at kirkland

A Report on Kirkland's Faculty

Faculty development is a systematic and pervasive program which will allow the faculty to marshal its considerable resources toward the fuller exploration of the college's mission — pedagogy — and its partner — scholarly growth and liveliness.

Samuel F. Babbitt
1973–74 President's Report

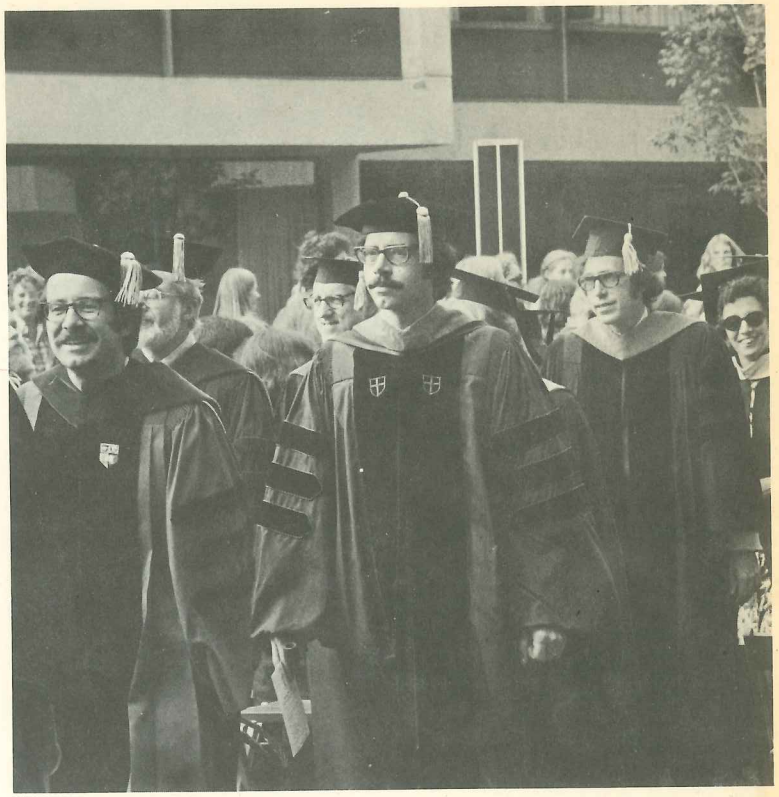
This issue of **At Kirkland** is a collection of pieces which touch upon the theme of faculty development.

Kirkland students, like students everywhere, know their best instructors as people who make them think — by stimulation, challenge, example or the other tools of teaching. The enterprise, however accomplished, must always be reciprocal to succeed; the student teaches as well as learns, as does the faculty.

The college realizes that, for such exchange to occur, the faculty must be encouraged to replenish its own intellectual and artistic resources. Faculty development is devoted to facilitating a professional growth through research grants, through sabbaticals, through alternative modes of employment, through regular critical feedback, through permitting new intellectual interest to flower rather than to wilt under the pressure of time and routine.

Most of the material in this issue is the result of regular programs scheduled during the fall of 1974. At one of the orientation programs before classes began, a professor of the history of science described what "liberal education" meant to her and how she hoped it would come to mean something similar to the new Kirkland students she addressed. At Convocation, Kirkland's new Dean of Academic Affairs discussed the role of discipline and imagination in liberal education and the faculty's need to see themselves as professionals who share their discipline and imagination with their students. The Research Professor for the spring semester, 1974, spoke at the Faculty Forum in early September about the directions and findings of his work, citing a sense of "renewed professional competence" upon returning to the classroom.

In addition, during the second annual Summer Arts Conference, the Arts Division's current program, its intermedia and interdisciplinary thrust, and its potential growth were explored by both students and faculty in greater detail than had been possible at the 1973 conference.



Opening Convocation '74

In October at a Women's Center meeting, a couple newly hired by Kirkland to fill one full-time literature position discussed the sharing of professional and domestic responsibilities.

Three other articles were written especially for this publication. An art historian describes his study of architecture first in Italy, then in upstate New York, and the subsequent genesis and development of a new course and professional interest. A Kirkland senior and the college's new Vice President of Research and Evaluation explain two aspects of institutional evaluation and growth, particularly as it applies to the faculty; one discusses the way in which students contribute to this process, and the other explains the institution's role in evaluating itself.

Bringing these statements together is one of the ways we can show what some of Kirkland's faculty and staff are doing to keep teaching, to keep learning, to keep us very much alive.

THE EDITORS

Women and Liberal Arts

In an orientation speech entitled "Liberal Arts Education and Its Value for Women at This Point in History," Nadine George, Chairperson of the Sciences Division, spoke to freshmen on their first night at Kirkland. Her own college education began thirty-one years ago, and in January, 1974, she received her doctorate in history of science from Cornell University.

I've sometimes taken a very facetious approach to education, in part because it's fun, and in part because fun has its funny moments. Also, I am sure I will never be out of school, at least not as long as I teach. That has another meaning in this case. If I manage to teach anybody anything, it's because I'm still learning myself. I think I speak for most of us at Kirkland when I say I always think I am a failure as a teacher with any given student if I haven't learned something from that student. These are forms of education that go on for all of us.

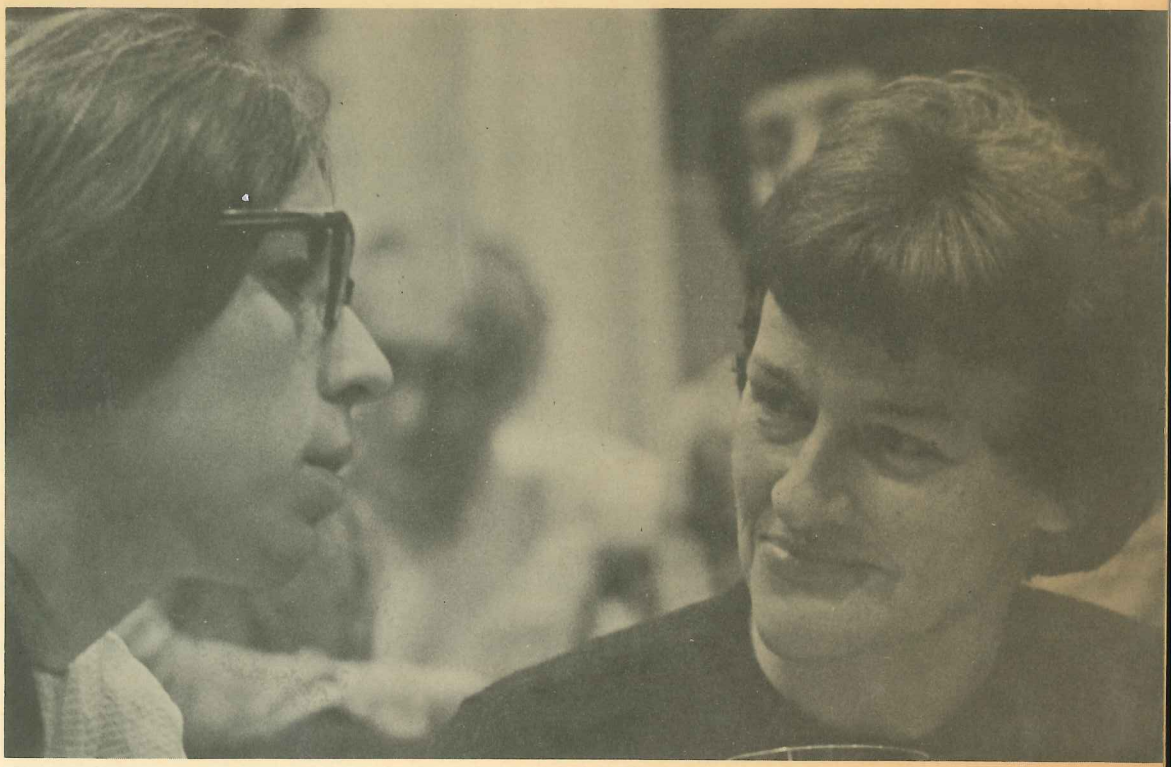
Liberal arts — I said that I was going to start out by disclaiming this topic. We're bored, we're weathered, we hear it all the time. But then, wandering around and dithering about what I was really going to say, I realized I didn't dare disclaim it because if I did I would be disclaiming my own identity — whatever that may be after all these chameleon changes of my role.

Not only have I never been out of school in this marvelous metaphysical sense, but I've never been out of some connection with the academic world since the day I started primary school. As a perpetual student, staff member, faculty wife and faculty member, there's paper work, head work, drudgery sometimes, but there's always excitement. In every case, the excitement was dependent on the idea of continuing education, and, in the truest sense of the word, liberal arts.

I don't pretend to know what liberal arts ought to mean for everybody, only what it means to me. Start out with that word "liberal." We won't be etymological or political; let's just say that, in this case, it means the open door to and of the mind, where I've invested a lot of myself.

I came from a world where that particular door was customarily closed to women. Girls simply **were** in a lower-class family. Women didn't have careers; they had babies. And they didn't have friends; they had relatives. Relatives are splendid, and children are equally splendid, but any human being needs a wider range than the world of relatives and domestic concerns.

