

REFLECTIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICES OF
LAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY AS SHOWN
THROUGH ITS HISTORY

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by
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PREFACE

After returning from military service in May, 1946, the writer was employed by Lamar College. Since that time, he has watched the school prosper both as a junior college and as a four-year technological institution. Consequently, he considers it a privilege to record something about the development and progress of the institution that has been so much a part of his life since 1946.

In the spring of 1949, an agendum, somewhat similar to the outline for this problem, was submitted to Dr. A. L. Kerbow, as a requirement for a course that he was teaching at the University of Houston. Dr. Kerbow seemed to believe that the topic could be developed into a doctoral study. With this encouragement, the writer began collecting and assembling data that were later used in this dissertation.

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to the many individuals who have assisted in providing the information that was used in this study. President F. L. McDonald, Dean O. B. Archer, and Registrar Celeste Kitchen at Lamar State College of Technology were helpful in making available college records and files. He acknowledges the assistance that was given to him by Professors H. R. Bottrell,

A. L. Kerbow, Milo E. Kearney, S. B. Red, and L. W. Hartsfield, who served on the Committee. He is sincerely grateful to Professor June Hyer, Chairman of the Committee, for her understanding attitude and for her helpful suggestions. He is particularly indebted to his wife, Mrs. Nell McLaughlin, whose valuable aid made it possible to complete the study in a much shorter time than would have been otherwise possible.

ABSTRACT

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study was an analysis of the development and expansion of Lamar State College of Technology. It revealed how a specific college has reacted to community and area needs; it related some of the factors that brought about the expansion of the institution; and it showed some of the changes in educational philosophy that were occasioned by the interacting needs of the college community.

SOURCES OF DATA

The most important sources of data used for this problem were: official college records, including reports from the offices of the president, the dean, and the registrar; personal interviews with persons who have been closely associated with the evolution of the college; news items and editorials in local newspapers; and theses and dissertations written on similar subjects.

PROCEDURE

The social, economic, and geographical conditions of southeast Texas were outlined to indicate the background for the establishment of a junior college in Beaumont. The

junior college movement in the United States, with particular reference to Texas, was reviewed to reveal how it possibly influenced the creation of a junior college in the South Park Independent School District in 1923.

Literature pertaining to the history of South Park Junior College, Lamar College, and Lamar State College of Technology was examined; acts of the Texas Legislature that affected either the junior college or Lamar State College of Technology were inspected; and interviews were arranged with persons who have been closely associated with the schools. Finally, the historical information was organized and presented in chronological order.

SUMMARY

The need for higher education facilities in southeast Texas, the effect of the junior college movement, and the influence of L. R. Pietzsch were some of the factors that led to the creation of South Park Junior College in 1923. The college was organized and controlled by the South Park Independent School District and was considered a community school. Enrollment increased from 125 in 1923 to 303 in 1931, with the most of the increase coming during the first three years.

In 1932, the name of the school was changed to Lamar College. It remained a part of the public school district,

with no material changes being made in the administration or faculty. Then in 1940, Lamar Union Junior College District was created, and Lamar College was separated from the South Park Schools. With new facilities and an enlarged curriculum, the college prospered.

A movement to expand Lamar College into a four-year state-supported school culminated in the creation of Lamar State College of Technology in 1951. Since that time, the curriculum has been liberalized and expanded to include many areas of study, some of which are not of a technological nature.

Some guideposts that appear to indicate the course of future development for the college are: (1) present plans for the expansion of physical facilities, (2) a changing emphasis on curricular offerings, (3) an estimate of future enrollment, (4) efforts that have been made to obtain approval by accrediting agencies, and (5) state-level plans for co-ordinating higher education in Texas.

The philosophy of Lamar State College of Technology has changed with the several periods of its internal organization. There has been a marked and rapid shift in educational philosophy from that of a public school, college preparatory view serving a restricted and local area to that of a state college offering training on a four-year advanced level in a variety of fields.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

This study was an analysis of the development and expansion of Lamar State College of Technology from the time South Park Junior College was created in 1923 until 1955. It showed how a specific college has reacted to community and area needs. The study determined some of the significant factors that brought about the expansion of the institution and made clear some of the major changes in educational philosophy occasioned by the interacting needs of the college community.

Limitations of the Study

It was not particularly difficult to record the history of Lamar State College of Technology. Information necessary for that part of the study was available from both primary¹ and secondary² sources. Much more difficult,

¹ primary sources: sources such as documents or oral testimony presenting firsthand evidence of a fact or event.

² secondary sources: sources more than one step removed from the original fact or event; for example, a newspaper editorial by a special writer who has obtained his information from the eyewitness account of a newspaper reporter.

however, was the problem of attempting to show how interacting needs of the community made necessary many changes in the educational pattern of the college. In some instances it was not possible to determine whether these changes in philosophy or curricular offerings were necessitated by community needs and demands or were a result of other forces.

Possible Use of the Study

This study has provided authentic information for those interested in the history of Lamar State College of Technology. The study revealed that the educational philosophy which has evolved is at least partly a result of specific factors and interrelated forces within the community, and it should be of value to those who are attempting to interpret and make provision for community and area needs in similar institutions of higher learning.

Sources of Data

Some of the most important sources of data used for this problem were: theses and dissertations written on similar or comparable subjects; books and magazine articles revealing information pertinent to the history and development of the college; official college records, including reports from the office of the dean, reports from the office

of the registrar, minutes of the board of education, and bulletins published by the college; personal interviews with persons who have been closely associated with the evolution of the college; and news items in local daily newspapers.

All of the above sources of data are not of equal importance. Some of them are of little value except for securing a background for the real problem.

Objectives of the Study

This study was made to record the history of the development of Lamar State College of Technology and to determine what specific factors made necessary the evolution of South Park Junior College into its present senior college status. To draw conclusions concerning how a particular college has reacted to community needs, it was necessary to make an analysis of changes in the program of the institution and to attempt to ascertain the reasons for the changes.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

The terms used in a restricted or specific manner in this study are: junior college, public junior college,

junior college district, union district junior college, junior college movement, private junior college, and curriculum.

Many definitions have been given for a junior college, and it is readily acknowledged that the term cannot be defined in a few lines or paragraphs. It may be that the best definition is found in terms of standards established for junior colleges by various accrediting agencies and states' laws.³ However, the definition that most nearly applies in this study is one of three given in the Dictionary of Education by Carter V. Good.

junior college: an educational institution requiring for admission as a regular student four years of standard high-school education or its equivalent; offers two years of work in standard college courses or their equivalent; two years of work in courses terminal in character and of collegiate grade and quality, or both such standard and terminal courses; does not confer the baccalaureate degree.⁴

A public junior college is one of which control is vested in a board of control such as a board of regents, board of trustees or board of education elected by the voting public or appointed by a public official.⁵

³ Thomas Luther Cox, "A Brief History of the Junior College Movement in Texas," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1948), p. 4.

⁴ Carter V. Good, editor, Dictionary of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945), p. 230.

⁵ Ibid., p. 231.

A junior college district is a publicly controlled junior college organized in a separate district. The district may coincide with a city or public school district; it may consist of two or more city or public school districts; or it may consist of an entire county or two or more adjacent counties.⁶

A union district junior college is comprised of two or more contiguous independent school districts or two or more contiguous common school districts, or a combination composed of one or more independent school districts or common school districts in the same county. Qualified voters in such a territory may elect to establish and maintain a union district junior college which is controlled by a separate board elected from the district at large by a vote of the people.⁷

The junior college movement is a term embracing the growth, development, and status of the junior college in all its branches, especially during the twentieth century.⁸

⁶ Ibid., p. 230.

⁷ T. L. Trimble, Supplement to the The State of Texas Public School Laws, No. 485 (Publication of State Department of Education, Austin, 1947), pp. 38-49, cited by Thomas Luther Cox, op. cit., p. 5.

⁸ Good, loc. cit.

A private junior college is a college of which the control is vested in a board of control, a single person, or a number of persons not selected by public vote or appointed by public officials.⁹

Curriculum is a term used in this study when referring to either a systematic group of courses or sequence of subjects required for graduation or a general over-all plan of the content or specific materials of instruction that the school should offer the student by way of qualifying him for graduation or certification or for entrance into a profession or a vocational field.¹⁰

III. PROCEDURES AND TECHNIQUES

Before attempting to record the history of Lamar State College of Technology and before making an analysis of changes in the philosophy of the institution resulting from community and area needs, it was necessary to determine the general background for the present educational arrangement and then make a detailed study of conditions as they actually existed at various stages in the growth of the institution.

⁹ Loc. cit.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 113.

A study of the social, economic, and geographic conditions of southeast Texas, with emphasis on Beaumont and Jefferson County, was made to secure the necessary familiarity with those aspects of the problem. Available literature concerning the rise of the junior college in the United States, with particular regard for the junior college movement in Texas was surveyed; literature pertaining to the history of South Park Junior College, Lamar Junior College, and Lamar State College of Technology was examined; acts of the Texas Legislature creating the various State Colleges were inspected; interviews were arranged with certain persons whose influence affected the college or who had first hand knowledge about economic, political, social, or educational factors relating to the philosophy of the college. Finally, the historical information was organized in chronological order with regard to the actual growth and expansion of the institution.

IV. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

For background information, it was necessary to review available literature pertaining to the history and development of the city of Beaumont and the South Park School District. Three books worthy of notation were

examined. Stratton¹¹ reviews the history of Beaumont from 1848 until about 1924. Her account presents factual material concerning the early days of the city, but the book is particularly interesting because it is written in "readable, whimsical language and bristles with human interest."¹² A second publication of importance is Beaumont,¹³ which was compiled by the Federal Writers Project of the Work Projects Administration. It is one of a series of books on Texas towns and cities, and information contained in it is based upon old records in the Jefferson County Courthouse, upon old letters, documents, copies of pioneer newspapers, and interviews with some of the founders of the city.¹⁴ It is more than a history, in that a part of it portrays the contemporary scene as it existed at the time the book was written. The third book, Spindletop,¹⁵ tells the story of the Lucas Gusher and the great Spindletop oil field boom which followed.

¹¹ Florence Stratton, The Story of Beaumont (a private publication that may be found in the Tyrrell Public Library, Beaumont, Texas).

¹² M. E. Moore, cited in Preface of book by Florence Stratton, op. cit., p. vi.

¹³ Beaumont (Houston: The Anson Jones Press, 1939).

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁵ James A. Clark and Michel T. Halbouty, Spindletop (New York: Random House, 1952).

None of the publications previously listed dealt particularly with the South Park School District; however, historical facts pertaining to the schools were located in several places. A very brief unpublished history of the district by Ray Asbury¹⁶ describes the growth and development of the school district from 1891 until 1953. School Board Minutes of the South Park School District covering the period of time from 1913 until the present are available; they were particularly useful in substantiating data obtained from secondary sources.

A large number of publications are available concerning the junior college movement in the United States, and considerable work has been done in tracing the movement in Texas. An inclusive review of the entire junior college field prior to 1931 is given by Eells.¹⁷ He presents a general overview of the extent of the movement. Likewise, Koos,¹⁸ in 1924, made a thorough investigation of the junior college and evaluated it as a new educational unit. Both of the studies listed above have been reviewed so many

¹⁶ Ray Asbury, "History of the South Park Independent School District," (unpublished manuscript, 1954).

¹⁷ Walter Crosby Eells, The Junior College (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931).

¹⁸ Leonard Vincent Koos, The Junior College (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota, 1924), Vols. I and II.

times that they have become "classic" references in the field. Practically the same thing could be said about The Junior College, Its Organization and Administration by Proctor.¹⁹ It is written from a practical standpoint by men actively working in the field, and the book is of particular value to those who are seeking information about educational trends of the 1920's.

The Junior College Journal,²⁰ the official publication of the American Association of Junior Colleges, publishes a directory of junior colleges each year in the January issue. Information about all junior colleges in the United States is included in the directory. Also, from month to month many fine articles relating to the junior college have been published in this periodical.

The first,²¹ second,²² and third²³ editions of the American Junior Colleges are authoritative directories of

¹⁹ William M. Proctor, editor, The Junior College, Its Organization and Administration (Stanford University, California: Stanford University Press, 1927).

²⁰ Junior College Journal, American Council on Education, Washington, D. C., 1930-54.

²¹ Walter Crosby Eells, editor, American Junior Colleges (first edition; Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1940).

²² Jesse P. Bogue, editor, American Junior Colleges (second edition; Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1948).

²³ Jesse P. Bogue, editor, American Junior Colleges (third edition; Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1952).

junior colleges in the United States. A brief history of the junior college movement is given in each of the editions. Since the books contain general information pertaining to fees, entrance requirements, curricular offerings, student aid, and housing, advisers and counselors often use them as basic references.

A number of master's theses have been written in the field. Two of them are sufficiently pertinent to be mentioned here. Comer,²⁴ in a study made in 1927, records the evolution of the different types of junior colleges and concludes with a review of the Hillsboro Junior College, Hillsboro, Texas. Cox,²⁵ in a thesis written in 1948, gives a brief history of the movement in Texas, with special reference to the period from 1930 to 1948. This study includes a short history of each of the junior colleges in Texas.

In addition to these master's theses, at least one doctoral dissertation should be mentioned. Von Roeder,²⁶

²⁴ J. R. Comer, "Origin and Development of the Junior College with Special Reference to Texas," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Texas, Austin, 1927).

²⁵ Cox, op. cit.

²⁶ Herbert Spencer Von Roeder, "A Study of the Public Junior Colleges of Texas with Special Reference to the Curriculum," (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin, 1940).

in "A Study of the Public Junior Colleges of Texas with Special Reference to the Curriculum," presents a survey of public junior colleges in Texas. The dissertation is comprehensive and scholarly, and it includes much data relating to the early development of junior colleges in Texas. The study was done under the direction of, and was dedicated to, Dr. Frederick Eby. On the dedication page of the study, Von Roeder aptly stated that Dr. Eby "has been the guiding spirit of the junior college movement in Texas."²⁷

A study that should be given special mention here is a master's thesis that was written by Earl Eugene Hutchinson²⁸ in 1938. Hutchinson's work is an account of the history and development of South Park Junior College and Lamar College from 1923 until 1938. This study was found to be historically accurate; however, it was very brief and was not dedicated to the purpose of this work.

²⁷ Ibid., dedication page.

²⁸ Earl E. Hutchison, "History of Lamar Junior College," (unpublished Master's thesis, Texas College of Arts and Industries, Kingsville, 1938).

CHAPTER II

THE JUNIOR COLLEGE PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT

To provide a background for a study of the philosophy of education at Lamar State College of Technology, it is important that certain historical and factual information be presented. That will be done in this chapter by giving a brief resume of events that took place or conditions that existed in the Beaumont area before the junior college was organized at South Park. Then, the general junior college movement in the United States, with special reference to Texas, will be briefly reviewed. Finally, the history of the South Park Junior College and Lamar Junior College will be outlined.

I. GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Geographical Background

Lamar State College of Technology is located in the City of Beaumont, Jefferson County, Texas. Jefferson County, created in 1836 from one of the original counties of Texas, was organized in 1837 and named for Thomas Jefferson.¹ The county is located on the coastal prairies

¹ Texas Almanac (Dallas: A. H. Belo Corporation, 1954-1955), p. 570.

of southeast Texas. It ranges in altitude from sea level to one hundred feet, has an annual average rainfall of 63.66 inches, and has a mean temperature of 69 degrees.² Jefferson County is bounded on the north by Hardin County, on the east by Orange County, and on the south by the Gulf of Mexico. Having the Neches River as the eastern boundary and the Gulf of Mexico as the southern boundary, it is suitably located for port facilities. The Neches River is navigable for ocean-going vessels as far north as Beaumont, which is the second largest port in Texas.³

Historical Background

Little more than a generation ago Beaumont was a small sawmill town of southeast Texas. Almost overnight the town became a city after the Lucas Cusher was brought in on January 10, 1901.⁴

Spindletop is a little knob of land out of a swampy prairie in the southeast corner of Texas, a few miles north of the Gulf of Mexico. There, on January 10, 1901, a new age of human progress was born when the

² Loc. cit.

³ Ibid., p. 267.

⁴ Beaumont (Houston: The Anson Jones Press, 1932), p. 97.

first great oil gusher roared in. There and then America was blessed with the supply of energy and the incentive to move up from a secondary position in world affairs to that of undisputed leadership.⁵

Florence Stratton gives a different interpretation of those hectic days:

In the twinkling of an eye, Beaumont, the slow-moving, sawmill town of 9,000 people was converted into a seething, fighting, shouting mob of 15,000 money-mad adventurers. . . . All the common-place sources of mere livelihood and legitimate profit were forgotten, while every mind centered its thoughts by day and dreams by night upon the dark column spouting through the derrick and roaring its message of treasure ready to flow into the hands of men. The merchant left his desk, the clerk his counter, the lawyer his books, and the laborer laid down his tools. Every man saw the opportunity to make a million. . . .⁶

On July 3, 1902, the Beaumont Oil Commission and Board of Trade announced:

. . . "Beaumont is a city of 25,000 people . . . has four immense lumber yards capable of 10,000 carloads per annum, the largest creosoting plant in America, three of the largest rice mills in the United States, two large iron foundries, several planing mills, sash, door and blind factories; shingle mills; arm and pin factories for telephone and telegraphic service; two extensive brick yards . . . and a new flour mill."⁷

⁵ James A. Clark and Michel T. Halbouty, Spindletop (New York: Random House, 1952), p. 13.

⁶ Florence Stratton, The Story of Beaumont (a private publication that may be found in the Tyrrell Public Library, Beaumont, Texas), p. 122.

⁷ Ibid., p. 112.

South of Beaumont in 1902, three new refineries were being erected, and the Treadway Canal and Rice Company was constructing a waterway twenty-eight miles in length to irrigate many of the 44,000 acres of rice planted in Jefferson County. The prosperity of the hour was proclaimed in an editorial of the Beaumont Enterprise on July 4, 1902: "We are independent of everybody and everything."⁸

Encouraged by the necessity for greater transportation facilities and awakened by the thriving commerce of the Port Arthur ship channel, leaders in the city became intensely interested in obtaining a deep water port for the city. In 1904, Beaumont business leaders, assisted by Congressman Samuel E. Cooper, renewed efforts to obtain a deep water canal to link the Beaumont portion of the Neches with the Port Arthur ship channel.⁹ The first Sabine-Neches Canal was completed on January 21, 1908; it was fifteen miles long and 100 feet wide.¹⁰ On that day the following statement was made in an editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise:

⁸ Editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise, July 4, 1902.

⁹ Beaumont, op. cit., p. 114.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 115.

Today the city and county celebrate the completion of work long anticipated, a dream of the earliest settlers in this section--the opening of the Sabine-Neches Canal. This great work opens to Beaumont opportunities . . . which are only limited by the willingness and ability of her people to grasp them.¹¹

With the growth of industry and business the population of Beaumont soared. With the increased population came a need for more and better schools.

Early History of the South Park School

Even before the discovery of oil at Spindletop, a small one-teacher school was organized in the area of South Park. The building was erected in 1893, on the Port Arthur Road on property donated by George Rexes. The first teacher was J. W. Kinnear. Mr. Kinnear stated that at one time he attempted to teach eighty-five children in eight grades. This little school was used until the discovery of oil in 1901, when a new school was built on Highland Avenue. In this new school ten teachers were employed to teach the children of the oil field workers of Spindletop. This building soon burned and a four room building was erected at Spindletop to take its place.¹²

¹¹ Editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise, January 21, 1908.

¹² "J. W. Kinnear Reviews Early Days of the South Park School System," The Gusher (South Park student newspaper), May 9, 1935.

In 1907, the first bond issue of \$23,000 was voted for a school for the children of workers of Spindletop oil fields.¹³ After the voting of the bond issue, the first building was erected in 1908. The building was soon inadequate, and a new eight-room building was constructed. At this time the South Park Schools were known as Common School District No. 6. This was changed in 1913 by an Act of the Texas Legislature creating the South Park Independent School District. This act of legislation fixed the boundaries of the district as they had previously existed.¹⁴

As an independent school district the South Park Schools continued to grow. In 1916, it was necessary to add two wings to the overcrowded building. This building was used from 1916 until 1923, and during this period of time there was such a gradual increase in enrollment that it became necessary to provide additional buildings.¹⁵ To obtain the funds for the needed buildings, bonds were issued.

¹³ Stratton, op. cit., p. 81.

¹⁴ Earl E. Hutchison, "History of Lamar Junior College," (unpublished Master's thesis, Texas College of Arts and Industries, Kingsville, 1938), p. 3.

¹⁵ Loc. cit.

Records indicate that on September 15, 1921, the school board at South Park was apprised of the crowded condition in some of the schools in the district. It was "moved and carried that the board meet within three weeks to discuss the advisability of a bond issue for the erection of a high school building."¹⁶ Not within the stipulated three weeks, but on October 27, 1921, the school board met and considered a petition in writing signed by R. L. Stuart and eighty-seven other persons asking that an election be ordered for the purpose of "purchasing, constructing, repairing, and equipping public free school buildings of brick materials, within the limits of the district."¹⁷ The school board decided to order a bond election for December 3, 1921. Contained in the Minutes of the School Board for October 27, 1921, are details concerning the election:

It is therefore, ordered by the Board of Trustees of South Park Independent School District that an election be held at the South Park School Building within this District on the 3rd day of December 1921, to determine whether the bonds of said South Park Independent School District shall be issued to the

¹⁶ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, September 15, 1921.

¹⁷ Ibid., October 27, 1921.

amount of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) to become due and payable serially, as follows: \$7,000 on the 10th day of April in each of the years 1923 to 1926, inclusive, and bearing interest not to exceed six percent (6%) per annum, payable semi-annually, for the purpose of purchasing, constructing, repairing, and equipping public free school buildings of brick material, within the limits of said School District, and the purchase of the necessary sites therefor, and whether there shall be annually levied, assessed and collected on all the taxable property in said District for the current year and annually thereafter while said bonds or any of them, are outstanding, a tax sufficient to pay the current interest on said bonds, and provide a sinking fund sufficient to pay the principal at maturity.¹⁸

There is little evidence showing that the people in South Park evinced particular interest in the bond election. Practically no newspaper publicity was given to it. One significant news item appeared in the Beaumont Enterprise on December 3, 1921, the day of the election. It stated in part:

The proposed \$300,000 bond issue is for the purpose of erecting a high school to relieve the congested condition at the grammar school where the pupils of the higher grades are now housed and to build a negro school. The main fight against the bonds has been that the amount is too great for what is to be done. Friends of the issue assert, however, that the full \$300,000 is necessary to build the structures needed and equip them.¹⁹

Little opposition was shown to the issue when the vote was counted. On December 4, 1921, a news item in the

¹⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, December 3, 1921.

Beaumont Enterprise stated that the voters of South Park favored the bond issue by 106 to ten.²⁰ Although it is not known exactly how many qualified voters there were in South Park at that time, it appears that the total number of votes cast was very low. School records do show that during the school year 1921-22, there were 1,332 white children and 308 negro children attending public school in the district; that gives some indication of the number of residents in the district.

The school board met on December 8, 1921, and declared the results of the election. Those results as they appear in the Minutes of the School Board are as follows:

On this the 6th day of December, 1921, came on to be considered the returns of an election held on the 3rd day of December shall be issued to the amount of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000), to become due and payable serially, as follows, \$7,000 on the 10th day of April in each of the years 1922 to 1926, inclusive, and \$8,000 on the 10th day of April in each of the years 1927 to 1950, inclusive, and bearing interest not to exceed six percent (6%) per annum, payable semiannually, for the purpose of purchasing, constructing, repairing, and equipping public free school buildings of brick material, within the limits of said School District, and the purchase of the necessary sites therefor, and whether there shall be annually levied, assessed and collected on all the taxable property in said District, for the current year and annually thereafter while said bonds, or any of them,

²⁰ Ibid., December 4, 1921.

are outstanding, a tax sufficient to pay the current interest on said bonds and provide a sinking fund sufficient to pay the principal at maturity.

And it appearing from said returns, duly and lawfully made, that there were cast at said election 116 votes, of which number 106 votes were cast "FOR THE ISSUANCE OF THE BONDS AND THE LEVYING OF THE TAX IN PAYMENT THEREOF", and 10 votes were cast "Against the issuance of the bonds and the levying of the tax in payment thereof."

It is therefore, found and declared, and so ordered by the Board of Trustees of the South Park Independent School District, that a majority of the taxpayers voting at said election voted in favor of the issuance of the said bonds and the levying of said tax, and that, therefore, this Board is authorized to issue said bonds and to levy, assess, and collect said tax.²¹

As a result of the passage of this bond issue, the taxpayers of South Park showed that they were ready to establish and maintain a school system of the first class for their children.²²

II. THE EFFECT OF THE JUNIOR COLLEGE MOVEMENT

Even before the bond election in the South Park Independent School District in 1921, business and educational leaders in Beaumont were considering the advisability of establishing some type of college or institution of

²¹ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, December 3, 1921.

²² Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 4.

higher learning in the community. The junior college movement in other parts of the nation undoubtedly had an effect on the final decision to form a junior college as a part of the South Park Schools. By briefly reviewing that movement in the United States, with particular reference to Texas, it may be possible to determine or estimate some of the reasons for the organization of a junior college in the South Park Independent School District in 1923.

The Junior College Movement in the United States

It is difficult to ascertain the exact reasons for the phenomenal development of junior colleges in the United States, and it is not easy to tell exactly when or where the idea first took form. As far as it is known, one of the first suggestions for such a change in American education was contained in the inaugural address of Henry P. Tappan as president of the University of Michigan in 1852. At that time he suggested the advisability of transferring to the high schools that part of the work of the university which he felt was distinctly secondary in character.²³ In 1869, W. W. Falwell, in his inaugural address as president of the University of Minnesota suggested the desirability

²³ Walter Crosby Eells, American Junior Colleges (Washington: American Council on Education, 1940), p. 10.

of transferring the "body of work for the first two years in our ordinary American Colleges" to the secondary schools.²⁴

Prior to the statement of W. W. Fallwell, the decision to abolish freshman and sophomore work was made and partially carried out at the University of Georgia. The decision was made by the trustees in 1859, and freshman work in the university was actually eliminated in 1862. This decision was made because the chairman of the prudential committee became convinced that the entering freshmen of "tender years" were too young for university responsibilities and "the foundation of failure, if not of ruin is laid in the freshman and sophomore years of college life."²⁵ In 1862, however, the institution was virtually closed down because of war conditions. After the war the university reopened, but the plan for eliminating the lower division was not included in the new organization.²⁶

When the University of Chicago was reorganized under the leadership of William Rainey Harper in 1892, the

²⁴ Loc. cit.

²⁵ Walter Crosby Eels, "Abolition of the Lower Division: Early History," Junior College Journal, 6:194, January, 1936.

²⁶ Loc. cit.

first real separation of upper and lower divisions within a college or university was made. President Harper, sometimes called the "father of the junior college," made the freshman and sophomore work a distinct division which he called the "academic college," while the upper two years were known as the "university college."²⁷ In 1896, the lower division was given the designation of "junior college," and completion of it was marked by the title "Associate in Arts." As far as it is known, this was the first use of either of the terms. A few years later President Harper used the phrase "junior college" to designate an institution entirely distinct from the university.²⁸

William R. Harper, in a decennial report covering the period closing July 1, 1902, discussed the experience of the University of Chicago with the junior college. He pointed out that the advantages of such an arrangement are fivefold:

- (1) Many students will find it convenient to give up college work at the end of the sophomore year;
- (2) many students who would not otherwise do so, will undertake at least two years of college work;
- (3) the professional schools will be able to raise their standards for admission, and in many cases, many who desire a professional education will take the first

²⁷ Eells, American Junior Colleges, op. cit., p. 11.

²⁸ Loc. cit.

two years of college work; (4) many academies and high schools will be encouraged to develop higher work; (5) many colleges which have not the means to do the work of the junior and senior years will be satisfied under this arrangement to do the lower work.²⁹

Koos, writing in 1925 about public junior colleges, said that the increase in the number of junior colleges maintained by city, high school, or junior college districts has been nothing short of notable.³⁰ The first of these public junior colleges was established in connection with the high school at Joliet, Illinois, in 1901.³¹ Another was established at about the same time in Goshen, Indiana, but it has since been discontinued.³² As far as it may be accurately ascertained, thirty-six similar institutions were in operation by 1921.³³

It was in California that the junior-college movement had its most significant development. The first junior college in that state was organized at Fresno in

²⁹ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁰ Leonard V. Koos, The Junior College Movement (Dallas: Ginn & Company, 1925), p. 4.

³¹ Frederick L. Whitney, The Junior College in America (Greeley: Colorado State Teacher's College, 1928), p. 2.

³² Koos, op. cit., p. 4.

³³ Loc. cit.

1910.³⁴ From the beginning it was spoken of as a "two-year postgraduate" or "junior college," and on July 15, 1910, an article appeared in the California Weekly, entitled "The Fresno Junior College," in which the superintendent of schools said:

The above title may appear rather high-sounding; yet when one contemplates the purpose of the act of the legislature of 1907 authorizing the establishment of postgraduate high school courses "which shall approximate the studies prescribed for the first two years of university courses," the title, "junior college" may not seem inappropriate.³⁵

After the Fresno example, the junior college idea grew rapidly in California. By 1917, there were at least sixteen junior colleges in existence in the state with an enrollment of more than 1,100 students, and in 1921, there were eighteen with an enrollment of approximately 1,500. That did not mean that only two new junior college departments were organized between 1917 and 1921, because during that time several of the older institutions suspended operations.³⁶

³⁴ Walter Crosby Eells, "Junior College," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, (Walter S. Monroe, editor; revised edition; New York: The MacMillan Company, 1952), p. 631.

³⁵ C. L. McLane, "The Fresno Junior College," California Weekly, July 15, 1910, cited by Walter Crosby Eells, American Junior Colleges, op. cit., p. 22.

³⁶ Eells, American Junior Colleges, op. cit., p. 23.

By 1921, the junior college was slowly but surely finding its way into American education; however, the period of its most rapid growth came a few years later. Generally, it developed in one of about four ways: high schools were raised to junior colleges; small four-year colleges have sometimes been cut down to junior colleges; independent junior colleges have been established outright; and the entire movement has been aided and accompanied by the segregation or elimination of lower division work in universities and senior colleges.³⁷

In discussing junior colleges Carl E. Seashore said:

The junior college movement is perhaps the most significant mass movement in higher education that this or any other country has ever witnessed in an equal period of time. . . .³⁸

In addition, he stated that many elements in the changing order before and after the first World War served as a background for the emergence of the junior college. Quoted in part are some of the factors that he listed as being significant:

³⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

³⁸ Carl E. Seashore, The Junior College Movement (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1940), Preface, p. iii.

Rise in the educational level. First of these I should say is the phenomenal increase in the demand and facilities for higher education in America. . . . The expansion has come largely from a constituency of a different order from that which filled the standard college a few years ago. It is the upper middle class which is demanding education for practical life rather than the scholarly erudition. . . .

The capstone of the secondary system. . . . The first two years of college are essentially the capstone of secondary education; they constitute a rounding off of types of general orientation which are essential as a groundwork for the scholarly pursuits which are entered upon at the beginning of the university in European institutions and of corresponding age at the beginning of the junior year in American colleges. . . .

Vocational or semi-professional demands. . . . We are now facing a new awakening to the effect that below the strictly professional, we have the semi-professional and skilled occupations which demand education adapted to that large mass of our American people who are not going to be the scholars but rather the workers in their respective fields in the countless avenues of industrial, governmental, social, artistic, and religious movements.

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The expression of democracy and a defense of democracy. Our American expansion in learning, both theoretical and practical, is an essential expression of our national theory of democracy. . . . Democracy cannot compete with the totalitarian states in the mechanization of science and technology for efficiency; but if our form of government is to survive, it will be due in part to the free and generous assumption of responsibilities in the co-operative life of our people--and this requires preparatory education. . . .

Adult Education. Things have moved so fast educationally in the present century that we are now thoroughly aroused over the possibility of making up for the "lost" privileges of education in our present generation of adults. Disregarding age and school days of the conventional sort, the intelligent American

people as a class are rushing in for privileges of adult education both public and private, both institutionally and in general ways of self-help. . . . The most logical unit for the sponsoring of this development as a community interest is now largely in the junior college.

• • • • • Social Intelligence. In the current junior college movement social intelligence is made a core-curriculum; that is, provision is made for the training of the future citizen, not so much for specific vocations as for intelligent and competent meeting of the responsibilities in national and community services and a real understanding of opportunities and obligations in the practical life of the community by participation in it.³⁹

In explaining or justifying the junior college as an integral part of the American educational system, Ray L. Shaw in the introduction to The Junior College by William M. Proctor said:

. . . It is a necessary corrective for the inadequacies of the long-established American system. It symbolizes the cessation of the fetish-worship of the numeral 4--four years in the high school and four years in the college--which has resulted in those artificial divisions of American education along certain social lines regardless of the requisite training of the mind.⁴⁰

The Junior College Movement in Texas

In Texas, private junior colleges led the way in so far as the junior college movement was concerned. In fact,

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 3-11.

