ABSTRACT

Traditional educational methods can no longer effectively meet the various needs and demands of the many diverse groups and individuals found in large metropolitan multicampus districts. Existing urban community colleges do not provide alternative services because they are limited in flexibility by state statutes and by the traditions of academia. Thus, a non-traditional college must be established as a separate entity to supplement and complement the offerings of existing institutions. Non-traditional education involves altering curriculum to meet non-traditional student needs and providing these services in environments other than those of a large campus plant. The specific elements of a conceptual framework for a non-traditional college include: (1) the new student constituency; (2) the changing social structure which has produced changing attitudes toward college; (3) an evolving interpretation of education and instruction. In a non-traditional college, curriculum and instruction must emphasize precise learning objectives and accurate measurement techniques, the concepts of space and time must allow for individualized programmed learning, learning resources centers, TV instruction, open lab hours, experimental scheduling, and short term classes, and the organizational structure must consider student goals as more important than institutional goals. (DC)
PART I. An Overview of the Rationale for Alternatives in the Community College

Educators and concerned citizens have generally been responsive to the need of alternative systems of education. Most of the major changes in public education have been the result of needs and demands from a changing student constituency combined with new emerging value systems. Historically, the high school began as an alternative educational system, as did the junior college. These alternatives have been identified as progressive, innovative, and, more recently, non-traditional.

The community college, along with a name change from junior college, has been progressively revising its mission to service the community in ways not traditionally a part of higher education. A by-product of this community involvement has been an expanded interest and new felt need for post-secondary education. During the past decade this interest has developed beyond the normal part-time adult student population attending evening classes.

In bits and pieces the community college has developed and altered its educational functions to service a varied student population. In the large urban areas these services can no longer be provided in a piece-meal fashion. The number of different student population group is so numerous and the educational goals of each group and individuals in those groups are so varied, traditional methods no longer effectively meet new needs and demands.

In answer to questions of why existing colleges do not provide alternative services, it may be well to note some limitations that are placed on the traditional college. There are two major obstacles. First, limitations are imposed by state statutes and form an increasing restriction on what can be developed in a community college. Second, traditions of academia probably constitute the most formidable barrier to development of
alternatives within the established colleges.

State statutes and interpretations of the law result in a confusing and often conceptually conflicting set of rules that seriously hamper development of alternatives within the traditional institution. Regulation of facilities construction, instruction, class hours, credentialing, and other phases of college operation make it apparent that community colleges are not truly considered in the same context as four-year institutions which are not so regulated. With operations being confined by laws and emerging issues of management and labor, flexibility and alternatives become increasingly difficult to develop in the traditional college.

Tradition has as much, if not more, direct influence as do laws on the form and operational mode of a community college. Social and educational tradition determines who the college student should be. Curriculum, instruction, and accreditation have all assumed their characters as a result of tradition. It is a matter of tradition that a college is thought of as a complex of concrete structures, not a legal mandate. Tradition is given an added element of power because much of it has been embodied in legislation. Given these limitations for flexibility, established by law and tradition, the community college is hard put to plan and implement alternative educational services on a large scale.

In addition to legal and tradition obstacles, not all community colleges have a need to develop non-traditional educational services. In the rural and suburban areas of the state few of the dynamic elements of a multi-cultural society and economics are in evidence. Moreover, implementation of totally new educational services in a single campus community college district might be detrimental to the district as a whole. The most opportune situation in meeting new demands and where the greatest need exists is in large metropolitan multi-college districts.

The obvious advantage is that students who desire a traditional college campus and curriculum taught in a familiar instructional mode have this opportunity. Since the
traditional has always existed in these areas, it may be assumed that the thousands not presently enrolled would react positively to a non-traditional approach. This has been demonstrated in a number of ways including skills centers, television instruction, classes offered in homes and places of employment, and weekend classes.

PART II. The Conceptual Elements of a Non-Traditional College

There are many complex elements that constitute a conceptual framework for non-traditional educational services. Important to such a concept is a working definition of the term non-traditional. For the purposes of this paper the term non-traditional is not defined as a system or specific theory. Non-traditional is used as a relative term and has many valid applications. Hence, a working definition should be formulated through identification of particular student constituents and their needs. In the process of meeting new demands outside the established framework of collegiate functions and operations, a non-traditional design will naturally evolve. This does not limit the design to a single approach or method. The alternatives will be as numerous as the needs.