I'm a funny kind of feminist, too. I really believe in women; I believe in women so much that I also believe in men. To this extent, I claim that a world should exist in which women have free access to the same



Ruth Rinard, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, and Nadine George, Chairperson of the Sciences Division

things men do, because the right to stretch your head is one of the things that makes you your own person. Without that right — without that **duty** — we're nothing but a link in the reproductive cycle. And I think all of us want to be able to say that we did more, in some way, than just keep two-legged animals walking upright on the face of the earth.

One of the usual ways of approaching the subject of liberal education for women has been to say that educated women make better wives and mothers. Of course they do, but I'm really hung up on the idea that they simply make better people, that they've got more reasons for liking themselves and, therefore, more reasons for liking others.

I had a friend who once wrote me a very beautiful letter about getting engaged and planning to be married. She said, "I'm beginning to realize what love really means. What love really means is the same thing as dropping a pebble in a pond and watching the waves spread out, because if you start by loving one person deeply, you become able

to love others much more than you could before you knew what this was like." I'm purposely using love as an example, love of self in the real sense of that word. I think the emphasis is not on selfishness, but rather on recognizing yourself for what you are: somebody worthwhile, somebody it is absolutely necessary to develop to the highest point. There can't be liberal education without that starting point.

The reason we try to stress individual attention, the chance to do your own thing and the chance to take part in the entire process of education at Kirkland stems from that conviction. We don't express it quite that way; it might be a little hard in our world of semantic confusions and rigidity of language to say we're trying to teach you to love yourself. But I think that is what we're doing.

One of the things that I hope you will do here is develop your own definition of liberal education and your own definition of yourself as a woman. I hope we will be able to help, but we will often be passive bystanders. We know it has to begin with you. We'll give you a hand, but we aren't going to do it for you, because the only preconception we have is that you're worth bothering about, you're worth pushing, and you're worth encouraging in the hard task of pushing yourselves.

NADINE GEORGE
Chairperson of the Sciences Division
Assistant Professor of History of Science

The Research Professor Reports to the Faculty

Walter Broughton was awarded the Kirkland College Research Professorship for the spring semester of 1974. Shortly before classes resumed this fall, he reported on his research and findings to his colleagues at the Faculty Forum, which was sponsored by the William R. Kenan Fund for Excellence in Teaching at Kirkland. Below is an excerpt of his report.

You don't know what a pleasure it is to have an audience again. When I accepted the Professorship, I didn't realize how much I would miss the chance to discuss ideas among a group of people; I imagine that's one of the reasons we enjoy the classroom.

Knowing my state of deprivation and fearing I might take advantage of your captive status, I asked several friends what they thought the faculty would like to hear. Most of them suggested that I describe the Professorship itself and speak briefly about my own use of the opportunities it provides. I'll attempt to stick to that agenda.

In effect, the Research Professorship is a paid leave of absence with an important proviso. In accepting the Professorship one undertakes to complete the research on the merits of which the leave was awarded. Otherwise it is very much like any other leave. You are no longer obligated to serve on committees, advise students or conduct independent studies. The Professorship does not affect your eligibility for sabbaticals. It may be pursued on or off campus, and you need not work on a book-length manuscript. A series of articles is also appropriate.

In preparing for this afternoon, I thought it would be prudent to reexamine my proposal and see what I said I would do. As is often the case — and I hope healthfully so — I haven't really stuck to what I said I would do. I did write five papers, as I said I would. But only two of the papers described in my proposal were among the five I wrote. A third was substantially modified as I saw an opportunity to support a theoretical argument with some data from my dissertation research. These first three papers have been submitted to sociological journals. They deal with conceptions of God among Protestant laity, the purported influence of social class and homogeneity of friendship choice upon certainty of orthodox Christian belief, and the influence of religious involvement upon lay willingness to support church social action programs.

A fourth paper, which also reflects my interest in the sociology of religion, was an attempted revision of a paper I wrote when in graduate school and delivered once, at New College. Although I liked the gen-

eral outline of its treatment of secularity and the religious experience of transcendence, I was unhappy with some of the analytics in the argument. I thought that I might be able to debug it with a little work and a reexamination of the parts of Talcott Parsons' and Neil Smelser's work that had inspired it. Unfortunately I was wrong. Consequently, it's been stuck back in the filing cabinet for "future reference."

The fifth paper I completed during the Professorship is the product of my increasing concern for the quality and character of American undergraduate education. For this last paper I originally had proposed a discussion of Lester F. Ward's "principle of female superiority." (I had hoped to examine this early American sociologist's attitudes toward the women's suffrage movement and contrast them with the attitudes of other early sociologists.) I found, however, as I wrestled with the problems of long-range planning faced by a Kirkland committee on which I sit, that understanding some of the processes affecting colleges like Kirkland became more urgent for me. I hope to present this last paper, titled "The Transformation of Higher Education: Democratization and the Creation of 'Post-Secondary Education' " at a sociological meeting next year.

That's a very brief description of my activities last spring. I could continue by presenting one of the papers I just sketched, but I suspect I might thereby tell you more than you wish to know. Instead I'll attempt to describe one of the major themes running through much of this work — my dissatisfaction with the reductionist tendencies to be found in much of the sociological literature on religion. I am referring to theoretical efforts to define religion as no more than a psychological or social need, or treatments which deny religious beliefs and social organizations some degree of autonomy. Such efforts commonly reflect

the influence of nineteenth century positivism, an intellectual movement with a strong impact on the development of sociology and a marked distaste for religion.

I have argued that the resurgence of interest in positivist interpretations of religion occurred when many analysts of American religion were faced with the need to find explanations for the conflicts which arose between clergy and laity over the social role of the church during the 1960's. As you will recall, many Catholic and Protestant clergy were highly active in the civil rights movement, the so-called war against poverty and the movement to stop the war in Southeast Asia. Some clergy lost their jobs and others sought a more hospitable location in the ecclesiastical bureaucracies. To analysts of American religion who saw these causes as charitable and just, the failure of Christian laity to join in these movements raised old questions about the "true nature" of religion.

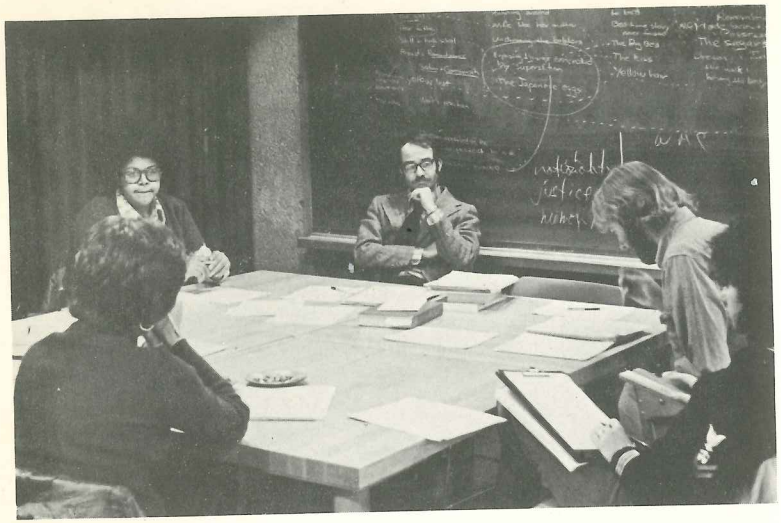
One argument that began to appear at this time asserted that laity were unconcerned with social action projects because they had a vested interest in preserving a church which provided comfort for them. This point of view draws directly upon the reductionist theories of Freud and Nietzsche, both of whom contended that religion existed only to provide solace for the weak of this world.

The second argument to appear at this time also draws upon older positivist theories. In this instance, it is argued that religious men and women are unconcerned with the problems of this world because they look forward to their existence in the next. From this point of view, those who believe in God and an afterlife are reluctant as a consequence to endorse efforts to involve the church in the problems of this world. The position, of course, is highly similar to the now classic Marxian plaint that religion is the opiate of the masses.

I was suspicious of these contentions. I recognized their nineteenth century origins and their implications for religion. I was struck, moreover, by the paucity of evidence behind them and grew to suspect they had been offered only because analysts were unable to identify other reasons for lay opposition. I saw no reason why belief in God necessarily led to a lack of interest in this world, nor did I believe that the motives for involvement in the church could be as simple as a need for comfort. I was willing to believe, however, that some religious explanations of the problem of evil — why it is that the good die young while the wicked flourish as the Green Bay tree — might have discompassionate implications. For example, providentialism, the belief that God is working His purpose out in the world, is reassuring when one faces suffering or injustice because it suggests that God will render the world a better place for man. But such a belief does not specifically encourage the individual to go out and do something about the problems of the world; indeed, it suggests human action may be unnecessary in the light of God's active presence in the world.

To conclude quickly, when I tested these ideas in four Protestant denominations, I found that many of the church members who ob-

Walter Broughton, Assistant Professor of Sociology



jected to church participation in social action programs did hold discompassionate explanations of the presence of evil. But there was no evidence to suggest that these laity were in need of comfort or that they had joined the church to obtain solace. Similarly, certainty of belief in God and life after death bore no relationship to these issues among the laity in my study. As a result I was able to argue that the older nineteenth century suspicions that religion is an effort to escape this world by the weak and socially deprived are still without support. Instead, there are some religious beliefs in the Judeo-Christian tradition with discompassionate implications (just as there are others which stress compassion and charity), and these beliefs are associated with efforts to keep the church out of secular problems.

