



OU NEWS

OU accreditation continued

Editor's note—Oakland University has received notice from the Executive Board of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education that the accreditation of Oakland University is being continued at the doctoral degree granting level.

The action is based on the recommendations from two evaluation teams. One team visited campus Oct. 29-Nov. 1 to review all university programs with the exception of the Ph.D. program in reading, and a second team visited Dec. 12-13 to consider that issue.

Because of the importance of the accreditation visits and their results, complete texts of both evaluation reports are included in this issue of the **OU News**.

REPORT OF A VISIT TO OAKLAND UNIVERSITY, Rochester, Michigan, October 29-November 1, 1978, for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

EVALUATION TEAM

Roland Dille, President, Moorhead State University; Dorothy R. Dodge, Professor and Chairman, Department of Political Science, Macalester College, St. Paul;; Georgia F. Lesh-Laurie, Professor and Chairman, Department of Biology, Cleveland State University; Robert W. MacDowell, Vice President and Dean, Hiram College; Paul L. Murphy, Professor of History and American Studies, University of

Minnesota; Robert F. Ray, Dean of Continuing Education Division, University of Iowa; Howard A. Sulkin, Vice President for Planning, DePaul University; E. David Cronon, Dean of the College of Letters and Science, and Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison (Chairman).

Introduction

Oakland University is a comprehensive, doctoral institution located in Oakland County in the northern suburbs of the Detroit metropolitan area, about twenty-five miles north of the Detroit central business district. While still somewhat rural in character, the area is developing rapidly and is linked to the central city by a convenient high-speed expressway system. Oakland University is one of the newest of the thirteen public state colleges and universities in Michigan, having been developed since 1957 and admitting its first undergraduate students in 1959. The institution began as a unit of Michigan State University, utilizing a generous gift by a former MSU Board member of an attractive 1,400 acre estate and \$2,000,000 in capital development funds.

From the first, the MSU Board decided that MSU-Oakland should be an autonomous institution with its own chancellor rather than simply a branch campus of the parent university. In 1963, as the new institution was graduating its first senior class, its name was formally changed from Michigan State University-Oakland to Oakland University. This emphasis upon Oakland's institutional autonomy was further strengthened and given legal basis in 1970 when the Michigan Legislature ended the thirteen-year association with Michigan State University and established Oakland as a separate public university

with its own appointed Board of Trustees. Earlier Oakland had been separately accredited at the baccalaureate degree level by the North Central Association in 1966, and in 1971 it received full accreditation at the master's level and preliminary accreditation for two doctoral programs. Only one of these, a Ph.D. program in Engineering, had been implemented by the time of the team's visit, however.

Oakland was originally planned as an innovative undergraduate liberal arts college with a limited number of related high quality professional programs in business, education, and engineering. There was to be a heavy stress on general education throughout the four-year undergraduate curriculum and an avoidance of narrow specialization even in the professional programs, which were initially developed as concentrations or majors within a common liberal arts framework. Perhaps inevitably, as Oakland developed into a more complex institution including a substantial array of academic disciplines, its organizational structure assumed more traditional lines. In 1963, appropriately as it adopted the name Oakland University, it began establishing departments in the conventional academic disciplines, and these were gradually grouped in separate schools and colleges. The all-university general education program was abandoned in 1970 in the absence of a clear faculty consensus as to its importance and character, and the various schools were left free to establish their own distributional and general education requirements. While there still remain some vestiges of Oakland's original collegiate commitment to an integrated and innovative undergraduate curriculum, it has become a university in fact as well as name. Although its student

body presently consists largely of commuters, Oakland aims to serve the state as a whole as well as its immediate area, offering a wide range of liberal arts, pre-professional, and professional degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, along with an ambitious adult continuing education program.

Focus of the Visiting Team

The assignment of the visiting team was to review Oakland University as a total institution for continued accreditation at the doctoral level. Prior to the arrival of the team at Oakland, however, neither the team nor the North Central Association staff was aware that the university was about to begin a new Ph.D. program in reading. Following its last NCA review in 1971, Oakland had received full accreditation under the then-existing policies as a "mature" institution at the master's level, and preliminary accreditation at the doctoral level for two proposed Ph.D. programs in Systems Engineering and Science. As noted above, only the doctoral program in engineering was actually implemented, and it produced its first graduates only in 1978 shortly before the team's visit. Through a misunderstanding and failure of communication on both sides, Oakland did not advise the NCA staff of its plans to develop a new doctoral program in reading during 1978-79. As a result, the team did not include any specialists in this field. The team's preliminary review of the proposed reading program raised a number of questions (and no conclusive answers) about certain aspects of the program and the adequacy of its support base. Concluding that it lacked the expertise necessary to give this new development the careful review it needed in light of Oakland's limited experience with doctoral level education, the team decided to recommend that the North Central Association promptly arrange for a visit by a separate smaller team of specialists in education and reading, and agreed to be guided by the findings and recommendations of the small team in its own recommendations. A three-member team consisting of two specialists and the chairman of the larger team revisited Oakland five weeks later and thoroughly reviewed the plans for the reading doctoral program. The small team's report and recommendations are included as an appendix to this report, and have been incorporated into the report and recommendations of the regular team.

Organization and Administration

Overall policy for Oakland University is provided by an eight-member Board of Trustees appointed by the governor. Interviews with two trustees and a review of the board's minutes indicate that the board is conscious of the need to separate its policy-making functions from the details of administration and not to intrude on the president's responsibilities. The president works closely with the board and plays a major role in its activities. The trustees appear to be interested and supportive of the university. Most of them are extremely active in community, professional, and business affairs, however, and the board minutes indicates occasional difficulty in obtaining a quorum for meetings. There is no reason to believe this is a serious problem, however, or that it reflects negative attitudes about the university or the importance of the trustees' role.

