnumber the specialized types of activities.
2. Place less emphasis on duplicating machine operation as this activity is not required on very many beginning office jobs.
3. Increase the scope of the office machine program.

The Gardner High School survey by Thatcher<sup>2</sup> is one of the most interesting and detailed of recent studies. The major problems were to determine the activities and duties most frequently performed by office workers, and to determine the effectiveness of the business curriculum with suggestions for revision. Using a data sheet and check list mailed to 157 graduates, Thatcher was able to make the following recommendations:

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<sup>1</sup>Ryan, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

<sup>2</sup>Thatcher, op. cit., pp. 43-47.

for improving the program:

1. Two years of bookkeeping instruction in the high school should be sufficient to provide the student with a thorough knowledge of the bookkeeping cycle and develop adequate skill in performing the bookkeeping activities on the job.
2. The office machines course should be expanded to meet the demands of new machines in business.

Studies of the foregoing surveys were made in order to determine the most effective methods to be followed in working out the survey of Skidmore College graduates from 1940 to 1955. The procedures used are listed in the following chapter and the subsequent chapters present the analysis and interpretation of the data, the findings, and the recommendations.

## CHAPTER III

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Skidmore College was incorporated in 1922 but its origin can be traced back to 1903 when its founder, Lucy Skidmore Scribner, put into effect her conception of creative education for young women. From her educational ideals and philosophies has developed the present institution, endowed by the generosity of graduates and friends and by the General Board of Education, New York State.

The foundation and development of Skidmore College has been based on the principle of combining a liberal education with vocational training in those fields where students have a particular interest and ability. Therefore, the curriculum includes not only liberal arts courses but also specialized courses in the fields of art, business, drama, home economics, music, nursing, and physical education. However, this specialization presupposes one half academic work, lending a greater breadth of general education than most technical schools.

The business department at Skidmore College prepares students for responsible positions in business and education. The courses in the first two years are largely academic for the purpose of testing a student's aptitude, presenting the main functions of business, and constituting a basic curriculum later to be supplemented by specialization in a chosen field.

Three programs are offered in the department. These include secretarial, retailing, and business administration. The last is in conjunction with the Department of Economics. All three programs require the

following:

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Introduction to Business	3
Business Mathematics	3
Elementary Accounting	3
Business English	3
Business Organization and Management	3
Economic Principles	6
Freshman Composition	6
Business Law	6

The secretarial program consists of the following required courses:

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Elementary Typewriting	2
Advanced Typewriting	2
Gregg Shorthand	6
Elementary Accounting	3
Office Machines and Filing	3
Advanced Shorthand and Transcription	3
Secretarial Practice	3
Electives	3 academic credits

The following courses are required courses in the retailing program:

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Elementary Typewriting	2
Advertising and Sales Promotion	3
Advertising Copy	3
Marketing	3
Selling	3
Buying	3
Field Work in Selling	1
Retail Management	3

The business administration majors are required to take the following courses:

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Marketing	3
Personnel Management	3
Money and Banking or Corporation Finance	3

In addition to the foregoing, business administration majors may choose 12 credits of courses in economics and/or business.

All programs require a general major examination. An annual field trip is conducted for seniors. Such business centers as New York and Montreal are included in itineraries as they house stock exchanges, investment houses, banks, manufacturing concerns, and advertising institutions.

Extracurricular activities at Skidmore provide facilities for developing a well-rounded person with special emphasis on character, personal relationship, and teamwork. Some of the events and activities included in the extracurricular program are lectures, concerts, discussions groups, dramatic presentations, non-sectarian religious services, social events, and sports.

At present, there are 1056 students registered in the college. The geographical distribution may be found in Table I on page 18.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Skidmore College Bulletin, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York, 1955.