⁴⁰ William M. Proctor, The Junior College (Stanford University: Stanford University press, 1927), Preface, p. v.

the first junior colleges in Texas were private denominational schools.⁴¹

During the latter part of the nineteenth century there were several colleges in Texas and other southern states, under the sponsorship of the Baptist Church, which were offering four-year courses. Many of these colleges were small and nearly all of them were having financial difficulties.⁴² In an attempt to solve some of the problems confronting these colleges, the American Baptist Education Society decided to organize all of their colleges into a "correlated system embodying the junior college principle,"⁴³ with Baylor University at Waco, Texas, at its head. This plan was put into effect in 1897-1898. It worked out favorably, and it was not long until private colleges of other denominations devised similar plans.⁴⁴ By 1922, there were fifteen privately controlled junior colleges in the state.

⁴¹ Herbert Spencer Von Roeder, "A Study of the Public Junior Colleges of Texas with Special Reference to the Curriculum," (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin, 1940), p. 11.

⁴² Thomas Luther Cox, "A Brief History of the Junior College Movement in Texas," (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Texas, Austin, 1948), p. 34.

⁴³ Van Roeder, loc. cit.

⁴⁴ Cox, op. cit., p. 35.

It took longer for public junior colleges to develop in Texas. When Koos made his study, he found that there was only one public junior college in Texas in 1922.⁴⁵ That college was the El Paso Junior College which had originally been chartered in 1917 as The College of the City of El Paso. In 1920, its status was changed, and the doors were opened as the first municipally controlled junior college in Texas. The El Paso Junior College continued until 1927, when it was consolidated with the Texas School of Mines and Metallurgy.⁴⁶

Not to be confused with public junior colleges as the term is used in this study, but important in their own right, were the two state junior colleges⁴⁷ that were taken over in 1917 by the Thirty-fifth Legislature of Texas: John Tarleton College at Stephenville, and Grubbs Vocational School (later changed to North Texas Agricultural College) at Arlington. These colleges were organized as state junior colleges in 1917, and they were placed under

⁴⁵ Koos, op. cit., p. 659.

⁴⁶ Cox, op. cit., p. 36.

⁴⁷ State junior college, a junior college controlled by a state appointed or elected board of control and usually established by a special act of the legislature.

the control of the board of regents of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas.⁴⁸

The next public junior college to be created in Texas was Wichita Falls Junior College which opened its doors to students in 1922. The name was changed to Hardin Junior College in 1936. In 1946, it became a four year institution, and it has been renamed Midwestern University.⁴⁹

The year after classes were begun at Wichita Falls Junior College, South Park Junior College in Beaumont was ready for its first student body.

III. SOUTH PARK JUNIOR COLLEGE

The Influence of L. R. Pietzsch

The idea for organizing a junior college in the South Park Independent School District was undoubtedly conceived by L. R. Pietzsch, superintendent of schools for the district from July, 1913, until April, 1924. Undeniably, Superintendent Pietzsch was a man of great enterprise,

⁴⁸ Von Roeder, op. cit., p. 14.

⁴⁹ Jesse P. Bogue, editor, American Junior Colleges (third edition; Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1952), p. 458.

intelligence, and vision, and he left a lasting impression on several educational institutions of Texas. Probably his greatest single achievement, however, was the part he played in the establishment of the South Park Junior College. In an attempt to explain some of the reasons for his decision to press for the creation of such a college, a brief summary of his background, training, and experience is presented.

L. R. Pietzsch was born of German parents near the little town of Weimer, Texas, in 1880. It is reported that the boy was about ten years of age before he learned to speak English, for German was spoken exclusively in the home. When he was eight years of age, the family moved to East Bernard, and it was there that young Pietzsch attended public school. He was graduated from the public schools at East Bernard and then attended Elinn Memorial College at Brenham, Texas, for two years. Following that, he taught school for two years in a rural community near the family home in East Bernard. After that experience in the teaching profession, he decided to enter the University of Texas and study engineering.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Interview with Mrs. L. R. Pietzsch, August 10, 1954.

L. R. Pietzsch was graduated from the University of Texas in the spring of 1907 with a degree in electrical engineering. Immediately thereafter, he accepted a job as a professional engineer at Cameron, Texas. He worked there during a part of the summer or until he saw an advertisement in a Houston newspaper stating that a science teacher was needed in the Beaumont City Schools. He accepted the job in Beaumont and taught science in Beaumont High School for one year (1907-1908) and was then elected principal of Killard Elementary School (Beaumont). He served in that capacity for four years or until he was elected County Superintendent in 1912. His tenure in that office lasted only from January, 1913, until July, 1913, when he was elected superintendent of the South Park Schools. Superintendent Pietzsch remained at South Park until he resigned in April, 1924, to accept a position as city manager in Beaumont. After serving there for a few months he resigned, and soon thereafter was elected superintendent of the French Schools (Beaumont), where he remained for two years. Later, he served successively as superintendent of the Nederland and Alvin schools for nine and three years respectively. In 1939, he moved back to Beaumont as a

representative of the Practical Drawing Company, and the following spring, April 1, 1940, he died.⁵¹

According to Mrs. L. R. Pietzsch, the decision to organize a junior college in South Park was made only after long and careful study of many aspects of the problem. Mrs. Pietzsch said that her husband first became intensely interested in the junior college movement while enrolled in summer school at the University of Chicago in 1918, and between 1918 and 1921, he read and studied everything that could be obtained concerning junior colleges. He visited several of them for specific information and ideas, and by 1921, he was firmly convinced that a junior college was needed in South Park.⁵²

J. J. Vincent, ⁵³ superintendent of schools for the South Park Independent School District from 1947 until the present and a personal friend of L. R. Pietzsch for many years, said that he believes Superintendent Pietzsch had at least three reasons for deciding to put forth an all-out effort to open a junior college in the fall of 1923. First, Pietzsch was convinced that the junior college as an educational unit was feasible as an integral part of the

⁵¹ Loc. cit.

⁵² Interview with Mrs. L. R. Pietzsch, July 23, 1954.

⁵³ Interview with J. J. Vincent, August 19, 1954.

secondary school at South Park. Second, the senior class at the South Park High School for the 1922-23 school year contained an unusual number of exceptionally bright students. Many of them were not financially able to leave their homes to attend college, and Pietzsch thought this would be a way for them to continue their education. Third, the superintendent wanted to avoid criticism by taxpayers for spending \$300,000 for a large, new high school building when a smaller and less expensive building probably would have sufficed. By utilizing a part of the building for junior college classes, public censure might be avoided. Vincent said that the very fact that the entire third floor of the building was used as a junior college in later years is evidence that the building was too large for high school needs alone.

A Community College at South Park

No record has been found indicating that prior to the passage of the \$300,000 bond election on December 3, 1921, the school board of the South Park Independent School District officially discussed the creation of a junior college in the district. It is known that the matter had been informally debated by school board members, citizens, and high school students. Evidence of student interest is

revealed in a story that appeared in the Beaumont Enterprise on December 3, 1921, a part of which follows:

One of the interesting features of the election was the appeal made by the school children attending South Park. In The Gusher,⁵⁴ the school publication, an entire publication was devoted to the bond issue. An appeal issued on the front page and addressed to voters was: . . . "We address you on the eve of the election held for the purpose of deciding whether this community shall erect a new high school building--possibly a junior college in the district."⁵⁵

The first official act relating to the creation of a junior college came on January 5, 1922, when the school board authorized the superintendent to visit several of the junior colleges in this state for the purpose of gathering information to determine the advisability of providing college facilities in the new high school that was to be erected.⁵⁶

During the 1922-23 school year a survey was made in the county to determine the number of high school graduates who were continuing their education at colleges or universities. The survey showed that from eight to ten per cent

⁵⁴ That issue of The Gusher is not available for inspection.

⁵⁵ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, December 3, 1921.

⁵⁶ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, January 5, 1922.

of the students in the county were continuing their training. These results and Superintendent Pietzsch's favorable report after he had visited several junior colleges, prompted the school board to make definite plans for opening a junior college.⁵⁷

Superintendent Pietzsch and his associates worked diligently during the 1922-23 school year with plans for the new college, and on May 5, 1923, the school board authorized the superintendent to "employ such teachers as are needed for a junior college and permitted him to offer salaries to such teachers as heads of departments not to exceed \$2700 for nine months."⁵⁸ A few days later, May 19, 1923, he was authorized to expend such funds as are necessary for advertizing the college, and permission was given to have announcements and circulars printed.⁵⁹ Superintendent Pietzsch, having led the move for the junior college, was selected by the school board on May 31, 1923, to be president of the South Park Junior College and superintendent of the South Park Schools at a salary of \$5000

⁵⁷ Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 6.

⁵⁸ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, May 5, 1923.

⁵⁹ Ibid., May 19, 1923.

per year. C. W. Bingman was elected dean of the college and principal of the high school at a salary of \$3600 per year.⁶⁰

During the late spring and early summer of 1923, President Pietzsch selected the faculty for the new college. On July 7, 1923, the school board approved the employment of the teachers recommended by the president; however, the salaries for these teachers were not approved until September 23, 1923.⁶¹

It was a difficult task for the president to estimate the number of faculty members needed for the college. Without a precedent to go by in so far as past enrollment was concerned, it was impossible to predict accurately the size of the first student body. The number of teachers finally decided upon was fourteen, all of whom, except one, were scheduled to teach some classes in high school.⁶²

The decision to utilize the same teachers for college and high school instruction was undoubtedly in accord with President Pietzsch's philosophy concerning the

⁶⁰ Ibid., May 31, 1923.

⁶¹ Ibid., September 23, 1923.

⁶² News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 15, 1925.

junior colleges. According to O. E. Archer, one of the first teachers at the college, and now dean of Lamar State College of Technology, President Pietsch believed that the junior college was an integral part of the secondary school system.⁶³ This philosophy was also reflected by the school board action in making the superintendent of schools a combination superintendent and president and in making the high school principal a combination principal and dean.

Prior to the opening of South Park Junior College on September 17, 1923, an attempt was made to make the public aware of the new school. Very little of the publicity was printed in either of the daily newspapers; nevertheless, President Pietsch and Dean Bingman mailed circulars and bulletins to many prospective students, and they personally contacted as many of them as they could. During the summer of 1923, a small bulletin or catalogue was prepared and published for distribution to interested students. This publication was not considered an annual bulletin, for it was very small and contained only limited information about the college. Probably the most important thing in it was a well formulated statement of the purpose of South Park Junior College.

⁶³ Personal interview with O. E. Archer, August 9, 1954.

South Park Junior College offers students an opportunity to continue their education beyond the high school at much less expense than similar work at a university would involve, and brings the student, through smaller classes than the universities can of necessity allow, into closer and more individual touch with his instructors. Junior College credits will be accepted as regular college credits at all of the leading universities.

Through various college activities students become familiar with the principles of student government and organization. Among the most prominent student activities may be mentioned: Literary Societies, Debating Clubs, Glee Clubs, Dramatic Clubs, Orchestra, and Athletics in all of its forms.

The purpose of the Junior College is three fold: to offer the first two years of general university work to those who intend to complete their education elsewhere; to offer the first two years of general university work required to those who plan to enter the professional schools, such as those of law, medicine, and engineering; to offer practical, business preparation courses to those who do not intend to continue their education at higher institutions.⁶⁴

It is interesting to note that the purpose of the college as stated in annual catalogues was not materially changed for many years. In the Second Annual Bulletin of The South Park Junior College, an addition was made to the last sentence of the last paragraph of the purpose as stated above to include "and to prepare teachers for elementary school work."⁶⁵ After that addition no change was

⁶⁴ South Park Junior College, Bulletin, 1923-1924, p. 3.

⁶⁵ South Park Junior College, Second Annual Bulletin, 1925-1926, p. 6.

made until 1941, when the college was completely separated from the South Park Independent School District.⁶⁶

The Bulletin for 1923-24 also stated that all students would be charged a tuition fee of \$90.00 payable in installments of \$45.00 for each semester. A matriculation fee of \$5.00 was charged at the time the application for admission was made; however, this applied on the tuition for the first semester at the time of registration.⁶⁷ Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, the school board decided that students living within the bounds of the South Park Independent School District would not be required to pay a tuition fee, but would be assessed a matriculation fee and be required to pay a laboratory fee to cover the cost of material actually used. The board also decided to allow out-of-district students to pay the equivalent of one month's tuition and to execute the balance in the form of notes, payable monthly.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Lamar College, Catalogue, 1941-1942, p. 24.

⁶⁷ South Park Junior College, Bulletin, 1923-1924, p. 7.

⁶⁸ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, September 14, 1923.

On September 4, 1923, a news item in the Beaumont Enterprise stated that "the South Park Junior College will open September 17, 1923. . . . the opening of classes will find the school system equipped with one of the most competent faculties in the state."⁶⁹ The next day the Beaumont Enterprise quoted J. V. Hall, State Director of the Trade and Industrial Department of the Texas State Department of Education as saying: "you have here one of the finest collections of buildings and equipment I have seen anywhere"⁷⁰

Two days before the college opened a news report giving more detailed and specific information about the new school appeared in the Beaumont Enterprise. Pertinent excerpts from that article are quoted as follows:

South Park Junior College, second of its kind in the state of Texas, will open its doors Monday morning at nine o'clock . . . "Just what our first day's enrollment will be is a matter of conjecture," said L. R. Pietzsch. "We would call eighty students a good enrollment. A hundred students the first day would be exceptional for the initial year of an institution like this."⁷¹

The newspaper article on September 15, also gave information about entrance requirements, where classes were

⁶⁹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, September 4, 1923.

⁷⁰ Ibid., August 15, 1923.

⁷¹ Ibid., September 15, 1923.

to meet, and a general description of courses to be offered:

South Park Junior College is now virtually complete and is splendidly equipped to handle the college work The entire third floor is reserved for college students who will not mix with high school students during class time. The study hall and library on the main floor will be for the use of both

College students will attend classes six days a week as in regular colleges. Each recitation period will be an hour. Rules and regulations about entrance and carrying courses are the same as those governing the University of Texas

The South Park Junior College offers courses leading to bachelor of arts, law, medicine, engineering, science, home economics, and business administration. Commercial courses, music courses, and courses in mechanical arts are also offered

The college plant makes a splendid appearance, with its sixteen-acre campus, including large athletic fields, tennis and basketball courts, its new main building, home economics building, and the mechanics building, representing a total outlay of \$400,000 on the part of the South Park District.⁷²

A significant point that should be emphasized in connection with the newspaper account quoted above is that from the day of its inception, South Park Junior College looked to the University of Texas as its "guiding light." The statement that "rules and regulations about entrance and carrying courses are the same as those governing the University of Texas" is an early indication that the Beaumont school would work very closely with the University. It was only a few days later that another news story in the

⁷² Loc. cit.

Beaumont Enterprise emphasized that the courses at the college were so arranged that credits would be recognized by any college in the country, and that it was by the "University of Texas plan that the courses were laid out."⁷³

The college opened its doors for registration on September 17, 1923. It was a rainy, dreary day; nevertheless, one hundred students registered. The Beaumont afternoon newspaper, the Beaumont Journal, noted that the enrollment exceeded all expectations and that a considerable number of out-of-town students were among the early registrants.⁷⁴ By the end of the week a total of 126 students had registered.

Thus, President Pletzsch's dream for a junior college in Beaumont became a reality. With fourteen qualified college faculty members, 126 students, and adequate financial backing furnished by the South Park Independent School District, it was possible for the administration, faculty, and school board to look toward the future with confidence.

Probably the most important thing that happened during the 1923-24 college year was the recognition of the

⁷³ Ibid., September 17, 1923.

⁷⁴ News item in the Beaumont Journal, September 17, 1923.

school as a first class junior college by the Texas State Department of Education.⁷⁵ In April of 1924, President Pietzsch attended the annual meeting of the Texas Association of Colleges and presented to that organization information concerning entrance requirements, courses offered, and faculty standards. At this meeting, South Park Junior College was given first class junior college affiliation. An article in the Beaumont Journal revealed something of the importance of this recognition.

. . . This affiliation was the first "high light" in the history of the institution, for it is a matter of record that South Park Junior College is the first college in Texas that has ever received its affiliation with institutions of older rank on the first year of its work. This was made possible, first, because of the rating of the faculty, and second, because approximately fifty per cent of the students who attended college during the first session had completed one term or more of work in one of the state colleges.⁷⁶

On April 15, 1924, at a regular meeting of the South Park School Board, it was decided that a copy of a letter received from the State Department of Education concerning the recognition be placed in the regular minutes of the board. That letter is quoted below:

I have the pleasure to inform you that State Superintendent S. M. N. Marrs has approved the

⁷⁵ Ibid., August 15, 1925.

⁷⁶ Loc. cit.

recommendation of the State Board of Examiners for the recognition of South Park Junior College of Beaumont, Texas, as a first class junior college for 1923-24 and subsequent years.

J. R. Reed, Chairman
Board of Examiners⁷⁷

A few weeks before the above mentioned letter was received, the school board at South Park had unanimously agreed to offer President Pietzsch a new two-year contract, ending August, 1926. The salary was set at \$5000 per year and he was to continue as both superintendent of the school district and president of the junior college.⁷⁸ When President Pietzsch accepted the new contract, he undoubtedly did not know that within a few weeks he would offer his resignation to the school board. However, on April 15, 1924, the school board accepted the resignation of L. R. Pietzsch, effective April 16, 1924. Along with the acceptance of the resignation, it was recorded in the board minutes that he was voted a word of thanks for building up the South Park School and College, and that he was leaving the school with the very best wishes of the South Park School Board and community.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, April 15, 1924.

⁷⁸ Ibid., March 17, 1924.

⁷⁹ Minutes, loc. cit.

On April 16, 1924, L. R. Pietzsch was named city manager for Beaumont. An announcement in one of the daily newspapers said that he was selected by the city commission at a salary of \$7000 per year.⁸⁰ An editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise the next day gave some indication of what the people of Beaumont thought of this man who had been the first president of South Park Junior College.

Mr. Pietzsch is a young man of outstanding qualities that commend him for the important place to which he has been elevated. His training has been in the school room, but his interests and his activities have not been confined there. The best of his equipment he brings with him for his service to the city includes a well ordered mind, a splendid character, a broad vision, and a loyalty and devotion to Beaumont not exceeded by any other citizen. We may not appraise his fitness for the varied and numerous duties as city manager other than by examining his elementary attributes. . . .⁸¹

Just a few days after President Pietzsch resigned to become city manager of Beaumont, the school board selected C. W. Bingman as superintendent of the South Park Schools and president of South Park Junior College. His salary was set at \$4000 per year. President Bingman had been serving as principal of the high school and dean of the college. At the same board meeting, I. J. Deck, who

⁸⁰ News item in the Beaumont Journal, April 16, 1924.

⁸¹ Editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise, April 17, 1924.

had been head of the department of education in the college, was elected principal of the high school and dean of the college.⁸²

As was previously mentioned, a number of students who had already completed some college work at other institutions entered the college at the beginning of its first year. At the end of the year, seven students who made up the sophomore class were awarded associate of arts degrees. This was the first graduating class sent out from the college.⁸³

Before the end of the spring semester of 1924, plans were made for organizing a summer school and a summer normal. An announcement of the proposed summer session was published and mailed to prospective students. In this announcement, it was explained that courses allowing regular college credit would be offered in the summer school, while review work in all subjects needed for the various grades of state certificates for teachers would be offered in the summer normal. Both college and normal classes were scheduled to meet five days per week.⁸⁴

⁸² Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, April 19, 1924.

⁸³ News item in the Beaumont Journal, August 15, 1925.

⁸⁴ South Park Junior College, Bulletin, Summer Session, 1924, p. 3.

O. B. Archer, head of the science department of the college during the long term of 1923, was selected as director of the summer session, which, with several subsequent ones, was financed in an interesting manner.

O. B. Archer⁸⁵ said that the school board furnished the buildings and facilities free of charge, but that salaries for teachers were dependent entirely upon revenue from student tuition charges. No teacher was guaranteed a salary, and any regularly employed junior college teacher from South Park could join the summer faculty and organize a class if sufficient students could be found to justify it.

A total of thirty-five students enrolled for regular college courses that summer;⁸⁶ no figures are available showing how many registered for the summer normal for teachers. Records show that this was the only time that a summer normal was ever taught at the college.

Several important changes and additions were made to the faculty prior to the beginning of the second year. Some of the changes have been previously mentioned; however, there were others that would materially affect the philosophy and progress of the institution in future years.

⁸⁵ Interview with O. B. Archer, August 12, 1954.

⁸⁶ Beaumont Journal, op. cit., August 15, 1925.

D. W. Boitnott was elected principal of the elementary school and head of the department of education.⁸⁷ Certainly, that arrangement was unique in so far as the combination job was concerned. Boitnott later became dean of the college and was particularly influential in plotting the course of the institution in relation to academic matters. Mary Campbell⁸⁸ was elected dean of women and head of the department of mathematics. She remained at the college until her retirement in 1951, and her great influence remains evident. F. S. Estill was elected registrar and auditor;⁸⁹ he remained in that position until 1928. As previously mentioned, I J. Deck was the new dean of the college and principal of the high school. He continued in that capacity until the positions were separated the following year.

In the South Park Junior College Bulletin, printed in April, 1924, for the 1924-1925 college year, a description of the physical facilities of the college was given. Practically the same facilities were listed as were

⁸⁷ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, July 19, 1924.

⁸⁸ Ibid., July 16, 1924.

⁸⁹ Ibid., May 21, 1924.

described in the news item previously noted, except for details about the various buildings. Quoted in part the bulletin stated that:

. . . The buildings are new, and are three in number; the Main Building; the Home Economics Building; and the Mechanics Arts Building--all together, costing approximately \$400,000 for buildings and equipment.

The Main Building contains twenty-four class rooms, four laboratories, library and reading room, an auditorium seating 1200 persons, cafeteria, large gymnasium fully equipped, and administrative offices.

The Home Economics Building contains six rooms specially designed for teaching all problems of the home; such as, cooking, sewing, home nursing, and laundry work. It is also a building planned to be used as a social center for the community as well as for the student.

The Mechanics Arts Building contains the shops and engineering laboratories. It is equipped with four laboratories and a drawing room.

The large elementary school located in the block adjacent to the college buildings serves as a practice school for advanced students who are preparing to become teachers.⁹⁰

When that same bulletin was printed, a long list of fees and deposits was included. Students living within the district were not required to pay tuition,⁹¹ except that the school board on August 26, 1924, passed a regulation

⁹⁰ South Park Junior College, First Annual Bulletin, 1924-1925, p. 8.

⁹¹ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, August 26, 1924.

requiring all college students over the age of twenty-one, regardless of where they resided, to pay the regular tuition of \$15.00 per month.⁹² The matriculation fee remained \$5.00 for all students; however, it applied on the first quarter's tuition if such was charged. Other fees and deposits were listed as follows:⁹³

FEES		DEPOSITS	
Chemistry	\$5.00	Library	\$2.00
Physics	5.00	Chemistry	2.50
Botany	5.00	Physics	2.50
Zoology	5.00	Botany	2.50
Foods	5.00	Zoology	2.50
Nutrition	3.00		
Shop Work	5.00		
Late			
Matriculation	2.00		

All of the deposits were returned to students at the end of the term if there were no breakages, losses, or fines. No refunds were made on laboratory fees.

Objections were soon voiced by out-of-district students because they were required to pay the \$15.00 per month tuition charge, and students within the district did not have to pay it. Reasons for the differential were evident; nevertheless, those who lived in the Beaumont Independent School District and other neighboring districts knew that

⁹² Loc. cit.

⁹³ First Annual Bulletin, op. cit., p. 10.

their parents were paying school taxes as high or higher than were the citizens of South Park. They also knew that much of the tax money for the South Park Schools came from the huge Magnolia Refinery that was in the South Park Independent School District. Magnolia Refinery was the outstanding industry in Beaumont, and many thought it was hardly fair for all of its school tax money to be paid to the South Park District. This feeling was particularly evident among the employees of the refinery who did not live in South Park.⁹⁴

At one time there was considerable talk of establishing a junior college in the Beaumont Independent School District. A new high school had been built, and it was contended that the old building could be utilized as a junior college. Many believed that the city of Beaumont could not adequately support two junior colleges, and that if a new one were established it would make for two institutions of weaker rank.⁹⁵

To protect their own interests and to give concrete evidence that the South Park School Board and college officials wanted the school to serve the needs of surrounding

⁹⁴ Interview with O. F. Archer, August 15, 1954.

⁹⁵ Loc. cit.

communities, the board endorsed a bill designed to make the college a county junior college.⁹⁶ J. W. Kinnear, state representative from Beaumont, met with the school board on the night of January 15, 1925, and discussed the details of the bill he planned to introduce in the House of Representatives. It was the opinion of the board that everything possible should be done to secure the passage of the bill in the forthcoming session of the Texas Legislature. To emphasize their endorsement of the proposed legislation, the school board instructed the secretary to draw up a resolution endorsing it and send copies to the press and to the Texas legislators.⁹⁷ Representative Kinnear met with the school board on two other occasions, January 26, 1925, and January 31, 1925, and discussed the progress of the bill. At the meeting on January 31, it was decided that the board would appropriate not more than \$1000 for the purpose of securing the services of expert attorneys to study the legal aspects of the proposed law. This expenditure was authorized only if Judge R. E. Masterson of Beaumont believed it would be legal for the board to spend this amount of money for the purpose stated. A committee was appointed to see

⁹⁶ Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 20.

⁹⁷ Minutes of the South Park Independent School District, January 15, 1925.

Judge Masterson and secure his opinion.⁹⁸ The committee reported back to a called meeting of the board on February 2, and said that it was the opinion of the Judge that such an expenditure of funds would be illegal. The board then rescinded the action that had been taken in appropriating the \$1000.⁹⁹

Although the bill introduced by Representative Kinnear did not pass in that session of the legislature or in subsequent sessions, it was seriously considered, and the bill was to some extent responsible for the legislature looking into the whole junior college situation in Texas, out of which came an act governing junior colleges in the state. Special consideration will be given to that act later in this study.

In many respects the second year at the college was about the same as the first had been, with practically the same instructors teaching the same courses again. It is true that the enrollment was somewhat larger than had been anticipated. Before the fall semester began, college officials had estimated that there would be about 200 students.

⁹⁸ Ibid., January 31, 1925.

⁹⁹ Ibid., February 2, 1925.

Actually, a total of 228 enrolled. By the end of the year, because of failures, withdrawals, and dropping of courses, the graduating class had decreased in size until only thirty associate of arts degrees were awarded.¹⁰⁰

During the spring of 1925, several important decisions were made by the school board of the South Park Independent School District that affected the college. C. W. Bingman was re-elected as president of the college and superintendent of schools for a term of two years at a salary of \$4800 per year. The new contract was to become effective on July 1, 1925.¹⁰¹ Then, on April 2, 1925, D. W. Loitnott was elected dean of the college for a term of two years at a salary of \$3800 for the first year and \$4000 for the second year. His contract was to become effective on June 1.¹⁰² I. J. Deck submitted his resignation as principal of the high school, effective at the end of the spring term, 1925. He had previously held the combination job of principal of the high school and dean of the college. The school board re-elected him as principal

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., May 19, 1925.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., February 17, 1925.

¹⁰² Ibid., April 11, 1925.

of the high school for the following year, but he did not accept the change in status.¹⁰³

The changes indicated above were but the beginning of a stream of events that led to the complete separation of the junior college from the high school and finally to the severance of the college from the South Park Independent School District.

In response to public demand, a summer session was again planned. In preparation for it, a special summer bulletin was published and made available to prospective students. In this bulletin it was stated that the faculty would be made up of regular college teachers, except that some other instructors of excellent qualifications would be added to teach some of the extra classes. Also, the bulletin prominently displayed evidence of recognition that had come to the school during the two years of its existence. The following are quotations from that publication:

South Park College has been ranked as a Class "A" junior college by the State Department of Education.

The College has enrolled a larger number of students during its first and second years than any other junior college in Texas.

¹⁰³ Ibid., April 11, 1925.

The Texas Association of Colleges has ranked South Park College as a junior college of the first class, and students transferring from this school will receive credit for the work done here.¹⁰⁴

The bulletin mentioned above listed the name of the college as South Park College instead of South Park Junior College. This was the first time that had been done in published material. The new name was continued in all later publications. Probably no special significance should be attached to this change because there is no indication that either the college administration or the school board was thinking of altering the status of the institution.

The second summer session was held from June 8, 1925, to July 17, 1925, under the direction of Dean D. W. Boitnott. A total of fifty-six students registered for college courses.¹⁰⁵

It was during this summer that an undetermined number of people appealed to college officials and to the school board asking that college classes be taught at night for those who had to work and could not attend regular day classes. The board considered the requests, and on August 1,

¹⁰⁴ South Park Junior College, Bulletin, Second Summer Session, 1925, p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ Beaumont Journal, op. cit., August 15, 1925.

1925, approved President Eingman's recommendation that plans be made for organizing night classes if there were sufficient demand.¹⁰⁶

For the first time in its history, South Park College was given adequate newspaper publicity during the summer of 1925. College officials apparently saw the need for disseminating additional information to the public. It appears that the daily newspapers were always ready to print information or facts about the college if the material was prepared for them. On August 15, 1925, the Beaumont Enterprise printed a news story describing plans that were being made for the coming year. It stated in part that:

All plans are in readiness for the opening of the South Park College for the term of 1925-26, and from all indications there will be, estimating conservatively, 300 students at the college

The aim of the college is to supply the needs of students in the immediate vicinity of Beaumont or within a radius of 100 miles.¹⁰⁷

The news story quoted above clearly indicates that college officials expected a large increase in enrollment for the 1925-26 college year. Actually, the estimated increase was a thirty-three per cent increment over the

¹⁰⁶ Minutes of the South Park Independent School District, August 1, 1925.

¹⁰⁷ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 15, 1925.

enrollment for the preceding year. Also, the story seems to point out that the college was becoming an area institution as well as a community school.

In preparation for the 1925-26 session, notable improvements were made in so far as physical facilities were concerned, and there were some additions to the curriculum. An enlarged reading room in the library was provided, and several hundred volumes of new reference books in the fields of history, education, design, mechanical drawing, physics, and home economics were purchased. Laboratory equipment worth about \$3000 was installed in the departments of chemistry, physics, mechanical drawing, and design. The athletic field was enlarged and new tennis courts were built.¹⁰⁸

The curriculum was strengthened by the addition of public school art and a one-year course in business administration. The latter was designed for students who thought it imperative that they prepare themselves for a vocation in the shortest time possible.¹⁰⁹

Tentative plans were made during the summer of 1925 for the formation of a students' council. The initiative

¹⁰⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁰⁹ Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 16.

for organizing the council was taken by the administration of the college. A news item in the Beaumont Enterprise explained the purpose of the organization.¹¹⁰

One new organization will be begun that will bind the student body together and make of it a unit. This organization will be known as the Students' Council. It will be organized and run by the dean of the college. The purpose of the organization is not particularly to govern the student body

The membership of the body will be limited to one student member from each organization of the college. The body will meet weekly with the dean and discuss affairs of the student body. . . .

The third year, 1925-26, opened with a considerable increase in enrollment. There were 270 students, including sixty-five who had registered on a part-time basis for evening classes.¹¹¹ At the end of the year, a total of sixty-five graduates heard Dr. T. O. Walton, President of the Agriculture and Mechanical College of Texas deliver the commencement address.¹¹²

The above mentioned session was an important one in the history of the college. With the new course offerings, an improved faculty, new equipment, and an administration almost completely separate from the high school, a new

¹¹⁰ Beaumont Enterprise, loc. cit., August 15, 1925.

¹¹¹ News item in Beaumont Journal, September 23, 1925.

¹¹² Ibid., June 3, 1926.

phase in the progress of the institution was entered upon. Undoubtedly, the college gained additional prestige in the community, area, and state as a result of this new status.

In the summer of 1926, the administration of the college prepared a list of twenty advantages or reasons for attending South Park College. It is true that some of these so-called advantages were compiled for publicity purposes, and a few of them were exaggerations of the truth. Nevertheless, it is believed that they are of sufficient importance to be listed here:

1. Approximately sixty per cent of 270 students enrolled in South Park College would not attend college if it were not for the local institution.
2. The aim of South Park College is vocational and preparatory for law, medicine, business administration, engineering, journalism, and home economics.
3. By attending South Park College for two years--the young college students are kept at home under parental guidance.
4. During the past three years South Park College has increased its enrollment from 125 to 270, thus it is a growing institution.
5. Failures are fewer in South Park College than in larger schools because of smaller classes, which makes it possible for instructors to give students more individual attention.
6. South Park College is affiliated with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Texas for two years of standard college work.
7. South Park College is rated as a first-class junior college by the University of Texas.