Oakland has an able top administrative staff. The president and provost are well-informed and have an excellent grasp of the details of the university's operation. Both were previously members of the Oakland teaching faculty, and the president earlier served as dean, provost, and briefly as chancellor before assuming his present position in 1970. As one of the early members of the Oakland faculty, the president has a good understanding of the institution's development since its beginning. He seems especially alert to ways the university can serve its varied constituencies and the larger community.

As the university develops further, the current administrative structure may need review and modification. At present eight administrative officers report directly to the president, who must also spend considerable time relating to the Board of Trustees, various political entities, the alumni, and the community at large. Overseeing eight immediate subordinates may eventually become unduly time-consuming and difficult for the president to manage effectively. There is no evidence of any problems in this regard as yet, however. One of the divisions reporting directly to the president—the Division of Continuing Education—might more appropriately report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost. While the team recognizes the relationship between the work of this division and the president's outreach activities, as well as the fact that in the past many faculty members were not interested in off-campus and non-credit continuing education assignments, there

may be serious long-term difficulties in not structuring continuing education more directly into the academic mainstream of the university.

The business and financial affairs of the university appear to be well-managed. There is an imaginative and successful development program, a small but growing endowment of \$1,300,000, and a continuing balance in the general fund. The board's policy is to change accounting firms every five years. While there may be sound management and political considerations for such a policy, it is also true that it usually takes at least two years before an accounting firm understands the financial and program intricacies of a large university, including its unique characteristics and problems. Efficiency and effectiveness are likely to be reduced if a new firm has to be "schooled" every few years.

Oakland University has committed itself to a major institutional planning effort. Beginning in 1973 with a management-by-objectives program, this effort has gradually evolved into a comprehensive and full-scale planning process involving all units of the university. The team reviewed various planning documents, including the Fifteen Year Plan for the period 1978-1993, which were prepared in lieu of the traditional NCA self-study report. It is intended that the Fifteen Year Plan will be updated periodically, based on the annual objectives prepared every year by each department or other unit, and used as the basis for five-year intermediate range planning. A planning committee, consisting of faculty, administrators, and students, oversees the planning process. One of Oakland's strengths is that the president and other top administrators are deeply committed to and integrally involved in institutional planning. While there is some disagreement on this issue, there seems to be satisfactory involvement of the university community at all levels in the planning process, through the planning committee and other means. More work is needed in identifying annual objectives, relating these to long range goals, and in clarifying mechanisms for implementing the objectives. No doubt because the planning process is relatively new, the Oakland administration needs to be aware that its impressive and involved planning effort has not yet produced a general consensus or clear understanding throughout the university community of the present goals and future mission of Oakland University. This problem appears to be part of a larger need for more attention to the matter of effective communication to achieve a better and more general

understanding of the university's rather complex administrative and governance structure and decision-making processes.

Faculty

Oakland has recruited a faculty of considerable and indeed impressive strength in a number of fields, as is evidenced by the quality and extent of its research productivity and external grant funding. The faculty is also concerned about effective teaching. While there is some unevenness among departments and programs across the university, most faculty members we met believe there is an overall concern for quality at Oakland and they are committed to building and maintaining a high quality institution. The concern for quality is especially evident in the Office of Graduate Study, where the graduate dean has established a tough-minded quality control mechanism through the graduate council, a faculty body which reviews new and existing graduate programs. This is a process that could well be expanded to include undergraduate programs as well. Another illustration of the concern for academic excellence is the development of the Arts and Sciences Honors College since 1977. In addition to the traditional required undergraduate major, the honors college provides a series of specialized general education courses and supervision of a substantial creative or scholarly project during the junior and senior years for a select number of highly motivated students. This helps to achieve a close faculty-student relationship and intellectual interaction often lacking on a predominantly commuter campus. It should be noted, however, that some Oakland faculty, especially in arts and sciences, are fearful that the competition for students in programs with declining enrollments, or in the university as a whole if it experiences an enrollment decline in coming years, may lead to a lowering of academic standards.

The Oakland faculty was one of the early proponents of faculty collective bargaining, selecting as its bargaining agent the Oakland chapter of the American Association of University Professors in 1971. The development of faculty unionism at Oakland was accompanied by a certain amount of tension, controversy, and polarization, including a traumatic faculty strike in the fall of 1971. Some of the original polarization is still evident, and it has had an adverse effect on collegial relationships within certain departments and between the faculty and the administration. There is disagreement over the degree to which faculty unionism

has eroded or superseded the traditional faculty bodies for participation in university governance. AAUP leaders stress their commitment to Oakland's excellence, and claim that because the university's governance structure is not really a faculty structure, it has not been much affected by faculty collective bargaining. Other faculty members express concern that unionization has brought a leveling tendency that cannot help but have a negative effect on quality over a period of years. At the present time one hesitates to draw any conclusions either way, for the evidence is mixed, but this is clearly a matter deserving of attention by the faculty and the administration alike as their new relationship develops further in the years ahead.

