

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN

Planning for the educational progress of the University in the years to come must inevitably involve a serious consideration of our responsibilities for the education of women. Our obligations are those of a great national university situated in a large metropolitan community and receiving generous financial support from the Commonwealth in return for its service to society. With the passing of the years the importance of higher education to women has been more widely recognized and throughout the country the increase in the number of women entering college during the past decade has been truly remarkable. The war period has thrown into higher relief the greater opportunities open to educated women in business and in the professions and has consequently increased the demand for the preparation that a college education gives.

Ours is an old university that has developed gradually to meet changing educational needs and has come to accept responsibility for a great variety of educational programs in many fields. Its accomplishments with limited physical facilities and inadequate income have been impressive and justify the more adequate financial support without which it cannot continue to maintain its prestige. In view of these restrictions it is easily understood why, as the movement for the higher education of women gained momentum in America, the University of Pennsylvania has proceeded slowly in opening to women the educational opportunities it has long afforded to men. It is important, however, that its policies for the present and for the future be examined and clarified. The necessity of reviewing the situation at this time is all the more imperative because the pressures of the war emergency period have led to a rapid increase in the number of

undergraduate women students on the campus until it has reached a total that it will be impossible to maintain with our present limited facilities as the enrollment of undergraduate men approaches the normal.

A study of the history of the University of Pennsylvania reveals that although until recently it has been thought of primarily as a man's institution it has never been entirely free of responsibilities for the education of the other sex. Any brief passing reference to our early origins with the rather complex relations of the Academy, the Charity Schools, the University of the State of Pennsylvania, culminating finally in the University of Pennsylvania, almost inevitably brings confusion. It is significant, however, that when the right to use the present name was granted it was stipulated that the separate Charity Schools for boys and girls must be continued and that they were carried on for the greater part of a century.

When these schools were finally dissolved in 1877 the Courts ruled that the University must continue to provide instruction "to indigent female students, so far as may be convenient and practicable in the University buildings." What was then found to be "convenient and practicable" is indicated by the following announcement in the Catalogue of 1877-78:

"Women are now admitted, in the Towne Scientific School, to the lectures on Modern History, given to the Seniors, to those on General Chemistry, given to Freshmen and Sophomores, to those on Physics, given to Sophomores, and to the instruction in Analytical Chemistry, given to Juniors. Women are also admitted to the instruction in the Science of Music."

In the following year there was established an auxiliary Department of Medicine for the benefit of women, which granted not the M.D. but the Ph.D. Three years later, in 1881, after a ten years struggle a woman gained admission to the Law School and later took her degree. A Graduate Division

for women was established under the administration of Provost Pepper, and women also gained by being admitted in 1894 to the newly established curriculum in Biology in The College and to the division now known as the College Collateral Courses. Women could then acquire the bachelor's degree if they were willing to attend classes during the late afternoon and evening hours, or if they were content to take during the daytime a course in Biology that was definitely scientific and fully prescribed.

Without setting forth in chronological detail the developments in educational opportunities for women a narrator of recent University history would inevitably point to gradual but definite progress during the thirty-odd years since 1914. As a result all the professional schools are now open to women: Medicine, Law, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine, and Social Work. The Graduate School and both graduate and undergraduate divisions in Education, Architecture, Fine Arts, and Music are co-educational. For women only we have the College of Liberal Arts for Women and the recently established College of Nursing in connection with the University Hospital. The only curricula not now available to women are those offered in the Engineering Schools and the <sup>undergraduate division</sup> Wharton School of Finance and Commerce.

It is a story of conservative progress in an eastern colonial university situated in a rather conservative community. In all fairness it may be said that until the last decade of the Nineteenth Century the University of Pennsylvania accepted women rather grudgingly, the records indicating no desire to provide adequately for them. They were long offered only what it was "convenient and practicable" to provide.

The College of Liberal Arts for Women, for example, was under consideration for more than half a century before it was finally established. Approximately fifty years ago Provost Pepper made the following statement on undergraduate education for women:

"No one who pretends to know much of the current educational work of America dare question the statement that co-education may be conducted safely and effectively. But equally it is recognized that each institution must be guided by its own peculiar position and organization in deciding whether it should open its undergraduate classes to women students. In the case of the University of Pennsylvania the authorities have decided, after careful study of the entire question, that it is not expedient to do so. They have, however, announced that they are willing to establish a separate college for young women as a branch of the University."

The action of the Trustees in 1882 thus put the University squarely on record as favoring the general scheme of co-ordinate development that with some variations has provided undergraduate education for women at Harvard, Columbia, and Brown rather than the plan of straight co-education to be found in the western universities, at Cornell, and in such urban universities in the east as George Washington, Temple, and New York University. This decision was reaffirmed from time to time, and action to make it effective was urged repeatedly. The years passed, however, and special funds for the purpose were unfortunately not forthcoming.

