A COMMENT ON THE PREDICTION OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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In establishing an admission policy for a University, it is of some interest to find a set of variables which correlate highly with success at the University. This set of variables can then be used to construct a model which will aid admissions officials in predicting whether a particular individual will be successful if he is admitted to the school.

A study was made of more than 400 students admitted to the Preparatory Year Program at the University of Petroleum and Minerals over a two-year period. Preparatory year grades, standardized examination scores, and secondary school final exam scores were correlated with the students' cumulative grade point average (GPA) in college. These students were also classified as to whether they entered the the Applied Engineering program or the Engineering Science program at UPM.

It was found that these two groups differ greatly in many of the variables under consideration and that several of the available variables correlate highly with Prep GPA and College GPA. Several regression models were constructed for predicting academic success at both the Prep and College levels of study. In all cases, useful models were found for making such predictions.

For example, one of the models uses secondary final exam score (TAW) to predict Prep GPA. The model is as follows:

$$GPA = (.0052) \times TAW + (-3.5733)$$

Hence, if a student has a secondary school final exam score of 1125 his predicted Prep GPA is 2.277.

In conclusion, those who have the responsibility of admitting students to Preparatory Programs or of admitting or promoting students to College level programs should find these types of models useful, as an aid to their decision making process. Experience indicates that such models of great use of those responsible for designing and administering the admission policies of a University.

A paper entitled "A Study of Correlates with Academic Success at the University", which completely describes the study summarized in this Comment, is available from the author.

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