What can be said is that collective bargaining at Oakland has absorbed, and continues to require, a great deal of time and energy from both the faculty and the administration, and on matters not always directly related to the educational mission of the university. It has also brought about a more formal and in some respects a more rigid set of relationships, certainly a change from the greater informality of Oakland's early years. The current collective bargaining agreement covering the period 1976-79 consists of 32 articles containing 180 sections, and occupies 75 single-spaced typed pages. To the extent that Oakland needed to think through and codify the rights and responsibilities of the faculty, this was no doubt a constructive development, but it has brought at least the potential for eroding the quality of the faculty. For example, Oakland's practice is to forward all tenure cases to the Board of Trustees for final decision, even if the case has been reviewed negatively at some point in the chain, including at the department level. If a faculty member is ultimately denied tenure, the current faculty agreement provides that the AAUP may grieve the case to a tenure review commission consisting of three members, one selected by the university, one selected by the AAUP, and a third member selected by the other two who serves as chairman. If the two cannot agree on a third member within thirty days, either may request the American Arbitration Association to select the third member-chairman. The Tenure Review Commission has the final authority to decide the case, and its decision is binding. Thus it is at least theoretically possible for a tenure case to be reviewed negatively at every level, including the department, and for the negative decision to be overturned by a single individual from outside the university. It should be emphasized that the current tenure review process is careful and thorough, and all parties agree that the

"worst-possible" case posed above seems inconceivable in present circumstances. It is nevertheless disconcerting that such an outcome is possible, whether conceivable or not. Of the four negative tenure decisions grieved so far under this process, the university has been reversed in three cases.

Students

While the team's contacts with students were necessarily random and limited, the student body at Oakland appears to be a clear institutional strength. The students we met were attractive, concerned, supportive of the university, and generally well-satisfied with the education they were receiving. Some of them were of impressive quality. Our limited sampling of student opinion suggests that most students believe the university is committed to quality, that the teaching is good, and that faculty members are very accessible. Many also believe that academic advising is poor, especially beyond the freshman year, and that general education courses are not very rigorous. Upperclass advising is the responsibility of the academic departments in which students major, and apparently its character and quality varies considerably. One problem is that departments claim they have no formal way through the registration process of knowing which students consider themselves to be majors, and must rely on the students to identify themselves as such.

The Office of Student Services is staffed by knowledgeable and committed persons and provides a full range of academic advising and support services. There is some question, however, as to whether academic advising ought to be in the Division of Academic Affairs rather than student services. The summer orientation program for students and parents and the evening-only student orientation provide a good introduction to the campus. Freshman advising, much of which takes place during the summer when pre-registration is held, is a well-organized program. Student services also handles the academic advising for undecided students beyond the freshman year. Special assistance for handicapped students is just beginning; a major problem for such students is the large size and sprawling nature of the campus. Student services is not yet satisfied with its women's center, which has failed to attract to its services many of the women students who might profit from it. Oakland began with the assumption that the sort of students it would attract would be academically sophisticated and would not need freshman composition. Like

most other institutions faced with the rather general decline in writing and other basic skills among high school graduates these days, the university has accepted the need for composition and other remedial learning skills courses, offered for credit through a Department of Learning Skills. The department offers the two-semester freshman composition course, Basic Writing Skills I and II. The first course seems carefully designed and makes use of current theory. The second semester course is more-or-less traditional, is not well-articulated with the first course, and appears less useful and effective than it should be. The university may wish to study the situation in order to develop a truly sequential program, providing whatever coordination and in-service training as may be needed. Some of the learning skills faculty have backgrounds in English, history, and various foreign languages, some are only part-time. With in-service training, this should be a good faculty. Classes now average from 28 to 30 students, so the department may be slightly understaffed. Learning skills also staffs the skill development center and a reading center and provides tutorial help in reading, writing, mathematics, and science.

It is the policy of the university to admit each year a number of minority freshmen that is equal to fifteen percent of the non-minority freshmen. The university has attained—or has come close to attaining—this goal in many recent years. The fifteen percent does not apply to transfer admission, to graduate admissions, or to overall enrollments. Therefore, the university's eight percent to nine percent minority enrollment is close to its expectations. Special programs aimed chiefly at minority students include Upward Bound, a special summer support program, and a skill development program. The university administration is concerned about the need to hire women and minority faculty, both in principle and as a practical way to make minority students feel more at home at Oakland. Departments are supposed to explain to their deans why a woman or minority candidate is not being recommended for a faculty appointment, but the faculty generally seems not to be aware of the university's commitment to affirmative action. The affirmative action officer is part-time in that capacity, as she is also the director of employee relations, and the office has had three directors in the six years of its existence. No doubt because of this turnover, there seems to be a general lack of understanding throughout the university community concerning expectations, procedures, and process concerning affirmative action.

Student life suffers from the fact that Oakland is largely a commuter school, and fewer than 1,500 of its approximately 12,000 students live in the residence halls. These students feel very strongly this division in the student body. Student government and most student activities tend to involve chiefly the resident students. There is general satisfaction with dormitory life. One of its strengths may be the 125 freshmen who receive campus leadership scholarships requiring them to live in the dorms. Resident students complain that the university gives inadequate attention to the needs of out-of-town students during holidays and breaks.

Physical Plant and Grounds

Oakland is blessed with an attractively rolling and partly wooded campus of ample size (1,400 acres) for its likely needs in the indefinite future. Formerly the country estate of a wealthy automobile manufacturer, the campus includes a golf course and a large mansion, Meadow Brook Hall, which the university has turned into a heavily used conference center. Adjacent to the conference center is the Meadow Brook Music Festival grounds, the home of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for a ten-week summer season, a highly successful and visible cultural outreach activity of the university since 1964.

Despite its handsome campus, Oakland faces some real problems with respect to its facilities. Although its buildings are relatively new and well-designed, and their maintenance is first-rate, the university's building program has lagged years behind its growth. The shortage of space and facilities is particularly acute in the sciences. Although a new science building has been approved it has not yet been funded. Work has just begun on a badly needed classroom building after a construction delay of several years. The library has far too little space for both study and its collections, and the proposed addition to triple its space now being planned is plainly badly needed. Eventually, the space shortage may ease so that the dormitory now being used for faculty offices can be returned to its intended use.