This early statement of policy is interpreted by some as carrying the implication that all degrees given to women would be conferred <sup>by</sup> through a separate college and not by the University of Pennsylvania. If that was the original intention it has not been adhered to, for, as has already been pointed out, subsequent actions by the Trustees have opened up degrees in many divisions of the University to men and women on equal terms. In our opinion this line of development in certain professionally aimed undergraduate courses such as Education, Fine Arts, and Music was just as inevitable as in



the professional schools and graduate divisions.

In recent years "a separate college" has been thought of in the more restricted sense of providing at the University a co-ordinate college to offer undergraduate women students a general education leading to the A.B. degree from the University. The demand had become increasingly insistent and in 1933 the Trustees decided, after considering a report from the administrative officers, that the time had come to take action. Hundreds of undergraduate women were already registered in the School of Education, many of them really desiring a more general course but willing to accept a curriculum that was professionally aimed as the nearest substitute that the University had made available. Because Education students had to be prepared for secondary school teaching in special subjects many classes in a variety of fields had already been provided for women. These provisions included a slight amount of co-education in advanced elective classes where because of small registrations duplicate sections for men and women would have been economically wasteful. All that it was necessary to add were a curriculum in Arts and Sciences, administrative officers, the assignment of members of the instructional staff to a special faculty, and a few more elective courses for women.

The immediate success of the new college left no doubt that by creating it the Trustees had moved to meet a very real demand from the community. In its first year the College for Women had 190 students; during the last five years the enrollment has been:

1941	-	546
1942	-	552
1943	-	627
1944	-	711
1945	-	<del>700</del> 786

These enrollment figures are only a partial indication of the popularity of the College of Liberal Arts for Women. Because of physical limitations

the selective process for admission has grown progressively severe. The 298 new students admitted in 1944-45, for example, were chosen from 1085 applicants and many others were discouraged from filing applications. In 1945-46 a slightly smaller number of new students has been selected from a considerably larger number of candidates.

During the twelve years of its existence the College of Liberal Arts for Women has had wise guidance in its educational development from its administrative officers. The curriculum has been enriched gradually to meet existing needs, the standards of accomplishment have been kept high, and the morale of the student body is excellent. Yet much of its success is attributable to the sound foundation upon which it was based. From the beginning its students have benefitted by receiving instruction from a strong faculty developed over the years in The College and in other schools. It can be asserted confidently that its instructional program in general will compare favorably with what is offered by the leading colleges for women throughout the country.

In the light of commitments the University has already made in educational programs for women the Committee has centered its considerations on certain fundamental questions looking to the future:

1. In view of the general trend toward co-education that has come about over the years, is it desirable to continue the College of Liberal Arts for Women separate from and co-ordinate with the College of Arts and Sciences for men?
2. If so, what additional steps should be taken to assure the effectiveness of its educational program?
3. With the University's present restricted physical facilities for accommodating women students what maximum should be set for the enrollment of full-time women students in the undergraduate schools?

4. What additional facilities for women are urgently needed for the future?
5. Is it desirable, or feasible, under present conditions to consider opening up for women additional curricula for which there may be a demand?

1. We are in favor of continuing the present policy of keeping the College of Liberal Arts for Women as a separate undergraduate school and hope that in the near future this separation may be emphasized by its location in a section of an enlarged campus where improved residential and social facilities can be ~~made~~ for all women students. This policy, frequently reaffirmed by the Trustees and favored by the Alumni, has become a tradition and traditions that influence the atmosphere and the spirit of an institution are not lightly to be set aside. There are also certain educational advantages for women students in the separate college. Whether the enrollment in the College of Liberal Arts for Women remains at its present size of over 700, or, as seems inevitable because of space limitations, is reduced gradually to its former figure of approximately 550 it will still represent an administrative unit larger than many of the better independent colleges for women. If it were to be combined administratively with The College on the basis of co-education the much larger college that would result would make it extremely difficult to provide women students with the individual guidance they now receive and would deprive them of pleasant and beneficial educational experiences they now receive from close associations with each other.

Perhaps the most cogent reason for the separate college is to be found in the curriculum, for it cannot be taken for granted that in the field of general or liberal education the program should be identical for men and for women. Although at the present time the requirements in the

two colleges are much the same, quite a few valuable courses have been introduced to meet special needs of women students. In addition, methods of instruction are likely to differ considerably when the same course is offered to men and women students in separate classes. The continuation of a separately organized faculty to study how to meet these needs most effectively seems in every way advantageous.

