



**History of Home Economics
at Washington State University:
Year 75 to Year 100
(1978-2003)**

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Prologue

A history of Home Economics at Washington State University from 1978 to 2003 (years 75 to 100) is somewhat difficult to write as it includes a time period when home economics, in general, was questioning its existence and focus. This has happened before, but this time it seemed to be more urgent. A second, more home-based reason was that in 1982 the College of Home Economics was merged with the College of Agriculture. A new College of Agriculture and Home Economics was born. To some, this may seem a minor change, but to many who were directly involved, the change was significant.

The history could be written as a compilation of accomplishments during this period (of which there were many) or as an unfolding of the changes in focus and direction of Home Economics at Washington State University. An excellent discussion of accomplishments by faculty in Home Economics over the past 100 years appeared in the Fall 2003 Connections, "Home Economics at WSU: Pioneers Then, Pioneers Now," written by Emalee Gruss Gillis. Our approach in this manuscript examines the change in direction and focus of home economics in the past 25 years, the state of home economics at present, and what the future may hold.

Cover art by Sheila Stafford

chapter one

Diamond Jubilee: A Heritage for the Future

The year was 1978. The College of Home Economics at Washington State University was celebrating its seventy-fifth anniversary. Established in 1916, it was the oldest College of Home Economics in the country. Though college budgets were relatively low, faculty, staff, students, and alumni were pleased with what had been accomplished, how programs in the college had been changed to meet real and anticipated needs of society, and eagerly looked forward to a challenging and productive future.

The theme of the anniversary celebration was “A Heritage for the Future.” A conference to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee was held on March 10 and 11, 1978. The program centered on three major topics indicative of the broad range of concerns addressed in the college: consumer issues, problems of older Americans, and world hunger. The conference was well attended by alumni, students, faculty, and other professionals. During this time, the College of Home Economics Alumni Association was established.

A Time to Look Forward

During the Diamond Jubilee celebration, plans continued for future college contribution to teaching, research, and extension. Development of new programs, strengthening the research base, and improving physical facilities were in the forefront of the plans.

A doctoral program was a logical next step to more fully meet the needs of the people of the state of Washington. As early as February 1977, Dean Alberta Hill went to Corvallis, Oregon, to discuss a cooperative doctoral program with the School of Home Economics at Oregon State University. Formal and informal discussions continued among faculty members at both institutions. In May 1979, the college Graduate Committee, chaired by Margaret Hard, prepared a rationale for offering a Ph.D. program in the College of Home Economics.

In December, 1980, Dean Hill and Jack Nyman, Dean of the Graduate School, met with heads of home economics programs in the western region in Las Vegas. Representatives came from Colorado State University, Oregon State University, University of Idaho, University of Nevada, and Washington State University. Two papers were presented and discussed: "Home Economics: A Field of Study," and "Priority Needs of Families in the Eighties: Proposals for Addressing Those Needs." Participants developed a prospectus for an inter-institutional doctoral degree in Home Economics. At that time, Dean Nyman was quite supportive of the idea.

Although the idea of a Ph.D. offered at Washington State University was still discussed, priority was placed on the inter-institutional degree. Given the shortage of resources, a degree offered solely by Washington State

University could be shelved for a short time. It was still viewed as both necessary and feasible. A committee was formed to discuss possibilities for a degree with an emphasis in Clothing and Textiles.

Even as everyone looked toward a possible doctoral program, the master's degree programs were not ignored. Both the quantity and quality of students and their research continued to steadily grow.

A number of achievements and honors were bestowed on the undergraduate program during this period. The Dietetics Program, only three years old, was fully accredited by the American Dietetics Association in 1981. Although a major in dietetics was in existence previously, the new program, which included an internship, began in 1978. In the same year, James Gingles and Kay Pasley, assistant professors in the Department of Child and Family Studies, were named as Faculty Members of the Year. A total of only five of these all-university awards were given that year. The selection, made by the students, was based on professional responsibilities, university activities, and community involvement.