Aside from its present cramped quarters, there is dissatisfaction with the library on the part of students and faculty alike. Students complain of high noise levels and difficulty in using the collections or finding places to study, referring it to as "a zoo." Some faculty believe the collections are inadequate, even for a predominantly undergraduate institution, and that more attention needs to be paid to the periodical collection. There is an elected library council, but in view of faculty

concern the university might well review the adequacy of mechanisms to assure appropriate user faculty-student input into the development of library budget allocations and the determination of priorities for acquisitions and the systematic building of its collections. Library holdings clearly need continued strengthening, especially if the university intends to develop additional advanced graduate programs. At present the library is not adequate for advanced graduate study in most fields.

Office of Graduate Study

As noted earlier, one of Oakland's strengths is the tough-minded review process established in the Office of Graduate Study by the present graduate dean for the review of new and existing graduate programs. In this the dean is assisted by a graduate council consisting of 22 faculty representatives from each graduate department or program, the deans of the participating schools and colleges, and a representative of the library. Because the council is a large body, its work is largely defined and carried on by its executive committee, a hard-working and conscientious group of six faculty members drawn from the council. The dean chairs both the council and its executive committee.

The team is satisfied that the university's existing graduate programs are both creditable and accreditable. Oakland's first and until recently only doctoral program is the Ph.D. program in engineering, which was begun in 1969 and given preliminary accreditation in 1971, and which produced its first three graduates in 1978. The engineering doctoral program appears to be doing well and is of good quality. The new doctoral program in reading, planned to commence in the second semester of 1978-79, was carefully designed by a strong group of specialized faculty in the School of Education and reviewed by three outside specialists before being further reviewed by the graduate council. The small NCA team assembled for this purpose evaluated the design of the program, the quality of the faculty in reading and related support fields, and the adequacy of library holdings. It concluded that the university is presently able to offer a reading doctoral program of acceptable quality.

Oakland's experience in graduate education to date has been chiefly at the master's level, and it has awarded only three doctorates, all within the past year and in the same field. Although the university has demonstrated both restraint

and responsibility in the design and implementation of graduate programs, because of its limited experience in advanced graduate work and the inadequacy of its library and other support base in most fields, the team believes Oakland should proceed with utmost caution in the development of additional doctoral or professional degree programs beyond the master's level. It should keep the North Central Association staff fully informed of such plans.

Academic units of the university

It is impossible in a relatively brief visit to do justice to all of the academic units and programs of a complex institution like Oakland University, or even to include in a report of this limited character observations on each of the units evaluated by various members of the team. What follows, then, are comments on some of the larger academic units of the university. Failure to mention other units, or individual departments within the schools and colleges, does not mean the team overlooked them or considered them unworthy of comment. On the contrary, we reviewed a number of departments, programs, and offices not mentioned specifically in the report, and made use of these findings in developing our overall impressions of the university.

College of Arts and Sciences

As Oakland's liberal arts base, the College of Arts and Sciences was the original and is by far the largest academic unit of the university. On the whole, it has an excellent reputation among students for the quality of its teaching, and has a number of strong departments, especially in the sciences and several of the social sciences. It also appears to have several weaker departments which would benefit from a system of periodic program reviews. The college has a more or less traditional liberal arts curriculum and set of degree requirements. A recent and praiseworthy innovation is its new Honors College mentioned earlier in the report. The college offers a full range of liberal arts disciplines and is one of Oakland's strengths.

Because of the way Oakland is structured and perhaps also because of the centralizing effect of faculty unionization, the arts and sciences dean has somewhat fewer functions and responsibilities than are often found in that office. The college provides no student academic advising services, for example, assigning that responsibility to its departments with

respect to their majors. It maintains no student records. As is the case throughout the university, the dean is only one of several faculty or administration review levels in tenure cases, and he does not have the power to block a weak candidate for tenure. He has more authority to exercise quality control over new appointments and promotions not involving tenure, however, and by his budget allocations can influence the quality and development of college programs. His role in Oakland's elaborate planning process seems somewhat uncertain and ill-defined, with the important initiatives and decisions taking place either below or above him. Like other Oakland deans, the Dean of Arts and Sciences seems institutionally to lack much of the authority needed if he is to be able to play a strong and constructive role in helping to shape and improve the quality of his college. The dean meets every other week with the A & S chairmen and weekly with an elected faculty executive committee which advises him on a variety of college policy matters. He shares information freely with both groups, and provides departments with useful institutional data such as the comparative credit analysis for the college as a whole.

Arts and sciences faculty members noted the leveling or declining enrollments in some programs and expressed concern that this might encourage a lowering of Oakland's academic standards or a shift in emphasis toward more pre-professional or professional programs. Although some departments have recognized the need to participate more fully in evening instruction and are scheduling their evening offerings so as to make possible the completion of an undergraduate major over a period of years, this is by no means uniformly the case. Nor does the A & S faculty seem generally interested in off-campus or non-credit continuing education work, both of which may prove to be important props to A & S enrollment in the decade ahead.

School of Economics and Management

The School of Economics and Management offers three programs: the baccalaureate with majors in either economics or management, and the Master of Science in Management. In addition, it provides several minors for students earning degrees in other programs of the university, and has plans in various stages of development for two additional graduate programs: a Master of Science in Applied Economics and a Ph.D. in Management. While proposals have been

written for both programs, only the MSAE program has been developed sufficiently to undergo review by the graduate council, and will probably not be ready to inaugurate before 1980. The Ph.D. proposal needs much more elaboration and discussion before it is ready for university review. The school appears to be moving slowly and carefully in considering each major curricular change, with a healthy concern for quality evident throughout. Each of the three existing programs appear to be reasonable and well-defined.