8. Graduates of South Park College enter the junior class in leading senior colleges and universities without loss of credit.
9. South Park College offers forty-two standard college courses.
10. There are fourteen student organizations that add much to the spirit and life of the South Park College.
11. South Park College is for Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana.
12. South Park College has a faculty of twenty men and women who are graduates of leading colleges and universities of the nation.
13. South Park College has a reference library sufficiently large to care for all courses offered.
14. South Park College has one of the best home economics departments in Texas and is housed in a separate building.
15. South Park College has the best equipped gymnasium of any junior college in Texas. It has hot and cold water and a floor of fifty by eighty-six feet, with a seating capacity of 1,000.
16. South Park College has an athletic field consisting of eight acres.
17. South Park College campus was recently beautified by the addition of shrubbery.
18. South Park College is located on a paved street; it is on a street car line; and it is one block from the Port Arthur and Beaumont interurban railroad.
19. South Park College ranks as one of the best in Texas; it is the pride of southeast Texas.

20. College education pays big dividends--attend South Park College.¹¹³

During the next five years, the administration remained the same; very few additions, alterations, or deletions were made in the curriculum; and only a few changes were made in the faculty. There was a slight increase in enrollment from year to year, until by 1931, there were 303 students.¹¹⁴ Several events and developments of consequence that occurred in the five-year period will be given special mention here.

An event to be emphasized was the spring commencement of 1927. No particular importance should be attached to this commencement, except that Dr. Frederick Eby, head of the school of education at the University of Texas, delivered the principal address to the sixty graduates. In his address, Dr. Eby declared that South Park College rated first among the junior colleges of Texas. Then, in regard to junior college students, he said that actual records at the University of Texas show that students who attend junior college during their first two years do better work during their junior and senior years at the University than

¹¹³ "Why Attend South Park College," (anonymous unpublished manuscript, 1926).

¹¹⁴ Hutchinson, op. cit. p. 18.

do those who spend four years at the senior institution.¹¹⁵ Probably without question, Dr. Eby was the outstanding authority and exponent of the junior college in Texas at that time. It is impossible to appraise properly his contribution to the general movement in the state, or to evaluate the aid he gave to individual schools with their varied problems. On several occasions his advice and counsel were sought by the administration of South Park College and, later, by those in authority at Lamar Junior College.

A development mentioned earlier was the passage of the so-called "Junior College Law" by the Texas Legislature in 1929. That year was a momentous one in the history of junior colleges in Texas, for this new law that was enacted by the Forty-first Legislature validated the public junior colleges then in existence and defined the limitations and methods for the establishment of new junior colleges. It even included regulations concerning the types of districts that could be organized for junior college purposes, the methods of control and support, and the "scope of work." It has been said that junior colleges of Texas did not have legal status until the passage of this legislation. In

¹¹⁵ News item in the Beaumont Journal, May 31, 1927.

some respects that is true; however, a degree of legal recognition had been given to them in 1917, when the Legislature enacted laws accepting the work of such colleges for teacher certification. Also, in the same year, the Texas Legislature accepted responsibility for John Tarleton College, at Stephenville, and established the Grubbs Vocational School (later changed to North Texas Agricultural College) at Arlington and placed them under the control of the Board of Regents of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, thus creating a small system of state branch junior colleges.¹¹⁶

Notwithstanding the legal developments that had taken place prior to 1929, this new "Junior College Law" gave legal stability to existing institutions, and it gave junior college administrators assurance that funds for the operation of the colleges could not be stopped by legal action attacking the legality of spending public money for the maintenance of a quasi-public institution. Too, the fact that junior colleges could not now be established promiscuously gave administrators the feeling of security that was needed for long range planning. Prior to this, it was never known just when the adjoining district or town might decide to establish a college of its own.

¹¹⁶ Von Roeder, op. cit., pp. 13-15.

The "Junior College Law" of 1929 is considered of such importance that it is quoted in part as follows:

Article 2815h, Section 1. Any independent school district or city which has assumed control of its schools, having in either case an assessed property evaluation of not less than \$12,000,000.00 or having an income provided by endowment, or otherwise that will meet the needs of the proposed junior college district, said need to be determined by the State Board of Education and having an average daily attendance of the next preceding school year of not fewer than 400 students in the last four years in the classified high schools within said district or city, may, by vote of the qualified voters of the district or city establish and maintain a junior college, such college district to be known as a junior college district.

Section 2. When it is proposed to establish a junior college district as above provided, a petition praying for an election therefor, signed by not less than five per cent of the qualified voters of the proposed territory shall be presented to the board of education of the district or city. It shall thereupon become the duty of the board so petitioned to pass upon the legality of the petition and the genuineness of the same. It shall then be the duty of the board to forward the petition to the State Board of Education.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of the State Board of Education, with the advice of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to determine whether or not the conditions set forth in Section 1, have been complied with, and also whether, in consideration of the geographic location with respect to colleges already established, it is feasible and desirable to establish such junior college district. In passing upon this question, it shall be the duty of the State Board of Education to consider the needs of the State and the welfare of the State as a whole, as well as the welfare of the community involved. The action of the State Board of Education shall be final and shall be communicated through the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, to the board, together with an order of the State Board of Education authorizing further

procedure in the establishment of the junior college district, if said State Board endorses its establishment. If the State Board of Education approves of the establishment of the junior college district, it shall be the duty of the Board of Education to enter an order for an election to be held in the proposed territory within a time not less than twenty days, and not more than thirty days after such an order is issued, to determine whether or not such a junior college district shall be created and formed. Such order shall contain a description of the metes and bounds of such junior college district to be formed, and shall fix the date for such election. If a majority of the votes cast by the qualified property taxpaying voters of such district at such election shall be in favor of the creation of a junior college district the same shall be deemed to be formed and created, and said board of Education shall, within ten days after holding such election, make a canvass of the returns and declare the results of the election. They shall then enter an order on the minutes of the board as to the results.

Section 4. A junior college established and maintained by an independent district or city that has assumed control of its schools, shall be governed, administered, and controlled by and under the direction of the Board of Education of such district or city.

Section 5. The Board of Education of junior college districts shall be governed in the establishment, management, and control of the junior college by the general law governing the establishment, management, and control of independent school districts in so far as the general law is applicable.

Section 7. The junior college district shall have the power to issue bonds for construction and equipment of school buildings and the acquisition of the sites therefor. The junior college district shall also levy and collect taxes for support and maintenance of the college provided no bonds shall be issued and no taxes collected until by vote of the majority of qualified voters of the junior college district.

Section 12. A junior college as here considered must consist of freshman and sophomore college work taught either separately or in conjunction with the

senior years of the high school and the course of study must be submitted and approved by the State Department of Education before it may be offered.

Section 16. Any public junior college now organized and conducted in the State of Texas which had been in actual operation prior to January 1929, or which is recognized as a standard junior college by the State Department of Education is hereby validated and may by action of its board of trustees, choose to be governed by the provisions of the act and receive the privileges of the same, at any time it may desire to do so.¹¹⁷

As was mentioned earlier, many students and parents were not satisfied with the schedule of fees charged by South Park College. Those who lived outside the district believed the differential in charges to in-district and out-of-district students was too great. Although a definite plan was never developed, citizens of Port Arthur, Orange, and Beaumont Independent School District considered the feasibility of establishing junior colleges in those communities. Since the bill introduced by Representative J. W. Kinnear to make South Park College into a county junior college did not pass and because the expense of operating the college had become a real burden on the taxpayers of the South Park Independent School District, the school board in 1929 decided to begin charging in-district students a tuition fee of \$20.00

¹¹⁷ Forty-First Legislature, General and Special Laws of Texas, pp. 648-650.

per term or \$60.00 per college year.¹¹⁸ This action caused students from outside the district to feel better toward the college.

Regardless of newspaper publicity and public statements of college officials telling about the growth and development of South Park College during the first nine years of its existence, enrollment figures simply do not reveal a picture of phenomenal growth. Figures from the office of the registrar show:¹¹⁹

TABLE I
ENROLLMENTS AND GRADUATES OF SOUTH PARK COLLEGE
1923-1932

Year	Total Enrollments	Number of Graduates
1923-1924	125	7
1924-1925	228	42
1925-1926	270	69
1926-1927	285	64
1927-1928	287	67
1928-1929	290	60
1929-1930	292	68
1930-1931	293	71
1931-1932	303	69

¹¹⁸ South Park College, Seventh Annual Bulletin, 1929-1930, p. 10.

¹¹⁹ Enrollment Report Analysis, (Registrar's Office, Lamar State College of Technology, 1953).

A study of the above table will show that after the first three years, growth was very slow. Between 1925 and 1931, the increase was from 270 full time students to 303 students or only 12.2 per cent increase over a period of six years. In so far as the number of graduates was concerned, there was little fluctuation between 1926 and 1932.

IV. LAMAR COLLEGE

Selection of a Name

At a regular meeting of the School Board of the South Park Independent School District on August 6, 1932, it was decided that the name of South Park College would be changed.¹²⁰ According to a news item the following day, this action was taken because of the expansion of the college and because of the large territory represented by students.¹²¹ Members of the Board believed that a new name without a community implication would help citizens in the area realize that the college was more than a community school.

¹²⁰ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, August 6, 1932.

¹²¹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 7, 1932.

The school board decided to let the public suggest a name for the college. Regulations were drawn up for a contest to be held, whereby everyone was eligible to enter, regardless of his place of residence. The person selecting the name finally chosen would be awarded a scholarship valued at \$100 and good for the 1932-1933 year. The scholarship, if won by a person unable to use it, could be transferred to a worthy boy or girl. It was suggested that names of importance in Texas history or names of national figures with a local connection be submitted. Territorial titles such as Southeast Texas College or South Texas College would not be favored. Instead, preference was to be given to such names as San Jacinto College, La Salle College, and the like. It was emphasized that titles other than those of a historical nature could be submitted. In view of a possible expansion of the school, the board agreed that the word "junior" would not be included in the name. Contestants were to submit, with the suggested title, a written explanation not exceeding 100 words telling why that particular name was chosen. In the event that two or more persons suggested the same winning name, the one whose reasons were best expressed in the 100 word explanation was to be declared the winner.¹²²

¹²² Loc. cit.

On August 20, 1932, the school board voted unanimously to change the name of South Park College to Lamar College, honoring Mirabeau B. Lamar, second president of the Republic of Texas and the man who is known as the founder of public school education in Texas.¹²³ The Beaumont Enterprise reported that about twenty-five persons suggested the name of Lamar College and that it was necessary for the school board to appoint a committee to read and study the various explanations to determine the winner of the scholarship. Other suggested names that were seriously considered by the school board were Travis College, Coronado College, Texmont College, and Gulf Coast College.

Otho Plummer, a student at South Park Junior College, was finally selected as the winner of the scholarship. It is interesting to notice that in later years Otho Plummer served for several years as mayor of the city of Beaumont and is at present (1955) a member of the board of regents for Lamar State College of Technology.

A Period of Steady Growth

Under its new name the college opened in the fall of 1932 with 330 students. No change had been made in the

¹²³ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, August 20, 1932.

administration. C. W. Bingman remained as president and D. W. Eoltnott as dean. The faculty was now composed of fourteen teachers, and of that number twelve held graduate degrees. In so far as the faculty was concerned, the separation of the college and the high school was complete, since no instructor was scheduled to teach in both. It was at the beginning of this year that a change was made from the term to the semester plan. This brought the college more in conformity with other institutions of higher learning. Accordingly, a standard teaching load of fifteen semester hours per teacher was established.¹²⁴ Tuition fees for students living within the South Park Independent School District were set at \$75.00 per year and \$150.00 per year for out-of-district students. This schedule was effective for only one academic year, 1932-1933.¹²⁵ The following year tuition was established at \$133.00 per student, regardless of the place of residence.¹²⁶

The college was now ranked as a class "A" junior college by the State Department of Education, and it was a

¹²⁴ Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 23.

¹²⁵ South Park College, Tenth Annual Bulletin, 1932-1933, p. 9.

¹²⁶ Lamar College, Eleventh Annual Bulletin, 1933-1934, p. 9.

member of the Texas Association of Colleges, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the Association of Junior Colleges of the United States, and the American Medical Association.¹²⁷

On March 29, 1933, W. A. Nelson, College Examiner for the State Board of Examiners, made a visit to Lamar College and submitted a written report to the State Board of Examiners on April 7, 1933, concerning his findings. Excerpts from that report are quoted as follows:

April 7, 1933

TO THE STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS:

On March 29, 1933, I visited Lamar College, and wish to present herein a report of my findings:

The Faculty

There are fourteen persons teaching in the college. Thirteen of these are teaching full-time. Twelve members of the faculty hold graduate degrees. Two instructors who do not hold degrees have had splendid training in their teaching fields. Each department head has a graduate degree. So far as the faculty is concerned, the separation of the junior college and the high school is complete, since no instructor teaches in both the high school and the junior college.

The teaching load is within the fifteen hour standard.

Plan and Scope of Work

Lamar College is this year operating under the semester plan. A uniform plan of work for the colleges

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 7.

of Texas is very much to be desired and since the trend is definitely toward the semester plan, the examiner is pleased to note that Lamar College has adopted this plan.

Two years of work are offered in biology, chemistry, education, English, history, mathematics, physics, French, and Spanish. A first year course is offered in engineering drawing, and second year courses are offered in economics, government, accounting, and public speaking.

The Library

The library is conveniently located and is well lighted. It is used jointly by students of the high school and the junior college. However, due to the limited capacity of the reading room, high school students are admitted in the forenoon and junior college students in the afternoon.

The Laboratories

The laboratories are well equipped and are shared with the high school. The enrollment in the high school and the junior college has grown to such an extent that laboratory facilities are not sufficient to accommodate all of those who seek admission to science classes.

Tuition and Finances

Each student living inside the South Park Independent School District is required to pay \$75.00 per year and all other students are required to pay \$150.00 per year for tuition.

There is no junior college tax. Last year expenditures for junior college purposes amounted to \$32,785. Student tuition and fees furnished an income of \$30,820. The difference between these two amounts was received from the funds of the South Park Independent School District.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The character of work being done at Lamar College by reason of its well trained faculty, rich curricula, and high standards for students, was the subject of very favorable comment in the report of January 6, 1932. The character of work being done this year calls for similar comment.

The present limited capacity of the library reading room does not permit the college to give its students the opportunity to make the most of the library facilities.

It is believed that due consideration should be given to the separation, when conditions will permit, of the college and the high school. This is in view of the following:

1. With the number of junior college students exceeding 300, separate buildings and equipment may well be given serious consideration.
2. Crowded conditions may react unfavorably upon the college enrollment.
3. So far as the faculty is concerned, the separation of the college and the high school is already complete, since no instructor teaches in both.

It is recommended that Lamar College be retained as a junior college of the first class on the list of accredited junior colleges of Texas.

Respectfully submitted,

W. A. Nelson,
College Examiner¹²⁸

Because of increased high school and college enrollment, and in view of W. A. Nelson's report to the State

¹²⁸ W. A. Nelson, "Report to State Board of Examiners," April 7, 1933.

Board of Examiners on April 7, 1933, the school board gave its attention to the need for additional housing facilities. In June, 1933, the school board authorized Livesay and Wiedeman Contracting Company to prepare plans and specifications for a new Administration Building and an addition to the Trade School Building. The plans and specifications for the new building called for a library and additional classrooms. The contract was let to the Clem F. Myers Construction Company, and in September, 1933, the work was complete and was accepted by the board.¹²⁹

With the completion of the new building and the additions to the Trade School Building, which was now named the Science Hall, the college began the 1933-34 year with faculty and student body in buildings separate from the high school. This, according to the college catalogue, "made it possible for the college to maintain its own daily program, thereby permitting greater freedom to college students and the development of a better atmosphere."¹³⁰ During the 1933-34 year, another building was erected to house the music department. This building consisted of classrooms, practice rooms, and a small studio auditorium.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Minutes of the School Board of the South Park Independent District, September 8, 1933.

¹³⁰ Lamar College, Twelfth Annual Bulletin, 1934-1935,
p. 7.

¹³¹ Loc. cit.

The college was now housed in three separate buildings and was in a position to offer a wider scope of work than ever before. These improved facilities undoubtedly were more enticing to prospective students, for when registration was complete in 1934, a total of 453 students had enrolled.¹³² This enrollment increased to 510 in 1935.¹³³

The school board decided that the increased enrollment made necessary the erection of a fine arts and auditorium building. The building was constructed during the summer of 1936. It contained an auditorium with a seating capacity of 525 and classrooms which were used for music, speech, and other fine arts.¹³⁴

The 1936-37 college year began with an enrollment of 548. This was an increase of about 7.5 per cent over that of the previous year. This increase was not particularly significant within itself; however, the enrollment trend from 1933 until 1940 as shown in the following table was significant.¹³⁵

¹³² Enrollment Report Analysis, (Registrar's Office, Lamar College, 1934).

¹³³ Enrollment Report Analysis, (Registrar's Office, Lamar College, 1935).

¹³⁴ Lamar College, Fourteenth Annual Bulletin, 1936-1937, p. 81.

¹³⁵ Enrollment Report Analysis, op. cit., 1953.

TABLE II
ENROLLMENTS AND GRADUATES OF LAMAR COLLEGE
1933-1940

Year	Total Enrollment	Number of Graduates
1932-1933	410	94
1933-1934	432	90
1934-1935	453	91
1935-1936	510	99
1936-1937	548	107
1937-1938	550	118
1938-1939	605	83
1939-1940	640	121

Table II shows that the total enrollment for the 1939-40 college year was 640 as compared to 410 in 1932-33; this was an increase of approximately 56 per cent within a seven year period. Simultaneously, enrollment in the high school continued to grow until additional facilities were needed for both high school and college purposes.

Movement to Expand the Junior College

From about 1937 until 1940, there was an undirected movement to change Lamar College into a four-year institution. On March 21, 1937, an article in the Citizen-Press stated that the opening of such a college would probably result in the immediate enrollment of between 600 and 700 students and that the present buildings and campus of the

junior college could be profitably used by the fast-growing South Park Independent School District.¹³⁶ That same year an article in the Beaumont Enterprise stated:

Lamar College in the past has made educational history. Establishment of the college here fifteen years ago was an experiment while the junior college idea in the state of Texas was comparatively a new thing and was certainly in the experimental stage. . . . Lamar College has become a definite part of the educational system of Beaumont and the surrounding area And today Lamar College looks forward.

Sentiment is crystalizing for a four-year institution. Trustees have considered this idea, and it has been vaguely discussed though no definite steps in the direction of forming a four-year unit here have been taken.

. . . A large area would be needed from which to draw support for a four-year institution. Also, educational trends in the state will have to be considered when the future of Lamar College is taken into account.

Officials of the local institution see within a short period of time, a state apportionment provision for all students attending college, and particularly for those attending a junior college. All of this must be considered in planning for the future of Lamar.

Those who are shaping the future of the institution point out that the area in which Beaumont is located is the largest section in Texas not served by a four-year college. And they also point out that Beaumont is ideally located for a petroleum engineering school, since it is in the very heart of the vast petroleum area of the state.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ News item in Citizen-Press (Beaumont), March 21, 1937.

¹³⁷ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, September 1, 1937.

The movement to make the college into a four-year institution never got beyond the discussion or planning stage. Instead, efforts were soon directed toward creating a junior college district. College officials and the school board believed this plan would be the quickest and most feasible way of alleviating the financial burden that was being imposed on the school district by the junior college.

The idea of a junior college district was given emphasis by Mr. E. H. Hereford, junior college examiner, in a report to the State Board of Examiners on February 7, 1939. In this report, it was pointed out that a considerable sum of money would have to be spent if further development was to be made. He said that additional buildings were needed and that some additions should be made to the curriculum. In his conclusions, Mr. Hereford wrote:

Lamar College is serving people from rather a wide area. The South Park Independent School District has carried the financial burden of the junior college for many years and has proven its feasibility and advantage. We are of the opinion, however, that the district will not be justified in extending the program very far beyond its present situation. We believe careful attention should be given to the idea of establishing a junior college district in this area, and thereby the financial responsibility will be extended to a much wider area. We believe that this plan would not only be feasible but just.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ E. H. Hereford, "Report to State Board of Examiners," February 7, 1939.

A few months before this report was made the Young Men's Business League of Beaumont offered the services of that organization to cooperate in any manner possible for the development of the college. This offer was promptly accepted by the school board, whereupon a committee from the Young Men's Business League was appointed to work with the school board and college officials on an expansion program.¹³⁹ This action was taken in view of the belief by Young Men's Business League leaders, college officials, and school board members that Lamar College had reached the limit of possible expansion with its present facilities and under its present political status. It was believed that unless an enlarged plant was provided and a more equitable system of financing arranged, it would become necessary to limit the number of students accepted and curtail the services of the institution.

The committee of the Young Men's Business League immediately began a series of meetings with business and industrial leaders to study the needs and possibilities of an expansion program. According to a report that they issued, these meetings revealed two very definite needs:

¹³⁹ The Road Ahead for Lamar College (pamphlet; Beaumont: Young Men's Business League, 1940).

1. Technical, vocational, and semi-professional training is badly needed in the Sabine Area. This large and expanding area is constantly in need of skilled mechanics and trained workers. Courses are needed to train the boys and girls of the Sabine Area for the work here.

Training above the high school level is needed in laboratory operations; metal work; use of office machines; specialized training for secretaries of doctors, lawyers and others; salesmanship; wood work; piloting and mechanics of aviation; diesel motors; electricity; and in many other similar fields. These courses can all be completed in two years.

2. Cultural and pre-professional college training should be made available to our young people at as low a cost as possible.

An increasingly large number of high school graduates are in need of junior college opportunity where they can obtain two years of college work without leaving home. Many of these young people need and desire pre-professional training in law, medicine, engineering, music, journalism, etc., in order that they may later enter the professional colleges to finish their degrees. Others desire general cultural training in order to prepare for fuller living and broader fields of service. Most of these boys and girls will be denied the opportunity of a college education unless a local college is made available to them at a low rate of tuition.¹⁴⁰

The committee further found that the Junior College Law of Texas made it possible to form and support an enlarged junior college district by vote of the qualified voters of any proposed combination of contiguous public school districts meeting certain legal requirements. Large tax-paying interests and many citizens were consulted, and the great

¹⁴⁰ Loc. cit.

majority were found to favor an expansion program. The committee of the Young Men's Business League then reported its findings to the board of directors, and recommended that the matter be presented to the general public for consideration. The report and recommendations were adopted by the board, and a central committee was appointed to work out a plan for submitting the proposed expansion program to the public. This central committee worked closely with officials of Lamar College and with the school board of South Park.

The central committee decided that the entrance of public school districts into this proposed junior college district should be entirely voluntary and that all semblance of coercion should be avoided. With this thought in mind, an invitation through the public press was issued to the people of the public school districts in Jefferson County, asking that any groups interested in helping form the original district make known their desires to the committee. Representative citizens of five school districts responded; those were Beaumont, South Park, French, Nederland, and Port Neches. The petitions for an election on the matter were therefore framed on this basis and signed by more than 2,000 resident taxpayers of the territory involved. Some opposition developed in the Port Neches District and in the

Nederland District. The opposition in these areas seemed to be based largely on a feeling that the densely populated districts in Beaumont were trying to "take in" these smaller voting areas without the consent of a majority of their qualified voters, since in the original formation of the district a majority votes of the entire area would govern, and hence a smaller district might be included although a majority of its own citizens were opposed.¹⁴¹

When opposition developed in the adjacent areas, the committee of the Young Men's Business League re-emphasized that even the slightest appearance of coercion should be avoided, since the entire project had been conceived and planned from the beginning as a cooperative endeavor, and since to do otherwise would probably create animosity toward Beaumont in the adjacent areas. As a consequence, adjacent districts were advised that they would not be permitted to participate in the formation of the original district unless they presented written evidence that a majority of their qualified voters desired to do so. These districts were given until June 25, 1940, to produce such evidence. When the outlying districts did not submit such

¹⁴¹ "Lamar College Expansion Project" (pamphlet; Beaumont: Young Men's Business League, 1940).

evidence by that date, it became apparent that only the three public school districts of Beaumont wanted to form the original district. It was explained that territories not desiring to enter at this time were not necessarily opposed to the project, but that they wanted to vote on whether or not to join the college district in an election involving only their own district.¹⁴²

The central committee decided to present to the qualified voters of the Beaumont, French, and South Park Districts on Saturday, September 21, 1940, the opportunity to decide on the following propositions:

1. The creation of a Lamar Union Junior College District to be composed of the Independent School Districts of Beaumont, South Park, and French.
2. The issuance of \$850,000 in 30-year serial bonds for the construction and equipment of a splendid college plant.
3. The levying of a tax not to exceed twenty cents on the \$100 valuation for the support and maintenance of the college.
4. Election of a board of trustees to govern the college.¹⁴³

To fulfill the legal requirement of having seven trustees available to govern the expanded college, educational leaders in the three Beaumont school districts were

¹⁴² Loc. cit.

¹⁴³ The Road Ahead (pamphlet), op. cit.

requested to suggest two qualified men from each school district. The six men so chosen nominated a seventh. These men agreed to be candidates for the non-salaried board of trustees to govern the proposed college. The proposed board included seven civic and educational leaders from the various communities.

In the weeks preceding the election scheduled for September 21, 1940, the public was informed of the many aspects and ramifications of the impending issue, with all of the usual avenues being used for the dissemination of publicity. There were articles in the daily newspapers; radio programs were scheduled; brochures were distributed; and public meetings were arranged. One of the brochures that was given wide distribution by the Young Men's Business League explained in a series of questions and answers items that citizens wanted to know about the expansion plan. Some of these questions and answers are listed as follows:

1. How much is the proposed bond issue for the Lamar Expansion program, and for what purpose will the money be used?

The proposed bond issue is not to exceed \$850,000. The money, if voted, will be used to establish and equip a new college plant. . . . It has been calculated by reliable architects that such a college plant can be established for \$850,000 and that this plant would provide ample facilities for 1,000 students.

2. How much will this expansion program cost the average tax-payer?

The maximum amount which it could cost any tax-payer under the laws of Texas would be twenty cents on the \$100 valuation. County valuations will be used, and the taxes will be collected by the county; and since the average tax-payer is not assessed for more than \$1,500 on the county tax rolls, his tax could not exceed \$3.00 per year.

3. How long would it be before this expanded junior college would develop into a four-year college?

It must be clearly understood that the present expansion program is being projected as a broadened junior college rather than as a senior college. In the first place, the laws of Texas make no provision for the levying of a tax in a local community for the support of a local four-year college, while such provision has been made for the support of a junior college. Consequently, bonds and taxes would have to be voted for junior college purposes only.

However, once a new and separate plant is provided for an enlarged junior college, on a campus of its own, there would be nothing to prevent the board of trustees of such an institution from permitting senior college classes to be organized if they so desire and the demand is evident; and use could be made of the buildings and equipment for such classes. Of course, the tuition charged senior division students would have to pay all operating costs of this division, as present laws would not permit any tax money to be used for this purpose.

4. Where would this college be located?

Texas laws provide that the campus for such a college must be chosen by the Board of Trustees of the college.

It might be added in this connection that the board of trustees of the South Park Independent School District, which now operates Lamar College purchased a 58½-acre tract of land at a very low cost a few years ago in order to attempt to be ready to meet the present over-crowded condition which they could see developing in the college. This tract of land would be more than ample for the establishment of a greater Lamar College.

5. Why does not the South Park Independent School District expand Lamar College?

It would be impossible for any one public school to develop the kind of college this community needs and deserves. No one district within its bounds has sufficient valuation to build and support such an institution in addition to caring for its public schools. By including several public school districts in one college district, the valuations are sufficient to permit a very low tax rate. Furthermore, the college will offer its services to all the high school graduates within the college district, just as the public schools care for their respective territories, except that a small college tuition will be charged.

If Lamar College continues to have the financial support of only one public school district, its student body will have to be limited and its services curtailed.

6. Would there be a different tuition charged to students outside the new college district as compared to those within the district?

This would be a question of policy for the board of trustees of the college to determine, but undoubtedly students living inside the college district would be charged a much lower tuition than those living outside. The exact tuition rate would depend upon several factors; size of the student body, amount of tax levied, number of different courses offered, and other factors.

7. Would it be possible to enlarge the college district in later years if other territory desires to come in?

Provision is made under the laws of Texas for annexing territory to an existing junior college district, provided such annexation be previously approved by the college board of trustees, and voted by an election in the territory requesting annexation. Procedure for such an election is simple.

8. What chance would there be to secure state aid for such a junior college?

The chances appear favorable that within the next few years the state of Texas will subsidize junior colleges to some extent, probably as much as \$60 per student. It would be much cheaper for the state of Texas to subsidize junior colleges than to educate freshmen and sophomores at the state supported senior colleges.¹⁴⁴

Another argument that was used by proponents of the expansion program was that if a junior college district was created, the State Board of Education probably would never permit the establishment of another public college nearby. On the other hand, it was pointed out, a defeat of the proposed college district in Beaumont would be an invitation to other communities to form such a district, and this would take away from Beaumont the advantages of being the college community of the Sabine Area.

The day before the election, Gene Maquin, president of the Young Men's Business League expressed confidence that the election would be won by an overwhelming majority. In a statement to the Beaumont Enterprise he said:

The future of Lamar College is in the hands of the voters. We believe that in the past few weeks we have convinced the parents and taxpayers that the expansion of Lamar College, which has not reached the limit of student enrollment with its present plant, is necessary to the cultural and economic development of the city.

¹⁴⁴ Loc. cit.

No formidable opposition has presented itself because it is practically impossible to oppose a proposition which has but one unselfish aim--the future welfare of our children and our community, which they will eventually govern.¹⁴⁵

Newspaper headlines the following day told that a greater Lamar College District had been created. The total number of votes cast was about 1900, and each of the proposals carried by about 300 votes. Although that was by no means an overwhelming majority, leaders of the movement were gratified by the results.¹⁴⁶

It was announced that the school board of the South Park Independent School District would continue to govern the college throughout the 1940-41 college year. However, it was emphasized that from the time of the opening of the new institution, the new board of trustees would govern it, and there would be no affiliation with the school board of South Park or any other governing body.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, September 21, 1940.

¹⁴⁶ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, September 22, 1940.

¹⁴⁷ Loc. cit.

V. LAMAR UNION JUNIOR COLLEGE

The new board of trustees for the Lamar Union Junior College District¹⁴⁸ met for the first time on September 24, 1940, just three days after their election. The board was composed of M. L. Love, Gene Naquin, Herman Iles, Beeman Strong, Dr. Talbot A. Tumbleson, J. M. Combs, and L. K. Wall. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Tumbleson, acting as chairman, who immediately asked for nominations for president. J. M. Combs was elected president by acclamation and succeeded to the chair. Then, Dr. Tumbleson was elected vice-president, and L. K. Wall was elected secretary. It was decided to seek a meeting with the South Park School Board on September 26, 1940, for the purpose of discussing events of mutual interest.¹⁴⁹

Initial Organization

The board of trustees for Lamar College met with the South Park Board as planned on September 26, 1940, and an atmosphere of complete harmony and co-operation was noted.

¹⁴⁸ Although the legal name of the district was Lamar Union Junior College District, the name of the college remained Lamar College until it lost its junior college status in 1951.

¹⁴⁹ Minutes of the Lamar College Board of Trustees, Vol. 1, September 24, 1940, p. 1.

The South Park Board officially agreed to continue the operation of the college for the remainder of the school year in order that the Lamar College Board of Trustees might devote its time to problems incident to the construction of a college plant. Furthermore, the Lamar Board accepted the opportunity of purchasing a fifty-eight and one-half acre tract of land from the South Park School District at a total cost of \$25,538.¹⁵⁰ The new college was later erected on that site.

The architectural firm of Livesay, Stone, and Pitts was employed to submit plans and specifications for buildings.¹⁵¹ The architects were told that the following buildings would be needed: (1) administration, (2) science, (3) vocational, (4) gymnasium and athletic plant, (5) heating plant, and (6) auditorium. In addition, it was pointed out that a students' union and a dormitory would be desirable if enough money were available.¹⁵² Shortly thereafter, the board of trustees authorized J. M. Combs, president of the Lamar College Board of Trustees, and John E. Gray, dean of men at Lamar College, to accompany the architects on a trip

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., September 28, 1940, p. 3.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., October 9, 1940, p. 7.

