Freshmen assigned remedial work

By Claudia Pederson
This is the first of a three-part series describing UNM's newly instituted Basic Skills Program.

Of this year's first-semester freshmen, 60 percent must turn to the Basic Skills Program. Of the 2,966 first-semester freshmen, 1,668 are in the program. A University brochure on the Basic Skills Program states: "The principal objective of the course is to teach fundamental reading, writing, mathematics and study skills." This is the first semester that UNM has instituted the program, although a remedial course has been offered at the University for the past five years. The wider program is available only to first-semester freshmen.

The program is composed of courses in English, math, natural and social science. Students are required to take Basic Skills courses if their American College Test scores fall below specified levels in each category, or if the have not met all academic entrance requirements.

Any student who receives ACT scores of 17 or below in English, 16 or below in math, 17 or below in natural science, or 13 or below in social science must take the corresponding Basic Skills class.

The maximum ACT score in each category is 36.

If a student is deficient in only one ACT subject, he will be required to take only the Basic Skills class for that area. A student must pass his Basic Skills class with a C or better in order to enroll in the regular freshman-level (101) course in that subject.

The 100-level courses offered in the Basic Skills Program are English, math, biology, chemistry, geology, physics, American studies, anthropology, economics, history, political science, psychology and sociology.

The College of Education is the only college in the University that gives degree credit for Basic Skills classes.

This semester, 583 freshmen are taking only one Basic Skills class. 375 are taking two: 290 are taking three classes and 256 are enrolled in all four areas of the Basic Skills Program.

There are 794 men and 774 women in the program.

Weaver said 86 percent of the Basic Skills students are New Mexico residents and 15 percent are from the Albuquerque Public School system. In the "Report of the University College" for last year William Huber, University College dean, said a number of students with high ACT scores who gained admittance to UNM in 1978 ultimately enrolled in Ph.D-granting institutions comparable to UNM. These students had ACT averages of 18.5, whereas the students who actually registered at UNM had ACT scores of only 18.5.

Rodney Young, UNM director of tutoring, said the average ACT composite score for all first-semester freshmen at UNM in 1978-1979 was 18.6, compared with a national average of 18.7. The national average ACT composite includes students enrolled in community and junior colleges and institutions that grant undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Weaver and Young said that the average ACT composite score for Basic Skills students is 13.5.

There are 14 regional or "sister" institutions to UNM. These institutions are in Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Nevada, Texas and Wyoming. Huber and Weaver said the regional average ACT composite score is 15.5.

Weaver said 52 percent of the 1,668 Basic Skills students are categorized as "whites," 38 percent as "Hispanics," and the remaining 10 percent as "Indians, Orientals and Others."

As an integral part of the Basic Skills Program in the Skills Center on Zimmerman Library's second floor.

Barbara Weber, one of the coordinators of the Skills Center, said the center is designed to help Basic Skills students develop good study practices. She said tutoring sessions for the students are held in the center.

Weber said non-Basic Skills students may receive tutoring if tutors are available.

The center is staffed by approximately 40 people, six of whom are paid employees.

Weber said lack of preparation in math, science and reading reflects "serious deficiencies" in the high schools.

"Students are reading at levels varying from second to sixth grade," she said. "We need to start working down the levels of the educational ladder and see what is going on."
Nobel awards chem, physics

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (UPI) - The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded Nobel prizes Thursday for achievements in chemistry and physics, a combination of work that could lead to a better understanding of the universe. The chemistry prize was given to Herbert Brown, 67, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and not the courts to decide whether a defendant is a sex offender.
Editorial

Switching horses in mid-stream

A lot of people are now not
open UNM hired coach Ed
 habits now to protect
veteran football team. The
Lobos are 3-5-1, the Aggies,
now 4-4-1. Aggie fans could
season some technical
bills with this move. 

Despite this move, the
Rochester Times-Union,
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Sports

Youngsters run for Baker

By Mary L. Martin

Although a group of 26 youngsters running for Baker in the annual Stride Rite race got behind in the competition, the participants participated in the race running through Oklahoma and New Mexico.

The race, which started in Oklahoma City, will end in Albuquerque.

The youngest to run, 9-year-old Michael Baltimore, bowed out of the race in Oklahoma.

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