TABLE I  
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF SKIDMORE STUDENTS

State or Territory	Number
New York	451
New Jersey	153
Massachusetts	112
Connecticut	111
Ohio	145
Pennsylvania	45
Illinois	13
Missouri	11
Rhode Island	10
District of Columbia	8
New Hampshire	8
Michigan	7
Minnesota	7
Virginia	7
Hawaii	6
Maine	5
Indiana	4
Maryland	4
Saudi Arabia	4
Vermont	4
California	3
Delaware	3
Florida	3
France	3
Georgia	3
Texas	3
Brazil	2
Haiti	2
Alabama	1
Belgium	1
China	1
Colombia	1
Colorado	1
Dominican Republic	1
Germany	1
Korea	1
Louisiana	1
Nebraska	1
Netherlands Antilles	1
New Mexico	1
South Dakota	1
Spain	1
Sweden	1
Turkey	1
Venezuela	1
Wisconsin	1
Wyoming	1

CHAPTER IV  
METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The procedure used in gathering the data for the study is summarized as follows:

1. A questionnaire was prepared and presented to the seminar in business education at Boston University for comments and criticism.
2. The questionnaire was revised using the suggestions of the seminar and the suggestions of Skidmore College officials.
3. The questionnaire, along with a letter of transmittal, was sent to all of the business graduates of Skidmore College from the classes of 1940 through 1955.
4. A follow-up letter was sent to all graduates who had not returned the questionnaire.
5. The data obtained from the returned questionnaires were compiled and tabulated.
6. Summaries and conclusions resulting from the analysis of the data were written.
7. Suggestions and recommendations were presented, based upon the findings of the study.

Permission was obtained from the officials of Skidmore College and together with the Chairman of the Skidmore Business Department and the Director of the Vocational Bureau a questionnaire was formulated and presented to a graduate seminar in business education at Boston University for comments and criticisms.

Follow-up studies of colleges and high schools made in recent

years were reviewed and abstracted to furnish a background for the study.

Two hundred and eighty-two questionnaires were mailed to the business department graduates whose addresses were available. Any questionnaires received after the first three weeks were mailed to Skidmore College and forwarded to the writer for tabulation. The distribution by classes was as follows:

TABLE II  
NUMBER AND PER CENT OF QUESTIONNAIRES RETURNED

Class	Questionnaires Mailed	Number Returned	Per Cent Responding
1940	21	3	14.3
1941	22	8	36.4
1942	22	6	27.3
1943	24	10	41.7
1944	29	8	27.6
1945	20	11	55.0
1946	22	8	36.4
1947	11	5	45.5
1948	10	5	50.0
1949	5	4	80.0
1950	16	6	37.5
1951	13	5	38.5
1952	14	4	28.6
1953	14	10	71.4
1954	21	10	47.6
1955	18	15	83.7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>41.8</b>

Finally, the information received was then assembled and analyzed; the summary, conclusions, and recommendations, based on the findings, were incorporated into the study.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The purpose of the follow-up study was to determine how well the business department graduates were prepared in their chosen fields of business and how the staff of the business department at Skidmore College might improve its courses of instruction in order to aid the graduate in preparing for employment.

Skidmore College is primarily a women's college and the 118 respondents were all female graduates. As shown in Table III, 86 of the 118 respondents, or 72.9 per cent, were married at the time of the survey, while 32, or 27.1 per cent, stated that they were single.

TABLE III  
MARITAL STATUS OF THE 118 RESPONDENTS

Class	Married	Single
1940	3	0
1941	5	3
1942	6	0
1943	10	0
1944	7	1
1945	8	3
1946	6	2
1947	5	0
1948	4	1
1949	2	2
1950	5	1
1951	4	1
1952	4	0
1953	8	2
1954	4	6
1955	5	10
Totals	86	32
Per Cent	72.9	27.1

As indicated in the replies to the question regarding further education, only one graduate had been taking or had taken specialized courses toward an advanced degree.

The area of secretarial studies was the undergraduate major field of 69, or 58.5 per cent, of the respondents. Forty-one majored in business administration and seven majored in retailing. One respondent failed to indicate her major while in college. The following table (Table IV) shows these data in condensed form.