Students and faculty alike are supportive and enthusiastic about the school. Both feel the school has a well-deserved reputation for good teaching, and students also praised the faculty for its concern for individual students, accessibility, and help in job placement. The students were more critical of the poor quality of computer hardware, a situation the university recognizes and is seeking to correct, and of the computer and information science instructional program, complaining that its courses are not well-coordinated with the management program and that some of the computer faculty are not of the same quality as most of the SEM faculty. Faculty research productivity in the school appears to be relatively high. The major concern expressed by SEM faculty was for finding better ways to deal with the current enrollment pressure. They believe more attention needs to be given to building planning and governance mechanisms to handle the growth in students, faculty, and curricular options which the school is presently experiencing.

School of Education

The School of Education is characterized by effective leadership, adaptability, good teaching, and a healthy interest in scholarship in a number of areas. As is true elsewhere, the school had experienced a severe drop in its undergraduate enrollment in recent years, necessitating staffing and program changes. Not surprisingly, the decline in secondary education majors has also had an adverse effect on arts and sciences enrollments as well, with a few departments like history losing substantial numbers of majors not only from the general decline but also from the decision to combine the various social science disciplines into a single social studies major under the School of Education rather than A & S departments. There is concern and disagreement over the present secondary education program. While English and foreign languages are satisfied with their programs, there is a general feeling that

the secondary education program might be administratively coordinated in a stronger fashion.

The school has had a large master's program, with most students holding teaching positions in the public schools of the area. Enrollment has been declining, but the programs in counseling and guidance, in reading, and in the secondary subject fields, offered jointly with the College of Arts and Sciences, are apparently maintaining good standards. The master's program in English has been developed to meet both general needs and the special needs of in-service teachers.

To serve those students who might formerly have majored in education at a time when more teaching positions were available, the school has developed a major in human resources development. Such programs are not unique to Oakland, and their critics have sometimes alleged that their chief purpose is the employment of education faculty. The Oakland program seems to have made good use of those parts of the school's curriculum that are not exclusively designed as preparation for teaching, to have developed a strong advising system, and to have made good use of internships. The program prepares students for a wide variety of positions in the public and private sectors, and the employment record of graduates is good.

School of Engineering

The School of Engineering is a credit to the university, both in terms of its present quality and its potential for growth. Its newly appointed dean brings vigorous leadership and outstanding experience to the position. For the most part the faculty also exhibits a high degree of professional competence and research productivity. The school offers engineering degrees at the bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. levels. It also offers a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in computer and information science, which offers program cognates in computer engineering, mathematics, statistics, economics, and management. The B.S. degree in engineering stresses the fundamentals of engineering, but requires a concentration in one of four specialized areas: computer engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and systems engineering.

The school currently enrolls about 750 students, of whom 85 are at the graduate level. Of the 91 degrees awarded last year, about 20% went to women. The school has not been successful in enrolling minority students, however, in spite of its active recruitment efforts and special

scholarship funds for this purpose. Undergraduate students are predominantly full-time, whereas a majority of the graduate students are part-time. The latter must satisfy a residency requirement, however. Engineering students seemed generally well-satisfied with the school and its programs, though as noted above there may be a need to review the offerings in computer and information science for better articulation with their cognate areas.

School of Nursing

The School of Nursing offers a professional program of study leading to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree. The program is designed to serve both undergraduate students and those who hold RN certification. Established only in 1974, the school currently has a faculty of 22 (mostly of junior rank) and more than 300 students. Already 14 agencies of the area have affiliated with it to provide facilities in which its students can obtain clinical experience. The Dean of Nursing is committed to building a high-quality, research-oriented program that will be a credit to the university. The school appears to be progressing well towards its objective of seeking accreditation from the National League of Nursing in 1979.

Center for Health Sciences

The Center for Health Sciences encompasses the rapidly expanding allied health programs being established at Oakland. Currently, the center offers two Bachelor of Science degrees: in medical technology and medical physics. It also offers a non-degree but credit-granting medical review program, which prepares graduates of foreign medical schools for United States board certification. The center plans to add baccalaureate degree programs in industrial health and safety and in physical therapy in 1979. Later a physician's assistant program at the baccalaureate level and a master of science program in health sciences will also be available. In varying degrees all of the allied health programs draw on the already over-extended laboratory facilities in the natural sciences. For the allied health programs to realize their full potential without damaging other science programs, the university must consider the adequacy of essential support facilities as expansion takes place in the allied health fields.

Also located administratively in the center is the self-sustaining clinical research laboratory. Supported by subscribing hospitals and health care professionals

who use its facilities, the laboratory provides clinical research opportunities for community health practitioners and Oakland faculty members.

Division of Continuing Education

Oakland has a comprehensive and extensive program of continuing education which is one of the university's real strengths. The division is concerned exclusively with non-credit activities, and provides courses, conferences, institutes, workshops, correspondence study, seminars, training programs, and counseling services both on and off campus. During 1977-78 its five program units served over one hundred thousand persons. Only about 10% of the division's courses and 15-20% of its conference programs involve members of the Oakland regular faculty, however, and most of its instructional staff is recruited from outside the university. The division is well-managed and is largely self-supporting. It is headed by a competent and experienced dean who reports directly to the president of the university, as had been the case since 1966. This structure is evidently under review, for one of the five-year planning objectives of the provost is "the administrative integration of the credit-free adult continuing education programs (on and off-campus) of the Division of Continuing Education with the credit-bearing programs (on and off-campus) of the Division of Academic Affairs, where appropriate and feasible." This would seem desirable as a way to make continuing education a more integral part of the academic mainstream of the university.