International activities have always been important in the college. In 1981, Dean Alberta Hill served as program specialist in Indonesia. While there, she evaluated work at several educational institutions in order to determine how Washington State University could participate in programs to improve agricultural and living conditions of the rural poor. Margaret Hard was one of a number of university faculty who visited Indonesia to explore ways to strengthen programs. Both Hill and Hard returned to Indonesia in 1983.



Research continued to receive special emphasis. Both individual and interdisciplinary studies (within the college and/or with faculty in other colleges) were showing much promise. Efforts included more involvement of college faculty in the Agriculture Research Center. Two members of the Department of Child and Family Studies received partial appointments and/or increased access with the center. This was especially important since, at that time, this opened the door for more inter-regional discussion and research. Topics of discussion included housing, job satisfaction and its effect on individual and family satisfaction, and government food programs (especially school lunch and breakfast offerings). These discussions resulted in long term, productive research projects, accompanied by a large number of academic and popular publications.

During this time period, faculty and students were involved in a number of important national and university activities. In 1980, a

national conference focused on a clearer definition of home economics. Alberta Hill, Cleo Hall, and Dorothy Price represented Washington State University. Also in 1980, university discussions centered on development of a program on aging. Aldora Lee was appointed as acting director of the proposed unit in 1978, and led most of these meetings. Discussions included faculty from Home Economics, Education, Veterinary Sciences, Intercollegiate Nursing Education, Pharmacy, Agriculture, Sociology, and Humanities.

With academic, research, and outreach programs moving ahead, the problem of physical facilities needed to be addressed. It had become more and more evident that the programs and numbers of students had outgrown the space available in White Hall. Plans that had been under consideration for a number of years became more specific and focused on updating or expanding White Hall.

Sudden Merger

Late summer of 1982 proved to be an eventful period for all involved with the College of Home Economics. In early August, Provost Yates called all College of Home Economics faculty to a meeting in which he left the distinct impression that he planned to eliminate the College of Home Economics. On August 18, 1982, a memo from Provost Albert C. Yates was sent to ten members of the faculty. One was appointed from each of three departments in the College of Home Economics; one was appointed from Cooperative Extension, representing Home Economics; and the remainder were appointed from the Departments of Sociology, Animal Science, Business Administration and Economics, and Horticulture and Landscape Architecture. Dr. Irving Tallman from Sociology was appointed chair of the committee, and Dr. Thomas Kennedy, Associate Provost for Instruction, was an ex officio member, providing the necessary liaison with the central administration and others. (Other appointed members were: Damaris Bradish, Cooperative Extension Service; James Carlson, Dept. of Animal Sciences; Edna Douglas, Depts. of Business Administration and Economics; Dean Fletcher, Dept. of Human Nutrition and Foods; Jean Klopfer, Dept. of Clothing, Interior Design and Textiles; Robert Patton, Dept. of Architecture; Ann Sherrill Richarz, Dept. of Child and Family Studies; and Frederick Steiner, Dept. of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture.) The memo requested that the committee begin to explore in detail the possibility of an administrative reorganization of the College of Home Economics. The proposal consisted of three main parts:

1. Merge the College of Home Economics with the College of Agriculture. The intent was to determine the academic merits of a

closer alliance of these two areas, but with consideration of reductions in administrative and operational expenses. A principal guideline to be used in discussion was the recognition of the importance of preserving the identity and core of Home Economics.

2. Combine Interior Design, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture to form a new department, division, or school.
3. Restructure programs in terms of classes and degrees offered in Clothing and Textiles to reflect mission and priority.

More specifically, the committee was asked to:

- Give elaboration and structural definition to the proposal;
- Analyze and report the advantages and disadvantages, principally in academic terms, of all elements of the proposal;
- Review, in collaboration with appropriate administrators, the financial implications of the proposal; and
- Advise in implementation steps and associated timetables of the proposal, if adopted.

It was further stated that it was imperative that all people potentially affected by the proposed reorganization be given the opportunity to express their views and that the entire analysis be completed by September 10. It should be noted that faculty on annual appointment were scheduled to report on September 15, and that classes began on September 22. Therefore, contact with all relevant parties was difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

Nearly everyone available was shocked by the formation of the committee to study this

merger, and particularly by the extremely short time period given to the committee for its research and deliberations. Personnel available at the College of Home Economics immediately began contacting alumni and home economists around the country for their input and evaluation of the proposal, especially the section calling for the merger of the two colleges.

Many letters were sent to Alberta Hill and Albert Yates, the overwhelming number indicating their opposition to the merger, primarily on academic grounds. It was especially interesting that so many letters were received during this “down” period for many of these people. It was still a time of vacations and family activities, not a time generally used to respond to a critical academic issue. The College of Home Economics discovered how many friends it had around the state and the country.

Those who responded included: Kinsey Green, Executive Director of the American Home Economics Association; Virginal Trotter, Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Georgia; Betty Hawthorne, Dean, School of Home Economics, Oregon State University; Beverly Crabtree, Dean, College of Home Economics, Oklahoma State University; Ruth Deacon, Dean, College of Home Economics, Iowa State University; Helen McHugh, Dean, College of Human Resources and Science, Colorado State University; Lilie Plowman Freese, Secretary-Treasurer, Washington State University Alumni Association; Sandra Schwartz, President, Home and Family Life Section, Washington Vocational Association; James Nielsen, Director, Common Ministry, Washington State University; Susan Armitage, Director, Women’s Studies, Washington State University; Uta Hutnak, Co-President, Pullman chapter of National Organization for Women (NOW); and American Association of University Women (AAUW) chapters in Pull-

man and in Vancouver. Many others also sent letters of support for the College of Home Economics to President Glenn Terrell and Provost Albert Yates. Dr. Dipteman Chakravarti, chair of the Board of Regents at the time, indicated to the Seattle Times (September 12, 1982) that the protests he received in regard to this restructuring were the greatest he had seen during the past two years of severe budget cuts for the university.

All of the communication from university administration, especially that from Provost Yates, emphasized making only those changes that would “strengthen and improve” programs in home economics. Recipients of these letters were also assured that the committee studying the proposals included “highly qualified faculty members, including several distinguished home economists, and that results of their discussions will strengthen instruction and research in home economics through establishing supportive ties with related disciplines, while simultaneously seeking every possible way to reduce expenditures.” Many wondered at the time if these goals could realistically be accomplished simultaneously.

Ironically, the College of Home Economics had also been looking at measures to strengthen its programs, while retaining the structural integrity of the college. It was recognized that several natural ties (especially in extension and some research areas) existed with the College of Agriculture. In January 1982, Dean Hill and the chairs of the departments in the college had sent a proposal to Dr. Yates outlining a possible new structure for the college. (This predated his call for an elimination of the college.) A “twin college” concept was proposed for discussion. Two associate deans, one for extension and one for research, would be appointed in the College of Home Economics. This would more closely mirror the



administrative structure of the College of Agriculture. In addition, financial officers would be shared by the two colleges. The proposed College of Home Economics included five departments:

- Child and Family Studies and Social Work
- Clothing, Interior Design, and Textiles
- Human Nutrition and Food Sciences
- Hotel and Restaurant Food Management
- Home Economics Education (perhaps also including Health Education)

Very little follow-up resulted from this proposal. The next tangible document was the memo sent by Dr. Yates on August 18, 1982, that appointed the committee to study restructuring. The restructuring committee submitted their report to Dr. Yates in time to meet the set deadline of September 10. Their response was

somewhat difficult to interpret. Even though all voted for approval of the document they submitted, some stressed that they had too little time to do an adequate job and a number said that the proposed changes would irreparably damage home economics on this campus.

The proposal went before the Board of Regents on September 17, 1982. (It should be recalled that the initial merger announcement was first made August 16, 1982.) Several members of the Home Economics faculty spoke against the proposal while the dean of another college spoke in favor of it. The proposal passed by a vote of four to two. (It was strongly rumored that the vote was quite close, with a “no” vote changing to a “yes” at the last minute, indicating some uncertainty among members of the board.) The effective date for the merger was set for October 15, 1982, just two months after it was proposed.

Types of Changes: Successes and Disappointments

A new dean came to the College of Agriculture in late summer, 1982. Soon after his arrival, James Ozbun found himself the dean of a College of Agriculture and Home Economics. Formal and informal discussions showed that this turn in events was a surprise to him, but he was willing and eager to begin work to make a success of the merger.

The merger proposal passed by the Board of Regents included the following points:

1. There is to be a merger, which is to occur as quickly as possible.
2. The name of the new unit will be the College of Agriculture and Home Economics.
3. The administrative structure will include an Associate Dean for Home Economics.
4. The three departments (from the College of Home Economics) are to be “moved” intact into the merged unit.
5. Planning should proceed to relieve anxieties of faculty and students and to avoid “polarization.”

The merger committee formed by Dr. Yates did consider the possible advantages and potential problems, at least briefly (due to time limitations). The possible advantages included:

1. Costs associated with administering the College of Home Economics should be reduced.
2. Greater opportunities should be provided for faculty in all of the Home Economics departments to achieve excellence in teaching, research, and service.
3. The improved resources should, in turn, increase the potential of the departments in

Home Economics for recruiting top-level faculty and graduate students.

4. The efficiency and functioning of Home Economics departments should be enhanced by virtue of access to the following services available in the College of Agriculture: finance office, information office, statistical and computing services, word processing equipment, and college development office.

The potential problems of the merger were also listed:

1. The merger can result in loss of identity and status for Home Economics. This could result in loss of faculty and students and erosion of alumni support.
2. The possibility exists of problems in effective communication among Home Economics and Agriculture administrators and faculty.
3. The merger presents a potential threat to the integrative focus of Home Economics. (If this is lost, so is the existence of Home Economics.)
4. Reorganization, in general, involves some disorganization. This suggests the real possibility of a relatively nonproductive period during realignments. Will college and university administrators display the patience required to go through this period?

With all of these issues underlying the situation, the fall semester of 1982 began. Students and faculty in Home Economics were confused and somewhat disoriented, but moved into the semester with great hopes. Although the merger proposal did not imply that faculty

would have to make a choice between an Associate Dean for Home Economics or annual appointments for department chairs (in order to ensure stronger chairs who would be equal to the chairs in the agricultural departments), this choice was presented to them. Given this choice, the Home Economics faculty apparently approved to move toward stronger chairs. The requirement for an Associate Dean for Home Economics, therefore, was not met. Most faculty do not recall this coming to a formal vote. At that point, it was indicated that all chairs and programs in Home Economics would be re-evaluated; this, however, would not happen in the agricultural departments. Some questioned if this really represented equality in the merger. In addition, although cutting costs was pointed to as an essential element for merger, Dean James Ozbun, in a memo to faculty dated November 22, 1982, indicated that departments should be aware that there would be additional costs associated with the merger, somewhat negating the immediate cost-cutting benefits.

Since one of the stated reasons for the merger was to save money, some immediate cost-saving measures were taken. In the first year, the Home Economics departments lost two and one-half faculty teaching equivalents (FTE's). For departments already suffering from limited resources, this exacerbated existing problems. All available resources were needed to meet the most pressing demands, especially for teaching required courses. These cuts held back innovations that could have resulted from the merger, such as developing courses or programs with a somewhat different group of faculty.

Delays in the necessary constructive work for the merger, in addition to lack of resources, caused some hope that the merger decision might be reversed. An article in the Chronicle of Higher Education (September 29, 1982)

stated the following: “(This) reorganization is expected to save \$160,000 in administrative costs this year, while the university, as a whole, needs to reduce spending by 84.4 million dollars. Some criticized the move, suggesting that the College of Home Economics was chosen for the budget axe because it is dominated by women.” When Dean Hill was questioned about this, she said: “I don’t believe the savings and I question the motives.”

In January, 1983, Charkravarti, chair of the Board of Regents, said that the future biennium budgets looked good and that it was “quite possible” that the College of Agriculture and Home Economics would eventually again become two colleges. He continued that he was not convinced that the merged operations would be beneficial in the long run and that there should be periodic reviews.

In a reply to concerns from the Board of Regents, Provost Yates indicated that there would continue to be a strong and prominent leadership for Home Economics in the merged college. He said that it should be remembered that several factors prompted the merger but none were more important than the preservation and strengthening of Home Economics programs. At this time, there was discussion of a suit against the university, in order to reverse the merger decision. This was spearheaded primarily by alumni, but the effort was eventually dropped. At that point, alumni stressed that their greatest concern was that there be a specific administrator for Home Economics in the college. Neither the periodic reviews of the merger nor the appointment of a permanent Home Economic administrator ever occurred. It should also be noted that after the merger the administration urged a merging of Agriculture and Home Economics Alumni Associations. For a variety of reasons, this organization no longer exists. Therefore, the formal Home Economics



Alumni Association had a short life, beginning in 1978 and ending shortly after the merger. It has, however, remained active informally.

During the 1980's and 1990's, on-campus teaching experienced another change. Teaching and some research was moving to other Washington State campuses, especially those in Spokane and Vancouver. In addition to courses being taught at other campus sites, a great expansion of Direct Distance Programs (DDP) occurred. Although these programs are not identical, both resulted in more students taking classes away from the main campus. All home economics departments were affected to various degrees and in differing ways. Human nutrition courses have been offered at the Spokane campus since the early 1990's. The Interior Design program is now centered primarily in Spokane. Courses in Human Development have been offered at the Vancouver campus since fall of 1994, and a B.A. degree in Human Development has been offered since 1998. Since 2000, an average of 60 students has graduated from this program each year. Courses in Apparel Merchandising and Interior Design were offered on the Vancouver campus in 1995-96. However, no courses have been offered in Vancouver since that time, and there is no evidence of any in the future. Graduate nutrition courses are offered at the Spokane campus, and graduate consumer-oriented courses will soon begin.

Extended University services have grown rapidly, especially in the Department of Human Development. The first course was offered in the 1980's as a traditional correspondence course. The first video course, Families in

Crisis, was offered in the fall semester of 1996. In August 1998, a B.A. in Human Development offered by Distance Degree Program (DDP), following development of required courses and multiple electives, was approved. These programs, obviously, continue home economics programs in different places and in different ways. How do these changes affect the status of home economics at Washington State University? On the Spokane campus, programs are specializing in certain areas, such as interior design. A home economics program, as such, does not exist. The Vancouver campus appears to be taking a different, though limited, approach. The Department of Human Development on the Vancouver campus most resembles a home economics orientation. But, even there, this approach is limited, with only one aspect of home economics and no plans to broaden the curriculum to include other areas of home economics.

Analyzing the impact of DDP programs on home economics, as a discipline, is somewhat difficult to do. Overall, it appears that students in these programs, as well as students on the main and satellite campuses, see themselves in a specific major, and have little relationship to a broader field of home economics. Whether this should be viewed as a positive or a negative is a matter of opinion. The Distance Degree Program has the most ethnically diverse group of students but it is typically about 95 percent female. Whatever our concern may be for home economics as a discipline, it is evident that these programs are serving the needs of a variety of non-traditional students. In a way, this may actually be contributing to the long-term legacy of home economics.