TABLE IV  
MAJORS OF THE 118 RESPONDENTS

Major	Number	Per Cent of Total
Secretarial	69	58.5
Business Administration	41	34.7
Retailing	7	5.9
Unanswered	1	.9
Totals	118	100.0

Commensurate with the data shown above in the field of secretarial studies, the majority of both present and previous positions held by Skidmore graduates of the business department were of a secretarial nature. Sixty-nine of the respondents indicated that they had at one time held jobs as secretaries and 34, or 28.8 per cent, of the respondents stated that they were presently employed in secretarial positions. Other positions mentioned as previous and/or present jobs included the fields of retailing, personnel, libraries, publishing, public utilities, and production.

TABLE V  
PRESENT POSITIONS OF GRADUATES  
AND THE NUMBER IN EACH POSITION

Position	Number in Each Position	Per Cent Employed
Secretary	34	28.8
Editor	4	3.3
Accounting Clerk	3	2.5
Assistant Cashier	2	1.5
Personnel Administrator	2	1.5
Stenographer	1	.9
Clerical Assistant	1	.9
Telephone Service Representative	1	.9
Camp Director	1	.9
Librarian	1	.9
Assistant to Business Manager	1	.9
Assistant to Production Manager	1	.9
Student	1	.9
Assistant to Sales Manager	1	.9
Credit Analyst	1	.9
Retailer	1	.9
Tax Clerk	1	.9
Unemployed	61	51.6
Totals	118	100.0

Tables V and VI were set up to show the present and previous positions of graduates. Of the 118 respondents, 61 are at present unemployed. Heading the list in each table is the secretarial field. In Table V, the field of publishing ranks second, with four graduates employed as editors. Three graduates are presently employed as accounting clerks. Two graduates each enjoy positions in the fields of personnel and cashiering. Various other positions are held by former business department students, ranging from clerking to stenography. The fact that so many are presently unemployed can be understood with a reference to Table III.

TABLE VI  
PREVIOUS POSITIONS HELD BY GRADUATES

Positions Held	Number
Secretary	69
Teacher	6
Retailer	6
Personnel Administrator	5
Bookkeeper	4
Librarian	3
Editor	3
Administrative Assistant	2
Telephone Service Representative	2
Production Assistant	2
Cashier	2
Research Assistant	2
Copywriter	1
Trade Analyst	1
Export Clerk	1
Totals	109

Table VI indicates the various positions previously held by graduates. Again the secretarial field heads the list. Of the 118 respondents, 109 indicated they had at one time been employed. The remaining nine had either never held a position or failed to indicate the positions.

TABLE VII  
 TYPES OF FIRMS  
 IN WHICH GRADUATES ARE PRESENTLY EMPLOYED

Type of Firm	Number Employed	Per Cent Employed
Manufacturing	9	15.8
Advertising	7	12.2
Law	4	6.9
Publishing	4	6.9
Retailing	4	6.9
Teaching	3	5.3
Public Utilities	3	5.3
Hospitals	2	3.5
Insurance	2	3.5
Television	2	3.5
Brokerage	2	3.5
Banking	2	3.5
Armed Forces	2	3.5
Government	2	3.5
Civil Defense	1	1.8
Home Building	1	1.8
Camping	1	1.8
Exporting	1	1.8
Wholesaling	1	1.8
Pension Consulting	1	1.8
Aircraft	1	1.8
Architecture	1	1.8
Unanswered	1	1.8
Totals	57	100.0

The types of firms in which the graduates are presently employed are as varied as the positions themselves. Over the 15-year period of the survey, nine graduates found employment in manufacturing concerns; seven, in advertising firms; four each in law offices, publishing companies, and retailing houses; and three became teachers. The remainder of the respondents are presently employed in various types of firms as shown in the above table, with only one graduate failing to respond.

The sources by which the graduates obtained their first positions included the Skidmore Vocational Bureau, personal application, relatives and friends, employment agencies, employee recommendations, previous employment, and advertisements. Personal application was the major method of obtaining both initial and present positions, as evidenced by the replies of 46 graduates. The fact that the College Vocational Bureau is given credit for placing only 29 of the graduates indicates that it is possible that some of the graduates who stated they applied personally were informed of the opening by the college. Seventeen graduates stated that they had received their jobs through relatives and friends. Employment agencies were instrumental in obtaining positions for 14 of the graduates. Two graduates were recommended for employment by persons already working with the firms, while two others received positions through advertisements. The entire data on how positions were obtained can be seen below.