Specific elements of a conceptual framework considered essential include (1) the student constituency; (2) the changing social structure based on a dynamic values hierarchy; (3) an evolving interpretation of education and instruction. None of the specifics discussed here, such as identifiable groups in the new student constituents, were essential components upon which the original junior college concept was founded.

1. New student constituents. It would be difficult to cite the exact number of new students. It would be equally difficult to compare their changing value system to the traditional value hierarchy. The growing body of data is not organized to the point where definite conclusions can be made in total confidence.

All community colleges have felt and are feeling the impact of part-time students as well as the need to serve citizens off campus. There is a growing awareness of the educational needs of citizens heretofore not considered as potential community college
students. This awareness began with the disadvantaged minorities who have been traditionally disenfranchised. The categories have grown to the point where the potential student population far outnumbers those categories of students who do attend. These include senior citizens, women, full-time employed, the unemployed, the developmentally disabled, the parolee, non-English speaking, the underemployed, and professional and semi-professional persons.

In contrast to the college bound high school graduate who sees post-secondary education as a phase of maturity are adults who have never considered higher education as a part of their lives. The creation of new educational services by the state and federal governments as well as the growth of parochial schools indicates that services which should have been provided by the community college are being offered by other agencies.

General statistics provided by any number of sources indicate that the number of disenfranchised people is astounding. For example, there are over 10,000 adult mentally retarded citizens in Alameda County. Over 100,000 persons in the state are released from prison every year. In every county of California at least 6% to 8% of the working force is unemployed. The number of senior citizens grows every year and the female population cast into non-fulfilling roles has always existed.

The different categories of educationally disenfranchised people are endless, primarily because the traditional college is oriented toward a very limited part of the population. The community college must actively seek out and identify people not now enrolled in college. It is one thing for an individual with a Master's Degree to undertake further training, but it is quite another for someone who has felt alienated from education to seek this assistance. We cannot wait for people to come to the college; it is necessary to take educational services to the people.

2. Changing social structure and newly emerging value hierarchy. The social and economic changes in society since World War II are clearly a permanent part of the American scene. The development of racial and social equality, in fact as well as in theory,
is probably the most visible of these changes.

Contrary to popular thought, value differences are not confined to ethnic minorities. Many citizens in all segments of society feel the need for diverse approaches to life goals, education being but one such goal. The educational goals and objectives of this group of potential students are quite different from those who see accumulation of credits and transfer as the objectives of college attendance. It is evident that many people no longer accept the traditional mores and values of society. American society has changed drastically over the past twenty years and a result of this change is the emergence of new values and new identities.

Institutions have traditionally invited all to accept predetermined institutional goals and values, and this acceptance has been a prerequisite for entry. When a few institutions, e.g., the church or government, dominated society, this attitude posed few problems. Obviously this is not the case today. Contrasting, and often conflicting, values and beliefs are held by an increasing number of Americans. Traditionalists feel that these values, beliefs, and attitudes should be integrated into the accepted norm. "Become part of the mainstream," the cliche goes.

While value integration may be achievable and desirable from a long range point of view, initial contact and achievement of immediate goals cannot be brought about by the traditional approach to education. Without advocacy of one or another system, non-traditional education implies working within environments and for the achievement of goals not normally considered a part of higher education.

The affluent minority and the emerging minority have been recruited for college and given the opportunity to take advantage of the changing times. However, the non-minority, affluent, and disabled persons have not been recruited in the same vigorous manner. Whatever social adjustments were made for disenfranchised minorities should be made for other types of disenfranchised people. Many share with ethnic minorities the rejection of post-secondary education in the traditional sense. While the basic reasons
for this rejection may differ, there is concurrence in the demand for alternatives in higher education.

Notable preferences in educational alternatives that have been expressed include sound educational advice that emphasizes career planning. Many would enroll in short and concise instructional presentations as opposed to drawn out semesters of seventeen weeks. Attending classes in buildings other than a campus is often preferred and is especially convenient if classes are offered at the place of employment or residence.

College is no longer thought of as a way of life for extended adolescence and is becoming an instrument for achievement of real life goals. Most often these goals are immediate ones for survival rather than those that may materialize in later life.

