

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Department chairmen were sent additional copies of the Special Graduate Education Issue for distribution to those seniors who are interested in graduate education. Additional copies of this issue are still available on request.

For the current issue department chairmen are being sent the number of copies for which they ordered bulk subscriptions. (Those departments whose requests have not been received as yet will be sent token copies in order to provide some continuity.) The new subscription policy is as follows:

1. Chemical Engineering Departments may request a definite number of copies at \$4/year for each of the four issues in 1970, with a minimum contribution of \$25/year. (They may pay for these through departmental funds or faculty contributions or both.)

2. ASEE-Chemical Engineering Division members may request (on the following form) individually addressed copies to any address and pay \$6/year starting in January 1970.

3. Libraries and other subscribers that are not members of the Chemical Engineering Division of ASEE may subscribe as before at \$10/year.

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Roberts Updates Data
Sir:

The Fall, 1969 issue of "Chemical Engineering Education" contains an article by Ralph A. Morgen entitled "The Chemistry-Chemical Engineering Merry-Go-Round." Table III of this article states that a "light chemistry" chemical engineering curriculum should consist of 24 semester credits of chemistry and that a "strong chemistry" curriculum should contain 36 semester credits of chemistry. A few paragraphs later, Dr. Morgen states that "The twenty-three institutions in Table II with accredited undergraduate chemical engineering curricula in 1967 all come within these limits."

As chairman of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee at Washington University (St. Louis), I recently made a brief survey of the chemistry requirements in chemical-engineering curricula at other universities, using the 69/70, or in some cases the 68/69 school catalogs as sources of information. The seventeen schools covered in the survey were arbitrarily selected, but I believe that they represent a reasonable cross-section of the chemical engineering departments in the United States. Ten were state schools and seven were private. The total number of semester credits of chemistry required in these seventeen curricula ranged from a low of 15.3 to a high of 30.0. The average requirement for the schools was 23.1 semester credits and the median was 24.0 semester credits. Seven of the seventeen schools fell at least 4 semester credits short of Dr. Morgen's "irreducible minimum" of 24. Not one of the schools required the 36 hours for a "strong chemistry" rating. Furthermore, the 36 semester-credit criterion for a "strong chemistry" program is *outside* the 99 percent confidence limits of the sample population.

Interestingly, the mean chemistry requirement for the seven private schools is 20.8 credits, and that for the state schools is 24.7.

The difference between these means is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. Five of the seven departments requiring less than 24 semester credits of chemistry were in private institutions.

On the basis of these results, it appears that the statistics presented by Dr. Morgen do not reflect the current situation among Chemical Engineering Departments. Chemistry requirements seem to have been reduced since the data leading to Table III of Dr. Morgen's article was compiled. However, since all but one of the seventeen schools surveyed required coursework in each of the three major areas of chemistry, it may well be that the present statistics reflect a "numbers game" rather than a significant drop in requirements.

The problem in reconciling these statistics with Dr. Morgen's may also result from the use of the term "semester credits." The present statistics are based on the use of two semesters per school year rather than three quarters. For schools on the quarter system, the number of semester credits was calculated by multiplying the number of trimester credits by $\frac{2}{3}$.

George W. Roberts
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