TABLE VIII

## MEANS BY WHICH FIRST POSITIONS WERE OBTAINED

How Positions Were Obtained	Number of Replies
Personal Application	46
Skidmore Vocational Bureau	29
Relatives and Friends	17
Employment Agency	14
Employee Recommendation	3
Previous Employment	2
Advertisement	2
Total	113

As noted above, only 113 of the 118 respondents indicated the source through which they obtained first positions. The remaining five

failed to answer the item on the questionnaire. However, this table shows that fairly adequate training was given in job-finding procedures.

TABLE IX  
KNOWLEDGES OR SKILLS  
WHICH HELPED IN OBTAINING FIRST POSITIONS

Knowledges or Skills	Number of Replies
Typewriting	52
Shorthand	50
All	19
Accounting	9
Education	2
Filing	2
Office Machines	1
Dictation	1
Advertising	1
Business English	1
Selling	1
Totals	139

When asked to state those knowledges or skills which helped in obtaining first positions, the graduates' replies were found to be fairly consistent. Typewriting ranked first, with 52 of the respondents placing it as the most helpful and instrumental skill obtained in college. Shorthand ranked a close second with 50 respondents either naming the skill as most valuable or second in value. Nineteen graduates mentioned all knowledges and skills as helpful in obtaining first positions; nine included accounting; two added education and filing. Table IX (above) shows those skills and knowledges which were deemed most valuable in initial positions.

In an analysis of the weekly salaries currently paid graduates of the business department of Skidmore College, it was discovered that the majority of the graduates earned between \$60.00 and \$70.00 a week. The two next highest salary ranges were \$50.00 - \$60.00 a week and \$80.00 - \$90.00 a week. When asked to state salaries, only 49 of the presently employed 57 graduates indicated the salary per week. Eight of those employed failed to indicate any salary whatsoever.

TABLE X.  
WEEKLY SALARIES OF GRADUATES

Salaries	Number
\$40.00 - \$49.99	2
50.00 - 59.99	10
60.00 - 69.99	12
70.00 - 79.99	4
80.00 - 89.99	10
90.00 - 99.99	4
100.00 - 109.99	5
110.00 - 119.99	2
Unanswered	8
<b>Totals</b>	

As shown in the above table, the salaries for present positions range from \$40.00 to \$120.00 a week.

TABLE XI  
MOST VALUABLE BUSINESS COURSES STUDIED AT SKIDMORE

Course	Number of Replies
Typewriting	97
Shorthand	79
Accounting	50
Business English	23
Advertising	14
Business Mathematics	9
Introduction To Business	8
Business Law	7
Business Machines	6
Economics	5
Marketing	3
Personnel	2
Filing	2
Selling	1
Buying	1
Management	1
All	1

In an attempt to determine the most valuable business courses studied at Skidmore, the graduates were asked to list those courses which have since proved most important in employment. Since the majority of the graduates were at some time employed as secretaries, it stands to reason that many of the respondents would indicate typewriting and shorthand as most valuable business courses studied while at Skidmore. Typewriting was mentioned as most important by 97 of the respondents while 79 indicated the importance of shorthand. Third in value was accounting which gained the mention of 50 graduates. Next in significant importance were business English with 23 elections and advertising with 14. One respondent indicated that all business courses studied at Skidmore were of value and importance in employment. Table XI shows these statistics in condensed form.

According to the responses, English ranked first in importance as a non-business subject. Psychology ranked next with 46 replies. Economics courses were listed next by 30 of the respondents and history was mentioned fourth by 12. As is indicated in the table below, humanities and physical education proved valuable but were least mentioned.