Some of the new values and attitudes are personal reactions to the indifferent systems of all levels of government. The formal physical structure of a campus, the multitude of rules, regulations, academic obstacles, and other aspects of the superstructure of education evoke several kinds of negative responses. First, the entire process is cold and overwhelming, reducing the prospective students to insignificance. The student feels unwanted and alienated. Second, the prospective student often feels that the total process is a hassle contrived by bureaucrats to keep certain people from attending college. The idea that college is a special place for a selected clientele becomes real. The college campus is not people oriented as much as it is created for institutional convenience.

In a recent meeting with Spanish speaking community members, the most specific and significant sentiment expressed was the need for educational services outside the unfriendly and alien atmosphere of a college campus. Members of this group verbalized the changing attitude of many when they said that colleges must seek out and provide services to all, not merely build a structure and expect people to fight a hostile environment for their rights to be educated. Included in this concept of the right to an education is consideration for bilingual instruction, indicating the need for
different approaches to learning.

3. Changing interpretations of education and instruction. As important as broadening the educational base is, the development of alternative systems goes beyond merely meeting the needs of non-traditional students. In many areas of instruction, successful alternatives have been in existence for some time. These alternatives are based on a variety of learning theories and many have been designed to meet special needs of students.

Alternative instructional systems should be designed for different learners according to what is most effective for them. This may mean television instruction, newspaper courses, individualized programmed learning, or open labs. The impressive list of alternative instructional methods has been detailed in many publications and need not be enumerated here. The critical point is that such alternative learning systems are needed.

While there is a necessity to develop alternatives, it does not imply wholesale adoption of all systems of teaching. There are realistic obstacles to this. A primary concern is financial limitations. A second concern of major importance is the lack of skilled personnel.

The creation of alternative learning systems is an extremely difficult task and one that requires skill as well as understanding of different concepts of education. New teaching methods imply a belief in learning concepts that may not be considered as basic in the traditional methods. This can be verbalized in terms of learning objectives, performance levels, skills and motor tests, individualized self-paced learning, non-graded instruction, etc. Alternative learning systems cannot be developed without a conceptualized framework. It may be that such a process is not as non-traditional as admitting that a learning concept (of any kind) must exist before teaching methods can be devised.

In addition to a conceptualized framework of learning, there is also a necessity to see education as something other than events that occur within a building. It is
important to envision education as a vehicle for achievement rather than as the achievement itself. It is to be used by people for their purposeful ends. College must also mean learning from any starting point, without predetermined obstacles intended to exclude people rather than encourage greater participation.

Although these obstacles are formidable enough to merit caution, there are other equally important reasons to proceed with care. A major consideration is the student for whom alternatives are being planned. Two crucial considerations must be taken into account when implementing any change in instruction. First, the subject matter content being taught and second, the instructional system and physical setting that best suits the learner.

In the first instance, teaching a course via television may not have any attraction as an alternative instructional system because of the subject matter taught. On the other hand, the use of television may not be acceptable for some although they wish to take the course being offered. Teaching college classes in the Spanish language via television may be the only realistic way to reach a large number of this constituency. Yet, television may be rejected by the middle class housewife who feels the need to be out in the classroom. Computer assisted instruction, regardless of subject matter, may be totally ineffective for a large segment of the disadvantaged population.

In summary, the following elements are considered to be vital to a non-traditional concept of education. First, a new student constituency is being recognized after years of indifferent treatment by education and society. The potential student population in this category far exceeds the actual number of students now enrolled in community colleges. This new student constituency is not limited to disadvantaged minorities. It includes people from all social and economic levels and adults of all ages.

Second, a changing social structure in America has produced alternative value systems that places education in a different frame of reference. College is no longer visualized as a depository of theory and ideas as opposed to the practical world of work.
and living. Education is valued as a means to be used to achieve goals, not as a goal in itself. In addition to this, the attachments of collegiate life are not considered important to many who want learning rather than an unique maturing experience.

Finally, experimentation and extensive study indicate that alternative methods of teaching are necessary for learning. These new instructional systems are based on changing concepts of learning and education. Curriculum and instruction need not be traditional duplications of what is accepted by academic watchdogs. Subject matter and instruction can and should be tailored to meet individual needs, rather than satisfying institutional standards. Many educators and laymen feel that learning can effectively occur anywhere and is not confined to a designated set of buildings.