2. At the present time the accomplishment of this desirable objective is handicapped by the absence of women from the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts for Women, and also by the lack of any administrative provision giving the Dean a voice in the appointment of those who are to instruct his students, except, of course, as he may be consulted as a matter of courtesy by other Deans. The existing situation came about naturally through the evolution of the College of Liberal Arts already referred to but it is a questionable basis for future development.

It is a source of strength to the individual undergraduate schools at the University of Pennsylvania that each of them is free to draw as much as is needed and to a considerable extent upon the teaching services of faculty members in other schools. In order to develop strong unified departments of instruction, each with a systematic program of teaching and a program of research activities, each department is budgeted as a unit in one or another of its schools, with the Dean of that school given a considerable share of responsibility for its development. This system seems preferable to any that might be substituted for it, yet inasmuch as the College of Liberal Arts for Women draws its instruction from departments already attached to other schools it has no budgeted faculty of its own. Without any fundamental change in administrative organization the instructional needs of students in the College of Liberal Arts for Women can be further safeguarded by a provision that its Dean be consulted, ~~as is the Dean of the Graduate~~



School, in matters of appointment, reappointment, and promotion above the rank of instructor in The College, and in departments in other schools such as Economics, Political Science, Sociology, and Chemistry that are basic in the educational program of the College for Women. This Committee recommends such a provision to the administration and the Trustees.

Although the Personnel Office of the College of Liberal Arts for Women, the Dean of Women and her assistants, and a few women instructors are available for consultation and advice, there are no women of sufficiently high academic rank to qualify for membership in the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts for Women. (The Statutes provide that only those with the rank of Assistant Professor or higher can qualify for faculty membership.) This means that all actions taken concerning the liberal education of young women are the decisions of a faculty on which the point of view of educated women is not directly represented. This applies as well to the deliberations of such important committees as the Committee on Curriculum and the Executive Committee, which pass<sup>la</sup> upon the academic records of individual students.

The present condition is, again, easily explained by the circumstances under which the College of Liberal Arts for Women came into being but its continuation is indefensible if the University is to meet its responsibilities to women students. A number of appointments should be made, through existing departments and regular budget channels, of women in the rank of Assistant Professor or higher to give instruction primarily in the College of Liberal Arts for Women and, if needed, in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, which is co-educational. This can easily be accomplished without undue strain on the budget in fundamental service departments such as English, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, History, the Sciences in The College, and possibly in Sociology and Economics in the Wharton School, as the faculty

is increased to its normal strength after the war. Much more important than the departments to which they are attached is the quality of the appointments. The need is for women of scholarly attainments and promise, with culture and breadth of view, who will be influential in their contacts with women students inside the classroom and in other associations. The appointment of several such women to faculty positions at the earliest opportunity is strongly recommended to the administration and the Trustees.

Thought should also be given to providing the College of Liberal Arts for Women with a distinctive name, less cumbersome than the one by which it is now known, that would emphasize its position as a separate educational unit within the structure of the University of Pennsylvania. There is no doubt that Radcliffe, Barnard, and Pembroke enjoy an advantage through the individuality that <sup>the</sup> name of each provides. The frequently repeated suggestion of Bennett College seems undesirable, not merely because the name is associated with another woman's college in New York State, but because there is no connection between the college and the bequest provided by Mr. Bennett. The present location in Bennett Hall is to be regarded as merely temporary, for the building is intended as the headquarters of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the College of Liberal Arts for Women needs a building of its own. Perhaps a new name must await the appearance of a donor who will provide the needed physical facilities, but it is to be hoped that the delay will not be continued indefinitely. An alternative might be to raise funds in honor of some educational leader in the University's history whose name could be given to the college.

3. The future size of the College of Liberal Arts for Women must be considered in relation to the total number of undergraduate women students that can be accommodated under present conditions in all the schools open to them. The rapid increase in the number of full-time undergraduate women

students during the war period is apparent from the following figures:

1940-41	-	798
1941-42	-	788
1942-43	-	897
1943-44	-	980
1944-45	-	1207
1945-46	-	<del>1340</del> (estimated) <sup>1217</sup>

From every viewpoint except balancing the budget the enrollment of women has been permitted to become too large. It has been possible to instruct them all because of the relatively light enrollment of undergraduate men, but to continue the present number of women in the classrooms and laboratories would inevitably involve a sharp curtailment in the number of men enrolled on the campus for many years before they were withdrawn for military service. This would be undesirable in view of the facilities for men developed over the years: a large dormitory system, not adaptable to women; the heavy investments in fraternity properties; Houston Hall; Franklin Field and the Palestra, and other provisions for intercollegiate sports, all based upon the assumption that the enrollment of men would remain fairly static. To reduce our normal quotas for men would be particularly unfortunate at a time when applications from well qualified returning servicemen are greatly in excess of the number that can be accepted.

