

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY - OAKLAND

NEWSLETTER

3070 BUTLER ROAD, ROCHESTER

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Have you been wondering about the following topics which open this issue of the MSUO NEWSLETTER? Many of our prospective students have raised questions regarding these:

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OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS: Herbert N. Stoutenburg has been appointed Director of Admissions and Registrar by the governing board of MSU. He comes to MSUO with broad experience in the field of registration, records and admissions. If you have any inquiries about admissions, please direct them to Mr. Stoutenburg.

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BUS TRANSPORTATION: As soon as we know the population centers in Oakland and Macomb Counties from which most of our students will come, efforts will be made to arrange for bus transportation on special routes to and from Meadow Brook. Decisions regarding this will probably not be made until late summer.

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ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS: The first series of entrance examinations will be given on 19 February. They will be available only to those people who have received written notification from Herbert N. Stoutenburg, Director of Admissions and Registrar. Subsequent to the first examination date, entrance examinations will be given once each month until further notice.

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ATHLETICS: A number of inquiries have been received regarding the sports programs to be offered at MSUO. As indicated before, we hope to have a strong program in physical education, intramural athletics and recreation.

MSUO will probably not engage in intercollegiate athletics for at least two years after opening. The first open competition will likely be in basketball, swimming and track. It is hoped that the Intramural Building will be completed by the time we are ready for intercollegiate competition. We are not pressing hard for this in the beginning, because it is believed that our student body should first develop a genuine pride in MSUO's academic programs.

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PART TIME STUDENTS: The question has been raised as to whether we will have degree programs for part time students. The answer is yes. We will make every effort to extend the school day to 10 PM so that part time students may attend on regular degree programs. Such students will be regularly matriculated into MSUO in the same departments as the full time day students. Generally, the only distinction between full and part time students will be that most of our part time people will attend in the evening. For all practical purposes, they will be regular degree candidates.

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THIS IS YOUR PUBLICATION: Coming issues will deal with curriculum development, including the four academic seminars which have brought to MSUO outstanding people in the fields of engineering, business administration, teacher education and liberal arts.

If you have suggestions for improving the NEWSLETTER so that it will more adequately provide the information you desire, please do not hesitate to write or phone this office (FE 8-4515).

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We hope that the first NEWSLETTER proved to be helpful in acquainting you with the current situation at Michigan State University-Oakland. This second NEWSLETTER outlines the purposes of MSUO, plus presenting a somewhat theoretical elaboration of these ideas.

Sometimes folks get the impression that philosophical theory does not have application to practicality; however, in reality, philosophy is the basis for practicality. Philosophy establishes the guidelines for what we do and what we hope to do educationally. It is hoped that this brief presentation will help you to know better the vision of responsibility which MSUO sees for itself in being of service to the people of Oakland and Macomb Counties.

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The primary purpose of a university is to encourage the maximum possible intellectual development of each student.

The discovery, preservation and dissemination of knowledge are vital elements in intellectual development. The cultivation of knowledge for its own sake is of great importance to the university student. Universities must help young people to develop comprehensive understandings of knowledge, but always on the basis that what is learned is never the final or the ultimate. Knowledge is something which is always in process. It helps the individual to be pliable in the sense that the student is constantly searching for ways to express the whole body of knowledge and at the same time developing new understandings through the combination and assimilation of old facts. We must recognize that the assumption of a standardized body of knowledge is dangerous because at best, knowledge can only be incomplete and inconclusive of the total milieu of life. This is a positive attack against educational content in the realm of mediocrity. Content in teaching must provide for young people, ceaselessly, a powerful challenge. We must diligently attempt to develop programs for individual students--programs in which individual differences will become more pronounced, because each individual is applying his best and his most--so that each individual student will experience maximum development of intellectual capacities--so that he may also learn the skills required to apply the intellectual concepts mastered.

University students must be singled out as individuals, each of whom has a rare and unique contribution to make in terms of his own intellectual, emotional, social and physical equipment. Universities must help young people to think and act in a rational manner; however, never losing sight of the serious obligation for benevolence...and certainly there is more to intellectuality than a body of facts or a body of content. Universities must lead, guide and direct young people through the many education-experience paths required for the development of critical methods of work--the scientific method of work being no less important today than at its best in the past. Young people must learn to think, to observe, to study, and these logical processes for problem solving must become for the individual akin to his very nature, a part of his everyday living experience.

This is not to imply that other values--morality, citizenship, personality--are not important or shall be ignored by a university, but a student entering a university without the knowledge of what constitutes the primary objective of the institution starts with a handicap.

"All the world's a stage...and one man in his time plays many parts." Were Shakespeare living today, he might gain considerable renown as a sociologist. What he has suggested in As You Like It is that men and women are role players. Every

individual plays many roles during his lifetime, and as a matter of fact, many roles within a period of a day or a week or a month. Each of these roles has some significance with regard to the particular situation in which the individual finds himself. He may play a political role, or a social role, or an economic role, or an organizational role. Each of these roles may involve to some degree different commitments, but all are important.

So it is with the university student. He cannot divorce himself from ongoing life merely because he comes to the university. On the other hand, when he is at the university, the role he plays as a student takes precedence over others. His primary role as a student is to develop his intellectual capacities and skills to the greatest possible extent. For the student to completely understand this is to satisfy in a large measure the motivational requirements for learning at an advanced level.