At the end of the semester I'm left with a sense of renewed professional competence. I haven't felt as fully in command of my field since I came to Kirkland. It's nice to have regained that sense of scholarly accomplishment and to have been able to do so through the College's generosity. I hope as Kirkland enters its second decade others of you will have an opportunity to enjoy the Professorship and that the rest of us will require it less as the daily demands of an older, more fully established college contribute more fully to faculty scholarship.

I'm looking forward to having students again. I've missed them. I've missed the ones I was fond of, I'm aware that I have lost a whole semester of potential friends, and I've missed the audience — we're all hams to some degree. I'm pleased to be back among the workers again (I even think I might enjoy a committee meeting or two), and I do recommend the Professorship to you very highly.

WALTER BROUGHTON
Assistant Professor of Sociology

The Summer Arts Conference: A Reexamination of the Media

Last spring, the Kirkland Arts Division received its second Andrew W. Mellon grant to conduct its second consecutive Summer Arts Conference, which took place on the Kirkland campus during the first two weeks of June. Kirkland arts students, arts faculty and faculty from other divisions participated in the conference, which served as a means of evaluating Kirkland's arts program and encouraging faculty and students to develop intermedia and interdisciplinary works. In addition to participating in workshops on theater, music, design, pottery, creative writing, photography and painting, the conference participants discussed common principles, attitudes, techniques and purposes of the various media of the arts and other disciplines. Printed here is an excerpt of the Arts Division's official report.

The purpose of the first Summer Arts Conference was to explore the relationships among the various media. That remained one of the fundamental purposes of the 1974 conference. In addition, the Arts faculty wished to expose our findings in a different way — that is, to share the exploration with faculty of other divisions as well as students presently concentrating in the arts. Hopefully we would be able to uncover methods for establishing fresh relationships among the divisions of the college and thereby to enhance the general learning enterprise at Kirkland College.

Our introductory sessions were begun by examining the fundamental purpose of the conference and by working out an agenda. These introductory sessions were somewhat more complicated than in 1973 because the new faculty and student participants first needed to clarify their own roles. To some extent the pursuit of this clarification continued to the end of the conference and uncovered commonalities identical in principle to those of the 1973 meeting. The differences that emerged are positive in that the new assertions and discoveries of the 1974 conference add to the sum of ideas and attitudes of both sessions, and we feel that they bode well for the college as a whole.

We asked each member of the conference to submit a statement — both a reaction to the conference and proposals for eventual, practical ramifications. The proposals came mainly as courses, programs and

materials that might be labeled and entered in the curricular calendar. In surveying those statements, one finds the most general assertion to be that the conference was valuable in itself — "as a self-sufficient exercise." This point deserves to be stressed, for all the things that one might hope would eventuate from specific courses did happen during the conference. Not only did each of us learn more about each others' roles and specialities, but each of us also learned more about his own area as it relates to the others and as it might be directed to enhance the learning that goes on at Kirkland College. A fresh reexamination of our own disciplines does come as a result of comparison and analogy to others without relinquishing the integrity of any single area.

Below are excerpts from these individual statements. Within these may be found the range of attitudes and proposals we shared during our two weeks:

"Contrary to many opinions, the creating of art — that is, the synthetic process which works with primary materials — is not devoid of thought. Art is not the romantic's notion that, in my opinion, condemns it to expressionism. Art is not something which magically pops out of a person. Yes, art indeed has many mystical qualities, but it is also meticulously calculated."

"I'll admit that I was skeptical at first. The workshops seemed fine to me — but when we began to philosophize, I was worried that afternoons of words could have no positive and certainly no useful results. I was wrong in trying to find a product when the process was much more vital. That idea was first emphasized in the theater workshop, and the process — whether it be centering a pot, studying a color wheel, or juxtaposing words on a grid — took center stage. The pot or painting or poem is important, but finding your own center and the center of your art guides the outcome. In discussing the artist's work, it is important to realize that we were not merely discussing one division of a college but Kirkland College as a community. The concerns of the artist, the way she is presented with a problem, the limitations which she must place on herself in solving that problem and the detached commitment which must be an integral part of the process concerns artists and non-artists alike. Our two-week experience as a group was special and may serve as a model for what can happen at Kirkland when people understand each other and the nature of their work. Best of all, a list of specific concerns for the coming semester was compiled, and some suggestions will be put to work. The conference answered some questions; but more importantly, it made me think and showed me the energy and potential of people at Kirkland."

"Communication was achieved as artists became more aware of what their colleagues in the other media were doing. In addition, those outside of the arts achieved a better understanding of the techniques and

William Salzillo, Assistant Professor of Visual Arts

intellectual concern of the Division. At the same time, the Arts Division was given a window into the Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences Divisions. The largely artificial barriers which have kept us apart for too long were momentarily dismantled. By the second week, we began to speak a common language which enabled us to perceive each other's concerns in mutually comprehensible terms. In this process, the integrity of each discipline and medium was respected by all. To me this was an intellectual achievement of great magnitude. A true intellectual community — the elusive goal of all small colleges — began to emerge. This emergence occurred with the participation of students as well. In sum, the conference was an entirely worthwhile experience. I hope that it will serve as a model for similar endeavors in other divisions and in facilitating closer Kirkland-Hamilton coordination and understanding."

"Another very important idea I had taken for granted — but after attending the conference I was convinced of its validity — is the notion of what a liberal arts college offers that a specialized school cannot and why that should be important. Students must take full advantage of the diversity and breadth which is possible from the Kirkland education. Colleges such as Kirkland and Hamilton try to educate students in more than one discipline and, therefore, make them better able to deal with the world and to be happier human beings."

"I began to see that we weren't talking only about the Arts Division, that the division is by no means isolated from the rest of the college. I had been aware that the arts are related to each other, but I hadn't thought much about the concepts that an art shares with science or history. Knowledge of these relationships can lead to exciting, innovative mini-courses and discussions. I doubt that the ideas for new programs that we derived at the end of the conference could have evolved without the hours of discussions. I noticed that an important word which we used often in the two weeks was 'communication.' "

"More ideas were generated by the group. The action reveals the abstraction. The tools are not the art — the artist goes beyond the rules. But the rules **are** a means to an end. What makes the artist different? Is it more than skill and diligence? Does talent/magic exist?"

"One of the central concerns of the college as a learning institution should be to seek out the common denominators among the disciplines or the processes upon which they can all agree. That in itself can be a goal-process which will keep each of us from sinking into our own grooves at the expense of our own learning. We should encourage multi-divisional and thematic courses. For example, symmetry, law, the variety of training patterns for painters, and measurement could be topics."

"The Summer Arts Conference was particularly valuable in a couple of respects. First, I found it useful for advising purposes, both as an individual advisor and as someone who is concerned with advising processes in general. The workshops during the first week of the conference gave me a far greater understanding of what instructors try to achieve in the introductory courses, what kinds of students should, therefore, be advised to take those courses, and what kind of realistic information can be given to those students concerning course content and course aim. I really wish there were some way to spread this information among the faculty more widely."

"The main thing to come out of the Summer Arts Conference was an understanding of the tremendous potential we possess at Kirkland — the fact that it is so far from being fully realized gives the college its life."

"I learned most from the participants from the other divisions, and, when it comes right down to it, we were all doing the same thing in slightly different manners, depending upon the discipline involved. All of us are teaching methods or techniques as tools. We teach students how to use these tools to achieve meaningful and important ends. We teach them how to solve problems, hopefully, in a way that they may become independent of us and learn to evaluate and carry on for themselves."

"One must guard against the emotional, though understandable, reaction that if we do not, after our labours, produce a Torah or at least a CURRICULUM, our enterprise has been in vain. Indeed, it is precisely the opportunity for a quiet but steady increase in our understanding of our colleagues and their crafts which made the flexible structure of the conference worthwhile. This growing understanding—invisible and unquantifiable—is constant in every classroom. It stands to reason that the broader the experience a teacher may bring to his own area the more convincing he can hope to be. A more closely knit faculty should also increase the likelihood of effective advising. I firmly believe that these intangibles are actually the most consistently valuable features of the conference and would alone justify its having been."

WILLIAM ROSENFELD
Chairperson of the Arts Division
Professor of Creative Writing

Participants in the 1974 Summer Arts Conference

STUDENTS

Katherine Connell '76
Diane Davis '76
Barbara Lapidus '77
Rosalind Root '76
Isabel Weinger '76
Julie Weinstein '75

FACULTY FROM THE ARTS DIVISION

Carol Bellini-Sharp, Assistant Professor of Drama
Hugh Hartwell, Assistant Professor of Music
Alan Heard, Associate Professor of Music
Steven Liebman, Assistant Professor of Film
Robert Palusky, Assistant Professor of Ceramics
William Salzillo, Assistant Professor of Visual Arts
William Rosenfeld, Chairperson and Professor of Creative Writing

FACULTY FROM OTHER DIVISIONS

Ralph Lieberman, Assistant Professor of Art History
Ruth Rinard, Assistant Professor of History of Science
Jeffrey Ross, Instructor in Government

Imagination and Discipline

Catherine S. Frazer, Kirkland's newly-appointed Dean of Academic Affairs, was the main speaker at the college's seventh Opening Convocation on September 15. Dean Frazer spoke about discipline and imagination both as a "freshman" — a newcomer to Kirkland — and as a faculty member of almost thirty years experience, who continues to teach philosophy in addition to her duties as Dean. An edited version of her speech is printed here.