Center for General and Career Studies

This center is charged with providing credit instruction to evening (after 4:00 p.m.) and off-campus students. It is also the administrative home of the Department of Learning Skills discussed earlier in the report and of New Charter College, an interesting vehicle for innovative and often interdisciplinary courses aimed in part at non-traditional students. New Charter College does not have degree-granting authority but its courses carry credit and are often used by students enrolled in the Bachelor of General Studies degree program offered by the center. The center is in the Division of Academic Affairs and its director is an associate provost.

The center offers credit instruction at four off-campus locations: Royal Oak, Birmingham, Sterling Heights, and Farmington

Hills. It currently serves about 3,500 students at these off-campus centers. The limited offerings do not permit students to earn a degree off-campus, but all credit earned is acceptable toward an Oakland degree. About half of the students enrolled off-campus also take courses on the campus. In the fall of 1978-79 approximately half of the off-campus courses were taught by auxiliary faculty called visiting lecturers. Regular Oakland faculty may teach off-campus either as part of teaching load or on a compensated overload basis. It appears that appropriate procedures and standards are used to assure quality in the off-campus offerings. The center is also responsible for on-campus evening offerings for credit. In 1977-78 about 1,500 students attended only evening classes and about 3,400 students enrolled in both day and evening classes. The Center for General and Career Studies is under able and effective leadership and is a clear strength of the university.

Inasmuch as Oakland's outreach efforts are of significant features of strength, the team suggests only that the university consider how the related credit and non-credit activities might be even more effectively coordinated and integrated. The university may also wish to consider the possibility of expanding its offerings of appropriate courses on both a credit and non-credit basis. Four or five such courses are now available. It would appear possible to offer some attractive certificate programs with both credit and non-credit components that might be of value to certain identifiable groups. Oakland University clearly has both the experience and expertise for such new continuing education activities.

Summary

Since its inception two decades ago, Oakland University has made great progress. It has recruited an excellent faculty and an able top administrative staff. While in some areas its growth has outrun its building program, it has developed an attractive campus with a modern, well-designed physical plant. On the basis of our limited contacts, it seems fair to conclude that Oakland students are well-trained and well-satisfied with the education they are receiving. The university's concern for quality is reflected in a number of strong departments, the new Arts and Sciences Honors College, and the careful review process for approval of new graduate programs. Its ambitious and impressive continuing education and outreach activities serve its surrounding community well. By most measures, Oakland University is a well-established

and rapidly maturing academic institution that is a credit to the State of Michigan.

Summary of strengths

The visiting team wishes to single out for favorable comment the following areas of strength at Oakland University:

1. The university has an able and effective top administrative staff. The president and provost are well-informed and have an excellent grasp of the details of the university's operation. The president is especially alert to ways the university can serve its larger community.
2. The university has demonstrated its responsiveness to local community needs, including its cultural as well as its academic needs.
3. The university has assembled a faculty of considerable and indeed impressive strength in a number of fields, as is evidenced by the quality and extent of its research activity and external grant funding. The faculty is committed to good teaching.
4. The university's concern for academic excellence is reflected in such activities as the new honors college and the thorough review of new graduate programs by the Office of Graduate Study.
5. While the team's contacts with students were necessarily limited and random, the student body appears to be an institutional strength. The students we met were attractive, concerned, supportive of the university, and generally well-satisfied with the education they were receiving. Some of them were of excellent quality.
6. The Division of Continuing Education and the Center for General and Career Studies enable Oakland to provide impressive outreach services on a non-credit and credit basis both on and off-campus. These related services might be even better performed through more effective coordination of the two programs.
7. The university has an imaginative development program which relates well to its cultural outreach and public relations activities.
8. Although it is a relatively young institution, the university has established an effective alumni relations program.
9. The university has an attractive campus and a modern, well-designed and maintained physical plant. Some of its facilities, especially the Oakland Center, are especially well-conceived to meet the needs of commuting students and to encourage them to remain on campus for

extracurricular activities. Meadow Brook Hall provides the university with an outstanding and enviable conference center which is heavily used for this purpose.

10. The university has embarked upon a commendable planning effort to establish and meet its intermediate and long range goals.

Areas of concern

The team also wishes to call attention to the following areas of concern:

1. While the university has developed an elaborate planning process with a view to establishing its intermediate and long range goals, this planning process does not appear to have yet produced either a general consensus or a clear understanding of the present goals and future mission of Oakland University.
2. There appears to be a need for more attention to the problem of effective communication to achieve a better and more general understanding of the university's rather complex administrative and governance structure and decision-making processes.
3. The library needs continued strengthening, especially if further advanced graduate programs are to be undertaken.
4. In view of the above concern, the university should review the adequacy of mechanisms to assure appropriate faculty-student user input into the development of library budget allocations and the determination of priorities for acquisitions and the building of its collections.
5. In some areas the quality and extent of the space and support facilities do not appear to be appropriate for or match the quality of the faculty.
6. While the university's tenure review process is thorough and involves a number of separate review levels before a tenure commitment is made, it also permits the ultimate decision in some instances to be made by a single individual from outside the university whose qualifications for making such a major and substantive determination are unspecified and unknown.
7. The university's commitment to and procedures for assuring affirmative action are not clearly understood at all levels.
8. Academic advising, especially at the underclass level before students have committed themselves to a departmental major, appears to need strengthening and more faculty involvement. In this regard, departments need a better means of determining their responsibility

for those students who have declared or expressed interest in a particular major.