Each social institution exists to accomplish a purpose. Churches have their fundamental objectives in the realm of morality and religion, industries must produce goods, families must rear the young. Only colleges and universities have been established by society specifically to deal with the human capacity for learning at an advanced level. To forget this is to betray the trust of the society which supports our institutions of higher learning.

The university's responsibility is to provide opportunity for advanced learning. It should not and cannot perform the services required of other social institutions. At best, it can only complement the functions of other social institutions. Certainly a university can provide facilities and resources for practice of the competencies and skills developed by other social institutions, but these basic functions must be developed within the framework of the appropriate cultural institutions. A university cannot be all things to all people. At times, the public has expected education to answer all questions and solve all problems for all people. Sometimes the obligations normally performed by other social institutions have been foisted onto public education at all levels, but this is not logical in terms of the total development of the individual. All social institutions in America have rather specialized functions to perform with regard to the growth and development of Americans, and the vital task of helping each individual to develop in all areas of human experience must be shouldered by all of the social institutions in our culture. Conceivably, we could expand education to handle the responsibilities and obligations of the family, church, our economic forms, our political forms, our social forms--but this would not be the original intent of education in the American philosophy of life. Higher education must, by virtue of obligation to the society which created it, deal primarily with the "human capacity for learning at an advanced level."

Of course, students do not live in a vacuum, and there are secondary learning experiences which not only support the primary, but which are important in themselves. Living and working with other students can teach much about man's historic endeavor to control himself and achieve desirable objectives through cooperation. The assumption of responsibility in student organizations can develop integrity. And most important in a public university is the realization by its students that the knowledge and skills which they acquire must be brought to the service of the people composing their society.

A knowledge of cultural expectations is essential to all members of a given culture. In America, students must become educated in the American cultural tradition. What our culture expects of its citizenry is generally expressed through the social forms which that culture has established for problem-solving, inter-personal relationships, economic forms, political forms and social forms. It would be rather senseless to educate an American youth to live like Eskimos. They must learn to live like Americans from birth. They gradually must understand more and more complex expectations which our culture has for them. To do this, they must experience on the college campus the living forms, techniques and skills which are expected of them as Americans. This, of course, is done through such forms as an organized social life, including clubs and various types of social and cultural groupings--through intramural and intercollegiate sports--through recreational activity--through student publications and quasi-scholastic ventures--to name a few.

Human beings learn social forms through experience. However, here again it must be emphasized none too carefully that the primary purpose of the university is the maximum intellectual development of each student and all other experience, which also certainly involves learning, is secondary in nature. To add one more thought, we should recall that it is essential for knowledge and skills to have application to the problems of man. Knowledge for its own sake certainly has merit--great merit in the traditional sense--but to be really significant for the individual student, it must provide some of the answers and some of the directions for helping people to help themselves. Were our students to graduate with no conviction for service to their fellow man, all of our efforts would be tragically in vain.

Stated another way, it is the university's obligation to assist each student to attain the knowledge and skills necessary to make him proficient as a professional, competent as a citizen, and happy as a human being; and all of this it must do in a context which never lets the student forget the words of a very wise scholar, "No man has a right to lead such a life of contemplation as to forget in his ease the service due to his neighbor."

This final paragraph in the Statement of Purposes is sort of a composite of the university's obligation, not only to its student body, but also to the culture which created the institution of higher education. We have expressed in a number of ways that universities have a responsibility, not only for teaching and research, but for extension as well. It has been implied that the learner must be able to use the great content of knowledge obtained through research, the manageable content of knowledge which has been learned from his teaching--both of these in the solution of the problems of men. Either knowledge or learning for its own sake as the ultimate is not enough. Meaningful experience results from the application of knowledge and learning to the solution of one's problems.

We also have implied that the university must help the student to develop intellectual skills which have application to the economic well-being of the individual, his state and his nation; that the kind of economic and social security which he is able to develop subsequently for his family is vital to his happiness; that he learn and apply the skills required for responsible citizenship in our culture which makes possible his own success and the success of his fellows. This represents a sort of "marriage" between the theoretical and the practical, between the philosophical and the utilitarian.

Finally, for your consideration, we submit these expressions from the President's Commission on Higher Education, because they have significance for higher

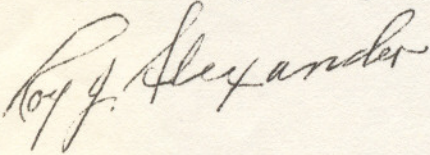
education's purposes....

The expectations in a liberally-educated man include:

-Ability to ascertain facts and act on them.
-Ability to know the source of imagination and insight necessary to perceive the direction in which society is moving and growing.
-To know that knowledge is power, but also freedom.
-To know that knowledge, when combined with vision and creative power can harness the forces of nature and work toward the establishment of a good society.
-To make wise decisions which provide guidance in one's personal life as well as in the collective decisions of society.

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It is sincerely hoped that this brief presentation regarding our purposes and philosophy will be meaningful to you. Every effort will be made to develop significant educational programs, which are consistent with what has been written here, not for yesterday but today and tomorrow.



Roy J. Alexander
Director of Student Services

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