PART III. Organizational Changes in a Non-Traditional College

Conceptualizing the idea of non-traditional education is a process of verbalizing operational procedures. It does not directly deal with what is to be altered. Making concepts operational requires identification of details to be considered as possible change elements.

1. Curriculum and instruction. Curriculum and instruction are considered to be the heart of the learning environment. As with many terms, a variety of definitions are available for these words. For the purposes of this paper, a composite definition is most useful. This definition begins with learning, described as the process which brings about a change in the individual's way of responding as a result of contact with aspects of the environment. The environment vital to this thesis is the learning environment, composed of curriculum and instruction. Contact with curriculum and instruction constitutes a learning experience.

Curriculum is commonly described as a predetermined pattern of courses. In the traditional curriculum these patterns are designed according to institutional requirements, usually dominated by university criteria. Transferability is most often the key
to course construction and student needs are not always considered.

The community college curriculum is usually arranged so that knowledge must be mastered sequentially by everyone who pursues that field of study. Content may be "watered down" for the less able, but in the final analysis the curriculum has been standardized rather than individualized for more effective learning.

Instruction is the means or methods used to bring the student into active contact with the learning environment. It forms the bridge between the planned sequence of courses and learning for the student. Instruction becomes, therefore, the contact between the student and instructor. In the traditional system the instructor communicates data by lecture, readings, demonstration, or discussion. Whatever is communicated in this mode theoretically leads to the next sequence, more complex than the first sequence. The learning objective becomes progression to the next level of difficulty.

This process depends on what the instructor feels is necessary to succeed in the next sequence as well as deciding where the initial mastery process begins. The latter inevitably eliminates those students who have not reached a particular level of mastery, best illustrated by establishment of prerequisites.

Instruction often becomes an abstract and confusing contact between student and teacher. Rarely does instruction imply specific learning objectives to be set by the instructor and achieved by the student. Even more devastating is the fact that measurement of learning is vague and unspecified. Chance plays a more important part in measurement and evaluation than does learning by design.

While curriculum and instructional alternatives are difficult to implement, they are far from being impossible. New and different courses can be created. Curriculum can also be created for objectives and goals that do not necessarily lead to transfer to a four-year institution. Instructional communication can be altered in many ways for both traditional and non-traditional curriculum. Mechanical devices are most commonly used and are effective, indicating that instruction by a person is not absolutely
necessary. Communication can also be in foreign languages to accommodate this segment of the population.

Most vital is the objective of the curriculum and instruction. Why and what is to be learned must be specifically stated and measurement must be of these learning objectives. Evaluation must be exact and a part of the learning process, not an appendage based on vague systems of grading. In like manner, curriculum must have an objective other than transfer or progression in complexity.

2. The traditional community college learning environment is unique. It applies only to the thirteenth and fourteenth grades but has characteristics of both the state secondary system as well as the four-year college.

While all community colleges are theoretically organized to facilitate instruction, there are serious obstacles to adjusting the framework of the learning environment. Mechanically, the two most important details of constructing the learning environment are space and time. Time is specifically defined in state statutes which are used primarily to assist in computing average daily attendance. In addition to specific periods of time community colleges are tied to a minimum 175 days of instruction per year.

Space is regimented in the community college in a number of ways. Construction of buildings must adhere to a designated number of square feet per student station. Additionally, all buildings used for credit classes must conform to the Field Act standards which are legislated as a protective measure against earthquakes. Time and space are, therefore, organized and administered according to state legislation, and design of the traditional instructional environment begins with legal definitions.

Within a traditional time and space frame, open lab hours, short-term classes, experimental scheduling, and other alternatives are seriously limited by the necessity of confirming to state mandates and institutional convenience. It is possible to alter some time and space requirements but not without extensive effort and legal approval.
Within the operational framework of non-traditional college these details of administration will be major targets for alteration. For example, the time frame will be altered to allow for one course to be completed within a three or four week period. The student will not enroll in any other class and the instructor will teach only one course. Within the seventeen-week semester a student could complete our different classes by enrolling in one class at a time.

Space requirements can be made flexible under special circumstances. This is one part of the learning environment most difficult to alter. It brings to mind the contradiction of community college classes and university classes. Both institutions teach first and second year courses to the same age group but only the community college must use buildings conforming to the Field Act. No other segment of higher education, including private schools of all levels, must meet this requirement.