TABLE XII

## MOST VALUABLE NON-BUSINESS COURSES STUDIED AT SKIDMORE

Course	Number of Replies
English	78
Psychology	46
Economics	30
History	12
Fine Arts	11
Sociology	11
Languages	8
Education	6
Home Economics	4
All	4
Humanities	2
Physical Education	1

When asked to indicate those knowledges and/or skills which were omitted in college programs, the graduates' replies were varied, ranging from office machines to fund raising. The fields included in the listing were shorthand, accounting, taxation, personality, on-the-job training, and law. Some of the less-often mentioned included home economics, practice teaching, dictation, stocks and bonds, psychology, and expression of thought. It must be borne in mind that this listing does not necessarily refer to courses that are not offered by the college, but rather those which were included in the college program but omitted in the selection made by the students. A detailed account of such fields may be found in Table XIII.

TABLE XIII  
 KNOWLEDGES AND/OR SKILLS DESIRED BUT NOT INCLUDED  
 IN THE RESPONDENTS' COLLEGE PROGRAMS

Course	Number of Replies
* Office Machines	9
* Shorthand	6
* Accounting	4
* Taxation	3
Personality	3
* On-the-job Training	3
Law	3
Home Economics	2
Practice Teaching	2
* Dictation	2
* Stocks and Bonds	2
Psychology	2
Expression of Thought	2
* Budgeting	1
* Executive Training	1
* Cashiering	1
* Minutes	1
* Business English	1
* Advertising	1
* Sales	1
* Business Organization	1
Education	1
Diplomacy	1
Speech	1
Creative Writing	1
Engineering	1
Grammar	1
Statistics	1
Remedial Reading	1
Philosophy	1
Fund Raising	1
More Liberal Arts	1

In a careful analysis of the above table it would seem that the business department should be directly concerned with the 15 starred items, the knowledges and skills commonly offered in business departments.

As shown in Table XIV, the adding-calculating machine was the most frequently mentioned office machine which graduates have used in employment. Five graduates used the switchboard; four, the voicescription; one, the comptometer; and one, the teletype. On the whole, office machines are not often used in present-day employment by Skidmore graduates.

TABLE XIV  
OFFICE MACHINES USED IN EMPLOYMENT

Type of Machine	Number of Users
Adding-Calculating	32
Switchboard	5
Voicescription	4
Comptometer	1
Teletype	1

Not included in the above table is the typewriter, either manual or electric. However, a separate table showing its use in the business world can be found below. Fifty-one of the 57 employed respondents use the typewriter in their positions. Forty graduates use the manual typewriter; six, the electric; and five use both machines.

TABLE XV  
TYPEWRITERS USED IN EMPLOYMENT

Typewriter	Number of Replies
Manual	40
Electric	6
Both	5

The above table illustrates the use of the typewriter by Skidmore graduates in present-day employment. In order to analyze typewriting

activities engaged in by graduates, Table XVI was set up. In the following table it is evident that letters, carbons, drafts, reports, and masters are most frequently written on the typewriter.

TABLE XVI  
TYPEWRITING ACTIVITIES

Type of Work	Number of Replies
Letters	47
Carbons	34
Drafts	33
Reports	27
Masters	27
Charts	1
Forms	1
Cards	1
Copy	1
Orders	1
Messages	1
Leases	1

In order to determine the most frequently performed activities concerned with dictation and/or transcription, correspondence, record-keeping, receptionist, and retailing, pertinent questions were asked of the graduates presently employed. Tables XVII and XVIII present these activities.

TABLE XVII  
DICTATION AND/OR TRANSCRIPTION ACTIVITIES

Type of Work	Number Giving Dictation	Number Taking Shorthand
Letters	9	31
Reports	7	23
Cases	1	4
Minutes		15
Documents		7
Forms		1
Routine	1	

TABLE XVIII  
CORRESPONDENCE, RECORDKEEPING, RECEPTIONIST, RETAILING  
ACTIVITIES PERFORMED IN EMPLOYMENT

Activities	Number Performing Activity
Correspondence	
Composing Correspondence	48
Reports	23
Supervising Correspondence	9
Forms	1
Minutes	1
Copy	1
Recordkeeping	
Petty Cash	77
Filing	26
Recordkeeping (actual keeping of records)	14
Payroll	6
Advertisements	3
Reports	2
Tax Forms	1
Receptionist	
Meeting Clients	25
Making Appointments	21
Interviews	2
Retailing	
Buying	1
Selling	7
Meeting Customers	3
Closing Sales	3
Supervising Others	2
Planning Purchases	2
Inventory	2

