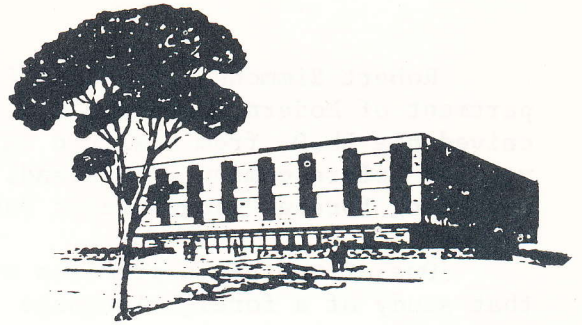


OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS



Freshmen Newsletter - #1

January 1966

*... an exciting
community
of learning*

CHANCELLOR'S GREETING

Next to meeting you next September, my happiest annual assignment is to welcome you warmly to Oakland in advance of your arrival. On behalf of the students and faculty, I congratulate you--for we are proud of the University--and I pledge our every talent and resource to assist you in successfully beginning your college education. You will find that it will fulfill your best hopes and aspirations directly in proportion to the best energies you give it. We hope you will also find the period between next fall and your graduation among the happiest years of your life. As a faculty and an institution, we are dedicated to helping you realize these mutually supporting and inseparably satisfying goals.

W B Warner

YOU HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO OAKLAND . . .

. . . and during the next months before fall enrollment, you will undoubtedly have many questions regarding the University. To answer some of your questions and to keep you informed of the latest happenings within the University, you will receive a series of Newsletters at monthly intervals.

In the issues to follow general information regarding academic programs, student activities, and student services will be discussed from the freshmen point of reference. Specifics involved with certain programs will be explained as in this issue's material concerning foreign languages at Oakland. Academic advising, the Writing Clinic and the Activities Center are just a few examples of student services that will be explored in succeeding issues. The Newsletter will also introduce you to faculty members and give you some information concerning research and special programs they and their colleagues are carrying out on Oakland's campus.

One of the first things you will discover as a student at Oakland is that the faculty and staff here are dedicated to making your learning experiences within the University complex successful ones. Your understanding of the many programs and services described to you in succeeding issues is important in our fulfilling this goal. We hope these previews of what to expect next fall will help you achieve a successful transition from high school to college.

Robert Simmons, Associate Professor of German, was named Chairman of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures in the fall of 1965. Mr. Simmons received his Ph.D. from Stanford University and was on the faculty at Marquette University before coming to Oakland. The following is a statement from Mr. Simmons regarding foreign languages at Oakland University:

One of the basic premises of Oakland University's educational philosophy is that study of a foreign language is an important part of the total academic experience. We want the student to gain as much as possible from his language study, and for this reason we pay careful attention to the student's language aptitude and the placement in a particular course.

A student who has studied a foreign language before admission to Oakland and who wishes to continue the study of that same language is given a placement test designed to place him in a course at a level for which he is best suited. It is worth mentioning that sufficient language preparation before coming to Oakland and an appropriate score on the placement test may exempt a student entirely from language study.

All entering students take the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT). This test--without reference to any previous knowledge of a foreign language on the part of the student--is intended as a measurement of ability to differentiate audially among vowel and consonant sound combinations; it indicates knowledge of language structure and vocabulary awareness in written form; and it tests the memory retention of word and meaning relationships in spoken and written form. On the basis of the score and percentile rank achieved in the MLAT, the student is advised to enter one of the two types of courses offered in foreign languages.

If the student shows ability in the area of aural-oral work, he should enter an audio-lingual section where his skills in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing are developed to the fullest extent possible. However, if the MLAT indicates that the student is more aware of language structure and would be better fitted for and derive greater benefit from a course devoted to developing the reading skill alone, then he is advised to enter a course of this type. By the end of the second semester, the student in such a course should have a solid grasp of the language structure, a fairly extensive vocabulary, and will have had a good deal of practice in the skill of translating with precision and reading rapidly for comprehension.

The third and fourth semesters are devoted to expanding this reading skill, acquiring a greater working vocabulary and--most important--being able to read in the original the writings of first-rate authors in the foreign language. A discussion in English of these writings provides an additional contribution to the student's intellectual growth at Oakland.

It should be emphasized at this point that all students who are considering a major in a foreign language should enroll in an audio-lingual section. This course provides the necessary preparation for major work, and it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to enter advance courses in foreign languages and literature solely on the basis of work done in a reading course. One more thing should be emphasized. Even though the MLAT score may indicate that the student should not enroll in an audio-lingual section, experience has demonstrated that the desire to learn to speak the language and a willingness to work can overcome an initial deficiency in aptitude. It is important, therefore, if there are any questions about one's status in the language program, that the student speak with a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. We would all be most happy to assist in every way possible so that language study is a meaningful part of the student's total academic experience here.