A basic part of non-traditional study is to bring educational services to the student. Within a confined framework it can be done. An alternative can be found in television classes directed to homes and offices. Individualized programmed learning is another possibility. Learning resource centers could be established for student learning on an individual or small group basis, but again construction of buildings and regulated student attendance hampers such programs until changes are possible in legislation.

3. Organizational structure. In order to implement non-traditional educational services the college must be organized to facilitate this kind of activity. Traditionally, the learning environment is divided into an instructional division and a student services division. Operational details are carried on by administrators and their staffs within each of these two areas. The President is assisted in his responsibilities by a number of functionaries such as business manager, community services director, and facilities maintenance. Many of the managerial positions are directly related to legal or mechanical detail that must be performed under any situation. Most administrative functions are designed for a given location that physically houses people as well as
operations.

The most vital contact made with the student, forming a base for the learning environment, involves instruction and student services. It is ironic that very often these two divisions in the community college are separated to the point that communication is non-existent. Some of this occurs because each division must conform to a complex set of rules that are often unrelated.

Providing services and instruction for students are the major objectives of traditional organization, but in practice much of the operation does not consider the student. Administrators and other staff members multiple in numbers, and new functions related to new laws and policies come into being without conscious thought about students. Rather than evaluating these personnel additions and functions in direct relation to students' needs, most often a numerical ratio is the rationale for such organizational structure.

Student services and instruction must be made an integral whole. In developing new organizational concepts it may be that the role of the counselor, as presently defined, will be altered. It may be necessary to redefine the function as well as evaluating the need of many traditional roles. The non-traditional college should organize for services unlike those provided at traditional campuses. This means organizing functional management staff based on those elements of the learning environment created to provide alternatives in education.

If the details of the mechanical administration such as registration and business are put aside, the great portion of organization can be reoriented toward services for the non-traditional student. Several basic concepts must be established as guidelines for this organization.

1. The learning needs of the student, not institutional goals, are the first consideration of the learning environment.

2. Student services such as counseling, job placement, achievement of course or program objectives, and evaluation must be integral parts of all instructional and
curricular development. This implies that an organizational structure segmented into distinct functions is not acceptable.

3. Management of the learning environment of a non-traditional college means organization functions in a single unit to service all of the educational needs of any single individual. This allows students to attend to enrollment and counseling needs without being confronted with an unconcerned bureaucracy.

4. All organizational components, including registration, counseling, etc., must be community (outer) directed rather than institutional (inner) directed. As an example, serving employees of a major industry or business is quite different from service for students who come on campus for all of their educational needs.

5. Staff members must be thoroughly familiar with problems and issues other than academics per se. An awareness beyond that required of the traditional college staff is necessary.

These are some of the important orientations and principles a non-traditional college organization must take and be based upon. Exactly what form the organizational structure will follow depends on the kinds of needs expressed by those who participate and are recruited. A popular alternative has been the development of learning centers throughout the community. Several community college districts have established such centers in specific geographic locations and they are designed to meet particular demands.

These centers are physically located in areas populated by citizens not traditionally served by a college campus. Many centers are ethnically oriented and are adjuncts to a main campus. A possible variation to this approach is to organize the entire college as a complex of centers based on people-oriented educational alternatives. Within the general framework of the college could be specialized functions, such as a Center for Women, a Center for Continuing Education of Disadvantaged Minorities, and a Center for the Developmentally and Physically Disabled. These special activities would be the operational arms of the college, functioning as self-contained organizational
divisions. They would incorporate all of those service functions traditionally divided into administrative areas.

The administration of the curriculum would not be segmented into divisions or departments. The curriculum would be an integrated college curriculum to be used and offered by all parts of the college without instructional, divisional, or departmental prerogatives. In a similar fashion instruction would not be divided into subject matter areas but into divisions directly concerned with development of instructional systems. These would include individualized instruction, television instruction, correspondence instruction, etc.

PART IV. The Community Based Non-Traditional College

The extent to which tradition influences educational thinking can be illustrated by the reaction to planning a non-traditional college. First, there is an automatic reaction to any title or name that does not include the word "college" as many cannot conceptualize an institution of higher education without the term. Second, all plans and operational designs are quite meaningless to some people unless they are related to a physical location commonly thought of and visualized as a campus.