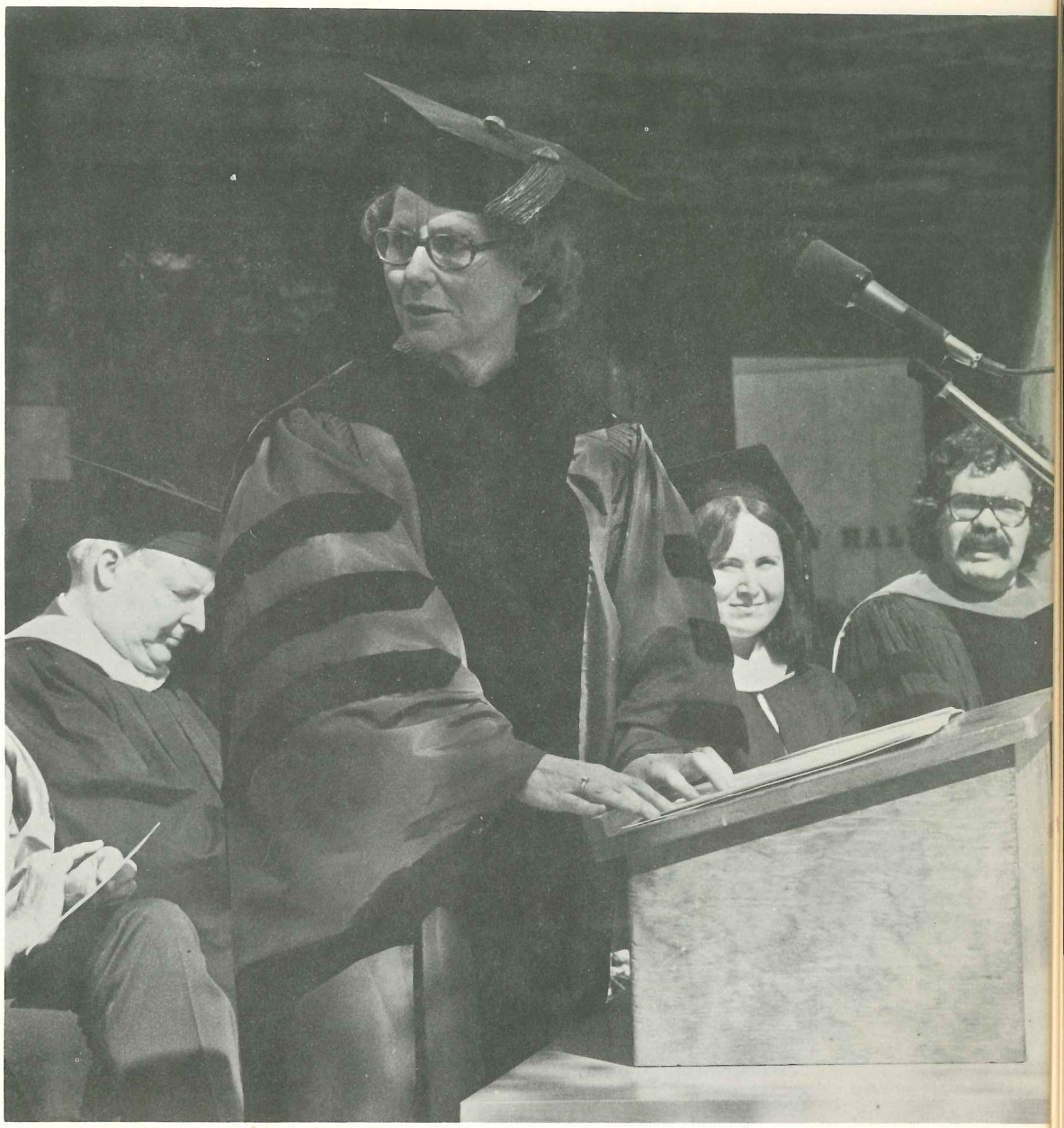
This is an occasion for me to look back over a number of new beginnings I've made in the past years, as an undergraduate beginner, as a graduate student, and at that awful stage when you're the new, green instructor who knows everything and can't teach anything — at least that was my plight. I eventually moved on to become a somewhat less agonized new faculty member at various other institutions.

I had another strange sense of newness when I found I had survived long enough to be a senior professor, and believe me, it's an awful shock the first time you realize you're one of the old fogies. Then, entering the administrative end of academia was, indeed, an interesting freshman venture because I found myself in totally male company. I hope the odds will have leveled out by the time some of you are exploring in these directions.

But in all of these beginnings, I've experienced the same sense of mixed feelings. There's excitement because I have many hopes for myself, for all of you and for Kirkland College. And there's anxiety, because I know how life has a habit of sometimes dealing with our hopes in a way other than we might wish.

Nevertheless, I'm glad to be here. First of all, it's an interesting feeling of homecoming because my first freshman year was also in a women's college. That important sense of belonging to a group of women who are specifically pursuing liberal education not only got me off to a good start in my own life and career but has stayed with me. I hope it will also stay with you in a similar way. I like this sense of belonging, not just to academia, but to a special part of it. I welcome in particular all of the new freshmen and remind them that they are a part of something that's been going on for a long time and is now gaining a significant new momentum.

There are some underlying themes to this pursuit that have not changed. Last year at my daughter's college commencement, I heard her remark that two of her great-grandmothers, both of her grandmothers, she and I had all chosen to go to college. This provoked some interesting speculations as to why those choices had been made.



Catherine S. Frazer, Dean of Academic Affairs

Opening Convocation '74

There had been little encouragement — or need, in social terms — to attend college. The other available options had much stronger social sanction. "I guess," said my daughter, "they really went because they had wanted to go." And she looked at me and said, "You know, so did I." I'm hoping then that all of you will set aside some of those pressing questions for a while and be content to answer, "I'm here at Kirkland because I want to be." I still think that's the best, the most enduring reason.

Because there are more options open to you today than there were even for me some thirty years ago, the choice was perhaps more difficult for you. You will reexamine that choice much more often than my relatively un-self-reflective college generation did. Some of the options that you have available to you are a result of social changes. Other options are a result of the efforts and dedication of a number of other people; they result, in particular, from the efforts, dreams and hard work of those who brought Kirkland College into being.

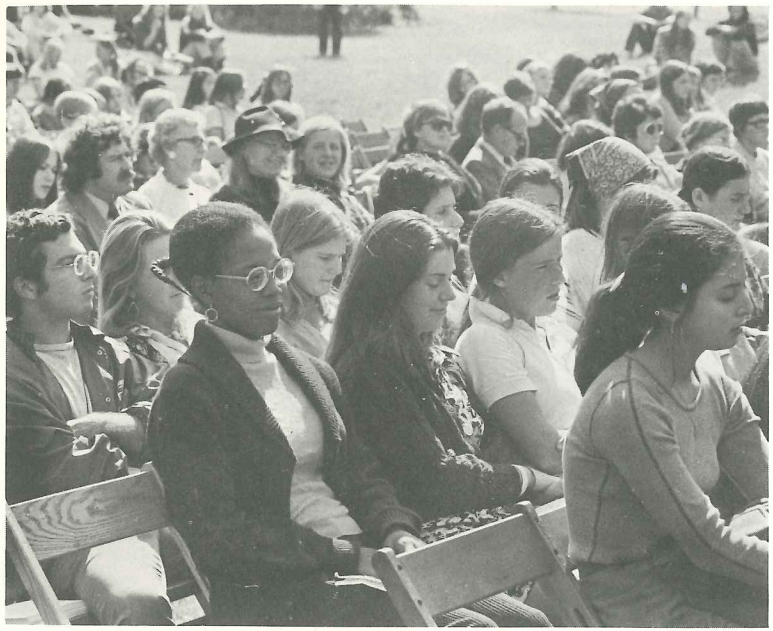
I won't discount your own efforts — far from it. It's your efforts that are going to help more and more to determine the options that are available to you. It will be your choices and your efforts because, after all, it's your education. We can only ask you this persisting question: "What is it that you want in the process of your education?" But we cannot make you want it. I have a firm conviction that your motivation is your responsibility. We admitted you to Kirkland College because you gave us ample evidence that you could both accept and carry that responsibility.

However, I'd like to think that there are ways in which we can help. First and foremost, I think we can help by our determination not to hinder you, not to get in your way. Kirkland's philosophy of education and the various kinds of structures it has developed to implement that philosophy speak far better to that point than anything else I could say. Those choices of direction have put a particularly heavy premium upon both faculty and students, for example, in the role of advising. In a college of our kind, it is necessary to set guidelines and expectations with great clarity. It's important, therefore, for the faculty to present themselves to you as a faculty — as facilitators and as professional academicians.

So if I could speak to the faculty a moment, I would like to ask you to let our students see you as professional persons. You are professors, and you are entitled to profess something. You have, in fact, the responsibility to show your sense of direction or, at least, the reasoned efforts that we all make to establish such a sense of direction. I hope you will take some concern, therefore, for your own growth as teachers, as scholars and as leaders in the many ways that the Kirkland College community demands leadership. As you grow, the students will also gain from your growth.

Now let me address the students as to what I think a faculty so presenting itself will offer you. Of course, you have the right to expect that they will help equip you with the methods and tools of learning. You also have the right to expect that they will help you choose selectively from the vast amount of resources to which those methods and skills are applied. That is the difference between simply acquiring techniques and skills and acquiring something to which they can be applied, and that is the difference between a technical and a liberal education.

