

OCC Probes Science Curriculums

By CORINNE ABATT

The communications barrier between high schools and colleges had another brick knocked loose.

The physical sciences department of Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College hosted area high school science department chairmen for a day.

"Inter-school relationships just don't exist," says Dr. Charles M. Wynn, Orchard Ridge physical sciences department chairman. "Many had never been on our campus before. I gather high school science department chairmen don't get much chance to meet each other."

Dr. Wynn put together the symposium for several reasons: He wanted to exchange curriculum information, identify problems and establish liaison between the college and many of the high schools it draws from.

It is also part of his continuing effort to relate the college to the community.

"The role of a community college is up for grabs - it is almost as if we are thinking what we should do," he says.

All high school department chairmen who attended listed their school's science offerings and texts.

Observerland schools included Clareneville, Farmington, North Farmington, Harrison, Our Lady of Mercy, Southfield and Southfield - Lathrup.

Other nearby schools were Brother Rice, Bloomfield Hills' Andover and Lahser, Cranbrook, Detroit Country Day, Birmingham Seaholm, Marian, Kingswood, Novi, Roper City and Country, South Lyon, West Bloomfield, Northville and Detroit Henry Ford.

Resource persons and speakers were: Dr. Robert Bowen, director of Cranbrook Institute of Science; Dr. LaMoine Moltz, director of science education for the Oakland County Schools; Lewis Shulman, assistant superintendent of Farmington School District, and administration representatives and physical sciences faculty of Orchard Ridge.

The course list from each school indicates what kinds of courses are being offered and the wide variety from school to school. Content and what the student receives from the course experience are impossible to measure.

Dr. Wynn was surprised to find independent study offered at the high school level. Andover, Lahser and Marian offer a complete science course of independent study. Several more incorporate it as part of course work under different names.

"The whole business of independent study, which a lot are heading toward, is not within my personal experience," he says - not a criticism, but an example of what he learned via his two way communication project.

"The Michel - course is really a different concept from the old lock-step



AREA HIGH SCHOOL and college science teachers got a chance to meet each other and exchange ideas at an all day session held at OCC Orchard Ridge campus. From left are: Tom Shallo, Harrison High School; Beverly Schmitt,

North Farmington; Dr. Charles Wynn, Oakland Community College; Sister Mary Delores, Mercy High School; and Lewis Shulman, assistant superintendent, Farmington.

for standard fare - courses in biology, chemistry, physical sciences and physics. Seven science courses were the smallest offering, and Southfield High topped the list with 22 followed by Southfield - Lathrup with 18.

Photography is unique with Har-son High; likewise geology at Cranbrook, although others include some geology in other courses. Southfield and Southfield - Lathrup combine in offering landscape and horticulture.

Farmington is the only school listing anthropology. Astronomy is offered by Cranbrook, Oak Park and Southfield - Lathrup. Two electronics courses are offered at North Farmington and three at both Southfield and Southfield - Lathrup. But names must be watched because Detroit Country Day lists a course in electronics for scientists under the science title.

Many teachers express an interest in offering courses such as environmental studies, photography, astronomy, geology - even oceanography at Northville.

Now that Dr. Wynn has opened the door to communication, he may plunk the whole thing in the lap of Larry Sabbath, of Oak Park High School, who is organizing the Oakland County science committee.

In the meantime, in the

face of dwindling funds from the National Science Foundation, the Orchard Ridge physical sciences department will offer a college credit science course to high school students this summer. In the past it has been largely subsidized. Without available funds, the four semester hours will cost \$40.

Professor Al Varone will teach the high school summer science institute which, Dr. Wynn says, "attracts the really bright crackerjack kids - really eager. Sometimes Varone can hardly keep up with them."

Although the NSF money is way down and school enrollment in general is down, enrollment in college chemistry has gone up.

Dr. Wynn says, "Our most popular course is chemistry." The reason: It leads right into many para-medical fields, and the jobs are there and waiting.

Dr. Wynn will continue to brainstorm the role of the community college in today's life. He promises to meet the challenges with more positive action such as last week's science get-together.

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