Construction of a college campus would be contrary to the non-traditional community college concept. If a campus were the starting point, or thought to be necessary, plans to establish a non-traditional college would lose some merit. A non-traditional college is most desirable in a district in which traditional campus(es) already exist. The new college would be designed to meet needs other than those provided at the established colleges. A non-traditional operation complements and supplements sister colleges. It does not surplant or duplicate services adequately being provided. As altering the curriculum to meet non-traditional needs is implicit in non-traditional education, so is the concept of providing these services for a new student constituency in environments other than those of a large campus plant.
Throughout this paper emphasis has been placed on providing services to a new constituency who have different educational goals and who have rejected the traditional system. This theme has been injected into all phases of development including organizational structure. This is certainly true of the physical facilities planned for the new college. The most important facility consideration is what is the best setting for instruction. In this instance notation has been made of providing classes in the community where people want them offered. This may be office buildings, home, elementary schools, or whatever location is most convenient and most acceptable to the student. Instructional designs must include the realization that many people, for a variety of reasons, do not want to go to a college campus.

It follows that a physical structure used for administration need not be a college campus. It does not, in fact, have to be any kind of structure. Administrative office can be housed anywhere as long as the instructional services are provided at locations most convenient to students. There have been arguments that a library and similar services are only available on a campus. This is not necessarily true. Television can be transmitted to homes, learning materials can be transported, communications can be mailed or delivered, public libraries are open to anyone and are easily accessible. In short, once the concept of community-based educational services has been established there is no need, in theory or in fact, for a college campus.

What is proposed and planned for the non-traditional college is a service, total and complete in itself, and not an adjunct to a traditional campus operations. A physical facility does not become a major priority in this framework. The college for non-traditional study becomes an educational concept that exists throughout the community. It is a distinctly different service from the traditional ones offered on college campuses.

What facilities are built can include a number of spaces for different functions, including large and small classrooms. It may also have a learning resources center as well as community oriented services such as a child care center and meeting rooms for
general public use. Again, a dominate influence in the planning will be the needs of the community, as it would be a prime consideration in development of curriculum and instruction. Facilities, as the curriculum, become vehicles to achievement of educational ends.

Some have argued that a comprehensive college campus is necessary for establishment of an accreditable community college. However, the cost of construction and the yet to be proved objectives of traditional vocational education concepts indicate that construction of all types of teaching stations may not be the most effective approach to providing a comprehensive service.

PART V. SUMMARY

Based on the rationale briefly outlined in this writing, the conceptual basis for a non-traditional college is as follows:

A. Basic elements on which the concepts are based:
   1. New student constituencies not envisioned in the junior college concept many years ago see the need for and demand post-secondary educational services.
   2. Social and economic changes are dynamically manifested in urban society, giving rise to a new value system that directly challenges the traditional concepts of higher education.
   3. Changes in society have counterparts in changing concepts of education that affect ideas of not only who should attend college but how and what should be the basis of learning.

B. Organizational changes identified for the non-traditional college
   1. The learning environment is the key to the creation of an alternative design for educational services.
   2. Basic changes in curriculum and instruction, considered essential parts of the learning environment will be implemented. Other alternatives include
flexibility in time and space framework within the learning environment.

3. Curriculum, course content and patterns of courses, will be altered and
designed to meet objectives based on student needs rather than sequential
learning progression. Alternatives to courses, per se, will be part of
the curriculum.

4. Instruction will be designed to enhance student learning by whatever
instructional mode best suits the student. This implies design and imple-
mentation of new teaching modes (within fiscal limitations).

5. Organization of the curriculum, instructional, and student services func-
tions will be based on learning needs of students rather than what is
convenient for the institution. All facets of college management will
reflect functions and services to students rather than traditional
institutional bureaucracy.

C. Community based rather than campus based facilities

1. The college will utilize those community based facilities considered most
desirable to students rather than being campus bound.

2. As the functions are community directed, the facilities and services will
be outer directed as opposed to being inner directed.

3. Campus type facilities will reflect administrative services and community
needs. This means classroom space will be minimal and emphasis would be
on service functions other than classroom instruction.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES
MAY 5 1975

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION