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UA68 Development of the Potter College of Liberal Arts

WKU Potter College of Arts & Letters

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POTTER COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

The Potter College of Liberal Arts was established by the Western Board of Regents in June, 1965, and at its inception included the departments of Art, English, Foreign Languages, History, and Music. The Philosophy and Religion department was organized in 1966. Two years later Speech and Theatre emerged as another department. The College embracing these seven departments is known primarily for its offerings in humanities and fine arts. Baccalaureate majors and minors are offered by all of these departments, and various master's degree programs are offered through the Graduate School. The name of the college dates from 1887 with the Creation of the Potter College for young ladies; the school opened in 1889 and became part of the Southern Normal School in 1909.

From its beginning as a separate entity in 1922 the English department has been noted for its curriculum growth, Expansion in the late 1950's resulted in the increase of requirements for area of concentration, major, and minor to 54 hours, 33 hours, and 27 hours. Speech and Dramatic Arts appeared as a new minor. A more rapid growth began in 1965 and resulted in new majors in mass media, Speech and Theatre, with minors in these and in Folklore. In 1966 the Master of Arts in English reappeared with a graduate enrollment of 16 in 1963 to 51⁶⁵ in 1969. In 1966 a Director of Freshman English was added.

From the founding of Western Kentucky State Normal School in 1906, music has been an outstanding part of the curriculum. Various curricula offerings have been added to meet the needs of teachers of Vocal and Classroom music as well as for those interested in studying music as a humanity. Students participate in such University organizations as the Orchestra, Band, Choral Union, Choir, Madrigal Singers, Opera Theatre, and Chamber Ensembles. Four curricula are available: (1) The Bachelor of Music Education, (2) Bachelor of Science with a double major in Elementary Education, (3) Bachelor of Arts in Music with a concentration in Music History and Literature, and (4) Concentration in Applied Music. In addition to these Bachelor's degrees the department offers the Master of Music degree in Applied Music and the M. A. degree in Education with a major in education.

The Art department emerged from a one instructor and two course offering in 1907 to an art minor offering in 1926 and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 1931-32. In 1965 an area of concentration replaced the program in which students could pursue a major in Art. These students could receive the Bachelor of Arts Degree from the College of Arts and Science or the Bachelor of Arts Degree from the College of Education. In 1967 the Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree replaced the area of concentration in the Arts and Sciences. The Department also offers an art minor in both the Arts and Science Curriculum and in the Elementary Education Curriculum. The department also offers graduate courses in Art History, Art Education, and in different studio areas.

From its earlier years when a background in the classes^{es} was stressed Western's Language Department has shown steady growth culminating in great expansion in the 1960's. Majors are offered in Classics, French, German, Latin, and Spanish. Minors are offered in French, German, Latin, Russian, and Spanish. Special programs developed since the creation of Potter College of Liberal Arts are:

- a. Minor in Russian (1965)
- b. Major in Classics (1965)
- c. MA., MACT, and M.~~A.~~ in Education in Spanish in 1968.
- d. M.A. in Education in German in 1969.
- e. Summer Program at the University of the Americas in 1965.

The Department of Foreign Languages also offers graduate programs in Spanish and graduate-level work in other languages.

The History Department enables students to pursue their study under one of five programs:

Arts and Science Curriculum

- (1) Major in History
- (2) Major in History and Government

Education Curriculum

- (3) Major in History
- (4) Major in History and Government
- (5) Social Studies Area of Concentration

The History Department also offers the M.A. in History. Students may also pursue a Masters in Education with a major in History.

Courses in Philosophy or Religion at Western date from 1931 when they

were offered by the English Department. Teachers of Philosophy were listed as members of the English Department, but in 1965 a philosophy minor was offered and Western had two Philosophy teachers. In 1966 the Department of Philosophy was organized and a philosophy major was offered. In 1967 a Danforth Foundation grant helped in the establishment of several courses in the area of religious studies. In the same year the title was changed to the Department of Philosophy and Religion. Five courses in religion were added in 1967-68. At the present time a student may pursue a major in philosophy or a joint major in philosophy and religion. A religion major and separate department status for religion have been suggested for 1969. In addition, the Department of Philosophy and Religion offers the M.A. in Humanities.

The Department of Speech and Theatre merged from the English Department June 1, 1968 and offers these programs:

Arts and Science Curriculum

Speech Major
Theatre Major
Speech Minor
Theatre Minor

Teacher Education Curriculum

Speech Major
Speech and Theatre Major
Speech Minor
Theatre Minor

Graduate Program

M.A. in Teacher Education with minor in Speech

Since becoming a department Speech and Theatre have expanded course offerings to include Historical Rhetorical Theory and Experiment Communications.

The growth of the faculty in both numbers and training is revealed in the following statistics for each department.

	<u>Total Faculty</u>		<u>Ph. D.</u>	
	'65	'69	'65	'69
English	44	47	12	16
Music	13	16	3	4
Art	9	12	1	3
History	10	20	7	13
Foreign Languages	8	14	2	7
Philosophy and Religion*		6		6
Speech and Drama*		11	2	2

*~~Does not include part time and graduate assistants.~~ Have developed since 1965.

The growth of student enrollment in the Potter College of Liberal Arts parallels the University wide growth. The number of majors in each department for the year 1964-65 and the year 1968-69 are:

	<u>1965</u>	<u>1969</u>
English	375	696*
Music	992	121
Art	140	210
History	150	407
Foreign Language	63	124
Philosophy and Religion	(created since '65)	47
Speech and Drama	(created since '65)	90

*One should remember that this number refers only to majors.

Over 5,165 students are presently enrolled in English courses.

The increased number of Ph.D. 's is an indication of the growth in training, teaching, and research. All departments offer work on one or more types of graduate programs. On one hand the College offers a sound liberal arts program and at the same time it provides general education courses for teachers and students who specialize in other areas. Ample training is offered those who seek to work for an M.A. or Ph.D. elsewhere. As indicated in previous descriptions of various departments the college has met the challenge by experimentation and through the inauguration of new programs such as the M.A., graduate courses for teachers working on certain ranks, mass media, a separate Speech and Theatre department, Humanities, Folklore minor, Bachelor of Fine Arts, modern languages, including Swahili; the development of courses in Afro-American History and Culture and television instruction.

The English Department has conducted an N.D.E.A. Institute for Advanced Study in Linguistics and Composition and an E.P.D.A. Institute for Advanced Study in English for Elementary School Teachers and Supervisors of Disadvantaged Youth. Also, Kentucky Heritage, an institute financed by the National Endowment for the Humanities is in progress. The Departments of English, Speech and Theatre, Art, and Music have also contributed to a cultural enrichment program. With the cooperation of ^{departments from other colleges} Liberal Arts College has augmented a Latin American Studies Program with emphasis on some student residence in Mexico.

The Music Department has developed special programs including annual

clinics servicing area teachers, Development of Opera Theatre, two overseas tours in Europe and the Caribbean by Gemini 15 sponsored by the National Music Council Department of Defense and USO and the establishment of the Kentucky Chamber Ensemble with concert tours under auspices of the Kentucky Arts Commission.

The Art Department through its Western Art Guild field trips, exhibits and lectures promotes art and scholarships not only among students and instructors but serves as an educational medium as does the Gallery with its wide variety of well organized exhibits by widely known artists both of a historical and contemporary nature.

In 1967 the Foreign Language Department, with an arrangement made possible by the Goethe Institute and the German Consulate, sponsored the visit of Professor Georg von Ihring from George Washington University, who delivered two lectures, one on Problems and History of Translation and one on a contemporary German satirist, Erich Kastner.

In 1968 the Potter College sponsored the visit of Mr. Robert Armstrong, vice-president of the British Poetry Society. Presently plans are being made for a poetry conclave with state-wide participation. Also, representatives from various departments in the College have been active in workshops in Creative Writing.

The continued interest and success in adding manuscripts to Western's libraries has been a boon to research. Valuable collections of state, regional, and national significance have been donated or secured. In addition, the number of newspapers and documents on microfilm has been augmented.

Before it received department status, Speech and Drama achieved recognition on the state, regional and national levels. This achievement continues, As Western's Debate teams and forensic effort have won top honors on all three levels of competition.

Interest in research has increased since the creation of the Potter College of Liberal Arts. Dr. Kenneth Clarke is editor of the Kentucky Folklore Record in which have appeared many articles and book reviews by Western teachers of folklore, history, English, and speech. Dr. Jim Wayne Miller won an award from Alice Lloyd College for his book of poetry, Copperhead Cane. Also, Dr. Mary Clarke was recently honored as joint second prize winner for her Jesse Stuart's Kentucky; this was the Chicago Folklore Prize. In 1969 Mrs. Clarke won the Western Kentucky University Research Award.

During the past five years the History Department has displayed considerable interest in research; Dr. Carlton Jackson's Presidential Vices and Dr. Lowell Harrison's John Breckinridge were published. In addition, numerous articles have appeared in state and regional journals. Also, many book reviews and abstracts were published.