¹⁵² Ibid., October 14, 1940, p. 13.

to "inspect the architecture, curricula, teaching procedures, and community relationships of junior colleges in California."¹⁵³

That was the first time that John E. Gray was mentioned as having an official connection with the new college, except that on October 14, 1940, J. M. Combs reported that the South Park School Board had offered the Lamar Board temporary office and meeting space, files, and stenographic service under the supervision of John E. Gray. On March 31, 1941, Mr. Gray was employed as director of the college. He was to serve until the board found it desirable to select a president, and, in the interim, he would have the same powers, duties, and responsibilities that a president would have. At the same meeting G. A. Wimberly was employed to set up and keep a set of books.¹⁵⁴ At a later date, he was named business manager.

John E. Gray and the Lamar College Board of Trustees worked very hard during the latter part of the 1940-41 year in making plans for the future. It was necessary for them to decide on the priority of building construction, to plan

¹⁵³ Ibid., November 14, 1940, p. 13.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., March 31, 1941, p. 147.

a curriculum, to hire teachers, to make provision for classrooms for the following year, and to care for a myriad of other problems that were confronting them. It had been recognized earlier that it would not be possible to erect sufficient buildings by the beginning of the 1941-42 year to care for the student body.

A strong selling point for the expansion program had been the need for technical, vocational, and semi-technical training by the youth of the Sabine Area. The Young Men's Business League practically promised that the new college would provide training programs for the pre-employment needs of youth and the post-employment needs of employed adults. The board of trustees decided to conduct an occupational survey to help them plan the type of curriculum that should be provided for these pre-employment and post-employment needs. It was also believed that the survey would provide specific information and suggestions for determining the type and size of the vocations building.

The survey was conducted by citizens of Beaumont, with the aid of consultants from the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, and an attempt was made to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To list the firms in the Lamar College Service Area employing ten or more persons including the mailing address, the number of persons employed, and the name of person or persons doing the hiring.

2. To list the occupational pursuits, the average number of employees engaged therein, and the possible number of employees hired each year with and without experience.

3. To recommend a pre-employment training program for Lamar College to prepare youths to enter chosen occupations found in the Sabine Area.

4. To recommend a post-employment program for employed adults working in trade and industry, distributive, commercial, semi-professional, and other fields.

5. To recommend for Lamar College the floor space required in a trades and industrial building for the recommended pre-employment and post-employment training programs.

6. To determine the number of young people eligible for training and their present interests.¹⁵⁵

The results of the survey were compiled and published by the college, and the findings provided usable information for the board of trustees and architects. However, one of the most important aspects of the project was that this was among the first of a long list of occasions when the administration or the board of trustees sought advice or suggestions from local people in order that the needs of the community might be more adequately considered.

Because of the great need for trained workers in national defense industries in 1940 and 1941, the board of

¹⁵⁵ Occupational Survey of Sabine Area (Beaumont: Lamar Union Junior College District, 1941), p. 1.

trustees considered various ways in which the college might give immediate assistance. With no facilities or buildings immediately available, the outlook was not too bright. However, on January 8, 1941, John E. Gray reported to the trustees that a representative group of the Beaumont National Defense Advisory Council had conferred with officials of the State Department of Vocational Education relative to the establishment of a National Defense Training Program in Beaumont. The board of trustees decided that the college would offer to sponsor the program if facilities could be obtained.¹⁵⁶ The offer was soon accepted, and arrangements were made to locate the training center at the Southeast Texas State Fairgrounds. Then, the college requested that the State Department of Vocational Education provide machinery and equipment for the training. On March 6, 1941, it was announced that \$43,700 had been approved for the program in Beaumont.¹⁵⁷ By the end of June, the defense training program was under way.

Undoubtedly, the faculty and students at Lamar College looked on the 1940-41 year as a sort of "lame duck" session. They knew that the college would be separated,

¹⁵⁶ Minutes, op. cit., January 8, 1941, p. 101

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., March 6, 1941, p. 132.

administratively at least, from the South Park Independent School District. As early as March 25, 1941, arrangements had been made with South Park for the college to continue to utilize buildings and equipment until the new plant was ready for occupancy.¹⁵⁸

By the time the 1941-42 year began, it was evident that the new college would differ greatly from the old one. Even without a single new building ready for use, sufficient changes had been made in the administration, faculty, and curriculum to give some credence to the statement that Lamar was "blazing a new trail in the field of college education in Texas."¹⁵⁹ Excerpts from the Beaumont Enterprise effectively tell the story of the revised curriculum:

This year the college, with the introduction of terminal courses, will offer, by far, the most varied and complete array of training classes in the history of the school and one of the most adaptable curriculums offered by any junior college in the nation.

The curriculum, patterned largely after the junior college system of the state of California, has been divided into two major divisions--the university preparatory and the terminal.

The university preparatory division will include the first two years of standard university preparatory and pre-professional training. . . . Each course in

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., March 25, 1941, p. 141.

¹⁵⁹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 23, 1941.

this division has been fully accredited with the state department of education, the Texas Association of Colleges and Universities, the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities, and the American Association of Junior Colleges. . . . These courses will fit fully the requirements for the first two years of degree work at any standard college or university.

The second major division will be the terminal division. It will include two general types of courses: business courses and trades and industrial courses. the business courses are set up on a practical business basis and are designed to lead to employment at the end of two years of college training. . . . It should be clearly understood by both parents and students that many of these terminal business courses are not transferable to senior colleges and universities for credit. The courses are not set up with the idea that the student will transfer to a senior college or university, but are designed to fit the student for employment at the end of two years of college training. . . .

The second section of courses in the terminal division of the new curriculum is known as the trades and industrial division. These courses offer skilled instruction in auto and aircraft mechanics, electrical and radio work, machine shop, petroleum refining, and distributive education. Also, oxyacetylene welding, burning, and electric welding will be taught as related skills to auto and aircraft mechanics and machine shop.

Distributive education, a specialized course in the art of distributing merchandise, is designed to teach boys and girls the art of proper buying and selling of merchandise, and stresses the service philosophy of the distributive field. . . .

All of the courses in the trades and industrial divisions are designed to lead to employment at the end of two years of training and do not carry transfer credit to senior colleges and universities.

. . . The college will meet the needs of every boy or girl in this entire area. . . . It will be a real service institution supplying a sufficient, but not an

over-supply of trained personnel to fit into the business, professional, and industrial life of the Sabine Area.¹⁶⁰

Not listed in the above mentioned newspaper article but of equal importance was the civilian pilot training program, a special phase of the terminal division, which was organized to provide a competently supervised primary ground school training in the subjects of meteorology, navigation, and civil air regulations. Upon successful completion of the course the student was to be granted a private pilot's certificate. This program was headed by O. E. Archer, director of the school of science.

Except for additional personnel to teach the new courses that were offered, the faculty remained about the same under its new status. As has been indicated previously, there were important administrative changes. John E. Gray, director, succeeded C. W. Eisingman who continued as superintendent of the South Park Schools. D. W. Boltnott remained as dean of the college; G. A. Wimberly was named business manager; and Celeste Kitchen became the registrar.

¹⁶⁰ Loc. cit.

¹⁶¹ Lamar College, Nineteenth Annual Bulletin, 1941-1942, Beaumont, Texas, p. 16.

For the first time since the creation of South Park Junior College, the purpose of the institution as stated in annual catalogues was materially altered. The objectives of the college as shown in the 1941-42 catalogue were:

Lamar College is a two-year institution of junior college rank, the primary purpose of which is to promote the development of its students.

The scope of the institution is broad. It is organized to serve at least four major groups of students; (1) those preparing for upper division standing or admittance to professional curricula of senior colleges and universities; (2) those seeking a cultural education in courses that terminate at the end of the college year; (3) those desiring two years of technical, trade, business or semi-professional training that will qualify them to enter the business and industrial world upon completion of two years of college training; and (4) those whose needs are best met by short term courses and cooperative programs, particularly in the field of adult education or on an evening school basis.¹⁶¹

Tuition charges were considerably different under the expanded college. Full-time students taking university preparatory or business courses and living within the junior college district were charged \$42.50 per semester, while out-of-district students taking those courses were charged \$67.50 per semester. A differentiated schedule was listed for students enrolling for industrial and distributive education courses. In-district students taking such courses were charged \$25.00; students from outside the district were

¹⁶¹ Lamar College, Nineteenth Annual Bulletin, 1941-1942, Beaumont, Texas, p. 16.

required to pay \$35.00 per semester. Officials of the college justified this difference by explaining that the salaries of vocational teachers are paid largely by the federal government through the Department of Vocational Education of the State Department of Education.¹⁶²

Prior to the beginning of the 1941-42 year, it had been hoped, and even anticipated, that the new vocations building would be ready for occupancy by the time the fall semester began. When it was determined that it would not be available, arrangements were made for shop classes to be taught in temporary quarters at the South Texas Fairgrounds. Students were transported back and forth from the college for these classes. All other class work was conducted in the buildings that had been utilized the previous year.

On November 20, 1941, the junior college examiner visited the college and submitted a report to the state board of examiners. In a letter dated December 1, 1941, the examiner had this to say about his findings in relation to the curriculum:

. . . The college examiner desires to express his thorough commendation for the very effective vocational and terminal offerings of Lamar College The

¹⁶² News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 24, 1941.

college makes a definite attempt to meet the needs of industry with well trained young people who are effective in semi-skilled and skilled vocations. While Lamar College has by no means quit the task of preparing students for higher academic work, it is very definitely and quite effectively attempting to meet the needs of the great majority of junior college students who are not destined to enter senior colleges.

In addition to the civilian pilot training program, Lamar College is training approximately 400 youths in national defense emergency vocational training During this emergency Lamar College is running two distinct institutions, one of which offers college training, while the other is primarily concerned with a quick imparting of skills so badly needed in defense industries.¹⁶³

In his conclusions, the examiner again express his approbation of the vocational program, and recommended its continuation, with increased emphasis on guidance for individual students. Furthermore, he stated, "With much enthusiasm, the college examiner recommends that Lamar College be retained on the list as a first class junior college."¹⁶⁴

During the year the board of trustees was primarily concerned with the building program. By December, the last major contract had been let, and by the end of the spring

¹⁶³ E. C. Dodd, "Report to State Board of Examiners," December 1, 1941.

¹⁶⁴ Loc. cit.

sufficient buildings had been completed for the college to be moved to its new quarters.¹⁶⁵

Anticipating an entirely new physical plant by the beginning of the fall semester of 1942, the board of trustees believed that there would be a considerable increase in enrollment. This, of course, meant that additional teachers would be needed. Also, it was decided that certain administrative and organizational changes would make it possible for the policies and principles of the board to be carried out more effectively. Accordingly, on June 1, 1942, the position of director of the college was abolished and John E. Gray was elected president. Simultaneously, other administrative changes were announced. F. S. Braden was named dean of guidance; O. B. Archer was promoted to dean of the night school, in addition to his other duties as director of the division of science and co-ordinator of the civilian pilot training program; R. M. Hodgkiss was named dean of men; and D. W. Boitnott, who had served as dean of the college for eighteen years, was relieved of that position and was designated as director of the liberal arts division.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, June 1, 1942.

¹⁶⁶ Loc. cit.

Under the new arrangement, the president was made the chief executive and administrator, directly responsible to the board of trustees. The dean of guidance and the dean of the night school worked directly under and were responsible to the president. Under the two deans were four divisions, each with a director.¹⁶⁷ President Gray made the following statement in relation to the new organization:

The organization of the college into the four major divisions will make it possible to serve the needs of the boys and girls of the area for higher education in the fields of pre-professional training, practical business, vocational and technical training, and the first two years of science and engineering. The broad program affords the youth of the area a variety of training unsurpassed by any junior college in the United States.¹⁶⁸

During the first week of June, 1942, college facilities were transferred from the South Park School site to the new location. Thus, when summer school classes began on June 8, 1942, they were held on the new campus. All of the buildings were not complete; however, sufficient classrooms were available for the classes that were scheduled.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Loc. cit.

¹⁶⁸ Loc. cit.

¹⁶⁹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, June 4, 1942.

Except for a few details, all of the new buildings were ready when the fall semester of 1942 began. The new plant was constructed on a sixty-acre site and included five modern brick structures, which were named the administration building, library, science building, union-gymnasium, and vocations building. These were in addition to the athletic field house, practice fields, garage, work shop, and store rooms. The college catalogue for 1942-43 stated that each building was furnished with new equipment of the most modern type obtainable, and it was estimated that the entire new plant, together with all equipment, was valued at more than \$1,000,000.¹⁷⁰

The War Years

It was believed that effects of the war would seriously affect student enrollment in the fall of 1942, for it was anticipated that many students and some teachers would enter the armed forces either before the college year began or shortly thereafter. This, however, did not prevent President Gray from optimistically predicting an enrollment of 800 students. This would have been an increase of thirty-seven over the enrollment of the previous year.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Lamar College, Catalogue, 1942-43, p. 15.

¹⁷¹ News item in the Beaumont Journal, September 6, 1943.

Actually, the president's prediction was too high for only 748 students registered during the 1942-43 year.¹⁷²

On January 8, 1943, the president said that the outlook for the spring enrollment was not bright, since over half of the young men at the college were of draft age. He stated that the total enrollment had already dropped off 100 since the beginning of the fall semester; however, he emphasized that conditions at Lamar College were not unlike those in similar institutions over the nation.¹⁷³ Enrollment continued to decrease until by the end of the spring semester, 1943, there were only 329 full-time students.

In a combined dedicatory and graduation program held on May 31, 1943, J. M. Combs, president of the board of trustees, dedicated the new buildings and gave the commencement address. The speaker said he was dedicating the new \$1,000,000 plant to the "youths of tomorrow who will perpetuate the democratic principles for which our boys are now giving their lives."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Enrollment Report Analysis, (Registrar's Office, Lamar College, 1943).

¹⁷³ Loc. cit.

¹⁷⁴ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, June 1, 1943.

Sixty-eight students were scheduled to graduate; however, a number of them were given their diplomas in absentia, since they were already in the armed forces.

At the beginning of the summer term in 1943, a new "tri-semester" plan was launched at the college. The school year was divided into three semester, one coming during the summer and the other two during what is normally the long session. The new system was planned to meet war time demands by speeding up the training of youths.¹⁷⁵ When registration was complete, a total of 230 students had enrolled. This was the largest summer enrollment in the history of the institution. Commenting on the summer school program, President Gray said:

. . . An unusual factor about the enrollment was that it was predominated by boys. Most of them are seventeen years of age or a little younger and want to get in as much college work as possible before entering military service. Some of the girls are waiting until September, but apparently the boys are entering while they may.¹⁷⁶

Prior to the beginning of the fall semester in 1943, the war time philosophy of the college was summarized in an article in the Beaumont Enterprise. Quoted in part, it stated:

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., June 3, 1943.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., June 8, 1943.

Frills of education have been relegated to another day, and streamlining for war time efficiency and speed have stepped in at Lamar College. . . .

Realistically the administrative staff of Lamar has faced the order of the day--that all youth now is involved in its greatest assignment--that of preserving freedom and the democratic way of life for posterity. The speed-up of the college has been planned to fit into this scheme and the college will put its shoulder to the wheel in preparing youth for this conflict, and for life in the days of peace that seem not too far in the future.¹⁷⁷

The war years were difficult ones at Lamar. With fewer students, all of the teachers and administrators were not needed. This problem was solved with comparative ease, for as enrollment decreased, teachers and administrators simultaneously resigned to enter other fields of employment or military service. By the end of the summer of 1944, the president, John E. Gray, was on active duty with the navy; F. S. Braden, dean of guidance, was serving with the navy; R. M. Hodgkiss, dean of men, director of athletics, and director of physical education, was in the navy; H. F. Baugh, head of the department of English was in the army; Ralph Huitt, assistant professor of social science was on duty with the navy; and N. H. Kelton, assistant professor of chemistry, was serving in the navy. The board of trustees

¹⁷⁷ ibid., September 11, 1943.

granted military leave to all of these teachers and administrators.¹⁷⁸

On July 18, 1944, O. B. Archer was chosen to serve as acting president during the absence of John E. Gray. At the same time, J. B. Norton was designated as acting dean while F. S. Braden was on leave.¹⁷⁹ O. B. Archer had been associated with the college since its inception and was director of the science division and co-ordinator of the civilian pilot training program at the time of his election as acting president. J. B. Norton had been a professor of chemistry.

At the general election in November, 1944, J. M. Combs, president of the board of trustees for Lamar College was elected as representative to the Congress of the United States from the Second Congressional District. This made it necessary for him to submit his resignation as a member of the board of trustees. The letter that he wrote to the board is quoted below:

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., September 2, 1944.

¹⁷⁹ Minutes of the Lamar College Board of Trustees, Vol. 3, July 18, 1944, p. 228.

Board of Trustees
Lamar Union Junior College District
Beaumont, Texas

Gentlemen:

I hereby tender my resignation as a member of the Lamar College Board of Trustees. As you know, my duties in Washington will make it impossible for me to render any real service as a member of the board.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work with you in the development of Lamar College. I need not tell you how large a place Lamar College occupies in my civic interests nor express my regret at not being able to share with you in its future development. However, its place of service has been found; the foundation of its future growth securely laid. It remains only to build, to pioneer, to grow in service to our youth and to our country. Fortunately, we have developed a leadership in the school itself, executive and faculty, which with your help will wisely guide its future growth. I know, too, you will plan in the future as we have in the past to so conduct the school that no ambitious youth willing to work his way, or her way, through Lamar shall ever be turned away because of lack of funds.

With personal regards and best wishes to each of you, I am,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) J. M. Combs

J. M. Combs¹⁸⁰

The resignation was accepted with regret, for the other members of the board knew how valuable J. M. Combs' services had been to the college during the past years. This will be emphasized in a subsequent chapter when additional information will be given concerning him.

¹⁸⁰ Minutes of the Lamar College Board of Trustees,
Vol. 4, December 21, 1944, p. 20.

Acting President O. B. Archer, Acting Dean J. E. Norton, and the faculty worked hard and faithfully during the war years to operate the college in such a manner that the greatest possible contribution could be made to the war effort. At the same time an attempt was made to obtain full utilization from resources at hand. At times, faculty members were asked to teach extra classes or to teach in subject matter areas, other than their major fields. This was unavoidable because it was practically impossible to hire qualified college teachers. By the end of the 1944-45 year, both administrators and teachers were looking forward with anticipation to the time when they might expect some degree of relief or a return to normalcy.

Training for Peace

Soon after the war ended in the summer of 1946, plans were made to shift the emphasis from training for war to training for peace. The war training program that had been operated by the college was discontinued, and plans were made for an organized program of training to fit men and women for jobs in local peace time industries.

Members of the faculty and staff who had been on military leave began to return to their positions during the fall of 1945; all of them had either resumed their duties or had submitted resignations by June, 1946. When

President Gray arrived at his office in November, 1945, after being released from active duty with the navy, he found the faculty and staff confronted with a number of problems that almost defied solution. As was true at nearly all other colleges and universities, veterans by the hundreds sought admission to classes at Lamar. With a faculty too small to teach the students and with a curriculum that had not been particularly planned for veterans, the president, the faculty, and the board of trustees attempted to make such adjustments as were made necessary by these changed conditions.

Several significant administrative changes were made before the beginning of the fall semester, 1946. As a beginning, John E. Gray returned from military service in November, 1945, and replaced O. B. Archer who had been serving as acting president. O. B. Archer then became dean of the evening school, director of the division of arts and science, and co-ordinator of veterans' education. When F. S. Eraden was released from active duty with the navy in the spring of 1946, he replaced J. B. Norton who had been acting as dean of the college. Shortly thereafter, F. S. Eraden resigned to enter private business, and O. B. Archer was chosen to replace him. Other administrative changes or additions were as follows: (1) Norris E. Kelton, returned from active duty with the navy, was named dean of student

life, director of the science division, and head of the department of chemistry; (2) David Engman, a former Lamar College graduate and a navy veteran, was selected as dean of men and head basketball coach; (3) M. L. McLaughlin, a former high school principal and an army veteran, was named co-ordinator of veterans' education; (4) W. J. Holloway, a former public school superintendent, became director of the veterans' advisement center; (5) Mrs. Bess Neal Gentry was employed as dean of women and director of health and physical education for women;¹⁸¹ and (6) M. L. Cariker, a former public school administrator, was named director of the evening or extended day program.¹⁸²

In the summer of 1946, President Gray estimated that 1100 students would enroll the following fall. Of that number, he thought about 700 would be veterans. As a consequence, twenty-five new teachers were employed, making a total of fifty faculty members.¹⁸³

Soon after registration began that fall it was realized that there would be more students than could be adequately accommodated. After 1100 students had enrolled

¹⁸¹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 18, 1946.

¹⁸² Ibid., September 11, 1946.

¹⁸³ Ibid., September 1, 1946.

registration was suspended until other arrangements could be made. The result was that additional teachers were hired, and the class schedule was revised. A news item in the Peaumont Enterprise stated that arrangements had been made to care for 200 additional students in the day program and 400 in an "extended-day" program. The extended day classes were scheduled to meet from 4:30 until 9:30 p. m., four days per week.¹⁸⁴ By the time registration was completed over 1800 students had been enrolled.¹⁸⁵

With such a large enrollment, physical facilities were taxed to the limit. Many classrooms were utilized every period during the day and until 9:30 p. m. With no money available for erecting new buildings, college officials sought relief from other sources. Consequently, an application was made to an agency of the federal government for some surplus buildings. On December 5, 1946, it was announced that three surplus buildings had been granted to the college for use in meeting the overflow enrollment. The facilities granted included an auditorium, a cafeteria, and

¹⁸⁴ News item in the Peaumont Journal, September 23, 1946.

¹⁸⁵ Enrollment Report Analysis, (Registrar's Office, Lamar College, 1947).

two small classroom buildings, with an estimated value of \$125,000. The federal government agreed to pay for dismantling and reerecting the buildings on the college site. It was anticipated that all of them would be ready for occupancy by the fall of 1947.¹⁸⁶

During the late spring of 1947, legislation that would have changed Lamar College to a degree-granting institution was enacted. However, the state comptroller did not certify that sufficient state funds were available for the \$1,000,000 appropriation that was provided in the bill. Even though the bill was passed by both senate and the house of representatives of the state of Texas and was signed by the governor, it died because of the lack of funds. A detailed analysis of the movement to make Lamar a four-year college and the legislative fight that followed will be given in the following chapter.

The annual catalogue for 1947-48 revealed no major changes in the curriculum, except that many new courses were organized and increased emphasis was given to the evening school. As was previously mentioned, M. L. Cariker was employed as supervisor of evening classes for college credit.

¹⁸⁶ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, December 5, 1946.

Later, Joe E. Thrash became supervisor of evening classes in the vocational division. These two men devoted their full time to planning and publicizing the evening program. A special supplement to the annual catalogue was issued in the summer of 1947. This publication, containing detailed evening school announcements and information, was given wide distribution in the Sabine Area. A quotation from that supplement aptly describes the sincere desire of officials of the college to meet the needs of the community and area:

Lamar College desires to meet the educational needs of the Sabine Area at all times. In keeping with that policy the evening school of the college operates a very flexible program of classes that is designed especially for those who are regularly employed and cannot attend classes during the day. To those desiring to continue their general education or extend their trade knowledge or skills, and remain in full-time employment the Lamar College Evening School offers an opportunity that is both convenient and low in cost.

To meet the needs of the people in the area, Lamar College is prepared to: (1) operate classes for any group of twelve or more, (2) operate classes in all subjects that are desired and for which competent instructors are obtainable, (3) operate such classes at any time, day or night, and at any location that is convenient to the group, and finally (4) offer such courses at the lowest possible cost to the individual.¹⁸⁷

At the end of the regular registration period in 1947, 1510 full-time day students had enrolled. That total

¹⁸⁷ Lamar College, Supplement to the Twenty-Fifth Annual Catalogue, 1947-1948, p. 6.

did not include part-time students taking academic or vocational courses. On the basis of estimates made during the summer, eleven new faculty members were employed, making a total of sixty-seven regular teachers.¹⁸⁸

Jefferson Junior College

On February 12, 1948, the board of trustees authorized John E. Gray, president, to make a survey to determine whether there was a need for a Negro branch of the junior college.¹⁸⁹ The president immediately enlisted the cooperation and help of the principals of the high schools and other Negro leaders in Beaumont. Also, he obtained assurances from school officials of the South Park Independent School District and of the Beaumont Independent School District that facilities at the high schools would be made available for junior college classes, if other arrangements could not be made. In early March, all Negro residents of Beaumont were invited to attend a mass meeting in the Charlton-Pollard High School to discuss the "possibilities and opportunities of organizing a Negro branch of

¹⁸⁸ "Registrar's Report" (Lamar State College of Technology, 1953).

¹⁸⁹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, February 13, 1948.

Lamar College."¹⁹⁰ At that meeting, John E. Cray outlined some of the tentative plans that had been formulated, and citizens were given an opportunity to ask questions or make suggestions. On April 2, it was definitely announced that the Negro school would open at the beginning of the fall of 1948.¹⁹¹

As planned, classes began in the Negro college, later named Jefferson Junior College, in the fall of 1948. The curriculum was divided into two divisions, the pre-professional and the vocations. Separate administrative heads, or supervisors, were selected for each of the divisions.¹⁹² That arrangement was continued until 1951, when Lamar College became Lamar State College of Technology. At that time, arrangements were made for the facilities of Jefferson Junior college to be transferred to Texas Southern University. The university continued to operate the school as an extension center.

An Expanding College

In the spring of 1948, United States Representative J. M. Combs, past president of the Lamar College Board of

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., March 16, 1948

¹⁹¹ News item in the Beaumont Journal, April 2, 1948.

¹⁹² News item in The Informer (Negro weekly newspaper, published at Beaumont, Texas), October 1, 1948.

Trustees delivered the silver anniversary commencement address to the largest graduating class in the history of the college. Of the 435 students in the class, approximately 250 were veterans of World War II.¹⁹³

The 1948-49 college year was of prime importance in the history of the institution, for it was in the spring of 1949 that final legislative approval was obtained for changing Lamar College into a four-year school. Details concerning that development are presented subsequently; however, it should be noted here that from the spring of 1949 until the fall of 1951, trustees, teachers, and administrators were busily engaged in making plans for the transition.

Enrollment at the college increased almost continuously from 1941 until 1951, when it became a senior college. The following table shows the enrollment trend:¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ News item in the Peaumont Journal, June 2, 1948.

¹⁹⁴ Enrollment Report Analysis, op. cit., 1953.

TABLE III
ENROLLMENTS AND GRADUATES OF LAYAR COLLEGE
1941-1951

Year	Number of Individual Students	Number of Graduates
1940-1941	686	98
1941-1942	763	98
1942-1943	749	76
1943-1944	563	46
1944-1945	604	24
1945-1946	1,425	61
1946-1947	2,038	246
1947-1948	1,828	442
1948-1949	2,213	372
1949-1950	3,763	266
1950-1951	4,050	176

An analysis of the above table seems to reveal a discrepancy between the number of individual students and the number of graduates during the last four years of the report. The figures as shown are correct; however, beginning in the fall of 1947, many adults registered for vocational or college preparatory courses on a part-time basis. These students were counted in the total number of individuals registered, but few of them completed sufficient work to obtain a diploma. The table shows that in the 1950-51 college year, 4,050 individual students enrolled. Of that number, 1,975 were full-time college students. When the remaining 2,075 part-time students were converted

to full-time equivalents for a report that was sent to the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, there were only 378. Thus, the total enrollment based on full-time equivalents for that year was 2,370.¹⁹⁵ Also, in 1951, many students who had completed sufficient work to graduate from the junior college chose not to do so, for they planned to remain at Lamar State College of Technology for a bachelor's degree.

This chapter has been concerned with the junior college phase of the development of Lamar State College of Technology. The background for the initial creation of a junior college was presented by giving a brief resume of the historical and geographical factors that may have influenced early leaders to consider establishing an institution of higher learning in the Beaumont area. Then, the junior college movement in the United States and in Texas was reviewed, in so far as it may have affected the local situation. Finally, a chronological history of the college from 1923 until 1951 was given. These accounts have pointed the way to the following chapter which will begin with the background and justification for the creation of a senior college.

¹⁹⁵ Annual Report to the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, (Office of the Dean, Lamar State College of Technology, 1950-1951).

CHAPTER III

LAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

When legislation was enacted in 1949 making possible the creation of Lamar State College of Technology, this was the climax of a movement that had begun several years earlier to change Lamar College into a four-year state supported institution. In this chapter, that development will be traced, with particular attention being given to the legislative process. Then, in the history of the college from 1951 until 1954, information pertaining to the administrative organization, the faculty, the curriculum, the physical facilities, and finances will be given.

I. THE MOVEMENT FOR ESTABLISHING A DEGREE-GRANTING INSTITUTION

Early Proposals

The first planned or directed movement toward creating a four-year state supported college in Beaumont was begun in the fall of 1946. Prior to that time, the matter had been the subject of discussion and speculation, but nothing definite had been accomplished. The first official reference to the development was a notation in the minutes of a special meeting of the board of trustees of

Lamar College on December 7, 1946. The minutes reflect that the board met for the purpose of making plans for a request to the legislature for the establishment of a four-year college, with Lamar College as the nucleus for the four-year institution. At the meeting, it was decided that information concerning the proposal should be released to the newspapers just as soon as possible.¹

That afternoon, R. F. Packwood, an employee of the Beaumont Enterprise, was called to the office of J. B. Morris, attorney for the college, and was given a prepared statement concerning the proposed expansion.

The following day, Sunday, December 8, 1946, headlines in the Beaumont Enterprise informed the people of southeast Texas of the proposal. The newspaper account stated that in January of 1947, the legislature of the state of Texas would be asked to expand Lamar College into a four-year institution. M. L. Love, president of the Lamar College Board of Trustees, was quoted as saying:

There is no state-supported, four-year college in southeast Texas, at present, although area residents pay taxes to support four-year colleges and universities in other sections of Texas. This is the largest population center in the state without such a school.

¹ Minutes of the Lamar College Board of Trustees, Vol. 5, December 7, 1946, p. 39.

Support of the area's legislative leaders already had been gained, with Lt. Gov.-elect Allan Shivers, State Sen.-elect W. R. Cousins, Jr., and State Reps.-elect Jack Brooks, Otis Lee, and Miller Walker pledging their full co-operation. These men are contacting legislators in the surrounding area to gain their assistance in the movement. In addition, a southeast Texas citizens committee, of outstanding civic and educational leaders, is planned. It will act in an advisory capacity to the local college board.

J. B. Morris, Lamar attorney, is preparing a bill to be presented to the legislature at the opening of the session. It will provide for the establishment and maintenance of a four-year college of the first class to be called Lamar College. Provision for the use of the present college plant, campus, buildings, and equipment by the state will be worked out with the legislature.²

In the same newspaper article, it was pointed out that approximately 300,000 people were living in the southeast Texas area served by Lamar, with about 217,000 of them residing within Jefferson County, and that it was probably only a question of a few years before one-half million people would reside within the area.³

L. K. Wall, a member of the board of trustees, said that there were three ways in which a four-year college could be obtained. One was through local philanthropy; a second was by charging sufficient tuition and fees in the

² News item in the Peaumont Enterprise, December 8, 1946.

³ Loc. cit.

upper division to meet the total cost of instruction and operation; and the third was to change Lamar into a state-supported school. He emphasized that since tax money collected for junior college purposes could not be used to support a senior college, the soundest and most feasible way to provide a four-year college was to make Lamar a state-supported institution.⁴

Otho Plummer,⁵ another member of the board of trustees, made the following statement pertaining to the proposal:

Senior colleges and universities of Texas are literally swamped with students. Many of our Lamar graduates will not be able to gain admittance to senior colleges and universities next year because of crowded conditions, and according to the most reliable estimate of the United States Office of Education, the peak of the college enrollment will not be reached until 1951. This means that additional higher education facilities must be provided somewhere or many veterans and high school graduates will not be able to attend college. We feel that the state should provide some of these higher education facilities right here in this densely populated industrial region.⁶

Legislative Action in 1947

Early in the legislative session, a bill to make Lamar a state-supported senior college was introduced in the

⁴ Loc. cit.

⁵ Otho Plummer was the person who suggested the name of Lamar College, and he is at present, 1955, a member of the Board of Regents for Lamar State College of Technology.

⁶ Feaumont Enterprise, loc. cit.

Texas House of Representatives by Representative Jack Brooks, a former Lamar College student and at present (1955) a member of the United States House of Representatives. The bill passed a first reading on February 3, 1947, and was then sent to the appropriations committee.⁷

Early in February, a small delegation of educational and civic leaders from southeast Texas went to Austin in an attempt to gain legislative support for the proposed measure. These people conferred with Lieutenant Governor Allan Shivers, who expressed a desire to do everything within his power to make Lamar College a four-year school.⁸ Many members of the Senate and House of Representatives gave similar assurances of their support.