In an analysis of the most time-consuming activities performed in employment, it was discovered that bookkeeping headed the list, with nine responses. Eight respondents mentioned typewriting as the most

time-consuming activity, while eight others stated that composing correspondence took most time. Six graduates were engaged in dictation activities and replied that these were foremost in the work schedule. The telephone seemed to take a great deal of time from scheduled daily activities, as evidenced by the five graduates' indication of its importance in their employment. Five other graduates stated that all routine work was spread evenly throughout the day's activities. Table XIX shows a detailed analysis of the most time-consuming activities performed in employment.

TABLE XIX  
MOST TIME-CONSUMING ACTIVITIES  
PERFORMED IN EMPLOYMENT

Activity	Number of Replies
Bookkeeping	9
Typewriting	8
Composing Correspondence	8
Dictation	6
All Routine	5
Telephone	5
Personal Supervision	4
Reports	4
Publicity	3
Advertisements	2
Tax Returns	1
Secretarial Duties	1
Stocks and Bonds	1
Filing	1
Organization of Work	1
Fund Raising	1

The summary and conclusions drawn from the foregoing analysis and interpretation of data may be found in condensed form in Chapter VI.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

From the foregoing analysis and interpretation of data, the following summary and conclusions were made:

1. The analysis of the responding graduates during 1940 - 1955 indicated that 86, or 72.9 per cent, were married and 32, or 27.1 per cent, were single. This high percentage of marriages accounts for the fact that only 57 of the 118 respondents were still employed at the time of the survey.

2. Of the 118 respondents, 69, or 58.5 per cent, majored in the secretarial program; 34.7 per cent specialized in business administration; seven, or 5.9 per cent, chose the retailing field. One graduate failed to indicate her major.

3. The majority of the graduates entered the particular branch of occupation for which they were trained. Thirty-four, or 28.8 per cent, of the 57 presently employed at the time of the survey became secretaries; four, or 3.3 per cent, joined publishing firms; three, or 2.5 per cent, were employed as accounting clerks; two, 1.5 per cent, became cashiers; and two joined the personnel field. The remaining 12 were in diversified occupations.

4. Previous positions held by graduates included the fields of stenography, teaching, retailing, personnel, bookkeeping, librarying, editing, administration, cashiering, research, public utilities, production, copywriting, trade analyzing, and exporting.

5. The types of institutions in which graduates found employment varied. Nine entered manufacturing concerns. Advertising claimed seven graduates and law offices, four. Publishing and retailing companies employed four. Three graduates became teachers. Other occupations listed were diversified.

6. The means by which first positions were obtained fell within seven categories. Forty-six of the graduates obtained their first positions by personal application; 29, through the Skidmore Vocational Bureau; 17, through relatives and friends; and 14, through employment agencies. Three graduates had been recommended for positions by present or former employees. Two graduates were previously employed by the firms they joined, and two more obtained their positions through advertisements.

7. In obtaining their first positions, graduates found typewriting and shorthand most valuable. Of all knowledges and/or skills nine students of accounting found their training most valuable. Education, filing, office machines, dictations, advertising, business English, and selling were also stated as important.

8. Current salaries ranged from \$40.00 to \$120.00 per week. The \$60.00 - \$70.00 bracket encompassed 12 graduates while the \$50.00 - \$60.00 and \$80.00 - \$90.00 brackets included 10 graduates each.

9. The five most valuable business courses listed by graduates were typewriting, shorthand, accounting, business English, and advertising. Others mentioned included business machines, economics, marketing, personnel, filing, selling, buying, and management. One former student declared that all business courses were valuable.

10. The most important non-business courses were quite varied.

The leading four were English, psychology, economics, and history.

