

OU ponders more doctoral programs

Oakland University's two doctoral programs have received further accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). The Rochester-based college's Ph.D. program in engineering produced its first three graduates last year. OU began a doctorate program in reading this year.

The NCA's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education recommended OU proceed slowly in developing additional Ph.D. programs. A university spokesman said OU has been considering additional doctoral programs in management and interdisciplinary sciences (a combination of chemistry, physics and biology).

AN NCA evaluation team visited the university twice last fall. Its report to OU said:

"Oakland has had only limited experience in doctoral level education so far and lacks the resources in most fields for such work."

The Ph.D. program in engineering was started in 1959 and was first accredited in 1971. Part of Michigan State University when it was created in 1957, OU has been a separate university since 1970. It was first accredited for bachelor's degree programs in 1966. Master's degree programs received accreditation five years later.

Continued accreditation assures students that credits earned at OU are transferable to other universities in the state are accredited. William Connellan, university director of public relations, said OU expected its doctorate programs would continue to receive NCA approval. OU has 11,000 students, 20 percent in graduate programs. Another 6,000 are enrolled in non-credit continuing education courses, Connellan said.

CONTINUING education is one of OU's "real strengths," the evaluation team said. Last year, five program units served more than 100,000 persons.

The university's Kresge Library has "far too little space for both study and its collection," the evaluators said. "At present the library is not adequate for advanced graduate study in most fields."

The state has approved planning funds for a library addition which would triple the current space, Connellan said. OU hopes construction funds will be approved next year, he added.

The NCA evaluation team did get a "limited sampling" of student opinion. Students said the teaching was good and faculty members were accessible, the report said. But, it added, many students believe advising is poor and general education courses are "not very rigorous."

'Misled' man convicted of bigamy

By TERESA BANAS

Once was not enough for Redford resident Thomas Fella, a man for whom the honeymoon was never over.

Fella, 26, this week was found guilty of bigamy in Wayne County Circuit Court. He pled guilty to marrying his fourth wife, Joan Soucy, 18, of Redford, without first legally divorcing his third wife, Deborah Walker, 27, of Plymouth.

Both wedding ceremonies were held in Westland's 18th District Court.

Fella was held in the Wayne County Jail Tuesday prior to Judge Michael Stacey's issuing of a \$5,000 surety bond. A June 1 sentencing date has been set. The maximum sentence for bigamy in Michigan is four years imprisonment.

According to Fella's attorney, Maroun Hakin, the defense contended Fella was "misled and misinformed" by Ms. Walker. While serving a 90-day jail sentence in the Detroit House of Correction last fall, he claims she told him of her efforts to end their year-old marriage, to claim she denied in court Monday.

In addition to denying that claim, the prosecutor said Ms. Walker had met Fella on two occasions following his release from DeLoCo and in that time made plans to reconcile. Fella had been imprisoned for driving with a suspended license and evading a police officer in Livonia.

FELLA HAD married Joan Soucy last Jan. 31 and remarried her in May. Since that time, the couple has been living with her parents in Redford.

He remarried Joan May 15 after filing for divorce from Ms. Walker in April.

Fella has been employed as a water sprinkler installer for Perfect Water Systems, a company owned by his new father-in-law. His wife, Joan, is a waitress at a local restaurant.

According to his mother-in-law, Fella is "great. He's very cooperative. He has to be living with a big family."

Joan Fella said her husband was surprised by the news that he was not divorced from his third wife. She adds she is supportive of him and plans to wait for him.

According to police, Fella's third wife learned of his subsequent marriage through an identity mix-up in wires by Livonia police. Following his arrest on the traffic violation in the fall, his new mother-in-law posted bond for his release.

Livonia police then called the woman they thought was Fella's wife in the confusion to ease her apprehension of his arrest. However,

they mistakenly called Fella's third wife and tipped her off to his new marriage.

Two weeks after his first marriage to his fourth wife, Fella filed for divorce from his third wife, Deborah Walker.

According to Wayne County Prosecutor Richard Neaton, Ms. Walker is more angry than bitter over the incident and plans to take a long vacation when the case is finished.

According to court records, Fella's first wife was Mary Baum, whom he married in 1973. Then he married Pamela Kay Martin in 1975.

When asked why he married so often, his attorney said Fella was just waiting for the right woman.

Fella testified that when he met his fourth wife, he regained his "honesty and self-respect."

No children have resulted from any of the marriages.

Fella also had several convictions prior to the bigamy charge. However, most resulted in probation sentences, except for the Livonia traffic violation.

Metro area gamers meet

Metro Detroit Gamers' eighth Gamefest will be held at Oakland University in Rochester this weekend.

The convention, open to the public, will feature 150 tournaments, demonstrations, seminars and panels. Games featured range from the familiar backgammon and monopoly to war games, science fiction and fantasy games. Forty game companies will display their wares.

The event begins at 5 p.m. Friday, June 1, and 9 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, June 2 and 3. A weekend ticket is \$9. Admission for Friday only is \$4 and Saturday or Sunday only is \$5. There is a \$1 charge to participate in most games.

The gamefest will be held in Oakland Center.

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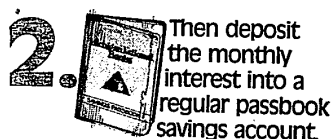
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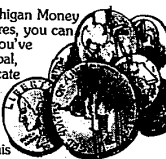
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