In all respects except instruction our facilities are also too restricted for the number of women now registered. Sergeant Hall and the small residence houses for women are overtaxed, and it is well-nigh impossible to find enough suitable rooms in the neighborhood. Social and recreational facilities are inadequate. The opening of the Houston Hall cafeteria and the soda grille temporarily to women during the war provided them with additional conveniences during the lunch hour, but this privilege has been withdrawn. The building is intended for men who are filling it to capacity as they return. Playing fields, tennis courts, and opportunities for outdoor

recreation are also too restricted for the present number of women. The improvements recently afforded by setting up social and recreational rooms on the fourth floor of Bennett Hall, the assignment of Weightman Hall to women, and the resurfacing of one of the fields are significant but are only temporary solutions of an acute space problem.

We regret that many deserving women students must be denied the opportunity they seek of entering the University and hope that every effort will be made to enlarge the campus for their benefit in the near future. Under existing circumstances, however, we are firm in our belief that the enrollment of women must be limited to the number for which the University can provide adequately. We recommend to the administrative officers, therefore, that definite steps be taken to restrict the size of each entering class with a view to reducing the number of undergraduate women students, gradually and as soon as possible, to the pre-war total of 900.

The most equitable distribution within this total must depend considerably upon where the demand is heaviest from well-qualified applicants. If the present trend continues it will probably be desirable to fix the registration in the College of Liberal Arts for Women at not more than 550, the remaining places for full-time women students to be proportioned between the School of Education and the School of Fine Arts.

4. Such reductions in enrollment, essential as they are in the present situation, serve to emphasize the inadequacy of the University's resources for meeting its responsibilities to women. Even with smaller numbers these responsibilities cannot be met. If we are to attract representative women students from a wide geographic area and to provide for them not only the type of instruction but the other facilities to which they are entitled, certain fundamental modifications must be made in the existing situation.

The recent establishment of a coordinating committee serving under



the Provost for the integration of the University's education and welfare programs for women students is a progressive step towards assuring a more careful and continuing study of the problems of housing, social activities, recreation, and athletics that demand attention.

The primary need is for the extension of the campus to provide an area suitable for the development of undergraduate women's educational and other activities. The site chosen should be near the present campus for the convenience of faculty and students, yet sufficiently detached to provide the general advantages of a separate college for women. Without attempting at this time a detailed blueprint of such a campus the Committee believes that it should include the following:

- a - Attractive dormitory units, possibly about a central court, comparable with those already in existence for men. Sergeant Hall should be abandoned at the earliest opportunity. The building is not only obsolete and inadequate, but is in a neighborhood which is undergoing rapid deterioration. It is further suggested that consideration be given to the construction of fraternity houses in conjunction with these dormitory units. These houses might be erected on the "lodge basis" which has functioned so successfully at a number of universities and which greatly simplifies such matters as supervision and dining rooms.
  
- b - A suitable club house or social center for women, which will contribute much to recreational activities and to the esprit de corps of the student body, both resident and non-resident students.

c - Lecture and recitation rooms for classes exclusively for women (reasonably close to Eisenlohr Hall where the School of Education is now centered) both as a matter of convenience and to relieve the congestion in Bennett Hall and College Hall, thus providing additional space in those buildings for the instruction of other students.

d- Library provisions, the extent of which should be worked out with the Director of Libraries and the Library Committee of the Educational Council.

ed - Additional playing fields and tennis courts for women students.

It is recognized that the providing of such a supplementary and adjacent campus for women will be a costly undertaking, but the commitments the University has already made to women involve clear responsibilities to supplement the excellent classroom instruction they receive with other opportunities for a well-rounded education and a pleasant college experience fully equal to those it offers its men undergraduates.

5. It is recognized that the University has not yet provided for women students all the educational programs that are desired. Although a wide range of courses in the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce is now available to students in the College of Liberal Arts for Women who are preparing for business careers, there is considerable demand for a complete curriculum in Business Administration such as that of the Wharton School. Occasionally women apply for Engineering. There are opportunities to provide a four-year college course planned to lead to Occupational Therapy, or Physical Therapy, or to give a sound college and professional training to those who wish to become laboratory technicians. Some or all of these

may properly be developments of the future when the campus for women becomes a reality. At present, however, in view of the necessity of placing severe limitations upon enrollment in the curricula already available for women it seems undesirable to set up new programs that would only increase a demand that the University is unable to meet.