Senator W. R. Cousins, Jr., said that he believed the chances of the college being taken over by the state hinged primarily on the plan to emphasize training in the field of petroleum engineering and other subjects related to the petroleum industry. He reported that some opposition was developing, since there were fourteen other junior colleges in the state whose sponsors would also like to have their local institutions converted into four-year state-supported

⁷ Ibid., February 4, 1947.

⁸ Ibid., February 5, 1947.

schools. He estimated that there was about an even chance that the bill would pass in both houses of the legislature.⁹

Approximately 125 industrial, business, professional, educational, and technical leaders from throughout southeast Texas met at Lamar College on February 15, 1947, to consider ways in which they could assist in getting the expansion bill approved by the legislature. They decided to invite the members of the Legislature to the Sabine Area to view the industrial development of the section and see for themselves the possible need for a four-year technological school.¹⁰

On March 16, 1947, about 112 visitors from the state capital, including sixty members of the House of Representatives, visited southeast Texas. These men were taken on a tour of the principal industrial plants of Jefferson and Orange counties.¹¹ Tentative arrangements were then made for members of the Senate to make a similar visit during the latter part of the month; however, because of the critical illness of the wife of one of the senators, the trip was not made.¹²

⁹ Loc. cit.

¹⁰ Ibid., February 16, 1947.

¹¹ Ibid., March 16, 1947.

¹² Ibid., March 27, 1947.

The bill to permit the expansion of the college was given a favorable report by the appropriations committee of the House of Representatives and was then sent back to the entire House for consideration. There, on April 22, it was approved by a vote of 113 to eighteen and was referred to the Senate.¹³

In the Senate, the measure met with greater obstacles. One provision in the proposal was a request for \$1,500,000 for the construction of new buildings. The finance committee of the Senate delayed action on the bill until more was known concerning the outcome of new tax proposals. Finally, on June 4, the committee trimmed the appropriation to \$1,000,000 and reported it favorably to the Senate. There, it was approved as reported. The House of Representatives then agreed to the reduction and passed the proposal in its revised form.

In accordance with Texas laws it was necessary for the comptroller to certify that sufficient revenue would be available for the appropriation. The comptroller did not do this. Consequently, the bill died even after it had been passed in both houses of the Legislature.

¹³ Ibid., April 23, 1947.

The president of the college, the board of trustees, and the legislators from southeast Texas expressed regret that sufficient money was not available to finance the appropriation; however, it was their opinion that the setback was not of a permanent nature. They indicated that the endeavor to secure a four-year state supported school would be continued at the next session of the Legislature in 1949.

Legislative Action in 1949

Early in the fall of 1948, plans were again drafted for carrying the expansion fight to the Legislature, which was scheduled to meet in January. As a beginning the thirty-one senators were invited to the Sabine Area for an expense-paid duck hunt and visit. Fifteen of them, with Lieutenant Governor Allan Shivers acting as host, accepted the invitation. They spent two days hunting and looking over the area served by Lamar College. The Beaumont Enterprise reported that the senators were impressed by the physical properties at Lamar and with its size and enrollment.¹⁴ In relation to the visit, Senator W. R. Cousins, Jr. said that the entire group praised the Sabine Area and talked favorably of the Lamar College project. He expressed

¹⁴ Ibid., December 2, 1948.

the opinion that all of the visiting senators, except possibly one, would support legislation necessary to establish a state technological school in the area.

Representative Jack Brooks of Jefferson County, Representative Ed Hughes of Newton and Jasper Counties, President John E. Gray, and Lamar Attorney J. B. Morris met on December 12, 1948, and formulated definite plans for introducing the legislation the following month. It was decided that Representative Brooks would again be the author of the bills in the House of Representatives, while Representatives Miller Walker and Otis Lee of Jefferson County, Representatives Paul Wilson of San Augustine, Bill Daniel of Liberty, and Ed Hughes would be co-authors. Senator W. R. Cousins, Jr., of Jefferson County was scheduled to be the author of the bills in the Senate.

In an editorial in the Peasmont Enterprise on January 6, 1949, the following facts concerning the proposal were related:

One of the first bills to be thrown before the Texas Legislature will be that making Lamar College a four-year, state-supported technological college.

It was one of the last bills to go through the legislature two years ago when the comptroller underestimated state revenue and thereby vetoed the college for the Sabine-Neches Area.

This time our legislators, with the help of Lieutenant Governor Allan Shivers, are determined to get this bill through early enough to qualify before the funds run out.¹⁵

Three days later, this viewpoint was expressed in another editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise:

There is probably no more profitable concentration of revenue-producing industries in the state than this one. The refineries, the rubber plant, the chemical industries, the shipyards--the state reaps a direct and an indirect monetary benediction from the industry of the people of this area.

The legislature is destined to vote a partial pay-off in the form of state support for a greater Lamar. The strategy has been perfected and refined since the area was euchered out of its college when the bill went through too late to qualify for the comptroller's conservative estimate of state income.

There are hurdles yet to be cleared, but with every phase of industry and business standing to benefit from a technological college in the heart of a technological area, it is hard to feel that this right will be circumvented.¹⁶

All reports concur that the editorial quoted aptly expressed the opinion of most of the people in the Sabine Area. Residents in Port Arthur, Orange, Silsbee, Kountze, Liberty, and other nearby towns assured college leaders that the people of southeast Texas were almost unanimously in favor of the four-year school.

¹⁵ Editorial in the Beaumont Enterprise, January 6, 1949.

¹⁶ Ibid., January 9, 1949.

The bills designed to convert Lamar College into a four-year state technological college were very similar to those introduced in 1947. One of them provided for an appropriation by the state of \$1,000,000 for constructing new buildings for the four-year program. The other established the procedure by which the junior college district could release to the state existing college facilities. The measures were written so that the second bill could not be enacted without the former having been previously passed.

State Senator W. R. Cousins, Jr., introduced the proposed legislation in the Senate on January 20, 1949, and made this statement about it:

I feel much more optimistic about the bill this year than I did at the last session. Although the Senate is extremely friendly toward the measure, other members who have junior colleges in their districts will be watching the bill's progress carefully.¹⁷

The bill was referred to the Senate Finance Committee for further study, and a few days later a subcommittee of three members was named to hold public hearings on the measure. The first public hearing was set for February 21, 1949.

¹⁷ News item in the Peaumont Enterprise, January 13, 1949.

In the House of Representatives, the first of the expansion bills was introduced by Jack Brooks on February 3, 1949, and was then sent to the Appropriations Committee. A public hearing before that committee was scheduled for February 23.¹³

Prior to the public hearing before the Senate sub-committee, Senators Searcy Bracewell and Keith Kelley, two of the three sub-committee members, went to Beaumont to inspect Lamar College facilities. Both Senators Bracewell and Kelley expressed the belief that there was a need for the type of college sought, but neither would make a definite commitment to support the expansion program. When the bill was before the Legislature in 1947, both Senator Bracewell, who was serving in the House of Representatives, and Senator Kelley voted against it.

When the sub-committee of the Senate held the public hearing on February 21, 1949, Herman Iles, president of the Lamar College Board of Trustees, sent an impressive and representative group of witnesses before the committee to assure the senators of the unified support being given the expansion program by the people of east Texas. Testimony by John E. Gray, president of the college, seemed to turn

¹³ Ibid., February 10, 1949.

the tide toward a more favorable consideration by the committee. He outlined for the committee the future plans for affording training for junior college students who would like to complete advanced work and obtain degrees, such as chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and bachelor of science with majors in chemistry or industrial chemistry. Gray then reminded the committee that the Lamar bill should have some preference because it was passed in 1947, but became a "ghost bill" through an error in estimated income. He concluded his formal statement by saying, "We think there is merit, justice, and equity in our case."¹⁹

Senator Bracewell asked President Gray whether plans were being made to limit the curriculum of the expanded college to technical subjects or would some liberal arts courses be offered. Gray replied that it would be necessary to offer some liberal arts courses because all students need some of those, such as English, government, and history. He said that a fairly wide program should be offered in the first two years, but that the curriculum could be narrowed down in the junior and senior years. In answer to further questions, Gray said that the school did not plan to offer liberal arts

¹⁹ Ibid., January 22, 1949.

degrees, and that he would be willing to limit junior and senior courses to technical subjects. At one point a humorous incident was interjected into the proceedings when Senator Bracewell asked if the Beaumont area did not have some millionaires who would endow the school. Senator Cousins countered with, "When they become millionaires they move to Houston."²⁰

Available to this sub-committee and to all of the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives was a brochure or brief that had been prepared by officials of the college. This brief was designed to help establish the reasons why southeast Texas desired and needed a four-year state college of technology. It explained that although the primary purpose of Lamar College was to give educational service to the people when and where that service was needed, the school was prohibited from doing so by laws and statutes which restricted the institution to a junior college level. The brochure pointed out that the capacity of the junior college to provide educational opportunities needed by both the people and the industries had been far outstripped because of the gigantic strides that had been made in the development of industries in the area.²¹

²⁰ News item in the Beaumont Journal, January 22, 1949.

²¹ Lamar College (a brochure printed in January, 1949).

In the brochure it was revealed that the Sabine Area, even if restricted to Jefferson and Orange Counties, was the fifth most densely populated area in the state of Texas, outranked only by Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and San Antonio. To emphasize that this was the only area of its size not served by a four-year college, two tables were compiled. The first table showed the number of high school scholastics in the Sabine Area and was intended to substantiate the claim that there were sufficient students in this area alone to support a four-year college. Table IV in this study depicts that information.

TABLE IV

THE NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLASTICS IN THE
SABINE AREA IN JANUARY, 1949

County	Total Enrolled	Seniors
Angelina	1,088	288
Chambers	332	74
Hardin	812	169
Jasper	720	140
Jefferson	6,189	1,406
Liberty	926	209
Newton	365	68
Orange	1,325	282
Sabine	492	64
San Augustine	355	85
Tyler	670	120
TOTAL	13,274	2,905

A study of Table IV indicates that of the 13,274 scholastics enrolled in the eleven counties listed, 7,514 or approximately 56 per cent were from Jefferson and Orange Counties.

The second table that was included in the brochure revealed the population of southeast Texas counties, based on the United States Census of 1940. That information is shown in Table V of this study.

TABLE V

POPULATION OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS COUNTIES
BASED ON U. S. CENSUS OF 1940

Angelina County	32,201
Chambers County	7,511
Hardin County	15,875
Jasper County	17,481
Jefferson County*	191,942
Liberty County	24,541
Newton County	13,700
Orange County	17,382
Sabine County	10,896
San Augustine County	12,471
Tyler County	11,948

Total 355,948

* Special United States Census of 1943

Table IV and Table V portrayed accurately and graphically information that the legislators needed in their study of the proposed legislation to create a state-supported college.

In the brochure it was explained that of the 2,218 students enrolled at Lamar College in January, 1949, 1,381 or 62 per cent of them were enrolled in pre-engineering, technical, and scientific courses. This was given as evidence that there was a definite interest in and need for upper levels of this type of training in the area.²²

It was pointed out that in the Beaumont area there were twelve major industrial plants of the most highly technical type in America, and that in these plants over 50 per cent of the engineers and scientists were trained in colleges and universities outside of Texas.²³ That is revealed in Table VI.

TABLE VI

SURVEY OF THE TECHNICALLY TRAINED PERSONNEL IN THE
MAJOR INDUSTRIAL PLANTS OF THE SABINE AREA
IN JANUARY, 1949

Classification	Per Cent Trained Outside of Texas
Chemical Engineers	44
Chemists	51
Petroleum Engineers	75
Mechanical Engineers	39
Electrical Engineers	29
All Others*	44

* This group includes engineers or technically trained personnel not included above.

²² Loc. cit.

²³ Loc. cit.

Included in the brief that was made available to the legislators were copies of letters from Neches Butane Products Company and Gulf States Utilities Company. These letters had been written in relation to the expansion program. The one from Neches Butane Products Company is reproduced below:

NECHES BUTANE PRODUCTS COMPANY

Box 1535

PORT NECHES, TEXAS

January 26, 1949

Mr. Dow Wynn,
Beaumont Chamber of Commerce,
Industrial Department,
Beaumont, Texas.

Dear Sir:

We are very much interested in the efforts now being put forth by Lamar College to obtain assistance through our State Legislature in expanding to a four-year technological college basis. It is felt that this area, which is a major part of the rapidly expanding petroleum and chemical development of the entire United States, should present an opportunity through Lamar College to the youth of this section to obtain locally this technical training which they are particularly fitted by environment and inclination to enter, and in which their job opportunities will lie upon the completion of their training.

This industry, as well as every other industry in this area, has a constant and continuing need for the technically trained personnel so essential for replacement and for future expansion. It seems obvious that our boys and girls, reared in homes where the problems of the chemical and petroleum industry are matters of

daily discussion, and whose environment is such that they possess a first-hand knowledge of the numerous opportunities in these fields, would constitute the greatest potential student body for a technological institute that might be available in any similar area in the country.

Nothing could contribute more to the growth and development of the industries of the Gulf Coast area than a readily available source of supply of the trained personnel which our industries now need and will continue to need in their future development; nor could any institution training personnel for entrance into industries be located in a section where their training efforts could be guided and assisted by such a large group of trained and experienced professional and technical men qualified to act in an advisory capacity.

I feel sure that a proper consideration of these facts by our State Legislature will lead to favorable action upon a request so well justified as that of Lamar College.

Yours very truly,

C. H. McKennon,
Manager - Industrial Relations.²⁴

A part of the letter from Gulf States Utilities Company is quoted as follows:

GULF STATES UTILITIES COMPANY

Beaumont, Texas, January 27, 1949

State Board of Education
Austin, Texas

Gentlemen:

Gulf States Utilities Company is vitally interested in Lamar College of Beaumont, Texas becoming a four-year

²⁴ Loc. cit.

fully accredited institution of higher learning. Our interests spring from the fact that we think the Louisiana-Texas-Gulf Coast area is fast becoming the chemical center of the world. Of course, it has long been one of the world's great oil refining areas. The net result of this activity in these two giant industries is that technical graduates are in demand and we find our company in competition with the oil industry and the chemical industry in obtaining the services of such people.

.
 You will note from plans above outlined that we have great faith in the future of the Gulf Coast area and in our judgment the existing industries, plus the new industries that can be expected to move in the area, will have a very definite need for technical graduates. We, therefore, feel that Lamar College can broaden the fine service it is presently rendering to the area by offering a four-year course to the young people in this rapidly expanding section of our State and Nation. Any consideration you can give in the matter will be very much appreciated.

Yours very truly,

E. L. Robinson, Manager
 Beaumont Division²⁵

The letters quoted above are illustrative of the determination of college officials and business leaders to justify the creation of a four-year state-supported college in Beaumont. It was known from the time the Legislature met in January, 1949, that much opposition would develop, and leaders of the expansion movement knew that an all-out effort would be required if the legislation was to be enacted.

²⁵ Loc. cit.

In the House of Representatives, the first public hearing on the Lamar College Bill was held as scheduled on February 23, 1949, before the Appropriations Committee. Representative Jack E. Brooks introduced eight Jefferson County men who spoke in favor of the bill. W. A. Kirk, chairman of the department of government at Tillotson College, was the only person who spoke against it. Kirk said that the proposal was unconstitutional and unjust to the Negro youth of the state because it would restrict the college to white students. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Appropriations Committee referred the measure to a sub-committee for further study. The members of the sub-committee were Vernon McDaniel of Wichita Falls, Otis Lee of Port Arthur, Ed Hughes, Jr. of Newton, Albert Jones of Valley Mills, and W. H. Rampy of Winters. As was previously mentioned, Lee and Hughes were co-authors of the bill.²⁶

A few days later, a citizens' committee and college officials invited the members of the Appropriations Committee to Beaumont to inspect the facilities of the college. Eight members of the Appropriations Committee accepted the invitation and spent one day in Jefferson County looking over the college and visiting various industries in the area.²⁷

²⁶ News item in the Beaumont Journal, March 1, 1949.

²⁷ Ibid., March 12, 1949.

After a favorable report by the special sub-committee, the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives voted the Lamar College bill out, and sent it to the floor of the House for further consideration. In making the sub-committee's report, Representative Vernon McDaniel of Wichita Falls, said:

"After inspection of the Lamar College facilities and the vast industrial area surrounding Beaumont, we are reporting favorably on this bill because we believe the merits of this bill have but increased since it was passed by both Houses in the 50th Legislature."²⁸

On March 28, 1949, the House of Representatives passed the Lamar College expansion measure by a vote of 104 to thirty-five and sent the bill to the Senate. The rules of the House had been suspended earlier, making the measure subject to final passage at that time. The vote to suspend the rules had carried after two unsuccessful efforts. Suspension of the rules required a four-fifths majority.²⁹

In the Senate, there was quite a delay in getting any definite action on the matter. Finally, on May 4, the Finance Committee of the Senate recommended the approval of the measure by a vote of ten to five. Then on June 1, the

²⁸ Ibid., March 15, 1949.

²⁹ Ibid., March 29, 1949.

bill was passed by the Senate by a vote of sixteen to twelve. The next day State Comptroller Robert S. Calvert gave his financial approval. Certification by the comptroller that funds were available to meet the \$1,000,000 appropriation was the final formality before the bill was sent to Governor Euford Jester for his approval or veto.³⁰

II. CREATION OF LAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Lamar State College of Technology came into being at 5:15 p.m. on June 14, 1949, when Governor Beauford Jester signed his name to the Lamar College bill. Actually, the law did not go into effect until ninety days, after July 6, the date the Legislature adjourned.³¹

The Law Creating the College

The legislation creating Lamar State College of Technology is considered of sufficient importance that it is quoted in its entirety in the following paragraphs.

³⁰ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, June 2, 1949.

³¹ Ibid., June 15, 1949.

LAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
(Acts 1949, 51st Legislature of Texas)

Article 2637a. Creation of college. There is hereby established in Texas, in the City of Beaumont, Jefferson County, a co-educational institution of higher learning for the white youth of this State which shall be known as Lamar State College of Technology, to be conducted, operated, and maintained under a Board of Regents, as herein provided.

Article 2637b. Organization, control and management. The organization, control and management of such College shall be vested in a Board of nine (9) Regents, who shall be appointed by the Governor of Texas and confirmed by the Senate. The term of office of each Regent shall be six (6) years, provided that in making the first appointment the Governor shall appoint three (3) members for six (6) years. Any vacancy that occurs on the Board shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Governor. The members of said Board shall be removable by the Governor for inefficiency or inattention to the duties of office. Each member of the Board shall take the constitutional oath of office. The said Board of Regents shall meet for the first time after the passage of this Act at the time and place designated by the Governor, or as soon after their appointment as possible. They shall organize by electing a chairman of said Board of Regents and such other officers as they may desire. They shall select a president for the College as soon as possible after the organization of said Board of Regents. They shall fix his term of office, name his salary and define his duties. The president of the College shall be the executive officer for the Board of Regents and shall work under its direction. He shall recommend the plan of organization and the appointment of employees of said College, and shall have the co-operation of said Board of Regents and shall be responsible to said Board for the general management and success of said College.

Article 2637c. The work of the college, courses and degrees. Lamar State College of Technology shall offer and develop and especially stress courses in chemical engineering, industrial chemistry, plastics,

and other phases of engineering and technology. Practical vocational and technical courses shall be offered. Such courses of study shall be offered as are found in the senior colleges of the first rank in similar fields, as the Board of Regents may order provided that any Bachelors Degree shall be based on four years of college work, and any higher degree may be offered with appropriate courses when in the judgment of the Board of Regents the educational welfare of the people served by the College demands such advanced courses and degrees, and provided that all work done and all courses, certificates, and diplomas given to students shall conform to standard College requirements as proposed by the accrediting agencies of Texas, of the South, and of other sections of the country. Short courses, terminal courses, long courses, and special courses of practical value to our people shall be given from time to time by Lamar State College of Technology, as the Board of Regents shall order and direct.

Article 2637d. Additional courses. The specification of courses of study written in this Act shall not prohibit the Board of Regents from adding other courses, subjects or groups of subjects necessary to enable Lamar State College of Technology to perform its functions as a College of Technology in the most practical and efficient way. The Board of Regents is required and directed to build and operate a State College of the first rank that shall compare favorably with the splendid Colleges of Texas in the preparation of its youth for the varied interests and industries possible in the section in which Lamar State College of Technology is located. This College shall be equipped adequately to do its work well as other State Colleges perform their functions.

Article 2637e. Appropriations. The Lamar Union Junior College District of Jefferson County, Texas, now owns and operates a Junior College at Beaumont, Texas, and its corporeal property consists of a campus of approximately sixty-four (64) acres in the City of Beaumont, an Administration Building, Library Building, Science Building, Union Building, Vocations Building, Maintenance Building and bus garage, and athletic field house, Federal emergency housing of twenty (20) units, as well as technical equipment and furnishings, all of

which are new and modern and have been constructed and acquired since 1942, and of the reasonable value of more than One Million, Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000) which will be made available for the exclusive use of the College hereby created. There is hereby appropriated out of any money in the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) to be used by the Board of Regents of said College in making additional improvements on the campus of said College including an Engineering Building, Technological Laboratory, and such other buildings, facilities, and equipment as the Board of Regents may determine necessary for the establishment of a Technological College of the first class.

Article 2637f. Eminent domain. The Lamar State College of Technology shall have the right of eminent domain and shall have the right to proceed under condemnation proceedings the same as now enjoyed by railroad companies under the laws of Texas.

Article 2637g. Donations, gifts and endowments. The Board of Regents is authorized to accept donations, gifts and endowments for the Institution to be held in trust and administered by said Board for such purposes and under such directions, limitations and provisions as may be declared in writing in the donation, gift or endowment, not inconsistent with the objects and proper management of said Institution.

Article 2637h. Acquisition of properties of junior college district. It is provided, however, that the Board of Regents of Lamar State College of Technology as herein created shall not institute or offer any courses of study as herein provided unless and until suitable arrangements are made for the acquisition or use of the corporeal properties and facilities of the Lamar Union Junior College District of Jefferson County, Texas, and the Board of Regents herein created is hereby authorized to acquire by gift the corporeal properties and facilities of Lamar Union Junior College District of Jefferson County, Texas, and it is also hereby authorized to acquire by gift the use of the properties and facilities of Lamar Union Junior College District of Jefferson County, Texas, for such time as may be necessary to acquire the properties themselves.

Article 26371. Partial invalidity. If any word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, Section or part of this Act shall be held by any Court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid as unconstitutional or for any other reason, it shall not affect any other word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, Section, or part of this Act.³²

Governor Beauford Jester's action in signing the bill came near the end of the last day of a ten-day constitutional "grace" period during which the governor may hold on his desk without action a bill passed by both houses of the Legislature.³³ When the governor signed it, he said that he was approving the measure because there were sufficient laboratory and technical facilities available in the Beaumont-Port Arthur area to make Lamar State College of Technology an outstanding petro-chemical institution. He also released to the press a formal statement explaining his decision.³⁴ This was undoubtedly done because the governor thought some additional explanation should be made to those who had attempted to persuade him to veto the legislation. Too, he probably wanted to give emphasis to his expressed desire that the college should be strictly a technological school.

³² Vernon's Texas Statutes (1950 Supplement; Kansas City: Vernon Law Book Company), pp. 203 - 205.

³³ Beaumont Enterprise, loc. cit.

³⁴ Loc. cit.

A part of the statement that Governor Jester released is quoted as follows:

"Our present higher education system in Texas, while farflung and reasonably diverse, does not supply the equivalent of the technological training that can be provided at Lamar College, for which training there is ample need.

"The gulf coast area of Texas is developing into the most important chemical industry center of our nation, and our oil and natural gas are responsible for this development. Within a few miles of the Lamar College campus are many large refineries and other plants manufacturing the byproducts of oil and gas.

"These factors, which are in line with my desire and my program to give Texas a balanced higher educational system worthy of this state, have finally outweighed in my judgment certain valid objections to the creation of another senior college at this time. . . .

"As governor, I shall use every possible safeguard to have Lamar technological college conform to the announced purpose of the bill, namely, to be a college of technology to especially stress courses in chemical engineering, industrial chemistry, plastics, and other phases of engineering and technology. . . .

"I would veto this bill if Lamar College was envisioned as another bachelor of arts and teachers' certificate institution, of which Texas has an abundance at this time."³⁵

Prior to the end of the legislative session, the last piece of legislation necessary to make Lamar College officially a four-year, state-supported technological school was passed. That was the companion bill which authorized

³⁵ Loc. cit.

the trustees of the junior college to transfer the properties and facilities of the school to the state. The governor signed the bill on June 30, 1949, and it became a law ninety days after the Legislature adjourned.³⁶

The First Board of Regents

After signing the first Lamar College bill, Governor Beauford Jester gave his immediate attention to the nomination of a board of regents. On June 27, he named A. M. McAfee, head of the chemical engineering department of the Gulf Refinery in Port Arthur, for a six-year term. He indicated that he would name the other eight members within a few days.³⁷ His untimely death during the early part of July prevented him from completing the task, and it was not until August 29, 1949, that his successor, Governor Allan Shivers, named the other eight members. They were Otho Plummer, mayor of Beaumont; Clark Barrett, assistant manager of the Du Pont plant at Orange; Ernest Winstel, business agent and secretary of Local 305 of the Boilermakers' Union of Port Arthur; A. P. Beutel, vice-president of Dow Chemical Company at Freeport; Lester Clark, oil operator and former

³⁶ Ibid., July 1, 1949.

³⁷ Ibid., June 28, 1949.

member of the Texas House of Representatives of Breckenridge; Joseph Mares, vice-president of Monsanto Chemical Company of Texas City; Glenn E. McCarthy, oil operator, industrialist, and hotel owner of Houston; and W. R. Smith, a former federal district attorney of San Antonio. At the same time, Governor Shivers designated A. M. McAfee as acting chairman.³⁸

III. PLANNING AND ORGANIZING THE FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM

Initial Plans

It was evident as early as the summer of 1949 that the senior division of the college probably could not be made operative until the fall of 1951. In the first place, the only money that the Legislature appropriated for the college was the \$1,000,000 that was to be used for constructing new buildings. That meant that money for operating expenses would not be available from the state during the next biennium. Also, it was realized that considerable time would be required to plan the curriculum, employ teachers, secure equipment, construct buildings, and effect the necessary administrative reorganization.

³⁸ News item in the Beaumont Journal, August 30, 1949.

At the initial meeting of the board of regents on October 6, 1949, John E. Gray was named president of the college, and A. M. McAfee, who had served as acting chairman of the board, was unanimously elected as the permanent chairman. A part of the meeting was held jointly with the trustees of Lamar College, at which time the procedure for converting the junior college to a state institution was discussed. They decided to recommend to the county judge that an election on turning over the junior college to the state be set for the first week in November. It was determined that the request for an election would require a petition signed by citizens of the junior college district.³⁹

In the election which was held on November 8, voters approved the transfer of junior college properties and facilities to state ownership by a vote of 2,066 to 220.⁴⁰ This action was a necessary legal corollary to the enabling act passed by the state Legislature.

During the summer of 1949, President Gray asked the executive council, an appointed group of the faculty and administration of the junior college, to work with him in

³⁹ Ibid., October 7, 1949.

⁴⁰ News item in the Peaumont Enterprise, November 9, 1949.

formulating objectives and in making preliminary plans for the curriculum of the senior college. Next, he asked the various department heads for their recommendations, and finally, all of the plans were presented to the full faculty for consideration. Thus, when the president was called upon by the board of regents in November to make recommendations to them concerning the objectives and the curriculum of the institution, he emphasized that his proposals were the result of the combined thinking of the entire faculty and staff of the junior college.⁴¹ President Gray then suggested the following objectives for Lamar State College of Technology:

1. To offer courses leading to the degree of bachelor of science in various fields of engineering, science, management, health, and homemaking.
2. To offer terminal courses of less than four years duration leading directly to employment in various vocational, technical, and business fields.
3. To offer two years of pre-professional training in various fields which may be transferred without loss of credit to other colleges and universities.
4. To offer courses in general education which will serve to prepare young men and women for the responsibilities of citizenship in a free society.

⁴¹ Minutes of the Board of Regents of Lamar State College of Technology, Vol. 1, October, 1949, to September, 1951, November 22, 1949, p. 13.

5. To offer courses and programs on an evening school basis to meet the needs of adults.⁴²

After the objectives were outlined and discussed, recommendations were made concerning the curriculum. It was suggested that the only degree offered should be a bachelor of science, and that this be limited to the following fields: chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, petroleum engineering, industrial engineering, home economics, chemistry, geology, medical technology, health and physical education, and business administration. In keeping with the objectives, it was stressed that terminal courses of less than four years duration and courses in the science and humanities division not leading to degrees should be authorized.⁴³

J. E. Morris, attorney for Lamar College, was questioned about the legality of certain aspects of the curriculum recommendations. Morris, who actually wrote the act creating the college, explained that it would have been impossible to prescribe in the act exactly which courses should be offered, and for that reason the language of the law was intentionally broad. He stated that, in his

⁴² Loc. cit.

⁴³ News item in the Peaumont Enterprise, November 24, 1949.

opinion, the institution should emphasize technological courses, but that in the final analysis the regents should use their discretionary authority in setting up the curriculum.⁴⁴

At this same meeting, the board of regents named O. A. Wimberly business manager and O. B. Archer dean of the state college. It appeared that each of the men was a logical selection because of his training and experience. O. A. Wimberly had been employed by the junior college for approximately twenty-three years and was business manager when he was selected for the new position. O. B. Archer was a member of the original faculty of South Park Junior College when it was created in 1923, and had been serving as dean of Lamar College for several years prior to the creation of the Lamar State College of Technology.⁴⁵

In connection with the building program, the board of regents authorized John E. Gray to employ consultants in the fields of engineering and home economics to help with the planning of the buildings, equipment, and curriculums in these fields. Previously, the trustees of Lamar College had agreed to pay the fees of these consultants. Then, the

⁴⁴ Minutes, loc. cit.

⁴⁵ News item in the Peaumont Enterprise, November 23, 1949.

chairman of the board of regents was authorized to appoint a building committee to advise with the architects and college officials on the building program. The chairman appointed Clark Barrett, Otho Plummer, and Ernest Winstel to that committee. Finally, the architectural firm of Stone and Pitts of Beaumont was selected as designing architect for the \$1,000,000 building program. This was done after previous interviews with three architectural firms of different Texas cities.⁴⁶

For the remainder of the 1949-50 college year, the curriculum and the building program were matters of primary concern to the board of regents and to college officials. In early December, representatives of the architectural firm of Stone and Pitts, the chairman of the board of regents, and the president and dean of the college made a special inspection trip to colleges in various parts of Louisiana and Texas to obtain ideas for the building program at Lamar Tech.⁴⁷ A few days later, on December 15, 1949, J. S. Stephens, James Wood, and Guy T. McBride, staff members from Rice Institute, were employed as special consultants to help plan the curriculum, the building, and the equipment for the engineering division.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Minutes, loc. cit.

⁴⁷ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, December 8, 1949.

⁴⁸ Ibid., December 15, 1949.

In an address to the student body in January, 1950, President John E. Gray attempted to reflect the viewpoints of the board of regents and the administration concerning the type of program that was being planned for Lamar State College of Technology. Gray said:

"Our policy in the future, as in the past, will be to try to maintain on our faculty a group of able, high-type men and women who are interested in devoting their lives to the art of teaching.

"A necessary corollary of this basic policy is the philosophy that the most important person on our campus is the individual student. Serving the needs of that individual student is, to my mind, the most important and most challenging job today.

"We shall devote our main energies to the task of doing effective classroom teaching rather than research. We feel that there are already a sufficient number of universities and institutions of higher education in Texas adequately staffed and equipped to do extensive research, and we intend to devote our full energies to the improvement of the job of teaching. . . ."49

The Building Program in 1950

In January, the board of regents approved tentative plans for three new buildings and asked the architects to proceed with the utmost speed in completing specifications for them. The structures planned were an engineering building, a home economics building, and a home economics

49 News item in the Beaumont Journal, January 5, 1950.

cottage.⁵⁰ Later, it became necessary for the home economics cottage to be dropped from consideration because of insufficient money.

Having no connection with the building program made possible by the \$1,000,000 state appropriation but important to the college, was a decision by the Lamar College Board of Trustees to build homes on the campus for the president and for the superintendent of buildings and grounds. Funds for this construction came from a surplus in operating funds of the junior college.⁵¹

A meeting of the board of regents was held on June 15, 1950, for the purpose of receiving bids on the three buildings that were being considered. After the bids were read, tabulated, and analyzed, it was found that all of them were far in excess of original estimates, but that Farnsworth and Chambers Construction Company of Houston submitted the lowest bid. It was agreed that the building committee, the architects, and college officials would carefully study ways and means of reducing the cost of the building program, and that another meeting of the board would be scheduled for June 22.⁵²

⁵⁰ Minutes, op. cit., January 11, 1950, p. 19.