White Hall—Exodus

The first location of the Home Economics program at Washington State University was Van Doren Hall. It was built specifically for the program and updated in 1908. However, for many years Home Economics and White Hall were considered synonymous on campus. In 1928, a new building was needed for the College of Home Economics, since it had outgrown the facilities at Van Doren Hall. The building (the future White Hall) was planned by Florence Harrison, first Dean of the College of Home Economics, and her staff, with Stanley A. Smith as college architect.

A side issue should be mentioned here, since it relates to what turned out to be the future of Home Economics on campus. In 1914, Agnes Craig was named head of what was then the Department of Home Economics. During her tenure, she was under considerable pressure to make the Department of Home Economics part of the Department of Agriculture. After making a survey of work in other institutions of higher learning, she wrote: "Since homemaking is a universal need, would it not be desirable to create as part of the newly organized State College of Washington, a separate organization, the first College of Home Economics, thus recognizing the importance of education in that field and giving the work the dignified position that it deserves?" In June 1916, when reorganization was announced, the College of Home Economics was created (one of five colleges within Washington State College).

Although White Hall and Home Economics became synonymous on campus, it was not until 1960 that it officially became known as White Hall. The building was named for Elmira White, a 1909 graduate. In 1917 she served as one of the first two county demonstration

agents in the state and, at the end of her career, was Assistant Director of Home Economics. From 1928 on, White Hall served as home base for home economics students. As programs developed, were dropped, added, or changed, the building was adapted to serve current needs. However, as time went on, it became obvious that White Hall, as with Van Doren Hall before it, had outgrown the growing needs of the college. In the 1970's, discussions regarding remodeling and building an addition to White Hall began. Demolishing White Hall or completely leaving it were never mentioned as realistic alternatives. As people recollect, this was also never discussed during the merger talks.

However, after the merger in 1982, pieces of the former College of Home Economics were gradually moved to other locations on campus. Logically, various parts of the college should be located near each other to encourage comradery and shared responsibilities of all faculties in the merged college.

Faculty and staff in foods and human nutrition were the first group to be relocated. They moved to the new Food Science building, therefore bringing most members of the new department —Food Science and Human Nutrition—to one location.

The second group to be relocated were those in the former Department of Child, Consumer and Family Studies. Prior to the move, discussions were held about merging parts of several departments with this ongoing one. Faculty in both Home Economics Education and in Agriculture Education had been in the College of Education but they became part of the new merged college. Eventually, faculty in



community organization, family economics, and 4-H (primarily involved in extension and Home Economics Education) were also brought into the new College of Agriculture and Home Economics. As a humorous aside, it should be noted that the department found it so difficult to agree on a suitable, descriptive department title, it was unofficially and officially called the New Academic Unit or the No Name Department. These changes created the Department of Human Development, all located in Hulbert Hall. In 1992, one more element of the former College of Home Economics had exited White Hall.

Various configurations involving all design aspects of departments in various colleges, including the former Department of Apparel Merchandising, Textiles and Design, were the focus of ongoing discussion, both pre- and

post-merger. This former department remained in White Hall for the longest period of time. The concept of a design building had always been included in these talks. In the summer of 1999, a “temporary” move was made by the apparel merchandising part of the department. Interior design is now located in the Engineering building and in Spokane. This final move meant that all aspects of Home Economics had left White Hall—the exodus was complete.

Shortly afterward, White Hall was totally renovated as a residence hall and classroom building for the Honors College. The building was renamed Honors Hall. Therefore, after serving home economists since 1928, home economists were no longer in the building, and White Hall no longer existed. This was a sad moment for many students, alumni, faculty, and staff.

Today and Tomorrow—What Awaits?

Twenty-five years have passed since the College of Home Economics at Washington State University celebrated its Diamond Jubilee. Twenty-one years have passed since the merger of two colleges led to the current College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences. What is the present picture and what does the future promise?

The merger had both positive and negative results. Those working in foods and human nutrition have larger, better-equipped laboratory facilities for teaching and research but fewer colleagues with similar interests with whom to interact. They are housed with faculty of similar interests. (They also have a fringe benefit—Ferdinands Creamery is located in the same building!) However, many would agree that the human nutrition aspect has somewhat declined while other aspects of general nutrition and food science have received increased emphasis. The number of graduate students in this area has also dropped.