As you encounter new fields of learning and new levels of learning in fields that were familiar to you before, you will need to be open to a sense of accomplishment, because you will encounter just as quickly a sense of frustration. In particular, you discover your own specific ignorances, and that's very painful. The pain changes to something close to dread and dismay when you begin to get that glimmering recognition that, for all the thousands of years of efforts to learn, we still know relatively little about ourselves. And, perhaps more disconcerting than that, we seldom have made full use of what little we do know. I hope you will look upon that as a challenge to improve our efforts.



Class of '78

As you seek a balance between the accomplishments and frustrations, you will probably find yourselves asking, "How does it all fit together? Where are the interrelationships? Where are the directions? What is this all adding up to?" Unfortunately, the patterns of relationships just don't leap out at us. Once in a while we get glimpses. On other occasions, usually after some hard effort, our perspectives on our various scholarly and artistic efforts seem to formulate and make sense to us for the time being. I think you will find that all of your teachers and your fellow students will acknowledge that these moments of insight and plateaus of accomplishment sustain and encourage us in the whole intellectual pursuit.

Discipline, in one of its literal senses, means instruction, tuition in how to grasp, how to take hold of something. How does one go about taking hold of anything? If it's a material object or something concrete, principles of leverage apply. You attempt to see something at the key point in its structure. This is as true abstractly as it is concretely. I would like to suggest then that you look at all the scholarly tools and all the artistic devices with which you will become acquainted in terms of the leverage which they will give you, the ability that you will have as a result of that leverage. If you can seize the key points in the structure of the problems you are trying to understand, you will have a real ability to exert power.

If you reflect on what scholars and artists often denominate as their discipline — to take the term now in a slightly different concept — you will find them usually referring to the principles which helped them unite their endeavor. Principles enable you to deal with the morass of detail more effectively than any other approach I know. If you can learn to grasp those principles which will help you select those details which you would like to have immediately and constantly available for your use, you will have made an informed judgment as to other details you want to put on the back burner for recall and to millions of still additional details which more properly belong in storage for eventual retrieval, if at all.

Whichever of these senses of discipline you pursue, you will find that you are involved in hard work. To abstract, to generalize, to analyze is dull and difficult. It forces you to deal with constraints that really impose formal limits upon what you are trying to do. Despite the impersonality of some of these constraints, the benefits do become personal in surprising ways, and they do so because they operate independently upon all of us. It's important, however, to realize that the principles and the formal structures and the assumptions underlying knowledge are really only beginning points.

Another disconcerting discovery that I'm sure you will be making—and many of you already have—is that knowledge is a process, it isn't a thing. It isn't something that you can get on top of once and for all time. The formal structures that you might seek have a disconcerting way of changing. The foundations of knowledge themselves are constantly in the process of change. Therefore, you need not only a sense of self-discipline in the knowing process, but you need capacities of creative imagination. It is the capacity for imagination that we turn to when we attempt to formulate new foundations of knowledge. I like to put the concepts of discipline and imagination together, because I think one cannot be creative and imaginative without discipline. Certainly the point of being self-disciplined as an intellectual is to release your capacity for creative imagination, to develop your competency in formulation of some sort of new insights and new perspectives that will then make this whole process new, personal and individual.

There will be times when you will find, as I have found, that you are literally lacking either the discipline or the imagination or both to be able to meet some unforeseen problem. This is the signal that one needs to regroup, to redirect, to try to perceive things in a newly imagined way. In this interplay of discipline and imagination and in the pursuit of a liberal education, there is indeed growth and development and achievement. As you exercise your own capabilities for a disciplined imagination you will be sharing in, taking from, and adding to the growth of the human endeavor in much more general terms.

CATHERINE S. FRAZER
Dean of Academic Affairs
Professor of Philosophy

Studying American Architecture

When I came to Kirkland in the fall of 1971, I had been living for three and one-half years in Venice, where I did research, wrote my doctoral dissertation and worked in the office of the Soprintendenza ai Monumenti di Venezia on architectural restoration projects. I also spent 1965–1966 there on a Fulbright grant. During all my years in Venice I had been accustomed to living in constant contact with the buildings I was studying. When, for example, it occurred to me at lunch that I had never taken a particular measurement or made a photograph of some detail or another, I could be at the building in a short while to do the work. On the way to or from the market I would often make a detour to see something that I had been thinking about. Furthermore, the archives and libraries were very good and very close by.

It was all quite convenient, but it was over forever when I left Venice in August, 1971. I would never again be able to spend a leisurely three and one-half years there, so further work would have to be done in the summer or on sabbaticals — the latter seemed a million years off, as I was only going to be an instructor at Kirkland and at the very bottom of the list of people eligible for leave.

It was a problem to accommodate my library and archival work habits to fit the realities of my new station, but what was really painful was that I would no longer be able to hop around the corner or over a few bridges and see a building that interested me.

The problem wasn't very intense at first. The labor of giving new courses my first two years at Kirkland kept me quite occupied, and I did spend one summer abroad. But as I became increasingly acclimated to Kirkland and, mercifully, a little better and more efficient at what I was doing, I found that I missed studying architecture firsthand.

There is only one thing for an incurable architectural historian to do in that case: when you can't be near the architecture you want to study, you study the architecture you're near. I had heard that there were interesting buildings in central New York, and so, putting aside my continental prejudices about the wilderness, I decided to find out about them. It didn't seem to make much sense to know only the local works and be unable to relate them to the whole scope of the history of American architecture, so I resolved, a little rashly, to go out there and find out about the architecture of America.

Figure 1

Figure 2

I applied to the Kirkland Grants Committee and received a Mellon Grant to support me while I drove around the country looking at buildings and taking pictures. As I drafted the grant proposal and pored over maps and guides to calculate mileage, I had my first rude shock: America is **very** big. Everything west of the Mississippi was ruled out. Then the realities of time, money and energy were considered, and a wildly optimistic itinerary was abbreviated again.

In the end, I still drove over 5,000 miles and saw a lot, but not everything — not even half. The trip took me from Clinton through Western Massachusetts to Boston, to New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Annapolis, Washington, back and forth across Virginia from Jamestown and Williamsburg to Charlottesville, down to Charleston, South Carolina, Savannah and Atlanta, then up through Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio, to Buffalo and Rochester, and back home. After a few weeks of rest and reading, I drove back to New England for ten days travelling from Newport, Rhode Island to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. I try not to recall that similar mileage in Italy would have taken me to every city, town and village of any importance at all.

Having seen some American buildings, I began to read about them more intensely and to start to sort out for myself the basic trends, the interesting areas and the problems I wanted to investigate.

As I started to work on my new subject, I found that some of the problems that appealed to me were very much the same sort of thing I had been working on in Venice. My field is Italian Renaissance architecture, and my specialty is Venetian architecture from about 1425 to 1575. My dissertation was on a church built in the 1480's, just the period when Venetian architects were trying to forge a unified local Renaissance style out of a variety of sometimes mutually exclusive trends and traditions. I seem to be attracted to transitional phases, but I don't think I ever really stopped to think about it clearly until I started studying American architecture.

In Venice I had been fascinated by such buildings as San Zaccaria, the choir of which (figures 1 and 2) was built in the 1470's. This choir is an odd fusion of Gothic, Byzantine and Renaissance forms, and the architect made a heroic effort to blend them together. The round-headed arches and Renaissance capitals of the lower level are replaced in the upper by pointed, traceried Gothic arches and capitals. The usual Gothic rib-vault system is replaced by a Byzantinizing circuit of domes on pendentives. In one astonishing corner (figure 2), we see clearly that the architect, as if suddenly aware that the two upper levels of his system are not going to mesh, just stopped one strong vertical element in mid-climb because there was nothing else to do. I like buildings in which one can see a mind at work; even if the architect is in trouble, he is thinking.

Similar moments of stylistic fusion appealed to me in my studies of American buildings. In the Italian Renaissance, classical forms were revived to replace the Gothic style, which had come to be considered "barbarous." Culture was to be found in a classical column. In America, after the immediate requirements of shelter were satisfied, a similar sort of thing happened. To replace the crude and undecorated early architectural style and to give a veneer of cultural respectability to a building, classical elements were employed. Here, too, culture and classicism were strongly associated.

The Renaissance revived the antique, and the American architect, like his English cousin, imported the Renaissance, but in both cases there is found the fundamental assumption that classical is better. The old forms lingered underneath. In America, examples of this process may be seen in many places. In a late eighteenth century house in Newport, Rhode Island, for example (figure 3), a traditional New England clapboard house has been graced with an oddly out-of-place Georgian doorway. In another example, from Fredericksburg, Virginia (figure 4), another clapboard house has an ionic porch stuck on it and large white boards across the tops of the windows to look like stone lintels. Functionless in wood, these boards feign a masonry solidity which, coupled with the porch, gives an imagined air of dignity to what would otherwise have been thought a plain house.

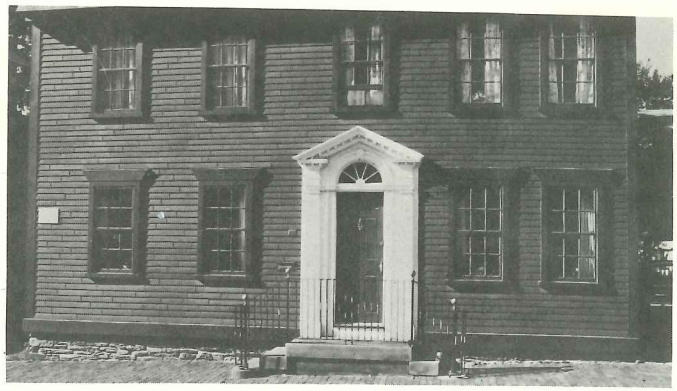


Figure 3

Figure 4

I like this sort of thing. It interests me to find aspirations, pretenses and attitudes so clearly revealed in architectural styles.