9. The learning skills courses may need revision and somewhat more adequate staffing.

10. There appears to be a need for extending the new policy of periodic program reviews to the undergraduate as well as the graduate level.

11. There seems to be considerable unevenness in the secondary education programs, a lack of coordination between arts and sciences departments and the education faculty, and no assigned responsibility for development and review of the programs.

Recommendation

The evaluation team recommends the following: That the accreditation of Oakland University be continued at the doctoral degree-granting level, that accreditation at the doctoral level be limited to the existing doctoral programs in engineering and reading; that during the next decade the institution should notify the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of its plans to implement any new programs at the first progression and doctoral degree-granting levels prior to their implementation; that an evaluation be scheduled in five years, 1983-84, focused on the university's continued development at the doctoral level; that the next comprehensive visit be scheduled in ten years, 1988-89.

Reasons for the recommendation

We have little hesitation in concluding that Oakland University is a rapidly maturing institution with a number of areas of strength. It has clearly achieved an acceptable and indeed in many instances an impressive level of quality in most of the programs it has developed during its relatively short institutional life. At the same time, Oakland has had only limited experience in doctoral level education so far, and it presently lacks the resources in most fields for such work. We believe the university should approach the matter of additional new doctoral or first professional degree programs beyond the master's level cautiously and on a highly selective basis, making sure that it first has the necessary faculty, library, laboratory, and other resources needed for quality programs at this advanced level. In this regard, special attention will need to be paid to the library, whose collections are not adequate for advanced study in most fields, and to the laboratory and other facilities needed for advanced research.

REPORT OF A VISIT TO OAKLAND

UNIVERSITY, Rochester, Michigan, December 12-13, 1978 for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

Robert J. Keller, Professor of Higher Education, University of Minnesota; Donald W. Robinson, Dean of the College of Education, Oklahoma State University; E. David Cronon, Dean of the College of Letters and Science, and Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison (Chairman).

Introduction

During 1978-79 Oakland University was scheduled for a regular comprehensive review of its academic programs by the North Central Association for the purpose of considering whether the institution should be continued in accreditation at the doctoral degree-granting level. A large evaluation team visited Oakland to conduct this review over three days on October 29-November 1, 1978. Prior to the arrival of the team at Oakland, neither its members nor the NCA staff was aware that the university was about to begin a new Ph.D. program in reading. Following its last NCA review in 1971, Oakland had received full accreditation under the then-existing policies as a "mature" institution at the master's level, and preliminary accreditation at the doctoral level for two proposed Ph.D. programs in systems engineering and science. Only the doctoral program in engineering was actually implemented, however, and it produced its first three graduates only in 1978 shortly before the team's visit.

Through a misunderstanding and failure of communication on both sides, Oakland did not advise the NCA staff of its plans to develop a new doctoral program in reading during 1978-79. As a result, the team did not include any specialists in this field. The team's preliminary review of the proposed reading program raised a number of questions (and no conclusive answers) about certain aspects of the program and the adequacy of its support base. Concluding that it lacked the expertise necessary to give this new development the careful review it needed in light of Oakland's limited experience with doctoral-level education, the

team decided to recommend that the North Central Association promptly arrange for a visit by a separate smaller team of specialists in education and reading, and agreed to be guided by the findings and recommendations of the small team in its own recommendations. A three-member team consisting of two specialists and the chairman of the larger team revisited Oakland five weeks later and thoroughly reviewed the plans for the reading doctoral program. The following report and recommendations of the small team were incorporated into the report and recommendations of the regular team and included as an appendix to its report.

Activities of the evaluation team

Prior to their arrival at Oakland, the members of the team reviewed a large amount of material describing the reading doctoral program and its development, including reports by three outside consultants employed by the university to evaluate the program. Upon arrival the team had several hours of general discussion about the program with the president, the graduate dean, the dean of the School of Education, and the faculty director of the program. The following day we met collectively with the eleven reading faculty members and later with a number of them individually and with some of the faculty in the related support fields of linguistics and psychology. The two specialist members of the team carefully reviewed the library's holdings in the field of reading. Two members reviewed the procedures for admitting students into the program and the files of prospective students who had passed the initial screening for admission. We also interviewed two of these students. The team met with three representatives of Detroit area school systems to ascertain community needs and interest in the program, and found them quite supportive. Two members of the team met with the executive committee of the graduate council to learn more about the review processes used in the development and approval of the reading program. Finally, the chairman explored with the graduate and education deans the nature and extent of the university's commitment to develop and adequately support a program that is projected to serve only a small number of students and will thus inevitably incur rather high staffing costs.

The Ph.D. program in reading

The reading doctoral program reflects careful planning, as might be expected in view of the thorough review process established by Oakland's graduate council for the approval of proposed new graduate programs. Over a period of years the School of Education has recruited specialists in a variety of fields, including developmental reading, diagnosis and remediation, children's literature, cogni-

tive development, teaching methods, related language arts, special education, counseling, and the like, needed to cover the important instructional areas in the field of reading. The faculty is of good quality and is regarded as a group to include some of the ablest faculty of the school. The group seems well-prepared and of sufficient size to staff a doctoral program in reading, and has had considerable experience with Oakland's baccalaureate and MAT programs in reading. Alumni of the MAT reading program who responded to a mail questionnaire indicated satisfaction with the faculty and the program. Most of the faculty seem to be teaching and service oriented, but at least three or four have the necessary depth of research training and scholarly activity to undergird the research component of the program and to serve as a catalyst for the remainder of the group. Although the relative youth of most of the faculty and their lack of experience in directing doctoral dissertations and advanced graduate student research is a present weakness, the team believes the potential for a quality doctoral program in reading exists. The enthusiasm and commitment of the faculty to the program are clearly evident. What is needed is a somewhat better balance between research and practice-oriented activities, which are very extensive.

