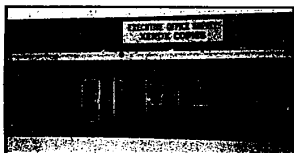


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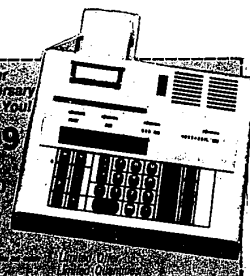
Left to Right: Karen Balden, Betty Kachadoorian, William Stibich, Kathy O'Brien, Manager, George Whitefoot, Kate Skupny, Maureen Hickey.



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College in the '70s

It's good-bye politics, hello career training

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Older students unabashedly eyeing college as a way toward better paying jobs are causing a quiet revolution in education.

In contrast to their role of 10 years ago, when colleges were predominantly attended by wide-eyed teens just out of high school, the institutions are now becoming more oriented to the concerns of older students in the midst of career changes.

The economy of the '70's has affected the profile of the college community.

Working toward a better paying job has replaced an interest in campus politics among older students.

"Ten years ago, students were largely high school graduates. There were many males in college as an alternative to the draft. We were in the midst of student activism," said Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Provost Richard Thompson.

"Politics was an important part of campus life. Now, students aren't as intensely political. They're seeking alternatives to their present employment situation," Thompson said.

TODAY, the average college student is likely to be about 26-years-old, female and employed at a full-time job, according to Thompson.

Ten years ago, the average student was a man in his late teens who was unemployed and enrolled in a full-time curriculum.

The trend toward more women students is indicative of a change in the country's economic situation, according to administrators.

"The complexities of the job market and the expanded interest of women who want to get back into the mainstream of things has changed colleges," said David Heinzman, of Schoolcraft College's college affairs department.

"You have to take into account the economics of the one income situation. Many times, today, both members of a family are working," he said.

At Schoolcraft in Livonia, that trend translates into a steady rise in the female population over the past five years.

In the fall of 1972, men made up 59 per cent of the student population. Women comprised 41 per cent.

Last fall, women made up 51 per cent of the students. Men were 49 per cent of the enrollment.

CHANGES in the student population have altered the curriculum.

With more women on campus, child care and women centers have become part of student services. Schoolcraft College has a women's resource center as well as a child care center.

OCC's Orchard Ridge campus, Farmington Hills, boasts the same services.

Within the last five years at Schoolcraft, there has been an increase in career oriented students and vocational classes, according to Heinzman.

Seven out of 10 students are enrolled in vocational courses at Schoolcraft.

In the fall of 1977, 5,585 out of 8,239 students were enrolled in career oriented classes.

That trend was repeated at OCC's Orchard Ridge campus where career programs have increased between 20-40 per cent in the last three years, according to Thompson.

The career boom has affected Madonna College, Livonia.

Once an all-woman college, the institution opened its doors to men and generated its own population explosion. In 1972, its first co-ed year, there were 816 students at Madonna. Six years later there are 2,500 students. Of that number, one-third are men, according to Mrs. Mary Van Alsten, spokesman for the university.

WITH its increased enrollment, the private school has found the emphasis to be on night courses and its flexible weekend workshops, designed for the working student.

Its older population, the average age is 29, is made up of persons who are

returning to school to switch careers or seek promotions within their present careers.

Its criminal justice, occupational safety and nursing school are as attractive to male students as they are to women, according to administrators.

Career classes at other colleges are getting their share of attention, too.

Courses such as computer science and data processing are increasing in enrollment at OCC. Accounting is the object of rising interest, also.

While the college population becomes older, it indicates another trend in education. High school students are putting off rushing into college. Many return to school when they are in their mid-twenties, according to Thompson.

"They know what they want then," he said.

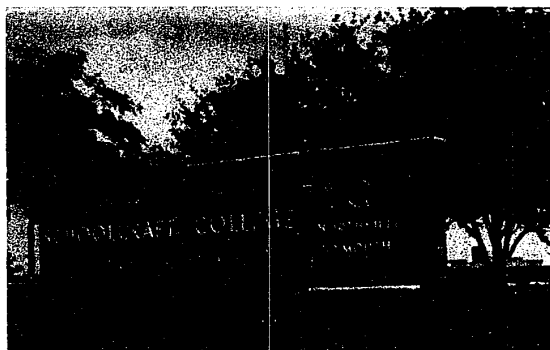
With an emphasis on vocational studies, liberal arts has failed to draw the same numbers of students it did about 10 years ago, according to college administrators.

That trend should change, too, according to Thompson.

"It's cyclical. I hope there will be a resurgence in liberal arts education."

"With industry giving its workers shorter time, that means people will have more time to fill," he said.

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