The problem of the gradual appearance of classical forms is only one of the many things I found thought-provoking in my first confrontation with American architecture. This and other new concerns will form the basis for a course on American architecture I will be teaching in January, 1975.

It is always exciting to start a new area of study and to have the satisfaction of bringing a body of once-strange material into familiar control. I thoroughly enjoyed the process of studying American architecture. And I found, to my great pleasure, that when reading Orson Fowler's **The Octagon House**, a mid-nineteenth century book in which the virtues of this shape are somewhat quaintly extolled, I could drive or even bike a few miles down route 12-B and see one. It isn't exactly like being in Venice again, but it's very nice.

RALPH E. LIEBERMAN
Assistant Professor of Art History

Nancy and Peter Rabinowitz, Assistant Professor of Literature

The Shared Professorship: An Academic Lifestyle

Nancy and Peter Rabinowitz, who joined the Kirkland faculty this summer, share the single position of an assistant professor of literature. In an informal discussion at the college's Women's Center on October 9, they spoke about their work and their marriage. That discussion is excerpted here.

NANCY: Every marriage consists of a certain amount of work. There's cooking, cleaning and earning a living. And it seemed to us pre-eminently sensible — since we could both cook, clean and earn a living — that we should each do all three things.

The women's angle always comes up. I've been trained — at an academic high school, in four years of college and through graduate school — to be a professional person. But, in a sense, our marriage is equally a sign of men's liberation, since Peter does things that many men wouldn't dream of doing. We both do all the things that go into the work of a marriage and into making a marriage work.

PETER: It also should be pointed out that a lot of people view women's liberation as this wonderful chance for wives to go out and work. Then you have a family where everyone is working as hard as one person used to work.

It seems to me that, ideally, if we can both work, I'd rather work part time than full time. It does seem perfectly reasonable that when we have a fully liberated society, everyone will work half of the time instead of doubling all the work that gets done.

NANCY: Especially now, with no jobs available, the economy in its present condition and more people wanting to work, the reasonable answer is to make more jobs—more jobs for more people. It's easiest to be a child-rearing couple, for example, if both people are teachers. Obviously, you can be home if you choose to be home. It could probably work for other professions if the right attitudes prevailed.

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NANCY: Only two people could meet all the qualifications that Kirkland wanted for the job. Obviously they were going to choose between the best combination thereof.

PETER: Nancy had checked the advertisement in the MLA listings and had written to Kirkland. When I went through the listings, I saw that the college wanted someone specializing in Greek — that's Nancy's field — who could also do Russian studies — that's my field — and

then, if one could teach women studies and French, that would be fine. Well, Nancy does women's studies; I do French. So I wrote to Kirkland saying, "Hey, Nancy wrote you a letter a couple of weeks ago, but now that we think about it what you really want is both of us."

NANCY: We didn't apply to every job as a couple; but we did when the job was in a place where it would not be easy for the other person to find a job. This was the liberated part: I was looking for a job, and Peter was going to find a job where I found one.

PETER: There was a time when I thought I was going to end up being a faculty husband in a small town somewhere. To be quite honest with you, I did not want to do that. I started writing a novel, so when people said, "What do you do?" I could say, "Oh, I'm a novelist," instead of saying, "My wife teaches." That is precisely the position where most women find themselves. I think it is very significant that the very thought of being a faculty husband was enough to throw me from it completely. I couldn't conceive of myself in that position.

So we are very happy that it worked out this way. Obviously, we are working more than one person would work; obviously, we are working less than two people would work. But then, I have never seen a school where the faculty works with students as much as they do here.

NANCY: Committees make this college different from other places. The average institution is run by the old-timers who have been doing it routinely for years. That doesn't take any time. A struggling young professor at the University of Chicago would teach two courses, have three office hours a week, and attend a faculty meeting and a department meeting each semester, when there was a hiring question. If you are being renewed, you don't have to go. That's it.

If you believe in the governance system at Kirkland, you get involved in committees. It is the college's governance system, not our position as two people sharing one job, that makes more work. Also, we are the type of people who tend to get involved.

If you are interested in sharing a position, there is no reason why you should have to be married or why you should supply your own partner. However, if a couple came to Kirkland where the woman took a part-time job at Kirkland and the man had no job at all, it would be difficult. But there is no reason why it shouldn't work. For one thing, it would give the divisions flexibility. One of my interests is Greek literature. To hire someone to teach six courses of Greek literature a year would really be a burden on the Humanities Division. If the interest wanes and waxes, what do you do with this person who only teaches one thing?

PETER: We are one of the few couples in the country sharing one position. We are not two part-time people. We are each half a full-time person, not a whole half-time person. There arises all kinds of distinctions having to do with fringe benefits, and employers in general must learn to deal with these side issues.

We've never done something like this before, and neither has Kirkland. Only experience will teach us where to draw the limits. When we came here, one of the first problems facing Kirkland was how to write our contract. And we did not know what requests, ideas, demands or complaints to make.

At the first Humanities Division meeting there was some question as to whether we should have one vote or two. We got two votes. But since we have voted on opposite sides of every issue that's come before us, it's like having no vote at all. However, if we had one vote, the question would be: is that two half-votes or one whole vote?

We all feel that this is experimental, and we are willing to see how things roll. There are other colleges that couldn't have hired us because they couldn't have written the contract, but Kirkland is the kind of school where these things can be worked out very easily.

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PETER: Most people, deep down in their hearts, would like to have some form of a shared position. It fulfills a basic need. There is something nice about having the time off and also sharing the responsibility for running the family. It takes a tremendous burden off me. I'm no longer the only one dealing with the worries that confront the breadwinner — now Nancy shares the responsibility.

NANCY: When you are married, you are part of a couple whether you like it or not. It's only when you are working that you have a separation — a separate identity. We've made separate friends, closer relationships with some people on our own, depending on personal feelings of kinship.

We have never worked at the same place before; it's very different, but it's also very nice. I'm glad to share my first teaching job. It was really nice not to have to face it alone — those first faculty meetings, faculty seminars, dormitory resident meetings. But we are very different, and the assumption that we are allied on issues will stop. I just hope no one comes to me and says, "You're my role model."

PETER: But, in fact, whether or not people say it or even know it, teachers are role models. And it is an added burden to be a social role model as well as an academic one.

NANCY SORKIN RABINOWITZ
PETER J. RABINOWITZ
Assistant Professor of Literature

The Student Evaluates the Faculty

In the fall of 1971, I was appointed the freshman class representative to the Standing Committee on Academic and Curricular Affairs (SCACA) of the Assembly. The first SCACA subcommittee to which I was assigned was charged with designing and implementing some means by which student judgements of teaching and courses at the college could be fed into the ongoing institutional evaluation of faculty and course offerings.

Although student opinion has always been fundamental to Kirkland's planning and decision making, it had never been systematically assessed up to that point. As the Dean of Faculty pointed out, the need for such input was immediate and compelling. We began our work with the Dean's request as our primary objective, though in the process of that work we became aware of other equally important advantages of student evaluation of instruction.

SCACA considered a number of means of eliciting student opinion. We considered asking random samples of students to write detailed evaluations of a given faculty member's performance. We considered interviewing random samples of students. One independently formed SCACA subcommittee drafted a questionnaire composed entirely of "open-ended" items, which are questions students answer at length, in free prose style. We toyed with the idea of using forms most other colleges and universities use, composed of short, "objective" questions, the responses to which are recorded on scales.

Ultimately, we combined these last two procedures. We wanted answers that could be tabulated quantitatively so that college-wide comparisons of instruction could be formulated. We felt that the college needed to establish certain objective criteria for teaching performance, and that it must have a sense of median and average quality of instruction and curriculum to make sound, valid judgements about individual instructors.

But we were equally concerned with retaining our grasp both on the uniqueness of Kirkland, with respect to other colleges and universities, and on what has been termed Kirkland College's "humanistic bias." Ursula Colby, Chairperson of the Humanities Division and a member of SCACA when the form was being debated, accused the quantifiable items of "pseudo-clarity," and we could not deny that charge. Phyllis Morris, who teaches philosophy, recently expressed the same reservation. She said that if the quantifiable items are seen as purely objective, then they clearly are deceptive. How it is possible to discern, from citing a point on a scale ranging from poor to excellent performance, what factors influenced the student's decision to place her instructor at that point?

The form on which SCACA eventually agreed and which was passed by the faculty in the spring of 1973 had some 22 quantifiable questions and three open-ended ones. Students were to circle one point on a scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" or "not applicable" as response to questions about, for example, the teacher's degree of preparation for class, the coherence of the instructor's presentation, the availability of the instructor and perceptions of the overall quality of both the course and the instructor.

The open-ended questions were designed to give students a chance to donate prose responses to specific questions, such as the relative value of reading assignments and class meetings, the value of the course to one's total educational experience at Kirkland, or suggestions for improving the course for future students. These items, according to one working paper on the questionnaire, were to elicit the "highly individualistic responses which often convey the unique tone of a course," as well as its specific strengths and weaknesses for a given student.