⁵¹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, January 13, 1950.

⁵² Minutes, op. cit., June 15, 1950, p. 22.

At the meeting on June 22, a quorum was not present; consequently, no action could be taken.⁵³ A third meeting was set for June 29 at the Shamrock Hotel in Houston. At that time, the Farnsworth and Chambers Construction Company was awarded the contract for the construction of an engineering building, later named the Anthony F. Lucas Engineering Building, and a home economics building at a total cost of \$763,821, with an option by the board of regents of thirty days to decide whether to build a home management cottage at a cost of \$26,000.⁵⁴ It was decided at a later date that the cottage would not be constructed.

The first spade of dirt was turned by Governor Allan Shivers on July 19, 1950, at groundbreaking ceremonies marking the beginning of the building program at the college. In a short prepared address the governor said:

"Lamar Tech has great possibilities--not only to train young men and women of the state--but to provide trained personnel to the oil and petroleum industries of the Sabine Area.

"The school will mean what the people of the area want it to mean. What you put into it now will reflect in its achievements of tomorrow. I predict that your children and my children will mark Lamar Tech as one of the outstanding schools in its field by the people of the Sabine Area.

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⁵³ Ibid., June 22, 1950, p. 24.

⁵⁴ Ibid., June 29, 1950, p. 28.

"I am grateful that I had a part in the creation of Lamar Tech. . . ."55

By September, 1950, the building program was well under way, and the curriculum was tentatively outlined. In newspaper publicity that was released before the beginning of the fall semester, information was given to prospective students concerning various degrees that would be offered.⁵⁶ This meant that students who registered in these fields did so with relative assurance that they would continue at Lamar for four years.

At a meeting of the board of regents on December 14, 1950, President John E. Gray was authorized to begin employing key faculty members for the following year. One member of the board emphasized the difficulty in obtaining capable men and cautioned against waiting until the last moment to engage a faculty.⁵⁷

Financial Difficulties

When the Texas Legislature appropriated the \$1,000,000 in 1949, for the construction of buildings at Lamar, no provision was made for operating the college.

⁵⁵ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, July 20, 1950.

⁵⁶ Ibid., September 1, 1950.

⁵⁷ Ibid., December 15, 1950.

Since the Legislature was scheduled to meet in regular session in January, 1951, it was necessary for college officials to seek and justify an appropriation for the 1951-52 biennium. Thus, in the summer of 1950, officials of the college met with the Texas Legislative Budget Board and presented a request for \$2,419,710 for the next two years. President Gray told the Budget Board that plans called for adding a third, or junior, year to the college in the 1951-52 school year, with a fourth, or senior, year being established in 1952-53, making the school a full four-year college.⁵⁸

About the same time that the economy-minded Texas Legislature met in 1951, enrollments were decreasing at Lamar College as well as at other institutions of higher learning over the nation. Because of the Korean War, many male students were withdrawing to enter military service. Thus, it was not particularly surprising that budget requests were drastically reduced by the Legislature. The two-year appropriation for Lamar State College of Technology was \$1,291,760. This was a greater reduction than could be absorbed and still provide the type of training program that the board of regents had approved. President Gray's first reaction was, "We will have to do well what we

⁵⁸ News item in the Port Arthur News, August 11, 1950.

attempt rather than spread it too thin." He then said that the amount was not as much as had been hoped for but "He will take it and do the best we can with it."⁵⁹

It was necessary for the board of regents to elect about twenty new faculty members, including some department heads and division directors, before the senior college opened. The following salary schedule was adopted: associate professors below department head level, were set at \$4,100 to \$4,600; assistant professors at \$3,600 to \$4,300; and instructors at \$3,000 to \$4,200; and department heads and division directors at \$4,200 to \$5,700.⁶⁰ Since this schedule was not sufficiently high in all cases to attract the best qualified teachers, President John E. Gray and Dean O. B. Archer were confronted with the problem of finding the best faculty possible under these conditions. They made several trips to colleges and universities in various parts of the United States in an attempt to find suitable personnel. Also, several applicants were invited, at college expense, to travel to the campus for interviews.⁶¹

⁵⁹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, May 6, 1951.

⁶⁰ News item in the Beaumont Journal, May 18, 1951.

⁶¹ Ibid., August 4, 1951.

IV. THE FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE

A senior college in Beaumont became a reality on September 1, 1951. The transition passed without formal ceremony; however, trustees of Lamar College had previously passed a resolution deeding college properties to the state, after voters of the junior college district had voted to dissolve the district and had agreed to the state plan. The opening of Lamar State College of Technology was the fulfillment of a dream shared by many Beaumont and area citizens who had visualized the city as the center of southeast Texas education, through the establishment of an outstanding four-year school.⁶²

In newspaper publicity released on September 1, it was stated that Lamar Tech was the first junior college in Texas to expand its program to senior college status under state support, and the only state senior college in Texas offering technological training in an industrial area.⁶³ That same day, in a full page advertisement appearing in

⁶² News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, September 2, 1951.

⁶³ News item in the Beaumont Journal, September 1, 1951.

the Beaumont Journal some of the features of the new school were outlined, and the dates for registration were announced as September 12 through September 15.

Charting the Course

At the first meeting of the general faculty on September 11, 1951, President John E. Gray in an address entitled "Charting Our Course" expressed some of his ideas and beliefs about the new college. Because of the exceptionally fine manner in which he attempted to set the stage for the formulation of a basic philosophy for the college, excerpts from his remarks are quoted as follows:

Today we are making educational history in Texas. I hope the occasion of this first general faculty meeting of Lamar State College of Technology may long be remembered with happiness and pride by everyone of us here today. . . .

Those of us who are here this morning will have the unusual privilege of helping to guide and mold and develop a new institution. It is a challenge which is filled both with glorious opportunity and with heavy responsibility. . . . Such a challenge cannot be lightly taken.

. . . What are the general principles which we must employ if we are to develop here the type of higher educational institution which our people need and deserve and of which we as the original faculty may be justly proud?

The first of these general principles which I should like to suggest is that of practicing the democratic method throughout the institution. And the place for democracy to start in an educational institution is in

the administration. Pious words to our students about the importance of democratic living will have a hollow ring unless they see democracy in action in the administration of the college. . . .

We shall make use of the principle of "pooled judgment" as a democratic technique in the development of Lamar Tech. I hope that this principle of "pooled judgment" and co-operative action will find application in the work of our faculty committees, in our departmental and divisional faculty meetings, in our executive council, in the sessions of our general faculty, and in our board of regents. . . .

The second general principle which I wish to suggest as a navigational aid to help us in charting our course is a belief in the doctrine that a college should develop in its students a desire for honorable living. A state-supported institution such as Lamar Tech has a particularly difficult challenge to meet in this area. Estopped from offering religious courses as such, and properly so, the faculty nonetheless must foster a moral and ethical climate on this campus of such force that our students will become definitely committed to sound spiritual values. . . .

I am not in the least unmindful of our unique responsibility in this technological institution to do highly effective teaching of the practical knowledge and skills included in our various curriculums. The doors of Lamar Tech could not have opened at a more auspicious time for the offering of technological and practical education. . . .

As an aid to effective teaching, let us strive to make good use of the great community laboratory which surrounds us. No other state-supported senior college in Texas has such a favorable location for integrating classroom teaching with the business, industrial, and professional life of its area. . . . It is almost certain that our contribution to the development of this great gulf coast area will be in direct proportion to the extent to which we make use of it as a teaching laboratory. Our community college philosophy, developed during the years of our local support and control, should by all means be carried over and even strengthened in our senior college status. . . .

This leads me to another general principle which I want to suggest for our philosophy, i.e., the belief that everything we teach is important. . . . If we return to our basic fundamental that it is our responsibility to help each individual student to achieve his fullest self-realization, we see immediately why we cannot consider one course or one department or one division of the college to be any more important than every other. . . .

In all of our teaching, I earnestly urge that we keep constantly paramount in our thinking the importance and dignity of the individual student. . . . I reiterate this morning with all the conviction within me, that the most important thing which happens on our campus is the striking of a spark between an eager, receptive student and a consecrated, inspired teacher. Everything else we do here simply helps to set the stage so that this spark may be struck. . . .

The destiny of this institution is largely in the hands of the people in this room. The board of regents will help all they can; the people of southeast Texas will surely give us their united support. But in the final analysis, it is you and I who must chart and direct our course. Realizing your professional competence and consecration, I look forward to the future of Lamar Tech with happiness and confidence.⁶⁴

The address of President Gray was well received by the faculty members. Those who had worked with him in the past realized that the remarks were uttered with sincerity and earnestness. New members of the faculty were impressed with the president's understanding and explanation of the problems facing the new institution.

⁶⁴ John E. Gray, "Charting Our Course" (an address to the first general faculty of Lamar State College of Technology, September 11, 1951).

Administration, Curriculum, and Enrollment in 1951

When classes began in the fall of 1951, the administrative staff, not including division directors and department heads, remained exactly as it had been the preceding year when the school was a junior college. As has been previously mentioned, the president, dean, and business manager were elected by the board of regents in 1950. The remainder were named during the spring and summer of 1951. As listed in the Lamar State College of Technology Annual Catalogue for 1951-52, the officers of the administration were: John E. Gray, president; O. E. Archer, dean, G. A. Wimberly, business manager; M. L. Cariker, director of extension; H. C. Calloway, Jr., assistant business manager, Mrs. Bess Neal Gentry, dean of women, W. J. Holloway, director of veterans advisement and placement center; Morris H. Kelton, dean of student life; Celeste Kitchen, registrar; and M. L. McLaughlin, administrative assistant and dean of men.⁶⁵

The positions of dean of women and dean of student life were not considered full-time administrative jobs; consequently, M. H. Helton and Mrs. Bess Neal Gentry were scheduled to teach some classes.

⁶⁵ Lamar State College of Technology, Annual Catalogue, 1951-1952, Beaumont, Texas, p. 4.

Except for a few changes, this administrative arrangement has continued until the time that this study is being made. There has been a change in the presidency, which will be reported later in this chapter. Then, in the fall of 1953, the position of administrative assistant was eliminated, and M. H. Kelton assumed the duties of the dean of men, in addition to his original position of dean of student life. At that time, M. L. McLaughlin joined the instructional staff in the department of education.

In the fall of 1949, the board of regents approved a tentative curriculum for the college, but by the time the four-year school opened, those plans had been altered to some extent. Newspaper publicity stated that bachelor of science degrees would be offered in the following fields: chemical, electrical, mechanical, civil, and industrial engineering; business administration; home economics; physical education; chemistry; biological science; petroleum geology; and medical technology.⁶⁶

The college was divided into six divisions: business, engineering, home economics, humanities, sciences, and vocations. Each of the divisions was headed by a director who was responsible to the dean of the college. Divisions were

⁶⁶ News item in the Beaumont Journal, September 1, 1951.

sub-divided into departments, each with a department head responsible to the division director. Some specific information about each of the divisions will be presented in the following paragraphs.

The division of business offered four-year programs of study leading to bachelor of science degrees in business administration in the fields of accounting, general business administration, and secretarial science. Terminal two-year curriculums giving emphasis to the development of skills to qualify students for office positions were provided in general business and secretarial science. No change was made the following year in so far as major fields were concerned; however, there were alterations in course requirements for various programs of study. In all degree plans a uniform program of study for the first two years was outlined. In 1953-54, the degree programs were expanded to include management and marketing. Richard W. Setzer, a former teacher at Catawba College, in North Carolina, was elected as director of the division.

In the division of engineering, bachelor of science degrees were offered in the departments of chemical, civil, electrical, industrial, and mechanical engineering. Then

⁶⁸ News item in the Beaumont Journal, September 1, 1951.

in 1952-53, a degree was added in the department of mathematics. A quotation from the Annual Catalog of Lamar State College of Technology for 1952-53 gives a clear account of the intended functions of the division:

The functions of the Division of Engineering include instruction in the various branches of engineering, research on both fundamental and applied problems, development of a technological library, extension activities, and provision of a center for technical meetings and activities.

All curricula have been designed upon the principle of offering sound fundamental training in mathematics, basic sciences, and English during the first two years. Emphasis is placed upon creative analytical thinking rather than upon the acquisition of factual information or the attainment of manual skills. However, sufficient factual data and laboratory work is presented to provide a sound foundation in the various fields of engineering. Specialized training is tempered by the inclusion of as many cultural courses as possible.

A uniform course of study for all first year students has been designed so that entering freshmen do not have to choose a specific major until after a year in college.⁶⁷

F. M. Tiller, 1950 winner of the junior award of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and an associate professor of chemical engineering at Vanderbilt University, was chosen in 1951 as the director of the division of engineering.

⁶⁷ Lamar State College of Technology, Annual Catalog, 1952-1953, Beaumont, Texas, p. 47.

Rosa Jean Tannahill, former head of the home economics department of Mary Hardin-Baylor College and past president of the Texas Vocational Association, was elected director of the division of home economics. Work leading to a bachelor of science degree was offered in that field.

Chosen to direct the division of humanities was Mrs. Ruth Olcott, who had been head of the department of education at Lamar College since 1946. Included in the division were the departments of education and psychology, journalism, modern languages, music, physical education, social science, and speech. A bachelor of science degree in physical education was the only degree that was offered in the division during the first two years. In the annual catalog for 1953-54, it was announced that bachelor of science degrees would also be offered in the departments of music and social science. Details concerning other changes and additions made during the spring of 1954 will be given later in this chapter.

Included in the division of sciences were the departments of biological sciences, chemistry, geology, and physics. Except in physics, a program of study leading to a bachelor of science degree was offered in each of the departments. Edwin S. Kayes, former head of the department of biology at the junior college, was selected as the director of the division.

The sixth major division of the college was that of vocations. All of the work in this division was terminal in nature and was offered through two general programs:

(1) Full-time day trade preparatory courses, and (2) the extended day program, for persons desiring to attend a part-time program of study. Full-time trade preparatory courses were offered in the departments of diesel engines, electricity, machine shop, refrigeration, vocational nursing, and welding. Courses offered in these departments were designed to give students the training necessary prior to entrance into a skilled trade or occupation. Extension and evening courses were provided for employed persons who desired to extend their occupational knowledge or skills. These were grouped into five broad classifications as follows: (1) Agriculture, an institutional on-the-job training program for persons who are engaged in farming; (2) apprentice training, for those employed as apprentices in skilled trades; (3) distributive education, consisting of classes for those engaged in retailing, wholesaling, or service occupations; (4) trade extension or courses for tradesmen of journeyman grade; (5) courses for persons employed in industrial supervision and leadership; and (6) conferences and workshops.⁶³

⁶³ Ibid., p. 109.

By the time classes began in the fall of 1951, enrollment in all divisions totaled 2,036. That figure included 1,024 day school students, 632 persons enrolled in academic evening classes, 260 registered for trade extension classes, and fifty-three taking courses in distributive education.⁶⁹ By October 1, the total in all divisions had reached 2,563.⁷⁰ Nearly all of this increment came in various departments of the extended program in the division of vocations.

Dedication of the Anthony F. Lucas Building

At a dedication ceremony on October 7, 1951, marking the completion of the Anthony F. Lucas Engineering Building, Governor Allan Shivers delivered the principal address. The Governor's address served as a climax to the \$1,000,000 construction program which he began the preceding year by turning the first spade of earth. Shivers urged the people of Beaumont and southeast Texas "to continue local support and encouragement, which cannot be replaced by state sponsorship." He said, "If you continue your interest, you

⁶⁹ News item in the Beaumont Journal, September 25, 1951.

⁷⁰ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, October 1, 1951.

will have a college which is responsive and responsible-- a college second to none in its field."⁷¹

A crowd estimated at 2,500 persons, including educators, industrial, business and labor leaders, and students of the college, attended the program. Among the prominent visitors were Oscar L. Chapman, United States Secretary of the Interior; Anthony F. Lucas, Jr., the son of the man for whom the building was named; and R. B. Anderson, Chairman of the State Board of Education and retiring president of the Texas Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association.⁷²

The Resignation of John E. Gray

The faculty and staff at Lamar State College of Technology were surprised and shocked when on Tuesday, October 23, a special meeting of all college employees was called, and President John E. Gray announced that he planned to resign and accept the position of executive vice-president of the First National Bank of Beaumont. The following morning a news item in the Beaumont Enterprise stated that Gray would "sever his official connection with the college as

⁷¹ Ibid., October 9, 1951.

⁷² Ioc. cit.

soon as relieved by the board of regents, probably January 1, 1952."⁷³ President Gray had previously contacted each member of the board of regents and had obtained assurance that he would be released from his contract with the college.

When the regents met on November 20, 1951, the first act was to elect a new chairman of the board. Previously, A. M. McAfee had resigned so that he could be considered as an applicant for the position of president of Lamar State College of Technology. W. R. Smith, Jr. of San Antonio was unanimously elected chairman. Then, President Gray's resignation was formally accepted, to become effective January 1, 1952. President Gray expressed to the board his deep gratitude for the "consideration, courtesy, and loyal support accorded him,"⁷⁴ and he stated that as a private citizen he would continue working for the best interests of the college.

Selection of a New President

The next act of the board was to elect G. A. Wimberly, business manager at the college, acting president at \$10,000 per year, effective January 1, 1952. Wimberly, in accepting

⁷³ News item in the Peaumont Enterprise, October 24, 1951.

⁷⁴ Minutes, op. cit., September, 1951, to September, 1953, p. 20.

the interim appointment, emphasized that he was doing so with the understanding that he was not and would not become an applicant for the permanent position.⁷⁵ The regents then issued the following statement to the press:

It is the purpose of the board to carefully review and consider all applications for the position of president and to make this final decision, the most important that any board of regents can make, one that will assure Lamar's future welfare and growth.

The board has not, under the procedure adopted, reviewed any applications for permanent president and will continue to receive suggestions about applicants and continue to accept applications from qualified candidates. . . .⁷⁶

On April 16, 1952, F. L. McDonald, director of the department of journalism at Texas State College for Women, was named president of Lamar State College of Technology. Simultaneously, it was announced that O. B. Archer had been elected vice-president and dean. An editorial in the Beaumont Journal that same day stated:

O. B. Archer was not named president of Lamar College, but he can be assured that the lack of a doctorate before his name is the reason.

Dean Archer is popular with the teachers. He has the longest record of service of the college staff. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Texas in electrical engineering, and these are considered in the profession with the doctorate in other professions.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 21.

⁷⁶ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, November 20, 1951.

But the president of Lamar should be a doctor. The presidents of all other state supported schools are.

Certainly one of the outstanding characteristics of Dean Archer is his sincerity. This young four-year college has great need of him. . . .

It is good that he has been named vice-president with Dr. F. L. McDonald as president.⁷⁷

The next day an editorial was written concerning the qualifications of the new president. A part of it is quoted as follows:

The new president of Lamar Tech, Dr. F. L. McDonald, holds his doctorate in journalism from the University of Missouri, and that fact alone should guarantee his public relations and, not at all incidentally, the public relations of Lamar College.

Under Dr. John Gray, Lamar's position in the community and in the state was solid. Dr. McDonald is qualified, personally and professionally, to carry on.

An education in journalism as signified by a doctorate means plenty of English and history and the liberal arts in general, and his selection by the regents is astute recognition of the possibilities of expanding Lamar into the academic field some day.

Dr. McDonald has the personality and character and experience to make effective his professional qualifications. . . .⁷⁸

Before selecting a president, the regents screened many people for the position. O. B. Archer, dean of the college, and A. M. McAfee, former chairman of the board of

⁷⁷ Editorial in the Beaumont Journal, April 16, 1952.

⁷⁸ Ibid., April 17, 1952.

regents, were among those who were carefully considered. When the final choice was announced, people in southeast Texas noted with interest that the man chosen was neither an engineer nor was he technically trained. This was one of the first real indications that there was a possibility that the college would be more than strictly a technological school.

Plans for Additional Building Facilities

When the original bill proposing the creation of Lamar State College of Technology was introduced in 1947, it called for an appropriation of \$1,500,000 for the construction of new buildings. As a compromise measure, the amount was lowered to \$1,000,000 during the latter part of that legislative session. Then, when the act creating the college was passed in 1949, it called for an appropriation of \$1,000,000 for buildings. With that money the engineering and home economics buildings were constructed and equipped.

Soon after F. L. McDonald was elected president, he realized that within a short time additional buildings would be essential if enrollments continued to increase. He gave his immediate attention to that problem, and before the end of the summer a master site plan, calling for

sixteen major changes in the physical plant was turned over to the architectural firm of Stone and Pitts to be developed. The plan called for: (1) Sufficient dormitories for men and women to take care of double the present enrollment; (2) a new plant for health and physical education; (3) a new auditorium; (4) three new instructional buildings; (5) expansion of the present library; (6) a home management house; (7) a dining hall; (8) enlarging and remodeling of the present union-gymnasium into a modern student recreation building; (9) a stadium; (10) an outdoor swimming pool; (11) an R. O. T. C. armory; (12) a chapel; (13) a new power plant; and development of new recreational fields for men and women.⁷⁹

President McDonald and the board of regents seriously considered going to the Legislature in 1953 with a request for another appropriation for buildings. Political advisers told them that such a proposal probably would have little chance of passing. Soon, the President thought of an entirely different approach to the problem. His ideas were incorporated into a bill, which was ready for presentation when the Legislature met in January, 1953. Lamar State College of Technology and Texas Southern University were associated in this attempt to obtain additional building funds.

⁷⁹ News item in the Beaumont Journal, August 9, 1952.

The bill was designed to eliminate the disadvantage to Lamar State College of Technology and Texas Southern University, since they were not included in the 1947 constitutional amendment providing for the issuance of tax-supported bonds for building purposes at all state institutions of higher learning then in existence. The Beaumont and Houston schools were created after the constitutional amendment was adopted; consequently, they did not benefit in any way from the state ad valorem tax which was levied to finance the thirty-year building program in other state colleges.⁸⁰

The bill, as it was introduced, provided for a twenty-four-year building program at Lamar State College of Technology and Texas Southern University. It proposed that tuition and fees from students be placed in a special building fund and that the boards of the two colleges be authorized to issue bonds to be retired from the income from such fees. It was estimated that the measure would provide a building fund approximately proportional to the amount the other state colleges would receive over the next twenty-four years from the state-wide ad valorem tax. It was pointed out that no tax money would be required to

⁸⁰ Ibid., January 22, 1953.

retire the bonds, but that somewhat larger appropriations from the state's general revenue fund would be needed to finance general operating expenses.⁸¹

Senator Jep Fuller of Port Arthur and Senator Searcy Bracewell of Houston sponsored the measure in the Senate. The entire Harris, Jefferson, and Orange County delegations co-sponsored it in the House of Representatives, with Representative William A. Miller, Jr. of Houston taking the lead.⁸²

The act was passed by the House of Representatives with relatively little opposition. In the Senate, it passed only after a bitter fight and after several important amendments were made to it. The amendments were: to prohibit legislative appropriation of any other building funds during the twenty-four-year period; to require approval of the Legislature before additional land for buildings could be purchased; and to postpone the effective date of the measure to the biennium beginning September 1, 1953.⁸³ The amendments certainly were not desired by proponents of the act; however, the entire measure would undoubtedly have

⁸¹ Loc. cit.

⁸² Loc. cit.

⁸³ News item in the Peasmont Journal, May 26, 1953.

been defeated if they had not been accepted. It meant, of course, that funds from that source would not be available until after September, 1955.

In a report to the board of regents on October 16, 1952, President McDonald cited the inadequacy of the student union building and suggested that immediate plans be made for remodeling and enlarging it. Then, he said that the time had come when campus housing was needed for both men and women. He pointed out the following advantages that dormitories would give Lamar: (1) Increased enrollment resulting from student housing would lower the cost per capita; (2) student morale would improve; (3) students from greater distances would be able to obtain the specialized courses which only Lamar State College of Technology offers.⁸⁴

Since the state does not provide money for facilities that are not used strictly for educational purposes, it was necessary to look elsewhere for funds to finance these buildings. Accordingly, it was decided that money for enlarging and modernizing the student union building could be obtained through the sale of revenue bonds, which

⁸⁴ Minutes of the Board of Regents of Lamar State College of Technology, Vol. 2, October 16, 1952, p. 8.

would be repaid by charging a building-use fee. This procedure was followed, and construction of the \$350,000 building was completed in September, 1954.

An application was made to the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency for a \$400,000 loan to be used for the construction of a dormitory to house 204 students. The loan was approved, and construction was begun in September, 1953. Before it was completed in September of the following year, it was announced that the name of the structure would be Combs Hall. The name was chosen in memory of the late United States Representative J. M. Combs, an early leader in the movement to expand Lamar Junior College. In the spring of 1954, a second application for a \$400,000 loan was approved for the construction of a dormitory for women. Construction on it was begun during the early fall of that year.

When the master site plan was submitted to the architects in the summer of 1952, a new plant for health and physical education and a dining hall were included on it. On May 26, 1954, the board of regents authorized the president to contract with the firm of Stone and Pitts for the necessary architectural and engineering work for a new

men's health and physical education building.⁸⁵ This building will be financed from funds that will accrue starting in September, 1955, when fees charged by the college will go into a special building fund as authorized by the Legislature. An application for a \$350,000 Federal Housing and Home Agency Loan for the erection of a dining hall was approved during the summer of 1954. Architects were then authorized to proceed with final plans and specifications for that building.⁸⁶

Thus, since Lamar State College of Technology was created in 1949, an engineering building, a home economics building, a student union building, and a dormitory for men have been built or remodeled. Construction on a dormitory for women has begun, and plans have been made for a dining hall and a health and physical education building for men.

Expansion of the Curriculum

Previously, it was mentioned that the curriculum of the college was expanded in the fall of 1953 to include degrees in music and social science in the humanities division and that degrees in marketing and management were added

⁸⁵ Minutes of the Board of Regents of Lamar State College of Technology, Vol. 3, May 26, 1954, p. 118.

⁸⁶ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 20, 1954.

in the division of business. President McDonald said that the new courses of study were added to meet the demand for expansion of the college curriculum as expressed by enrollment in these fields.⁸⁷

A second major expansion of the curriculum was announced in the spring of 1954. In a carefully prepared statement to the board of regents on May 26, the president made the following statement and recommendations concerning new degrees and courses of study:

For two years I have carefully studied the curriculum of Lamar and have endeavored to view it against a background of the youth and the adults it serves.

Lamar is destined to become a great area college as well as a great technological college. Within easy commuting distance are more than a quarter million people. Each of the four colleges with a greater enrollment than Lamar serves a large population area: The University in south-central Texas, A & M in south-central Texas, Texas Tech in west Texas, and North Texas in north-central Texas; and Lamar in southeast Texas has an equally important role in its area.

There are several reasons why the Lamar curriculum should be expanded at this time:

1. To serve its area adequately, more general education courses are required. With the present limited programs many students are enrolling in courses that are not what they would choose and that are not best suited to them.
2. The addition of more general courses will strengthen the present technical programs.

⁸⁷ Ibid., September 1, 1953.

3. Accreditation by the Southern Association must precede accreditation in all other fields. The addition of a number of Bachelor of Arts degrees is considered absolutely imperative if Southern Association accreditation is to be sought. To carry out our declared objective of becoming "a college of the first class," we must strive for Southern Association accreditation.

4. In a rider to the general appropriation bill in 1953, the degree programs of all state colleges except Lamar were frozen. It is not considered likely that Lamar will be given any extension of time to add programs beyond 1954-55.

To accomplish our objectives, I suggest that the following degree programs be authorized:

Bachelor of Arts

Major in English

Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science

Major in Economics)	
Major in Government)	B. S. degree in
Major in History)	social science is
Major in Sociology)	already in effect

Bachelor of Arts

Major in Chemistry)	
Major in Biology)	B. S. degrees in
Major in Geology)	these majors are
Major in Mathematics)	already in effect

Bachelor of Science

Major in Education
Major in Geological Engineering

Bachelor of Business Administration to replace the degree of Bachelor of Science presently offered in that area.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Minutes, op. cit., May 26, 1954, p. 125.

The recommendations of the president were accepted by the regents and by the opening of the fall semester of 1954, the changes had been effected.

Reorganization of Departments and Divisions

In May, 1954, the board of regents approved a reorganization of the departments and divisions to bring them more in line with other institutions of higher learning. In the reorganization, the division of business, humanities, science, engineering, home economics, and vocations were supplanted by the schools of engineering, business, and arts and sciences, each headed by a dean. Then, there were the divisions of fine and applied arts, education, and vocations, each headed by a chairman. These chairmen were made responsible to the dean of the college, just as were the deans of the three schools.⁸⁹

Under the new arrangement, the school of business, with R. W. Setzer as dean, included the departments of accounting, general business, secretarial science, management, retailing, finance, and economics. In the school of engineering, were the departments of mathematics and chemical, civil, electrical, mechanical, industrial, and

⁸⁹ News item in the Peaumont Enterprise, May 30, 1954.

geological engineering. F. M. Tiller was named dean. The school of arts and sciences, with E. S. Hayes as dean, contained the divisions of sciences and liberal arts. The departments of biology, chemistry, geology, physics, and medical technology were included in the division of sciences. In addition to his duties as dean of the school of arts and sciences, E. S. Hayes was named chairman of the division of sciences. In the division of liberal arts, were the departments of English, journalism, modern languages, library science, religious education, sociology, history, and government. C. A. Davis was the new chairman of this division.⁹⁰

A chairman was not selected for the division of fine and applied arts; however, the departments included in it were music, speech, and commercial art. Mrs. Ruth Olcott became chairman of the division of education, which included the departments of education and psychology, health and physical education, and home economics. E. E. Miller continued to head the division of vocations, now chairman instead of director. No material changes were made in the curriculum there.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Loc. cit.

⁹¹ Loc. cit.

Enrollment Trends

Since the creation of the senior college, enrollment has steadily increased. A report of that trend is shown in Table VII on the following page.

TABLE VII

ENROLLMENT REPORT BY DIVISIONS FROM
FALL OF 1951 THROUGH FALL OF 1953

Division	<u>Day Classes</u>		<u>Evening Classes</u>		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
<u>Fall of 1951</u>					
Business	148	111	176	134	569
Engineering	213	4	197	3	417
Home Economics	7	31	3	9	50
Humanities	144	113	76	57	390
Science	111	74	35	9	229
Vocations	80				80
Total	703	333	487	212	1735
<u>Fall of 1952</u>					
Business	219	106	120	130	575
Engineering	317	3	195	2	517
Home Economics	12	29	4	15	60
Humanities	106	135	58	38	337
Science	160	89	36	10	295
Vocations	101	53			154
Total	915	418	413	195	1938
<u>Fall of 1953</u>					
Business	229	146	162	99	636
Engineering	358	5	252		615
Home Economics	14	51	5	12	82
Humanities	125	187	54	55	421
Science	167	88	49	9	313
Vocations	90	39			129
Total	983	516	522	178	2196

While the information given in Table VII was being compiled, it was decided that a more realistic analysis of the enrollment trend could be made if enrollment figures in apprenticeship, trade extension, distributive education, and industrial supervision classes in the division of vocations were not included. Most of these classes were offered in the evening; they were of short duration; and they were not comparable to full-time trade preparatory or collegiate training programs.

It may be noted in the table that in 1951, no women were enrolled in the division of vocations, while in the following years there were fifty-three and thirty-nine respectively. The reason for the difference was that in 1952, vocational nursing was added to the curriculum of that division. The reason for the comparatively large number of men in the division of home economics was that commercial art was included.

Actually, Table VII revealed that the increase in enrollment has been fairly consistent in the various divisions. Evening classes have just about held their own, and the proportion of men to women, in day classes, has remained almost the same, with two men to one woman.

Because of the rearrangement of departments and divisions, enrollment figures for the fall semester of 1954 were not shown in Table VII; however, in a slightly altered form, they are included in the following table.

TABLE VIII
ENROLLMENT REPORT BY SCHOOLS OR DIVISIONS
FOR FALL SEMESTER, 1954

Division or School	Day Classes		Evening Classes		Total
	Men	Women	Men	Women	
Business	350	160	205	112	827
Education	60	158	22	42	282
Engineering	529	8	225		762
Fine and Applied Arts	51	69	4	4	128
Liberal Arts	71	67	41	47	226
Science	270	125	40	7	442
Vocations	186	47			233
Total	1817	634	537	212	2900

Table VIII indicates that with the new degree offerings in 1954, there was a phenomenal increase in the number of students enrolled in day classes. Again, tabulations in this table did not include evening classes in the division of vocations; however, the office of the registrar on October 15, 1954, reported that there were 1,190 students in such classes. If that number is added to the total

indicated in the table, the over-all enrollment for the fall semester of 1954 was 4,090.⁹²

In this chapter, particular attention was given to the movement for establishing a senior college in Beaumont and to the long and tedious ordeal of getting legislative approval for it. Then, the contributions of President John E. Cray and the board of regents in planning and facilitating the building program and in organizing the curriculum were noted. Finally, in a history of Lamar State College of Technology from 1951 to 1954, information was given pertaining to the administration, the faculty, the building program, the curriculum, and enrollment trends.