The reading curriculum is well-designed, reflecting a good balance between didactic courses, cognate fields such as linguistics and psychology, research, and independent study. Although there are formal linkages between the reading faculty and faculty members in the A & S programs in linguistics and psychology, these might be strengthened perhaps through joint appointments or involvement as dissertation committee members or even as dissertation directors where appropriate. This would help to assure the effective support of these important cognate fields for the reading program. The team has some concern that the research methodology course of the program has not been thoroughly devel-

oped as yet. Care should be taken to involve all of the faculty responsible for the research course in its planning, and to relate it to other aspects of the program. The team was surprised to learn that no detailed syllabi had yet been developed for the new advanced courses of a program scheduled to get under way within two months, in spite of the rather elaborate reviews the program had undergone at various levels previously.

Admission standards and procedures are appropriate. The team reviewed the qualifications of the four students admitted provisionally to the program so far and concluded that at least three of the four were of good quality and the fourth was perhaps more marginal but acceptable. This view was reinforced by interviewing two of these students, who were well-satisfied with their previous graduate work at Oakland. The team recommends that admission standards remain high, especially during the early development years of the program, and that care be taken to insure that admission criteria and standards are appropriate for a Ph.D. research-oriented program. At the same time, we are concerned that the small size projected for the program (5 students in the first year, building to a total of 18 in the fourth) may be too small to be either pedagogically sound or economically efficient. Perhaps consideration should be given to moving toward a critical mass of 15-20 doctoral students relatively quickly. Another option might be to permit especially promising master's level students to enroll in the advanced graduate courses, though care should be taken to limit such students to those with the clear potential for doctoral level work.

The facilities available for the program are adequate but not outstanding. They will be improved considerably when the new classroom building is completed, which is to include space for the School of Education and for several specialized rooms designed for the reading program. The new computer with on-line capability available for faculty and graduate students will markedly enhance the potential of the reading and other graduate programs of the university. The proposed expansion of the library, planned to be completed by 1982 or 1983, will also improve the support facilities of the reading program.

Much progress has been made over the past several years to enlarge and upgrade the library's holdings needed for doctoral work in reading. The team is satisfied that the library base is adequate to begin the program at this time, but there is need for continued improvement,

particularly as students move toward the advanced research and dissertation stages of the program. Following the decision to plan for the development of the reading doctoral program the library gave special priority to building its collections in this field, including reference works, monographs, and specialized journals and periodicals, as well as continuing acquisitions in other fields of education. The acquisition of the substantial William S. Gray Research Collection on microfiche relates directly to the reading program, while the books and journals ordered over the past two years to strengthen the new master's degree program in linguistics will also be useful. The reading faculty and the library staff have identified the most important and useful materials for a graduate program in this field and have made considerable progress in acquiring them. Their collaborative work in this regard seems effective and should be continued.

Although an impressive start has been made in building the library base for a quality doctoral program in reading, much remains to be done in this regard, however. In particular, attention would be given to expanding the number of journal subscriptions and in building up back runs of journals already being received. These should include not only the more obvious specialized periodicals in the field of reading, but those in the related fields of psychology and linguistics as well.

Summary

The special evaluation team concludes that Oakland University is able to offer a Ph.D. program in reading of acceptable quality at this time, and that it has established the necessary standards and procedures for admission of students and institutional review of the program to assure continuing quality during its development in the years ahead. At the same time, the special evaluation team shares the view of the larger comprehensive evaluation team that Oakland is not yet a fully mature institution with the resources and experience needed to mount any considerable number or variety of doctoral programs at the present time. The team offers the following suggestions about the reading program:

1. A possible modest expansion in the projected size of the program, so it will not incur such high staffing costs and so there will be enough students in the doctoral-level courses for them to be pedagogically effective. Another option is to admit some highly selected and

promising master's level students to these courses.

2. The involvement of faculty members in such related fields as linguistics, psychology, and perhaps statistics in the program, perhaps through joint appointments or as dissertation committee members or even as dissertation directors, in order to assure effective support from these important cognate disciplines.

3. While library holdings are generally adequate for the reading program, there is a continuing need to build the collection of scholarly journals, including back issues of journals already being received, and especially in the related field of experimental psychology.

4. The need to plan the new doctoral-level courses with more specificity than was yet the case at the time of the team's

visit. In particular, the proposed required research methodology course should be carefully planned with a broad faculty participation to make sure it will serve the collective purposes and needs of the diverse reading faculty members involved in the program.

Recommendation

The special evaluation team recommends the following: That the Ph.D. program in reading be included in the recommendation of the larger comprehensive evaluation team for the continued accreditation of Oakland University at the doctoral level; that an evaluation be scheduled in five years, 1983-84, focused on the university's continued development at the doctoral level.

Reasons for the recommendation

The team believes Oakland University has the faculty, library, and other resources needed to offer a Ph.D. program in reading of acceptable quality at this time. Its library holdings need continued strengthening, however, and its lacks experience in doctoral level education, not only in the field of reading but generally. It therefore seems prudent, and beneficial to the institution, to recommend that another evaluation be scheduled in five years, focused on the university's doctoral programs. This will provide an opportunity to review the development of the reading program at about the time it should have produced its first graduates.