In the introduction to the form, we stated the purposes which we hoped it would accomplish: to aid instructors in the improvement of their instruction and course offerings, to encourage students to think and develop concern about teaching, learning and their own educational objectives and to provide the college with student evaluations of teaching effectiveness to be used, with other information, to make decisions of promotion, reappointment and tenure.

Kathryn Grover '75

Faculty members often say that the forms contain little that is surprising about their performances but that the periodic critique serves to increase their awareness of their own latent and not-so-latent pedagogical weaknesses. The experience is one of continual sensitization to the effect one has on students.

Many faculty members have found this feedback most useful in the revision of courses. For instance, Douglas Raybeck, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, has modified his Cultural Anthropology course a number of times on the basis of the evaluations he has received. The course is offered every semester, there are usually two sections, and enrollment in both sections is larger than that of most Kirkland classes (from 24 to 35 students). Given these facts, Raybeck said, the weaknesses students tend to cite in the course are usually unavoidable. For instance, to the open-ended question, "If someone who was thinking of taking this course asked you about it, how would you respond? To whom would you recommend it?" One student answered, "It is especially good for those students who are shy or unsure of themselves in discussion. Mr. Raybeck listens carefully to all comments and, therefore, gives every student some amount of confidence. There are times, though, when students have gotten too confident and talked for a long time about practically nothing. Because this was an introductory course and there was a lot of material to cover, time was very important."

Mr. Raybeck will take a comment like this one, provided it is held in common with other students, and adjust a course to changing student need. Student opinion enables the instructor to determine which of his own aims in teaching are most relevant to his students. The instructor can achieve some sort of balance between his aims and the students' needs and work to minimize the effects of endemic shortcomings.

Ruth Rinard, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and an historian of science who teaches one course per semester, said the form is good in that it helps students "get a closure on a course." I believe that not only does it do that, but that it also gives students a sense of active participation in the determination of a course's future. I habitually form opinions about everything, especially about courses I take; what I appreciate about the student evaluation process is that I can register opinions with someone who is in a position to do something about it.

Ms. Morris speculated that this opportunity for "letting loose" is a manifest virtue in students' eyes. One can be assured that this is the case after reading a number of the open-ended questions. For instance, one student in Ms. Morris' Phenomenology and Existentialism course said, "If your attitude is, 'Yeah, I always wanted to know something about existentialism,' then the intensity of this course will kill you." One student in Theory in Anthropology recommended that course "to anthro majors. And, if you're a sadist or a competent philo jock," the student said, "give it a try. All others, steer clear." The form compels even students who aren't naturally opinionated to make judgements rather than simply to retain a bulk of discontinuous, unrelated reactions to particular readings and class sessions.

Use of the evaluation form in the college's self-evaluation is still considered somewhat of an issue at Kirkland. It has never been clear just what place student evaluations occupy in the determination of faculty status, and it was edifying to discuss the question with Professors Raybeck and Morris, who both serve or have served on the College's Appointments Committee. "Whether students believe it or not," Raybeck said, "people react to the evaluations. The instrument is probably weaker for not having been summarized, but analysis of the questionnaire is not arbitrary. Most faculty members on the Appointments Committee serve for three years," he said, "and you build up a good comparative insight from reading so many questionnaires. It's not the single evaluation but the pattern which emerges from reading a number of them over time which is significant."

An important clause in the statement of purpose is that the student opinion generated from the evaluation form is to be used "with other information." In other words, it is necessary but not sufficient to the institution's evaluation of the quality of instruction and curriculum here.

As any questionnaire must, the form attempts to flesh out attitudes on salient variables, and the questions determine the parameters of the answers which can be offered. Therefore, the form suffers a corresponding constriction of perspective. It cannot tell the entire truth about teaching, as Professor Morris would point out. "In general, it's a good idea and a good form," she said. "I'm not wholly convinced that it's flexible enough for the kinds of teaching we do here, though." And, as Mr. Raybeck said, the form cannot capture "the element of art in one's teachings"; style does not lend itself well to being pinpointed on a scale.

I appreciate this dilemma. As a student of sociology, I would like to see summarization of the quantifiable items. They have never yet treated quantitatively, though that is how they are maximally effective. As a Kirkland student, I would welcome summaries because they could give the student body a potentially more responsible role in shaping Kirkland's instruction and curriculum. Published summaries would aid students in the selection of courses.

But another part of my Kirkland self holds out for the unique here, for the art and flavor of teaching and learning at Kirkland College as opposed to anywhere else. The open-ended questions are to my mind as fundamental to the student evaluation form as evaluations are to Kirkland College. By means of continual refinement the form could earn a more respectable place in the institution's overall evaluation process, while students would glean a heightened sense of commitment toward the college's academic character.

KATHRYN GROVER '75

The College Evaluates Itself

Carl J. Schneider is Kirkland's first Vice President for Research and Evaluation. His office was created last year in response to the college's increasing awareness of its need for a systematic self-evaluation.

Up to this point in Kirkland's history the only sustained effort at self-study and assessment has been the document produced for the Middle States accreditation team in 1972. This document was first-rate, but it was produced to meet a unique and specific requirement — without it Kirkland would not be an accredited college today. Other collections of data and their analyses have been made, but these too have been largely ad hoc responses to immediate situations or designed for routine housekeeping purposes. What has been lacking is a systematic and continuous program of self-study and evaluation based upon regularly updated information. As we look ahead into Kirkland's second decade, the need for an on-going analysis of what we do, and with what results, and at what cost, becomes inescapable. In recognition of this need the college created the Office of Vice President for Research and Evaluation which, as its name indicates, will carry the primary responsibility for collecting the relevant data and directing the necessary investigations.

The intensive and critical assessment of higher education which is being made by society as a whole only underlines the importance of in-house research and evaluation. The effectiveness of our colleges and universities in meeting the needs of current and future generations is now being called into question. One sign of the times is the increasingly loud call for accountability, a term which pervades all of the literature and is used by government agencies at all levels, to say nothing of foundations and other sources of funds. What this term really means may be debatable, but its general import is clear: colleges and universities, both public and private, are now being asked to explain and justify their stewardship of the monies given them for the education of their students. The days of affluence and spectacular growth are past, and the public is asking searching questions about the entire academic enterprise. Any institution that cannot provide satisfactory answers has placed its future in jeopardy.

There are, in short, both internal and external pressures for the systematic development of a continuing program of assessment and review. There should be no misunderstanding about this new insistence upon accountability. It need not impose unacceptable constraints upon any college, including Kirkland. A college that is answerable only to itself can easily become self-satisfied, wasteful of its resources and insensitive to its own shortcomings. On this score, Kirkland — because of its youth, the educational philosophy which it affirms, its open system of governance and the expectations of its various constituencies — is less vulnerable than most other colleges, but the time has come to be more self-conscious and deliberate in facing up to the responsibilities which accountability implies.

Implicit in the concept of accountability are the twin issues of effectiveness and efficiency, two additional terms that have crept into the vocabulary of higher education. Effectiveness refers to the learning experience of the students, the "outcomes" of their collegiate experience. What, if anything, has the college added to their repertoire of skills, knowledge, capabilities, values and personal qualities? Answers to these questions must be found if we are to deal more sensibly with our more important long-range concerns: are we satisfied with what Kirkland is accomplishing? What can be done to improve the results? Efficiency refers to the relationship between the way we use our resources and the value produced. The issue is primarily one of cost-effectiveness and management as measured against acceptable standards of academic quality. In order to obtain maximum benefit from our resources without diminishing the effectiveness of the college, we must research and analyze the allocation of resources in terms of our basic educational priorities.

These are all large and complicated issues with many ramifications for long-range planning. How do we proceed? For a starter, I spent my sabbatical leave last spring surveying institutional research efforts at other colleges and universities, tapping the resources of such educational research institutions as the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), and examining a wide range of evaluation techniques and procedures to estimate their applicability to Kirkland. It became clear almost from the outset that Kirkland is sufficiently different from the majority of other colleges to make it risky to use many of the evaluation instruments that have been developed elsewhere. On the other hand, I was gratified to find much that could be adapted to Kirkland's idiosyncratic condition. The entire experience provided a useful perspective from which to launch the process of research and evaluation at Kirkland.