The next chapter will be concerned with some of the factors and personalities that have materially affected the development of the college.

⁹² Enrollment Report Analysis, (Registrar's Office, Lamar State College of Technology, October 15, 1954).

CHAPTER IV

FACTORS AND PERSONALITIES THAT HAVE INFLUENCED THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AT LAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Some factors and personalities that appear to have materially affected the development of Lamar State College of Technology were selected for special consideration in this chapter. Many of these were discussed briefly earlier in this study; however, it was believed that they were of sufficient importance to be presented separately.

I. SOME IMPORTANT FACTORS THAT HAVE AFFECTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAMAR STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Education for Veterans

College officials and students pointed with pride to the 11,000 or more former students who served in various branches of the military services during the second World War. It was natural that a special effort should be made to meet the needs of veterans who wanted to attend the college.

In the summer of 1945, Acting President O. B. Archer made preliminary plans for establishing a special counseling

service for veterans. A representative of the college was sent to the University of Houston to study the program that was in effect there. As a consequence, the service center for veterans that was established at Lamar was similar in many respects to the one at the Houston school.

In the fall of 1945, it was announced that the college would follow the recommendations of the American Council on Education in granting academic credit for military experience. Under these recommendations, credit for college work was granted on a basis of measured educational attainment and achievement.¹ Then, in November, 1945, refresher courses in mathematics and English were organized for veterans who wanted to review some high school work before enrolling in regular college courses. No college credit was allowed for the completion of these courses.²

When President John E. Gray returned from active duty with the navy, O. B. Archer was relieved of the position of acting president and was soon named co-ordinator of veterans education, in addition to other duties. He continued in that position until the beginning of the summer of 1946,

¹ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, September 2, 1945.

² News item in the Beaumont Journal, November 29, 1945.

when he became dean of the college. Simultaneously, M. L. McLaughlin was named co-ordinator, a position which he retained until the fall of 1953, when W. J. Holloway assumed the responsibilities of the office.

When the real impact of the veteran enrollment hit the college in the spring and fall of 1946, a special effort was made to provide facilities and teachers for them. This was difficult, for the enrollment was much greater than had been expected. The following table shows the number of students in day and evening classes who received benefits from federal laws pertaining to the education and training of veterans of either World War II or the Korean conflict.

TABLE IX
ENROLLMENT OF VETERANS UNDER PUBLIC LAWS 346, 16, AND
550 FROM THE SPRING OF 1946 THROUGH
THE FALL OF 1954

Semester and Year	Number of Veterans
Spring, 1946	400
Fall, 1946	943
Spring, 1947	1,113
Fall, 1947	794
Spring, 1948	767
Fall, 1948	609
Spring, 1949	701
Fall, 1949	747
Spring, 1950	817
Fall, 1950	584
Spring, 1951	500
Fall, 1951	549
Spring, 1952	437
Fall, 1952	326
Spring, 1953	327
Fall, 1953	397
Spring, 1954	539
Fall, 1954	833

In the fall of 1952, the first veterans of the Korean War enrolled under Public Law 550. The number enrolling under that law increased from sixty-one in 1952 to 708 in the fall of 1954. These figures are included in Table IX.

From the beginning of the veteran influx in 1946, an attempt was made by teachers and college officials to be

considerate of individual problems of returning servicemen. The fact that this assistance was appreciated was pointed out in an editorial in The Red Bird, a Lamar College student publication, in March, 1946.

Those of us who attended service schools can readily see that our college curriculum at Lamar affords us a far greater scope of freedom and opportunity. Here, too, the incentive to achieve success is kindled, fostered, and spurred on by understanding, persevering faculty members and counselors, who, though perhaps confused at first by the prospect of having hundreds of veterans descending upon them . . . have endeavored conscientiously to overcome the so-called problem of "psychological readjustment," as some eminent psychologists have chosen to call the mass exodus of America's youth from the armed services to civil and college life.

.
The student body and the faculty have accepted us hospitably and graciously. We are grateful to them for their assistance and their cooperation in making our tour of duty here at Lamar as pleasant as we had hoped it would be.³

Adult Education

In the early history of the junior college some evening classes for adults were organized with varying degrees of success; however, no continuous or co-ordinated program was planned until World War II made it necessary that many men and women be trained for defense and war industries. During the war years, approximately 12,000 adults were trained in various trades.

³ Editorial in The Red Bird (a Lamar College student newspaper), March 16, 1946.

Immediately after the war ended, President Gray instituted a plan for expanding the adult education program. This expansion was in keeping with the following statement that Gray made in 1943 concerning the purpose of the college:

If I had to say in one sentence what I consider to be the major purpose and objective of Lamar College, I would say it is to become more and more a community service institution. To put this another way, we want to render educational service when and where educational service is needed, and to become truly a college for all the people, an institution where needed training may be obtained by both college students and adults for better participation in the vocational, business, professional and cultural life of this community and nation.⁴

It was decided in 1946 that the adult education program should be divided into courses for college credit and vocational courses, with a separate supervisor for each category. It should be noted that from 1947 to 1951, many non-credit hobby and recreational courses were offered that would not fit exactly into either of the divisions listed above. In general, these were sponsored and directed by the supervisor of evening classes for college credit.

The demand for courses offering regular college credit increased rapidly. By 1950, forty-five separate courses in seventeen fields were taught. The following year that number increased to more than fifty. In the division

⁴ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, August 31, 1943.

of vocations, it was announced in January of 1951 that Lamar College was offering the largest trade and industrial education program for adults in the state, with a total of forty-three classes. These figures did not include classes in distributive education.⁵

With the beginning of state support and control in the fall of 1951, a curtailment of offerings was effected in so far as hobby, recreational, and avocational courses were concerned. There is some indication now, 1954, that arrangements again will be made to render that service to the people of the community.

Scholarships, Gifts, and Endowments

The scholarship program at the college, for needy and deserving students, began in 1928, when Mrs. C. W. Bingman, a part-time teacher at the college and the wife of the president, was informed that several students could not enter or continue their training because of insufficient funds to pay the tuition and fees. In a committee meeting of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mrs. Bingman made these facts known, and the late Ida Caldwell McFaddin agreed to pay the tuition for one of the student. Mrs. McFaddin continued to give an annual scholarship as long as

⁵ Ibid., January 21, 1951.

she lived, and since her death, her daughter, Mrs. Carroll Ward, has given it as the Ida Caldwell McFaddin Memorial Scholarship.⁶

Mrs. C. W. Bingman helped organize scholarship committees in the Daughters of the American Revolution and in the Women's Club of Beaumont. Through the years, these organizations have led the way in making scholarships available.

The scholarship program grew slowly but steadily, and by 1943 twenty-five were given; in 1950 the number was 112; and in the fall of 1954 there were 184.⁷ These awards were donated by individuals and organizations to students on the basis of need and merit. Recipients have been generally selected in one of three ways: (1) by the donor; (2) by a committee designated by the donor; or (3) by a faculty committee on scholarships at the college. Donors have been allowed to establish standards, regulations, or restrictions which they wanted to have considered in making or renewing their awards. Scholarships have been financed

⁶ Interview, Mrs. C. W. Bingman, December 27, 1954.

⁷ Taken from records in the office of the registrar at Lamar State College of Technology on December 27, 1954.

in either of two ways: (1) by outright gifts of cash of the desired amount each year; and (2) by setting up permanent endowment funds and providing that the income from those funds be used to provide scholarships of the desired type.⁸

Comparatively few large gifts and endowments have been received by the college; however, the most important of these are briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

During his lifetime, the late James F. Weed gave the college a \$1,000 endowment fund, the income of which has been used to provide student awards to stimulate special study in American government. An additional \$1,000 was added to this fund in 1950 by Mrs. James F. Weed.

Max Goeckelman, who died in 1947, provided in his will that the \$11,763 that was left in his estate be used as a perpetual scholarship fund for youths of the Beaumont area. The fund is known as the Max and Josephine Goeckelman Scholarship Endowment.

Lulu M. Long, a former resident of Beaumont who died in San Antonio in 1950, made provision in her will for the establishment of an endowment fund to be used for providing education to deserving students who were financially unable

⁸ Lamar Tech--Building for Perpetuity (a brochure printed for Lamar State College of Technology in 1951).

to attend college without assistance. This fund amounted to \$25,000.

Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Morris have provided two \$5,000 scholarship endowment funds. They were established in memory of their son, Joe Ed Morris, and their daughter, Marion (Nena) Morris, who lost their lives in separate tragic accidents.⁹

In October of 1951, the Spindletop Fiftieth Anniversary Commission presented a gift of \$25,000 to the engineering library of the college. The library endowment was presented by John W. Newton, vice-president of the Magnolia Petroleum Company and chairman of the Spindletop Commission, at dedication ceremonies of the Anthony F. Lucas Engineering Building. The gift was used as a nucleus for beginning the new engineering library.

In November of 1951, the late Marra McLean, a philanthropist and pioneer oil operator in this area and a former resident of Beaumont, gave \$5,000 to the Lamar State College of Technology Engineering Library. Then in January of 1952, Mrs. W. M. Crook gave \$1,000 to the Lamar State College of Technology Library as a memorial to her late husband, W. M. Crook.

⁹ Information pertaining to gifts and endowments was obtained from files in the office of the president of Lamar State College of Technology on December 6, 1954.

Athletics, Health, and Physical Education

Since it was created in 1923, Lamar College has participated in an intercollegiate athletic program, except for a period of time during the war. From 1923 until 1951, Lamar Cardinal football teams won ninety-four, lost seventy-eight, and tied ten of the games played.¹⁰ From 1951 through 1954, twelve games were won and twenty-eight were lost.

In the early days, schedule making was a difficult problem. Schools in Lamar's class were scattered over a wide area, and traveling long distances on a very limited budget was not possible. Consequently, games with nearby high schools, four-year colleges, and freshman teams went into the making of a hodge-podge schedule. One week the team would be undermatched as they played a high school, and the next Saturday it would be hopelessly outclassed with a superior four-year school.

The coach's job at Lamar College has often been a springboard to success for many of the former mentors. Joe J. Vincent, who tutored the 1926 team, is now superintendent of the South Park Independent School District. John E. Gray, coach from 1932 to 1939, became president of the college and is now executive vice-president of the First

¹⁰ News item in the Beaumont Enterprise, September 9, 1951.

National Bank in Beaumont. F. S. Praden, assistant coach for several years, became dean of Lamar College, city manager of Beaumont, and is now postmaster of Beaumont.

G. A. Wimberly, Gray's assistant in 1933, is business manager at the college. Al Vincent, assistant coach in 1934, is the storied manager of Texas League baseball clubs.

Ted Jeffries, who coached the Lamar Cardinals in 1946, now is head coach at Stephen F. Austin State College. Thurman Hull, assistant to Standard Lambert in 1948-49, is head basketball coach at the University of Texas.

When the curriculum was planned for the four-year college, it was decided that a bachelor of science degree in physical education would be offered. One of the reasons for this being done was that it would have been difficult, if not impossible, for the college to compete in inter-collegiate athletics without a department of health and physical education. This degree program was of particular significance because it was the only one offered in 1951 that was not of a technical or scientific nature.

In 1951, it was stated that the primary objective of the department of physical and health education was to train capable physical education teachers, but that the program would include instruction for industrial safety

personnel and for directors of recreational programs.¹¹ Since 1951, the curriculum of the department has been planned and organized in accordance with that objective. By the fall of 1953, eighty-seven students listed physical and health education as their training objectives.¹²

Admission Requirements

The first catalogue of South Park Junior College stated that admission to the college could be gained by presenting fifteen standard high school units or by examination. Detailed regulations concerning the special subjects required were not listed in the catalogue; however, it was stated that general requirements were the same as those at the University of Texas. Students from unaffiliated schools were admitted after passing an entrance examination.¹³

The following year, 1924-1925, the catalogue stated that to be acceptable for admission, the fifteen required high school units had to be in subjects approved

¹¹ Ibid., July 1, 1951.

¹² Enrollment Report (Registrar's Office, Lamar State College of Technology, 1954).

¹³ South Park Junior College, Bulletin, 1923-1924, Beaumont, Texas, p. 6.

by the Department of Education of the State of Texas, in accordance with the annual directory of classified and accredited high schools. Also, the fifteen units were subject to these restrictions: Three units were required in English; two in history, or in history and civics; two in algebra; one in plane geometry; and two in foreign language. Not more than four units could be presented in history and civics together, and not more than four in vocational subjects. Biology could not be utilized if either botany or zoology was used. Students specializing in engineering were excused from the foreign language requirement. Also, it was announced that applicants over twenty-one years of age could be admitted by individual approval, at the discretion of the president or registrar. Such students were required to furnish evidence of sufficient training, experience, ability, and seriousness of purpose to indicate that they could satisfactorily do college work.¹⁴

Requirements remained almost the same until in 1935, when it was announced that each student seeking admission would be required to present: (1) three units in English; (2) two units in mathematics, selected from algebra, plane geometry, solid geometry, and trigonometry; (3) a total of

¹⁴ South Park Junior College, First Annual Bulletin, 1924-1925, Beaumont, Texas, p. 8.

four units from foreign language, natural science, and social science, with two units being required from each of the two areas selected; (4) and six additional units from subject matter areas elected by the student. Those enrolling for engineering courses were required to have three units in mathematics, including one and one-half in algebra, one in plane geometry, and one-half in solid geometry. Students over twenty-one years of age still were admitted on individual approval. The changes in 1934 were particularly significant because the requirements in foreign language and mathematics were relaxed.

The next important change was made in the fall of 1939, when the following regulation was included in the annual catalogue:

Graduates of accredited high schools who present a transcript of fifteen affiliated units will be admitted to the freshman class. However, all students who expect to have their Lamar College credits transferred to a senior college must satisfy the entrance requirements of the senior college which they expect to attend, when they enter Lamar College.

We recommend that all students meet the requirements of the University of Texas which are acceptable in practically all four-year colleges.¹⁵

The catalogue then listed the requirements of the University of Texas, which were almost identical to those that had been in effect at Lamar College in previous years.

¹⁵ Lamar College, Seventeenth Annual Catalogue, 1939-1940, Beaumont, Texas, p. 8.

In 1945, the college returned to its earlier policy of listing specific requirements for entrance. Actually, this did not constitute a change of policy, for college officials had previously required that students adhere rather closely to the University of Texas requirements, which were used as a pattern.

The Lamar State College of Technology catalogue for 1953-55 stated that admission might be gained by:

1. Presentation of a transcript showing graduation from an accredited high school and showing at least fifteen affiliated units.
2. Examination in fifteen high school units.
3. Individual approval for persons twenty-one years of age or older, and discharged service personnel eighteen years of age with one year of service.
4. Submitting a separate and official transcript from each college attended, with a statement of honorable dismissal.¹⁶

Unit requirements remained as they had been in previous years except that no specific list of high school units was required for admission to terminal and vocational courses.¹⁷

¹⁶ Lamar State College of Technology, Annual Catalogue, 1953-1955, Beaumont, Texas, p. 42.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 43.

II. PERSONALITY

C. W. Bingman

When L. R. Pietzsch resigned as superintendent of the South Park Independent School District and president of South Park Junior College, C. W. Bingman succeeded him. Bingman continued with those positions for seventeen years, or until the junior college was separated from the public school. At that time, he remained as superintendent, and John E. Gray became director of the college.

C. W. Bingman was born in Coalville, Ohio, in 1885. He attended public schools in that state and was awarded a bachelor's degree from the University of Ohio. Later, he did graduate work at the University of Wisconsin, the University of Cincinnati, and the University of Texas, where he obtained a master's degree.¹⁸

Bingman began his professional career in a one-room country school. Later, he became a teacher in the Cincinnati Public Schools, where he organized an opportunity school for the foreign born residents of the city. His first administrative position was in Fargo, North Dakota, where he established a junior high school system. He left Fargo to

¹⁸ News item in the Beaumont Journal, April 22, 1947.

accept a position as head of the department of education at East Tennessee State Teachers College. In 1919, he accepted the principalship of the South Park High School, and in 1924 was chosen to head the South Park Public Schools and the junior college.¹⁹

The seventeen years that C. W. Bingman served the college were crucial ones, for it was during that time that a firm foundation was laid for a first class college. Under his supervision the college grew from an institution of less than 100 students to one of 700.

J. M. Combs

Judge J. M. Combs, as he was affectionately known by his many friends and acquaintances, was the central figure in outlining the program for Lamar College which resulted in the formation of a junior college district in 1942.

J. M. Combs, born on an east Texas farm and an orphan at the age of nine, obtained his first job in an east Texas sawmill. Later, he became a school teacher and was then appointed County Agricultural Agent of Hardin County. After studying law at night and being admitted to the bar, he was elected successively as county and district judge of Hardin

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

County. He resigned the position of district judge and moved to Beaumont in 1925 to enter private practice of law. In 1932, he was elected to the Ninth Supreme Judicial Court of Civil Appeals to fill an unexpired term; he continued in that office until 1943, when he resigned to enter private law practice again. In the spring of 1944, Judge Combs announced his candidacy for United States Representative from the Second Congressional District. He was elected and served in Congress for eight years. He did not announce for re-election in 1952, because his health had begun to fail. He died in Beaumont in August, 1953.

During the entire time of his residence in Beaumont, J. M. Combs was sincerely and actively interested in civic affairs. He became a member of the South Park Independent School District School Board in 1926 and served continuously on that board or on the Lamar College Board of Trustees until he was elected to congress, when the press of official duties made it necessary for him to resign.

While he was president of the South Park School Board, Judge Combs saw a brilliant future for Lamar College. He knew, though, that one school district could not sustain a large college. As a consequence, he began selling the idea of a junior college district to the people of the area. He spent many hours in consultation with business and civic

leaders, convincing them that the formation of such a district would fit into the educational and industrial picture of the area and that it should be sustained by the combined tax efforts of several school districts.

Judge Combs was eager to establish a college where young men and young women could acquire not only the foundation for a college degree, but could also secure training that would fit them into the varied industries that were common in the Beaumont area. He envisioned classes in engineering and laboratory work, with the students attending courses at Lamar and working in industry several hours each day in order to acquire practical knowledge of their classroom theory. He wanted a college planned so that every boy and girl, whether rich or poor, could attend. He insisted on a complete vocational guidance program where a checking system was kept on the progress the students were making in industry while they were securing their training at Lamar College. He also was very much interested in establishing a variety of two-year terminal courses.²⁰

It is not strange that J. M. Combs is given credit for furnishing the basic ideas for establishing a union junior college district and that he is often called the

²⁰ Ibid., August 22, 1942.

father of the expanded institution. It was entirely fitting that Lamar State College of Technology's new, men's dormitory, which was completed in 1954, should be named Combs Hall.²¹

O. B. Archer

Dean O. B. Archer has been employed at the college since it was created in 1923. His record of service with the institution has been longer and more varied than that of any other member of the faculty or staff. During his tenure he has served in just about every official capacity.

O. B. Archer was born on a farm near Holland, Texas, and was graduated from Belton High School in 1913. After attending summer normal in Belton the same year, he obtained a second grade teacher's certificate and taught in a one-teacher school at Center Lake for one year. The following summer he obtained a first grade certificate and then taught a year at Wiltonville, a two-teacher school. In 1915, he entered the University of Texas, but the first World War interrupted his training before it had been completed. After a period of military service, he returned to

²¹ Facts concerning the life and contributions of J. M. Combs were verified on December 29, 1954, in an interview with his widow, Mrs. J. M. Combs.

the University of Texas and was graduated in 1922, with a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering.²²

Archer was employed in the fall of 1922 by the late L. R. Pietzsch, the first president of South Park College. He taught that year in the South Park High School; however, he also helped plan the engineering curriculum for the college that was to open the following fall. When the new college opened, he was selected to head the department of physics and engineering.²³

In addition to being a classroom teacher, Dean Archer has held many other positions. In 1940, he was assigned the additional duty of co-ordinating the flight training program, involving both flight and ground instruction. He served as acting president while John E. Gray was on military leave during the second World War. After Gray's return, Archer became co-ordinator of veterans education and dean of the evening school, posts which he held until he was named dean in 1946. In 1952, he was named vice-president and dean.

O. E. Archer, a master classroom teacher and a capable college administrator, has maintained through the

²² News item in the Beaumont Journal, January 22, 1951.

²³ Ibid., August 26, 1950.

years a sympathetic attitude toward both students and staff members. He has probably done more than any other person to develop and continue a college climate that is student-centered.

John E. Gray

To a considerable extent this study has been centered around John E. Gray and his ideals, aspirations, and accomplishments. This is necessarily true because he was so much a part of the college for two decades that he was sometimes referred to as "Mr. Lamar."

John E. Gray was born on a farm in Matagorda County, Texas, but with his parents he moved to Jefferson County in 1916. He attended the South Park Schools and was graduated as valedictorian in the spring of 1923. The following fall he became a member of the first class of South Park Junior College, and in 1925, he was a member of the first graduating class. While attending the junior college, he worked as janitor, mowed lawns, and did odd jobs to help defray his expenses.²⁴

After graduation from the junior college, Gray's first job was in the trade school of the South Park High School,

²⁴ Ibid., April 15, 1946.

where he taught such related subjects as mathematics, science, and English. In the fall of 1926, he also coached the high school football team.²⁵

In 1927, he decided to leave the teaching profession and entered the University of Texas Law School. He remained there only one and one-half years before reversing his decision concerning teaching. He returned as teacher and football coach at South Park.²⁶

In 1932, Gray became head football coach and athletic director at the junior college, which had been renamed Lamar College. In addition to his coaching duties, he taught courses in mathematics, education, and American government. Four years later, he was named dean of men and in that capacity had charge of the part-time work program and handled administrative duties in connection with men students. In 1939, he left his job as football coach to devote more time to other duties.

When plans were made for creating a junior college district, Gray took an active and leading part, working very closely with J. M. Combs. He helped plan the curriculum and

²⁵ News item in the Leaumont Enterprise, February 4, 1951.

²⁶ Loc. cit.

the building program, making a trip to California with the architect and J. M. Combs to secure information for planning the buildings and the curriculum for the expanded college.

In 1941, after the junior college district was created, Gray was named director. The following year, he became president, a position he held until he resigned in 1951 to become executive vice-president of the First National Bank of Beaumont.

As far as professional training was concerned, Gray obtained bachelor of science and master's degrees from the University of Texas a few years after he began teaching at South Park. In May, 1949, he was given an honorary doctor of laws degree by Centenary College at Shreveport.

With the exception of J. M. Combs, John E. Gray probably did more than any one else toward creating a separate junior college district in 1940. Then after he was named director and later president of the college, he and the staff he selected provided the leadership and encouragement that were needed to make Lamar College one of the outstanding junior colleges in the nation. In 1947 and 1949, it was Gray who initiated and carried to a conclusion the legislative fight to change Lamar into a four-year state supported institution.

John Gray achieved a high rank in professional circles. He was chairman at different times of some of the most important study committees of the American Association of Junior Colleges and was a member of the executive committee until Lamar College changed its status to that of a senior college. Gray was president of the Texas Junior College Association, whose membership is made up of all junior colleges in Texas. He also rendered constructive service as president of the Texas Public Junior College Association.

F. L. McDonald

After the resignation of John E. Gray became effective on January 1, 1952, three and one-half months elapsed before F. L. McDonald was named president of the college. In the interim, G. A. Wimberly served as acting president. McDonald, head of the department of journalism at Texas State College for Women, was selected for the office on April 16, 1952, but did not assume his duties until June 1.

F. L. McDonald, the son of a Canadian born rancher-preacher-teacher, spent his early childhood in the Black Hills of South Dakota. He attended public schools in that state and received bachelor of arts and master of arts

degrees from the University of South Dakota. Later, he obtained a doctor of journalism degree from the University of Missouri.²⁷

President McDonald's experience has been quite varied. At various times he has served in the following teaching positions: (1) part-time instructor of journalism at Northwestern University; (2) head master at Harris Military Institute at Roanoke, Virginia; (3) teacher of English and journalism at Eveleth Junior College in Minnesota; (4) principal of the junior and senior high schools in Biwabik, Minnesota; (5) and head of the department of journalism at Texas State College for Women. All of his experience has not been in the field of education. For a time he was managing editor of the Vermillion, South Dakota, Plain Talk and acted as correspondent for the Associated Press and the Sioux City Tribune. Also, he had a distinguished war record. He was called to active duty in 1939 as a first lieutenant, and in December, 1944, was given the rank of colonel. He served fifty-nine months in the second World War, thirty-four of which were spent in the southwest Pacific.²⁸

²⁷ Ibid., November 20, 1952.

²⁸ News item in the Peasmont Journal, April 16, 1952.

Although many of Dr. McDonald's accomplishments have been noted in previous pages, it should be emphasized that since he became president in 1952, the curriculum of the college has been expanded and liberalized; a dormitory and a union building have been built; construction has started on a second dormitory and a dining hall; a workable plan for financing the construction of classroom buildings has been made into law; a master plan for the future development of the college has been devised; and tentative plans have been made for the development of equitable promotion and tenure policies for faculty personnel.

This chapter, which has been concerned with the effect of selected factors and personalities on the growth of the college, concludes the historical phase of the study. The next chapter will present some guideposts that seem to point the way toward future development.

CHAPTER V

GUIDEPOSTS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Although it may be hazardous to predict or estimate the course Lamar State College of Technology will follow in the future, the existing status of the college and trends that have been evident during the past few years should form some basis for a forward look.

I. PLANS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

After his election as president in the spring of 1952, P. L. McDonald worked with the dean, the directors of the divisions, the department heads, and the board of regents in preparing a master plan for the future development of the college. After it was completed, the plan was submitted to the architectural firm of Stone and Pitts of Beaumont, Texas, with the request that a general site plan and an analysis of proposed buildings be prepared.

Within a few months, the architects made a written report to the president of the college. Their recommendations were based on the supposition that enrollment would be doubled by 1963.

The architects believed that the general pattern of the existing site plan should be retained in order that the

inner campus with its connecting covered walks would be preserved. They thought that the privacy of the inner campus for student circulation and gatherings and that the service of each building from peripheral roads and parking areas were highly desirable.¹

A comprehensive building program was outlined, with attention being given to many aspects of possible development. The following paragraphs contain descriptions of some of the buildings that were recommended:

1. Women's Dormitories. Property allocation for women's dormitories was based on an ultimate occupancy of approximately 400 women. Four three-story dormitory units and two one-story lounge units were suggested. Each floor would accommodate approximately thirty-four women. A dormitory for women that will be adequate for 200 women will be completed in 1955.

2. Men's Dormitories. It was estimated that four three-story units and two one-story lounge units would be needed to provide for about 1,000 men. One building housing 200 men was completed in 1954.

¹ A Master Plan for the Future Development of Lamar State College of Technology (Stone and Pitts, Architects and Engineers, 1953), p. 12.

3. Vocations Building Addition. It was proposed that the floor space of the vocations building be increased by about 50 per cent. This would be accomplished by wings extending from the existing structure.

4. Home Economics Building Addition. This addition, to allow for an increase of 50 per cent over the existing floor space area, would be provided by extending wings from the present building.

5. Engineering Building Addition. Property allocation for this addition assumed a floor space increment of approximately 30 per cent of that now existing. The addition was to be accomplished by two wings extending from the present building.

6. Carillon Tower. A carillon tower to be constructed directly in front of the main entrances to the engineering and administration buildings was indicated on the general site plan.

7. Administration Building Additions. It was recommended that 25,000 square feet of floor area be added by extending two wings from the existing structure.

8. Library. An addition of 9,000 square feet to the floor space of the library was suggested. In this case the addition would be considerably larger than the present structure.

9. Science Building Additions. Property allocations for this proposed addition assumed an increase in floor area of about 32,000 square feet.

10. Theater and Gallery. The architects proposed a theater and gallery which would consist of a small intimate theater, an outdoor stage and theater, and a gallery for art exhibits. The building would form the apex of a triangular group of new structures including a music building, an art building, a speech and drama building, and two classroom buildings.

11. Music Building. The music building would consist of a two-story structure approximately 140 feet long by sixty-three feet wide, housing offices, studies, practice rooms, band and choral files, instrument rooms, uniform rooms, and a music library. Also, at one end of the structure, there would be a two-story wing housing a choral rehearsal room on the second floor and a band and orchestra rehearsal room on the first floor.

12. Art Building. It was suggested that the art building be a two-story structure approximately 146 feet long by sixty-three feet wide, housing studios for ceramics and sculpture, arts and crafts, kiln drying and glazing, general art, offices, storage, and a small gallery.

13. Speech and Drama Building. This building would consist of a two-story wing approximately 160 feet long by sixty-three feet wide, housing classrooms, lecture rooms, offices, recital rooms, radio and television rooms, and storage. In addition, a small speech auditorium containing 140 seats was proposed.

14. Auditorium. No attempt was made by the architects to estimate the size of auditorium that should be constructed. They said, however, that they were allocating sufficient property to make it possible to construct a large auditorium building with an undetermined seating capacity.

15. Men's Gymnasium. It was proposed that this building be situated on the main axis of the campus in the recreational area. The building would consist of a clear-span structure approximately 118 feet wide by 186 feet long and embrace a central area for inter-collegiate basket-ball competition which can be separated by a folding partition for practice areas. The building would accommodate approximately 4,000 to 4,800 spectators.

16. Women's Gymnasium. It was suggested that this building be a clear-span structure approximately seventy-two feet wide by 111 feet long. Locker facilities and showers for the women's gymnasium would be constructed within one of the two-story ends of the men's gymnasium.

17. Swimming Pool. The pool would be accessible to both the men's and women's dressing rooms from the gymnasium buildings. Plans for the pool indicated that it would be eighty-two and one-half feet wide by 165 feet long, so as to qualify as a standard Amateur Athletic Union fifty-meter pool. Spectator bleachers would be provided on each side.²

The plans for additional buildings that were submitted by the architectural firm in 1953 appeared quite comprehensive, and it was difficult for college officials to visualize a need for all of the facilities recommended. However, trends since 1953 seem to indicate that the proposed building program, based on an estimated 100 per cent increase in enrollment between 1953 and 1963, might have been too conservative.

In the previous chapter, it was mentioned that a law, which will provide building funds for Lamar State College of Technology and Texas Southern University, was passed by the Texas Legislature in 1953. To present a clear picture of the real significance of that law a portion of it is quoted as follows:

Section 2. The governing board of each of said educational institutions is hereby authorized for a period of twenty-four years commencing September 1, 1953, to discontinue the collection of tuition and

² Ibid., pp. 7-20.

laboratory fees from students and, in lieu thereof, is hereby authorized to charge and collect from students using the hereinafter described buildings, special building-use fees for the use of libraries, hospitals, vocational shop-buildings, laboratories, and other buildings for extra-curricular activities or special purposes, as follows:

Full-time resident students, \$30 per semester

Part-time resident students as follows:

11 semester hours	\$28.50
10 semester hours	26.50
9 semester hours	24.50
8 semester hours	22.50
7 semester hours	18.50
6 semester hours	16.00
5 semester hours	14.00
4 semester hours	12.00
3 semester hours	10.00

Full-time students who are not residents of the State of Texas, \$80.00 per semester

Part-time non-resident students as follows:

11 semester hours	\$76.50
10 semester hours	70.00
9 semester hours	63.50
8 semester hours	57.00
7 semester hours	48.00
6 semester hours	41.50
5 semester hours	35.00
4 semester hours	28.50
3 semester hours	22.00 3

The amount of money available for building purposes will be determined by the enrollment. A total of 3,000 full-time resident students enrolled for the fall and spring semesters would provide \$180,000 within a nine-month period.

³ "House Bill Number 141," Section 2, Chapter 330, Acts Fifty-third Legislature, Regular Session, p. 819.

II. A CHANGING EMPHASIS ON CURRICULAR OFFERINGS

There is evidence to indicate that the curriculum of the college will not be strictly technological; in fact, it never has been. When the first four-year courses of study were planned, a degree program was outlined in the field of health and physical education. Then, when a new president was selected in 1952, it was noteworthy that his experience and training had been neither scientific nor technical, but in the field of journalism. Since the four year college was created, the curriculum has been expanded to include degree programs of a rather wide variety.

Contained in material that has been compiled in the office of the dean and that will be included in the annual catalogue which will be published in the spring of 1955, is a list of objectives that have been approved by the board of regents for the college. They are as follows:

1. To offer courses leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Business Administration in the appropriate fields of business, education, engineering, fine arts, health, liberal arts, and science.
2. To offer courses in general education which will serve to prepare young men and women for the responsibilities of citizenship in a free society.