11. Some of the Skidmore graduates had, in their college careers, omitted knowledges and/or skills which they felt should have been included in their programs. Those most often mentioned were office machines, shorthand, accounting, taxation, personality, on-the-job training, and law. It is interesting to note here that those courses mentioned above are almost identical to those found most valuable by graduates who had included them in their programs.

12. The office machines used in employment are few. The adding-calculator machine was most often used; the switchboard was used by five graduates and the voicescription, by four. Only one graduate used the comptometer and one, the teletype.

13. The manual typewriter still leads in frequency of use in the typewriting field. Of the 51 employed and using typewriters, 40 used the manual; six used the electric; and five used both.

14. Of those graduates employed and using typewriters, the most common activities performed include the writing of letters, carbons, drafts, reports, and masters. Forty-seven of those engaged in typewriting activities mentioned the first; 34, the second; 33, the third; and 27, the fourth and fifth.

15. Of those graduates performing dictation and/or transcription activities, it was discovered that very few give dictation, but many take shorthand. Here, too, letters and reports head the list, with cases, minutes, documents, forms, and routine work also included.

16. In correspondence activities, letters and reports again lead, with supervising correspondence, forms, minutes, and copies entering into

the routine.

17. In bookkeeping, 77 graduates indicated they performed petty cash duties; 26, filing; 14, bookkeeping (actual keeping of records); six, payroll; three, advertisements; two, reports; and one, tax forms.

18. Not many graduates performed any receptionist's activities, but of those who did, 25 indicated they met clients, 21 made appointments, and two conducted interviews.

19. Only one former student was officially employed in the retailing field, but some graduates performed retailing activities of a sort. Of those who answered this inquiry, only one actually bought while seven sold. Three graduates indicated that they met customers and three actually closed sales. Two supervised others, planned purchases, and took inventory.

20. When asked to state the most time-consuming activities involved in their positions, nine graduates mentioned bookkeeping. This is understandable when one realizes the actual time such an activity requires. Next in frequency of performance was typewriting, mentioned, along with correspondence, by eight graduates. Fourth in frequency of performance was dictation, while all routine and telephoning ranked fifth.

From the foregoing information, it becomes evident that practically all respondents entered the fields of occupation for which they had prepared and were apparently well trained. At the time of the survey, 57 of the 118 respondents were presently employed. On the basis of these findings and conclusions, recommendations have been drawn and put forth in Chapter VII.

CHAPTER VII  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR IMPROVING THE CURRICULUM

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of the data, the following recommendations are made:

1. A required course in speech that might include personality development and expression of thought should be considered in the program for every business student. Although a speech test is required of every entering freshman, no speech course is required or even suggested unless there appears to be an impediment in speech. Perhaps a specific course for business students might be set up to fit their needs.

2. Typewriting and shorthand would seem desirable for all business students. So often these skills will open the doors for a graduate meeting higher qualifications, but unable to secure the desired position because of the lack of these skills.

3. The responses of 57 presently employed graduates from the past 15 years indicate a need for a personal business course with emphasis on those activities which housewives and mothers perform. Some of the unemployed respondents indicated a need for such fields as personal banking, home economics, expression of thought, budgeting, diplomacy, speech, remedial reading, and psychology.

4. Consideration should be given to the possibility of correlating or supplementing classroom work with supervised work experience or on-the-job training.

5. If systematic follow-up studies were made, the department could keep in close contact with graduates in order to ascertain the demands and competition facing women in the business world.

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**APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX A

163 Bay State Road  
Boston, Massachusetts  
January 13, 1956

Dear Alumna:

In an attempt to determine the effectiveness and value of your training in the Business Department of Skidmore College, I am making a follow-up study of all Department graduates from 1940 to 1955.

The success of this study depends upon your cooperation in completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it to me as soon as possible. The information obtained through this survey will be held strictly confidential, and will be used only for group reports without reference to individuals.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be of vital importance in improving the program for future students of Skidmore College.

