

## **Provost Joseph Watson announces campaign to inform minorities students of admission criteria**

**September 14, 1971**

Dr. Joseph Watson, Provost of the University of California, San Diego's minority-oriented Third College, announced today the beginning of a month-long campaign aimed at informing minority youngsters of the admissions criteria of the University of California.

The campaign will address itself to the minority communities in San Diego, Imperial and Los Angeles counties, calling on the assistance of the media, as well as Increasing contact with high school counselors and community service agencies.

The University of California System regularly admits the "cream of the crop" of California's senior class and, because they often do not meet certain basic requirements, not many minority students find themselves eligible. The major reason is that In order to qualify for regular admission to the University, students must have earned at least a B average in each of several specified subject areas: all must have taken at least one year of history and laboratory science, two years of mathematics and foreign language, and three years of college preparatory English. After that, they can choose to do an additional year's work in either math, science or language. Of the high school students in the state who meet these requirements (usually around 12 1/2 percent of all California high school students), only the smallest percentage comes from the Black, Brown, and other minority communities.

It seems that, while increasing numbers of minority youngsters have decided to pursue a university education, most continue to enroll in programs better suited for business or vocational careers. This tendency has been borne out by the recently reported test scores for San Diego City Schools. For the greater part, San Diego students perform as well or better than students across the state and nation. When the scores from schools with more than 20 percent minority enrollment are examined, however, performance is generally well below the median scores in science and social studies. There is every indication that these low scores are due primarily to a lack of exposure to these college-oriented courses because, as Provost Watson states, "You don't get that kind of performance when students have been exposed to the material.

"It's not a question of ability," Watson continued, "because once they are given the chance to do college work, minority students have proven that they can succeed. Minority students admitted to the University of California have established an enviable record, with over 90 percent of those enrolled in special programs remaining until graduation...this is particularly significant if you compare it to the 60 percent completion rate for the rest of the undergraduate college population. What we're concerned about at Third College is doing what we can to insure that even greater numbers are given that chance," Watson said.

UCSD is currently able to admit a small number of minority students who don't qualify under the normal requirements by applying for the University of California's special admissions waiver which is reserved for four percent of the freshman class.

"If the University is ever to achieve its goal of offering quality education to significant numbers of minority youth, more realistic changes will have to be made in the admissions procedure," Watson said. At the same time,

Provost Watson feels that "every step must be taken to increase the pool of minority youth admissible under the regular criteria, and the first step has to be one of informing students of what those criteria are."

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