3. To offer pre-professional courses in fields where transfer to other colleges for professional training is necessary.

4. To offer courses and programs during the evening hours to meet the needs of adults.

5. To offer terminal courses of less than four years duration leading directly to employment in various vocational, technical, and business fields.⁴

A long list of degree offerings has also been approved by the board of regents for inclusion in the next catalogue.

They are:

Bachelor of Arts with majors in the following fields:

Biology	Mathematics
Economics	English
History	Government
Chemistry	Sociology

Bachelor of Science with majors in the following fields:

Biology	Medical Technology
Economics	Social Science
Government	Commercial Art
Mathematics	Geology
Physical and	Home Economics
Health Education	Music
Speech	Sociology
Chemistry	
Education	

Bachelor of Science in the following engineering fields:

Chemical	Electrical
Mechanical	Industrial
Civil	
Geological	

⁴ Lamar State College of Technology, "Catalogue Information," (assembled but unpublished material from the office of the dean, January 6, 1955).

Bachelor of Business Administration with majors in the following fields:

Accounting	Management
General Business	Finance
Secretarial Science	Marketing ⁵
Economics	

The trend to expand the curriculum to include degree programs other than those of a scientific or technological nature has been obvious. The only things that would prevent the continuation of such a trend would be the development of a new point of view by boards of regents; new legislative action; or changes on a state level in the administration of colleges and universities.

The expanded and liberalized curriculum should attract many students who have previously attended other colleges because they could not pursue the desired course of study at Lamar State College of Technology. Also, for many years the ratio of male students to female students has been about two to one. With these additional offerings, it is believed that a greater proportion of female students will enroll.

College officials in planning and organizing the new programs of study have given particular consideration to the actual increase in enrollment since 1951 and to estimates of enrollment in future years.

⁵ Loc. cit.

III. ESTIMATE OF FUTURE ENROLLMENT

It was stated in the report of the Commission on Higher Education in 1954 that Texas is faced in the years immediately ahead with greatly enlarged enrollments in its state-supported institutions. It was estimated that the fall enrollment would be 62,500 in 1955; 69,100 in 1960; and 101,200 in 1970. This was contrasted with a total of 51,000 in 1952. According to these predictions, enrollment in Texas colleges and universities would be 33 per cent greater than the 1952 level by 1960, and 95 per cent greater than the 1952 figure by 1970.⁶

The General Site Plan that was made for the college in 1953 was based on the estimate that the number of day and evening students at Lamar State College of Technology would increase to 7,200 by 1963. This prediction was based on the increase in enrollment at the college in recent years, together with the rapid growth of industries and population in the general area.⁷

⁶ "Texas Commission on Higher Education Report to the Honorable Allan Shivers, Governor of Texas, and the Legislature of the State of Texas," November 4, 1954, p. 4.

⁷ A Master Plan, op. cit., p. 4.

Actual enrollment figures since 1951 indicate that the above estimate was too low. Table VII and Table VIII in Chapter III of this study show that in the fall of 1951, there was a combined evening-day enrollment of 1,735 and that in the fall of 1954, it had increased to 2,900, a 67 per cent increment within three years. There is no evidence to indicate that this trend will not continue during the next few years.

Article 2637a of the Legislative Act creating Lamar State College of Technology states that the institution was established "for the white youth of this state";⁸ however, the recent United States Supreme Court decision regarding segregation infers that Negroes will soon be admitted to public colleges. Such action would materially affect the enrollment.

The time is rapidly approaching when Lamar State College of Technology will be more than a school for residents of southeast Texas. An expanded curriculum and available dormitory facilities should make it possible for the college to compete favorably with other state-supported institutions of Texas in so far as enrollment is concerned.

⁸ Vernon's Texas Statutes (1950 Supplement; Kansas City: Vernon Law Book Company), p. 203.

There are some indications that enrollment will increase faster than physical facilities can be provided. Nevertheless, plans have not been made for changing the general admission practices of the college. The present board of regents would adopt a policy of selective admissions only as a last resort. This attitude probably will not change in future years.

IV. GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Definite plans have not been made for offering work beyond the bachelor's degree. However, some preliminary discussion has taken place concerning the institution of graduate programs in the school of engineering, the school of business, and the division of education. Such programs would undoubtedly be limited to the master's degree level. It is apparent that such an educational service is desired and needed in southeast Texas, and it is reasonable to expect that within a few years the board of regents will authorize the expansion of the curriculum to include work beyond the bachelor's degree.

Equally as important as plans for graduate degrees, and of more immediate concern, are efforts that are being made to obtain approval of Lamar State College of Technology by accrediting agencies.

V. ACCREDITATION

Lamar College was approved and affiliated with the Association of Texas Colleges, the Texas Association of Music Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and The American Association of Junior Colleges. When the college became a four-year institution, administrative officials immediately began laying the groundwork for obtaining approval of the upper division by the Association of Texas Colleges and the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

In the fall of 1952, Dean O. B. Archer requested that the Committee on Standards of the Association of Texas Colleges send a representative to Lamar State College of Technology to counsel with college officials concerning procedures for requesting membership in that association. Accordingly, Dr. Otto Nielson, a member of the Committee on Standards, made such a visit during the early part of 1953.

Acting upon Dr. Nielson's recommendations, an application for associate membership was submitted to the Association of Texas Colleges. In April, 1953, at the annual meeting of the Association at Dallas, the application for associate membership was approved.

In the fall of 1953, a request was sent to the Association of Texas Colleges asking that Lamar State College of Technology be approved for full membership. At the annual meeting of the Association in San Antonio in April, 1954, this was granted.

South Park College, before the name was changed to Lamar College, became a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1929. The regulations of that association permit a junior college which has changed to a senior college to continue its membership for the lower division until a study is made of the new operation. The faculty and administration believed that an attempt should be made to secure approval of the upper division by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools just as soon as possible.

At the annual meeting of the Southern Association at Saint Petersburg, Florida, in December, 1951, President John E. Gray and Dean O. L. Archer appeared before the Committee on Admissions and presented verbal and written reports concerning the status of Lamar State College of Technology. President Gray and Dean Archer were advised that they should request an unofficial inspection by a member of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Learning.

The request was made, and in April, 1952, Dr. J. M. Goddard, Executive Secretary of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Southern Association, visited Lamar State College of Technology and advised with college officials regarding various requirements and standards. Dr. Goddard said that the Committee on Admissions usually would not appoint a committee to study the applying institution until data were available concerning three graduating classes. He suggested that for several years the Graduate Record Examination be given to all graduates. He also asked that persons responsible for the various degree programs keep post graduate records pertaining to the performance of students both in graduate school and in employment.

Acting upon the advice of Dr. Goddard, a complete report on all items covered by the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools was assembled in the summer of 1954. This was then submitted to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Association, along with a request asking that a committee be appointed to study Lamar State College of Technology. At the annual meeting of the Southern Association in Louisville, Kentucky, in December, 1954, the Committee on Admissions recommended that such a study be made, and the

Association approved the recommendation. At present, March, 1955, the faculty and administration are awaiting notification of the date when the Committee for Study will visit the campus.

Lamar State College of Technology now has an affiliate membership in the American Society for Engineering Education. Full membership in the Society will not be granted until the institution is approved by a regional accrediting agency, such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Application for approval of the various departments of engineering has been made to the Engineering Council for Professional Development. A preliminary study by that council is scheduled for the spring semester, 1955.

College officials and teachers have worked diligently since 1951 in an attempt to comply with the standards and requirements of accrediting agencies. For instance, it was known that the proportion of teachers holding doctoral degrees would have to be increased considerably before a regional accrediting agency would approve the upper division. As a consequence, President John E. Gray in 1950 recommended, and the board of trustees approved, a plan whereby a department head or a division director who could reasonably expect to complete the work of a doctoral degree within one

year was given a leave of absence for one year at one-half pay. Next, all teachers were encouraged to do advanced study during the summers. Finally, in employing additional teaching personnel since 1951, an effort has been made to employ teachers with doctoral degrees. As a result, approximately 16 per cent of the teaching faculty held doctorates by February 1, 1955, and it is expected that 25 per cent of them will hold such degrees by September 1, 1955.

VI. STATE-LEVEL PLANS FOR CO-ORDINATING HIGHER EDUCATION IN STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES OF TEXAS

In 1953, the Fifty-third Legislature of Texas established the Texas Commission on Higher Education as a temporary body to study the present needs of higher education in the state and to recommend a co-ordinated system of state-supported higher education. The Commission was directed to report its findings to the Governor and to each member of the Legislature.

On March 5, 1954, the Commission on Higher Education adopted the following goals for higher education in Texas:

1. Every person in the state should have an opportunity to obtain public higher education.

2. A system of public higher education should be sufficiently flexible to be adaptable to future needs and should include a curriculum geared to current needs. . . .

3. A system of public higher education should achieve the highest possible quality.

4. A system of public higher education should be equitably financed within the necessary limits of the state's resources.

5. A system of public higher education should be effectively administered.⁹

The goals listed above are significant because they formed a basis for later recommendations that were made by the Commission.

On November 4, 1954, the Texas Commission on Higher Education made a report to the Governor and to the Legislature. The report was divided into findings and recommendations. Among the thirteen findings listed, two are quoted as follows:

3. Texas' fully state-supported colleges and universities are now discharging their responsibilities well and, with few exceptions, there are no serious duplications of program offerings. In instances in which duplication appears to exist, further detailed study in the light of rapidly increasing enrollments will be necessary before valid recommendations may be made. The task of shaping educational programs in colleges and universities in the interest of efficiency and the public welfare and making specific determinations regarding expansion or reduction of programs ought to be met on a continuing basis.

⁹ "Texas Commission on Higher Education Report to the Honorable Allan Shivers, Governor of Texas, and the Legislature of the State of Texas," op. cit., p. 2.

7. The over-all interests of the state will be served if the various institutions of higher education through their governing boards administer curricular and program matters with the highest possible degree of autonomy.¹⁰

The Commission recommended that a central state facility for state-supported higher education in Texas be created. The facility, to be called the Texas Commission on Higher Education and composed of twenty-one members, would have its powers and duties limited to those indicated below:

1. To provide coordination, leadership, and counseling services to assist the individual institutions and their governing boards, together with the Council of College Presidents, for the purpose of developing the most efficient and effective system of higher education possible for the State of Texas.

2. To make a continuing study of the program offerings and degree offerings in state-supported colleges and universities in relation to the needs of the state. . . .

3. To approve new degree and certificate programs and to consolidate or eliminate existing programs if, after reasonable notice and hearing for the institutions concerned, the Commission concludes that such action is in the best interests of the institutions themselves and the over-all requirements of the State of Texas.

4. To make a report to the Governor annually and to the Legislature by December 1, prior to the regular meeting of the Legislature, summarizing its reports to the various governing boards and the actions taken by them.

5. To make a continuing study of the needs of the state for fundamental and applied research and for extension and public services. . . .

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

6. To make continuing studies of the formula method of financing and its application to all services and activities of the individual institutions. . . .

7. . . . The Commission on Higher Education shall review budgets and shall have broad power to recommend to the budget offices and the Legislature concerning all phases of higher education budgets.

8. To recommend to the budget offices and the Legislature the amount required as a supplemental contingent appropriation to provide for increases in enrollment and to allocate such funds to each institution based upon and limited to its actual increased program needs.

9. To make continuing studies of all phases of higher education, whether expressly enumerated herein or not, for the purpose of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of higher education in Texas.

10. To serve as the single state facility through which all state reports on higher education shall be channeled. . . .

11. To review all requests for the establishment of additional senior institutions of higher learning and to make recommendations to the Legislature based upon the needs of the state and the cost of the proposed institution to the state.

12. To grant any institution of higher learning the privilege of a hearing before the Commission upon reasonable notice of the institution's desire to be heard and to grant each institution a hearing prior to any action of the Commission concerning that institution.¹¹

The findings and recommendations of the Texas Commission on Higher Education will be reviewed by the Texas Legislature when it convenes in 1956. Since the temporary

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 14-17.

Commission was a creature of the Legislature and since it received a stamp of approval from the Governor of Texas, it is reasonable to expect that some, if not all, of the recommendations will be enacted into law.

Officials at Lamar State College of Technology favor the creation of a permanent Commission on Higher Education. They believe that the restrictive power of such a body would be far outweighed by the leadership that it could provide.

In this chapter, certain guideposts have been presented that appear to point out the course of future development for the college. Plans for the expansion of physical facilities were outlined; evidence was shown indicating that the curriculum is becoming much more liberal and is being expanded rapidly; an estimate of future enrollment based on findings of the Texas Commission on Higher Education, past enrollment trends, and other factors was presented; steps that have been taken to obtain approval by accrediting agencies were reported; and finally, state-level plans for co-ordinating higher education in state colleges and universities were discussed.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The earlier part of this study was primarily concerned with the history of Lamar State College of Technology from the time South Park Junior College was created in 1923 until 1954. This chapter contains a summary of the information previously presented and some recommendations based on the findings of the study.

I. SUMMARY

Historical Development

After the discovery of oil at Spindletop in 1901, Beaumont rapidly changed from a small sawmill town to a city. The population increased from 9,000 in 1901 to about 25,000 in 1902. Refineries were built; the Sabine-Neches deep water canal was constructed; water for irrigation was provided; and the rice industry prospered. With this growth of industry and business, population soared, and the need for additional facilities for education became evident.

In 1907, a bond issue of \$23,000 was voted for the erection of a public school building in the South Park area of Beaumont. This building was soon inadequate, and a new eight room structure was built. In 1913, the South Park

Independent School District was created by the Texas Legislature. The school population continued to increase, and in 1921, a \$300,000 bond issue was voted for the purpose of constructing a new high school building. The third floor of this building was used later to house South Park Junior College.

Some of the factors that affected the decision to create a junior college within the framework of the South Park Independent School District were: the historical and geographical background of the school district; the junior college movement; the influence of L. R. Pietzsch, superintendent of schools at South Park; and the actual need for higher education facilities in the Beaumont area.

There is no real evidence that there was a greater need for a junior college in South Park than at other places in southeast Texas. Superintendent L. R. Pietzsch, however, became interested in the junior college movement while attending the University of Chicago in 1918, and he began considering the feasibility of creating a junior college as a part of the South Park Independent School District. It is the opinion of the writer that L. R. Pietzsch should be given the entire credit for originating the idea of establishing the college at South Park, and that his influence was the deciding factor in the final determination to create the school.

South Park Junior College opened in the fall of 1923 with approximately 125 students and fourteen faculty members. L. R. Pietzsch was president, in addition to being superintendent of the South Park Independent School District, and C. W. Bingman was dean of the college and principal of the high school.

During the first few years of its existence, the college was closely allied with the South Park High School. The institutions were housed in the same building; several teachers taught both high school and college classes; the same library facilities were utilized by both groups; and the same board of trustees and administrators served the college and the high school.

On April 16, 1924, L. R. Pietzsch resigned as president of the South Park Junior College to accept the position of city manager of the city of Beaumont. Within a few days, C. W. Bingman was selected as the new president of the college and superintendent of the school district. Bingman remained in that position until the college was finally separated from the public school district in 1941. I. J. Deck, who had been head of the department of education, was elected principal of the high school and dean of the junior college. Then, in the spring of 1925, the positions of principal and dean were

separated, and D. W. Boitnott was chosen to succeed I. J. Deck as dean. Boitnott served in that capacity until June 1, 1942.

Although L. R. Pietzsch, C. W. Bingham, and D. W. Boitnott were students of the junior college movement, they apparently did not agree with Seashore¹ that the first two years of college are essentially the capstone of secondary education. It is true that for several years after the South Park Junior College was created, college classes were scheduled in the high school building. Actually, they were separate from the high school, for the junior college occupied the third floor of the building. Also, the practice of allowing teachers to instruct both high school and college classes was soon changed. In fact, the purpose of the college as it was outlined in 1923 was (1) to offer the first two years of general university work, (2) to offer the first two years of general university work for those who planned to enter professional schools, and (3) to offer practical courses to those who did not want to continue their education at senior colleges or universities.² The purpose as

¹ Carl E. Seashore, The Junior College Movement (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1940), p. 5.

² South Park Junior College, Bulletin, 1923-1924, p. 3.

stated in succeeding catalogues remained almost exactly the same until the junior college was separated from the South Park Independent School District in 1941.

South Park College was a district school. It was created primarily for students of the South Park Independent School District. Except for some small fees, students residing within the district were not charged tuition. This policy was changed in 1929, when the board of trustees decided to charge in-district students tuition amounting to \$60.00 per college year. In its early history, the college was quite responsive to community needs and demands. For instance, during the summer of 1925, a number of people requested that night classes be arranged for students who could not attend during the day. The board of trustees authorized the scheduling of such classes if the demand was sufficient. Then, in 1926, a course in public school art and a one-year course in business administration were added to the curriculum because of public requests for them.

From the day of its inception, South Park College looked to the University of Texas as a model. Entrance requirements and course requirements were patterned largely after those at the University. Before the end of the first college year, the school was recognized as a first class junior college by the Texas State Department of Education.

In 1929, the so-called "junior college law" was passed by the Texas Legislature. This law validated the public junior colleges then in existence and defined the limitations and methods for the establishment of new junior colleges. The law gave the board of trustees at South Park reasonable assurance that another junior college would not be created in the immediate area being served by the local institution. Also, it was in 1929, that the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools approved the college for membership.

Enrollment increased rapidly at the college during the first two years of its existence; however, between 1925 and 1931, there was an increase of only 12.2 per cent. In 1931, the board of trustees became concerned about this almost static condition and decided that one reason for it might be the community implication of the name of the college. Accordingly, the public was invited to suggest a new name, and in 1932, South Park College was renamed Lamar College.

From about 1937 to 1940, there was an undirected movement to change Lamar College into a four-year institution. The movement, however, never got beyond the discussion or planning stage. Instead, efforts were directed toward creating a junior college district. College officials

believed that this would be the quickest and easiest way of alleviating the financial burden that was being imposed on the school district by the junior college.

It was not determined exactly when or who originated the idea for changing the college into a junior college district. However, J. M. Combs, along with C. W. Eisingman and John E. Gray, gave impetus to the movement. They were undoubtedly instrumental in getting leaders of the Young Men's Business League of Beaumont to offer the services of that organization in publicizing the proposed expansion program. Supporters of the junior college district proposal believed that unless an enlarged plant was provided and a more equitable system of financing arranged, it would be necessary to limit the number of students accepted and curtail the services of the institution. A committee of the Young Men's Business League in a study of needs found that technical, vocational, and semi-professional training were badly needed in southeast Texas, and that cultural and pre-professional college training should be made available to students at as low a cost as possible.³ Residents of the proposed district were practically promised that the

³ The Road Ahead for Lamar College (Beaumont: Young Men's Business League, 1940).

new school would provide educational programs for the pre-employment needs of youth and the post-employment needs of employed adults.

As a result of an election that was held on September 21, 1940, the Lamar Union Junior College District was created. This district was comprised of the same territory as that which lay within the Beaumont, French, and South Park Independent School Districts.

At the same time that voters authorized the creation of the junior college district, they approved the issuance of \$850,000 in bonds for the construction and equipment of a college plant; they voted to levy a tax not to exceed twenty cents on the \$100 valuation for the support and maintenance of the school; and they elected a board of seven trustees to govern the college. The members of the board of trustees were M. L. Love, Gene Naquin, Herman Iles, Eeeman Strong, Dr. Talbot A. Tumbleson, J. M. Combs, and L. K. Wall.

The board of trustees of the South Park Independent School District agreed to continue to operate the college for the remainder of the 1940-1941 college year. This gave the junior college board an opportunity to effect an administrative reorganization, plan the curriculum, and begin construction of the physical plant.

John E. Gray, former dean of men, was named director of the expanded college. He succeeded C. W. Eisingman who continued as superintendent of the South Park Schools. D. W. Boitnott remained dean of the college; G. A. Wimberly was named business manager; and Celeste Kitchen became registrar. In June, 1942, the position of director was abolished, and Gray was elected president.

By the beginning of the 1941-1942 school year, the administrative severance of Lamar College and the South Park Independent School District had been completed. However, since the new buildings that were being constructed had not been finished, it was necessary for the college to continue to utilize the facilities of the public school. In June, 1942, with new facilities valued at \$1,000,000 available, the college was moved from the South Park site to the new location.

The war years and post war years presented the same difficulties at Lamar that were experienced at other colleges and universities. Enrollment decreased during 1943-44 and 1944-45, and many teachers and administrators left to enter other fields of employment or military service. While John E. Gray was on active duty with the navy, O. B. Archer was chosen as acting president.

In November, 1944, J. M. Combs, president of the board of trustees for Lamar College and the man who had led the fight to create a junior college district, was elected to the Congress of the United States. He subsequently submitted his resignation as a member of the board of trustees.

After the war ended, enrollment rose so abruptly that facilities became overcrowded and inadequate. Extended-day and evening classes were organized to make instruction available to additional students. As enrollment increased, the need for senior college facilities became evident. By 1946, educational, civic, and business leaders were convinced that the time was propitious to change Lamar College into a degree-granting institution.

The first planned or directed movement toward creating a four-year state supported college in Beaumont was begun in the fall of 1946. The matter had been a subject for speculation before that time, but nothing definite had been accomplished. The board of trustees met on December 7, 1946, and made plans for introducing a bill at the following session of the Legislature for the establishment of a senior college, with Lamar College serving as a nucleus for the four-year institution.

Communities of southeast Texas are often very competitive in their relationships; this is particularly true regarding the establishment or location of new industries within the area. There was, however, a concert of agreement concerning the desirability of changing Lamar College into a senior college. In fact, educational and civic leaders from the entire Sabine-Neches Area made many trips to Austin in support of legislation favoring the creation of such a college.

In the spring of 1947, legislation was enacted to create a degree-granting institution; however, because the state comptroller did not certify that sufficient state funds were available for the \$1,000,000 appropriation that was included in the bill, it died because of the apparent lack of funds.

At the beginning of the fall semester of 1948, a Negro branch of Lamar College, later named Jefferson Junior College, was created. The Negro branch remained a part of Lamar College until 1951, when Lamar State College of Technology came into being. At that time, arrangements were made for the facilities of Jefferson Junior College to be transferred to Texas Southern University. The University continued to operate the school as an extension center.

In 1949, approval of the Texas Legislature was again obtained for changing Lamar College into a state supported school. The legislation that was passed provided for an appropriation of \$1,000,000 for the construction of new buildings, and a procedure was established by which the junior college district could release existing facilities to the state of Texas.

The four-year college did not open until the fall of 1951. This delay was necessary because the Legislature did not appropriate money for operating expenses until 1951. Also, considerable time was required to plan the curriculum, employ teachers, secure equipment, construct buildings, and effect the necessary administrative reorganization.

John E. Gray, president of the junior college and the person who largely directed the legislative fight to create the new school, was chosen as the first president. The other principal administrative officers were: O. E. Archer, dean; G. A. Wimberly, business manager; and Celeste Kitchen, registrar.

The curriculum of Lamar State College of Technology in 1951 was almost entirely technical or scientific in the upper division, except for a degree in physical education. Freshman and sophomore offerings remained as varied and as comprehensive as they had been before the status of the school was changed.

Shortly after the fall semester of 1951 opened, John E. Gray announced that he planned to resign as president on January 1, 1952. The board of regents then elected G. A. Wimberly to the position of acting-president. It was understood that Wimberly would not be a candidate for the position of permanent president and that he would serve only until a new president was selected. On April 16, 1952, F. L. McDonald, director of the department of journalism at Texas State College for Women, was named president. Simultaneously, it was announced that Dean O. B. Archer had been given the additional title of vice-president.

Under the direction of President F. L. McDonald, a re-appraisal was made of the physical facilities and the curriculum of the college. It was found that additional buildings were needed, but that adequate funds were not available for their construction. Also, it was determined that there was a need and a public demand for an expanded and liberalized curriculum.

In 1953, the Texas Legislature passed a bill that will provide for a twenty-four year building program at Lamar State College of Technology. The measure, which will become effective on September 1, 1955, authorizes the college to retain tuition and fees from students, thereby creating a building fund.

In May, 1954, an administrative reorganization of the divisions and departments was made; this brought them more in accord with other institutions of higher learning. Schools of engineering, business, and arts and sciences were created, each headed by a dean. Also, divisions of fine and applied arts, education, and vocations were organized. Each of these was headed by a chairman.

Enrollment increased rapidly after the senior college was created. By 1951, there were 1,735 students enrolled for day and evening classes. By the fall of 1954, there were 2,900 students.

Factors and personalities that have significantly affected the development of the college were presented in Chapter IV of this study. The factors discussed were: education for veterans; scholarships, gifts, and endowments; athletics, health, and physical education; and admission requirements. The personalities selected for special mention were C. W. Eisinger, J. M. Combs, O. B. Archer, John E. Gray, and F. L. McDonald.

Some of the guideposts that appear to point the way toward future development at Lamar Tech are: (1) plans that have been made for future development and expansion, (2) a changing emphasis on curriculum offerings, (3) estimates of future enrollment, (4) the implications of

accreditation, and (5) state-level plans for co-ordinating higher education in state colleges and universities in Texas.

Immediately after F. L. McDonald became president, he directed the formulation of a master plan for future development. The plan was then submitted to an architectural firm, with the request that a general site plan and an analysis of proposed buildings be prepared. The architects soon prepared a written report, which included a general site plan and suggestions for seventeen additional buildings.

There is evidence to indicate that the curriculum of the college will not be strictly technological. Since 1923, there has been an obvious trend to include degree programs other than those of a scientific or technological nature. By the fall of 1935, Bachelor of Science degrees will be offered in twenty-one fields, Bachelor of Arts degrees in nine fields, and Bachelor of Business Administration degrees in seven fields.

There are indications that enrollment at Lamar State College of Technology will increase very rapidly in future years. With a more liberalized curriculum and adequate dormitory facilities for men and women, the time is rapidly approaching when the college will be more than a school for

residents of southeast Texas. There is the possibility that within the next few years work beyond the bachelor's degree will be offered. Also in attempting to estimate future enrollment, consideration must be given to the implications of the recent United States Supreme Court Decision regarding segregation.

As a junior college, Lamar College was approved by several accrediting agencies, including the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and the Association of Texas Colleges. Immediately after the school became a four-year institution, college officials began making plans for obtaining approval of the senior college. At present, March, 1955, the college has full membership in the Association of Texas Colleges and affiliate membership in the American Society for Engineering Education. Applications for membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and in the Engineering Council for Professional Development are pending.

The Legislature of Texas, in 1953, appointed the Texas Commission on Higher Education as a temporary body to study the present needs of higher education in the state and to recommend a co-ordinated system of state-supported higher education. The Commission made a report to the Governor and to the Legislature in November, 1954, and recommended, among

other things, that a permanent Commission on Higher Education be created. Officials at Lamar State College of Technology appear to favor the creation of a permanent commission because they believe that the leadership that could be provided would outweigh the restrictive effect.

The Changing Philosophy

The philosophy of Lamar State College of Technology has changed with the several periods of its internal organization. From the foregoing history, it is possible to identify several distinct types of philosophy in the life of this institution.

From the creation of South Park Junior College in 1923 to 1941, the philosophy of education held was that of local service, the nature of which was determined by the wishes of the patrons of the South Park Independent School District. Primarily, the theory of education was the same as that held by the public schools of this area, which was in a large degree of a college preparatory nature. After the name of the college was changed to Lamar College in 1932, the curriculum was expanded to appeal to more people; nevertheless, the basic philosophy of the institution did not change as long as control remained with the South Park Independent School District.

With the creation of Lamar Union Junior College District in 1941, the philosophy underwent two major changes. First, the area served by the college was greatly expanded. The junior college district was composed of the same territory as that which was included in the South Park, the Beaumont, and the French Independent School Districts; however, the actual area served included such cities as Port Arthur, Port Neches, Nederland, Orange, and others. Second, the philosophy underwent a change from that of preparation for college or university to training in the following areas: (1) terminal education in practical business, vocational, and technical fields; (2) post-employment training for adults; (3) pre-professional training in such fields as engineering, dentistry, and medicine; and (4) the usual preparatory courses for entrance into senior colleges. Thus, the philosophy from 1941 to 1951 was characterized by efforts to make Lamar College a service center for much of southeast Texas. These changes marked the emergence of the college from the chrysalis of the public school view of education.

After becoming a four-year state institution, controlled by a board of regents appointed by the governor of Texas, Lamar State College of Technology departed from the philosophy of responsibility to the local residents for

directions, without, however, becoming insensitive to the needs of this area. The philosophy has now become that of serving the youth of the entire state in the areas of business, education, engineering, fine and applied arts, liberal arts, science, and vocations.

Since 1951, changes have been made so rapidly that the philosophy has been in a constant state of flux. It seems fairly clear at this point, however, that the philosophy of the institution is that which is common to most of the orthodox colleges and institutions of our time, both as to methods of teaching and purposes of education.

Thus, there has been a marked and fairly rapid shift in educational philosophy from that of a public school, college preparatory view serving a restricted and local area to that of a state college offering training on a four-year advanced level in a variety of fields. Perhaps the future of the institution will hold an ever-widening goal of industrial training to the nation. Then, the areas of service may be extended to include training in professional areas, such as law and medicine. At least, the pattern of development in the past has been one of ever-expanding service.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are made in the light of the findings of this study and as a result of personal opinions that the writer has formed during his association with the college.

First, the writer believes that a policy of continuous evaluation should be followed in relation to the curriculum. Changing employment trends, past enrollment figures, area needs and desires, offerings in other state colleges and universities, and sound pedagogical practices are some of the factors that should be considered in this evaluation.

Second, there probably should be more community participation in planning the curriculum than has been practiced in the past. Since Lamar State College of Technology is situated in the center of the petro-chemical industrial area of southeast Texas, it should be possible to obtain from leaders in these industries many ideas and suggestions that would be useful. Also, for some types of training, facilities of the industries could be utilized as adjuncts to regular laboratory work that is conducted on the campus.

Third, in view of the recent United States Supreme Court decision regarding segregation in public schools and colleges, it is recommended that the board of regents and college officials give their immediate attention to the implications of non-segregation.

Fourth, it is suggested that long-range plans be made for offering work beyond the Bachelor's degree level. Better library facilities, additional teachers, new classrooms, and improved laboratory equipment are needed before a graduate program would be practical. Nevertheless, there is a demand and a need for that educational service in southeast Texas.

Fifth, it is recommended that efforts be made to expand the area being served by Lamar State College of Technology. Located in the center of industrialized southeast Texas and within commuting distance of approximately one-half million people, the college enjoys an enviable advantage over some of the other state colleges in Texas. There is no other state-supported college nearer than Sam Houston State Teachers College at Huntsville, and the nearest state technological college is the Agricultural and Mechanical College at Bryan. With a well planned and varied curriculum, adequate dormitory facilities, membership in a regional accrediting agency, and a good public relations

policy, it is reasonable to expect that Lamar State College of Technology should serve a wide geographical area.

Finally, it is the writer's opinion that continued but intensified emphasis should be given to pre-employment, terminal and post-employment, adult education. Since the college became a four-year school, attention has naturally been directed toward degree offerings. It is suggested, therefore, that a study be made of the terminal and adult programs to determine whether current needs are being satisfactorily met.

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August 24, 1941.
June 1, 1942.
June 4, 1942.
June 1, 1943.
June 3, 1943.
June 8, 1943.
August 31, 1943.
September 11, 1943.
September 2, 1944.
September 2, 1945.
August 18, 1946.
September 1, 1946.
September 11, 1946.
December 5, 1946.
December 8, 1946.
February 4, 1947.
February 5, 1947.
February 16, 1947.
March 16, 1947.
March 27, 1947.
April 23, 1947.
February 13, 1948.
March 16, 1948.
December 2, 1948.
January 6, 1949.
January 9, 1949.
January 13, 1949.
January 22, 1949.

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February 10, 1949.
June 2, 1949.
June 15, 1949.
June 28, 1949.
July 1, 1949.
November 9, 1949.
November 23, 1949.
November 24, 1949.
December 6, 1949.
December 15, 1949.
January 13, 1950.
July 20, 1950.
September 1, 1950.
December 15, 1950.
January 21, 1951.
February 4, 1951.
May 6, 1951.
July 1, 1951.
September 2, 1951.
September 9, 1951.
October 1, 1951.
October 9, 1951.
October 24, 1951.
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September 1, 1953.
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June 3, 1926.
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September 23, 1946.
April 22, 1947.
April 2, 1948.
June 2, 1948.
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 January 5, 1950.
 August 26, 1950.
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 May 18, 1951.
 August 4, 1951.
 September 1, 1951.
 September 25, 1951.
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