Your assistance will be very much appreciated. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

H. Jean MacDuffie, '53

Enclosures (2)

A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE 1940-1955 BUSINESS DEPARTMENT GRADUATES  
OF SKIDMORE COLLEGE, SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK

1. Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_  
 Husband's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Major: (Please Check) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Secretarial \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Retailing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Advanced Degree(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Business Administration \_\_\_\_\_  
 Institution \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Subject(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Present Position \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Institution \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other Study \_\_\_\_\_ Salary \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (confidential) \_\_\_\_\_
2. What previous positions have you held since graduation?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. What business knowledges and/or skills learned at Skidmore helped you in obtaining your first position after graduation?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
4. How was your first position obtained?(Please Check)
- |                                      |                             |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (a) _____ Skidmore Vocational Bureau | (e) _____ Advertisement     |
| (b) _____ Relatives or friends       | (f) _____ Employment Agency |
| (c) _____ Personal Application       | (g) _____ Civil Service     |
| (d) _____ Employee recommendation    | (h) _____ Other             |
5. What three business courses studied at Skidmore have been most valuable to you?  
 (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
6. What three non-business courses studied at Skidmore have been most valuable to you?  
 (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
7. What business knowledges, skills, and /or degree of skill not acquired at Skidmore might have been defensibly included in your college program?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
8. Please include any comments that may occur to you on the reverse side. If you are now employed, please turn to the following page.

Please check at left in the following list the types of work you now perform.

1. Dictating and/or Transcribing:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>a. <input type="checkbox"/> Giving Dictation</p> <p>    (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Letters</p> <p>    (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Reports</p> <p>    (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Case Studies</p> <p>    (4) <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other</p> | <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> Taking Shorthand and Transcribing</p> <p>    (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Letters</p> <p>    (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Reports</p> <p>    (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Case Studies</p> <p>    (4) <input type="checkbox"/> Minutes of Meetings</p> <p>    (5) <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Documents</p> <p>    (6) <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other</p> |
|--|---|

2. Typewriting:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>a. <input type="checkbox"/> Using Manual Machine</p> <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> Using Electric Machine</p> <p>c. <input type="checkbox"/> Letters</p> <p>d. <input type="checkbox"/> Rough Drafts</p> | <p>e. <input type="checkbox"/> Statistical Reports</p> <p>f. <input type="checkbox"/> Multicarbon</p> <p>g. <input type="checkbox"/> Masters for Duplicating</p> <p>h. <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other</p> |
|--|---|

3. Operating Machines, other than Typewriter:

- a.  Adding-Calculating  
If checked, what is the brand name? \_\_\_\_\_
- b.  Voicerecording  
If checked, what is the brand name? \_\_\_\_\_
- c.  Switchboard
- d.  Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Retail Selling and/or Buying:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>a. <input type="checkbox"/> Selling</p> <p>    (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Customers</p> <p>    (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Closing Sales</p> <p>    (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Supervising Others</p> <p>    (4) <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other</p> | <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> Buying</p> <p>    (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Figuring Inventory</p> <p>    (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Planning Purchases</p> <p>    (3) <input type="checkbox"/> Supervising Others</p> <p>    (4) <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Other</p> |
|---|--|

5. Recordkeeping:

- a.  Actual Recordkeeping
- b.  Petty Cash
- c.  Payroll
- d.  Filing
- e.  \_\_\_\_\_ Other

6. Composing Correspondence and Reports:

- a.  Correspondence
- b.  Reports
- c.  Supervising Others
- d.  \_\_\_\_\_ Other

7. Acting as Receptionist:

- a.  Meeting Clients Other Than Customers of a Retail Store
- b.  Making appointments
- c.  \_\_\_\_\_ Other

8. What aspect of your work consumes most of your time?

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

163 Bay State Road  
Boston, Massachusetts  
February 3, 1956

Dear Alumna:

To date, I have received a gratifying return on the Follow-up Study of the Business Department Graduates of Skidmore College, 1940-1955. However, this does not give me adequate data to compile the survey.

As yet, I have not received a completed questionnaire from you. Your cooperation in completing and returning this form as soon as possible will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

H. Jean MacDuffie, '53