

Problems of  
College and University  
Administration



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# Problems of College and University Administration

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## Preface

The two authors of this book have enjoyed a friendship of thirty-five years, enriched by occasional visits and conversations at meetings of educational associations. They were college teachers with more than twenty-five years of experience and they have served a period of fifty-six years as presidents of four institutions of higher education.

After retirement from active service, they agreed at the close of one pleasant visit to join in writing a book based on their experience and observations of the various problems which arise in college administration. It is their hope that such a book might be of use to deans, heads, and other administrative officers, as well as presidents, in meeting some of *their* problems. The two colleagues present in this book more than a hundred aspects of college administration as they have met them while in office or as they have reached conclusions about those problems in recent years.

In planning the book it was agreed that each author would write on any topic suggested which interested him, whether he agreed or disagreed with his colleague. Each topic has been initialed to identify the writer.

The comments are not always closely related. The theme

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of the book, based on experience and observation, is not a continuous narrative. It is really a reference book and different aspects may be covered in several sections. It attempts to deal with many of the problems met by college presidents and other administrators.

We are indebted to Mrs. John G. Park, of Lexington, Kentucky, for reading the manuscript and for making helpful suggestions.

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December, 1951

# Introduction

This land of ours, covering three million square miles, includes a population of 150 million people. Located among them are 1,850 colleges and universities attended by 2,600,000 students and staffed by more than 240,000 teachers. The amount spent on higher education exceeds one billion dollars annually, which brings college education into the brackets of a great and important national enterprise.

The first college in the United States was Harvard, founded in Cambridge, Massachusetts Bay Colony, in 1638. Other colleges followed slowly, and by the opening of the American Revolution there were a half-dozen institutions of college level. The growth of colleges in numbers, in endowment and income, plants, faculties, and students since then, particularly in recent years, has been amazing.

Each year three or four hundred new presidents and many more deans and directors are appointed in the 1,850 institutions. This turnover may be laid to retirement, resignations, and death, and in some cases to removal through trustee action. New presidents are coming into the educational field, most of them well trained in education or highly experienced in a profession or business. Most of them, however, are wholly new to the job

of president of a college and inexperienced in conducting a considerable educational organization.

The presidency of a college or university is a many-sided job. No man is equally capable of handling all of its many duties. Some features of the task are entirely new to any man. That is one place where this book may help. Of course it does not cover every question a president or dean will meet. But where it does it will either suggest a solution or give a turn to the inquirer's thinking that may prove valuable.

With many men appointed as presidents, deans, and directors each year, the average term of presidents is too short, about six years. It should be longer, perhaps eight or ten years, for the best interest of our institutions. Perhaps such a book as this may make it possible for more administrators to avoid difficulties which could develop into serious problems. It might, in fact, make some administrations run more smoothly and give them a longer life.

Certainly the colleges need no dictators as president and fewer men who build their ego on authority. There is a need for more leaders who, through democratic procedures, withdraw from controversial positions. Some of the policies developed in this book might well lead to improvements in the administration of higher education.

The opinions arrived at may be contrary to those of the reader, but even so he will find something with which he may test his own opinions.



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