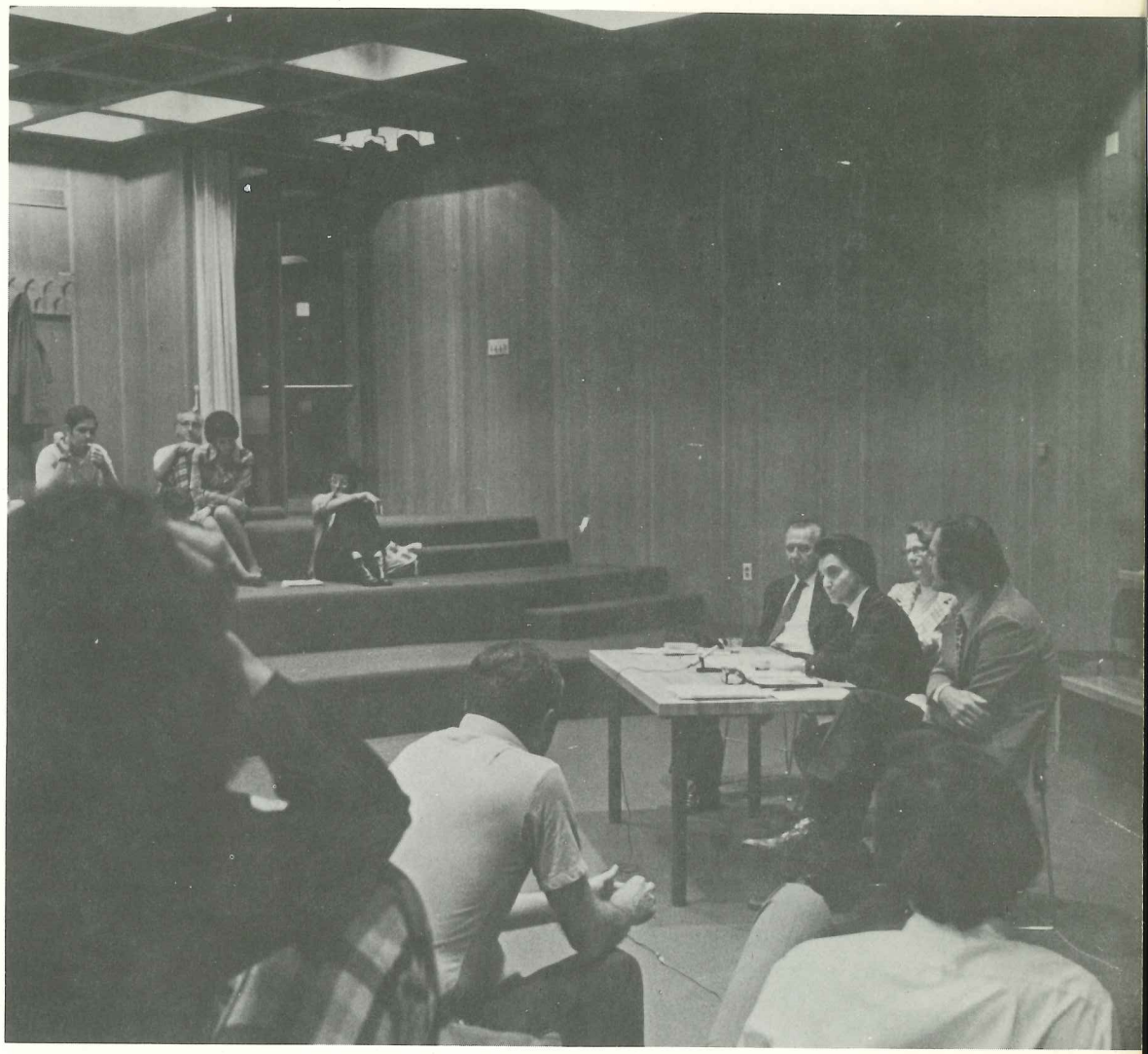
It may be of interest to identify some of the areas which are earmarked for study, either immediately or at some more appropriate time. First is the basic question of Kirkland's goals and objectives. Congruence between rhetoric and reality depends upon a clarification of goals. There are procedures for identifying goals and for the generation of new ones. One of the more interesting, the "Institutional Goals Inventory," has been developed by ETS and is under consideration for use at Kirkland. It consists of a series of 90 statements of possible goals

which members of the college community (faculty, administration, students and trustees) are asked to rank on a scale ranging from "Of No Importance" to "Of Extreme Importance." These are ranked both as the respondents see them to exist on the campus and as they would like to see them exist, as they "should be." These goal statements cover both outcome objectives and the quality of the learning environment on campus. The replies to this questionnaire can be useful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement within the college, leading to fruitful discussions about the future direction of the college.

Another issue is that of faculty development, an especially sticky issue to talk about because it seems to imply criticism of an already hard-working and dedicated faculty. Nonetheless, the issue must be faced. Undergraduate instruction needs attention, and the college must improve the general climate for teaching in every way it can. In particular, it can furnish opportunities for faculty members to acquire new insights into ways of effective teaching. Steps in this direction have been taken at Kirkland, among them the use of student evaluation of instruction and the faculty seminars which were held prior to the opening of the academic year in 1973 and 1974. As a long-term proposition, faculty development depends upon established procedures for feeding in new ideas and testing uncommon teaching and learning methods.

An idea that is gaining currency in various parts of the country deserves mention here. It is usually referred to as competency-based education and is closely related to the issue of goal identification and faculty development. Briefly stated, it simply means redefining the objectives of the academic program in terms of a set of institutionally determined competencies which the student must master in order to graduate. Institutions that adopt a competency-based system must first reach consensus on precisely what skills, knowledge and qualities of mind and spirit are to be acquired by students. These must be stated as explicitly and objectively as possible, along with an equally explicit and objective statement of how the students' mastery of the required competencies is to be ascertained. The system obviously compels an institution to think long and hard about its definition of an educated person, about the functional "outcomes" that it wants to generate in its students. In accordance with this scheme, emphasis shifts away from building up a prescribed number and/or sequence of courses as the prerequisite for graduation and focuses on the demonstrated "competence" of the student in a number of well defined categories. All this has obvious implications for teaching methods, course content, program planning and one's perception of the purposes of education. It opens up fascinating prospects which ought to be explored.

Fundamental to any program of research and evaluation is the systematic collection and storage of data. This process is now under way in such areas as student characteristics, attrition rates, patterns of curricular choice, fields of concentration, senior projects, independent study, student perception of their college experience and academic cost analysis. All of this must be done if the state of the college is to be accurately understood in anticipation of the Second Decade, as we consolidate our gains and push forward in our search for even more rewarding and viable educational program and concepts.



Faculty Forum

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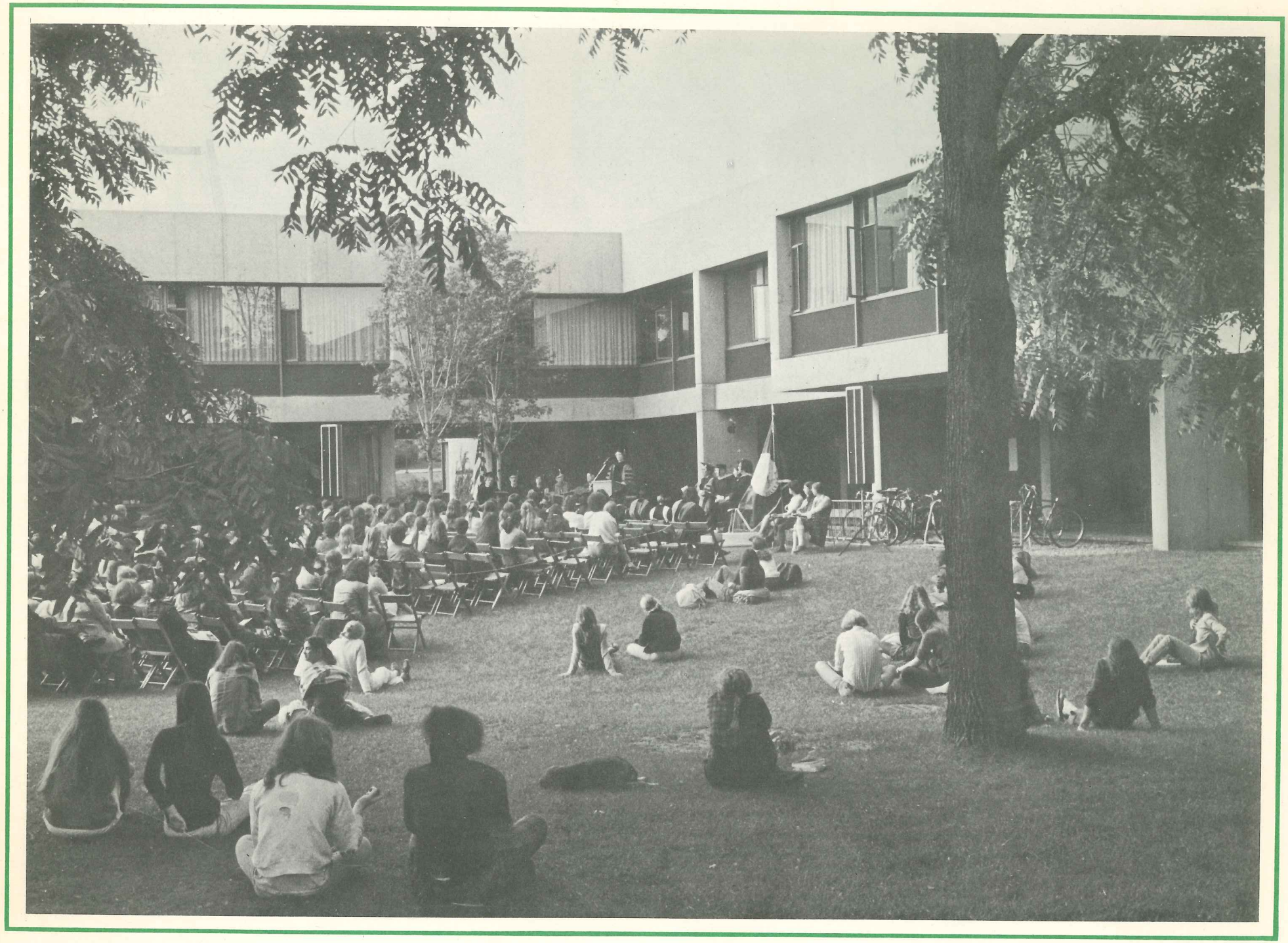

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