In looking at space requirements, undoubtedly the Department of Apparel Merchandising and Interior Design (in actuality, these two areas now operate as separate departments) has seen the most problems. Space at White Hall was not suitable and other temporary locations, including some of the present ones in a former dormitory, provide inadequate facilities in terms of space or usability. Therefore, it can be said that facilities for these programs have not improved over the past 25 years. The Interior Design program, however, shows a different picture when viewed in totality, as much of the program has moved to the Spokane campus.

The Human Development program, now primarily housed in Hulbert Hall, has seen little

change in amount or usability of space. Most conspicuously missing are common spaces, such as seminar rooms, lounges for faculty and student discussions, as well as classroom space and suitable space for graduate students. The laboratories for child development programs have finally found suitable facilities, after a number of temporary locations. Unfortunately, this space is not located with other departmental programs.

When speaking of space, there are also intangible aspects to consider. Space plays an important role in bringing people together or pulling them apart. When the College of Home Economics was located primarily in White Hall, faculty and students in all three departments frequently interacted. This resulted in several cross-departmental research and teaching projects. All faculty and students were enriched by this interaction—formal and informal. As departments of the former college moved on to different locations, the casual interaction lessened and, in time, there was a noted decrease in more formal interaction. Not only space, but the need to adapt to a new college atmosphere provided additional obstacles in seeking out this interaction. Over the years, the former Home Economics departments grew further and further apart. They still were in the same college, but interacted with each other to no greater extent than with other, unrelated departments.

The question of increased resources, other than space, is also somewhat complex. In general, few departments and/or colleges on campus have received increases in the state budget in recent years. This college has not avoided the problem. Today, much of the resource increase on campuses comes from private grants. Due to



monetary restraints at the time of the merger, several faculty positions were lost. Enrollment in most areas continued to be stable and, in many instances, it grew. Therefore, faculty found it necessary to spend most of their time teaching. This left little time for increased search for outside funds. Of course, many other departments on campus faced similar problems.

The year 2003 marked 100 years since Home Economics began at Washington State University. A centennial was set to mark the event. It was quite well attended, and a number of interesting, well-done papers were presented. Many found it difficult to participate since there was no College of Home Economics and no White Hall to visit. Some considered the centennial to be a celebration, some felt it was a wake, and others simply viewed it as a milestone.

The biggest questions about Home Economics and the ones asked by many at the centennial observation were: “Does Home Economics exist at Washington State University?” “Does it exist on the Pullman campus?” The questions are both easy and difficult to answer. The Home Economics profession and the training for this field have changed in many places across the country in the past two to three decades. The American Home Economic Association has become the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. Some schools have totally dropped anything that resembles a Home Economics program; others have made significant changes and now present up-to-date, strongly research-oriented programs that reflect traditional concerns from Home Economics but present new, much needed insight into families and consumers. Some schools have chosen, or arrived at, a middle ground approach. Various configurations of former Home Economics programs have emerged, generally outside of a College of Home Economics. Some of these offer fairly

strong programs in a few areas; other programs have become so diluted that, in reality, Home Economics no longer exists. The program at Washington State University comes closest to this third category.

At present it would be difficult to state that Home Economics exists on this campus. There is no central focus; relevant departments have little or no contact with each other; and there is very limited interaction in teaching and research programs. There is some interaction in extension programs, but this is also limited and has very little relationship or input from relevant departments. Few students in these departments identify with Home Economics and many have no idea of what it is or that their departments each had roots in Home Economics.

In all likelihood, if all students, faculty, and recent graduates in the three departments were interviewed, few would identify themselves with home economics (no matter what name is used) and many would not want to be so identified. This does not represent a negative connotation but a simple matter of fact. They are in different, useful, exciting professions; they need not be home economists. The more essential question is whether society today needs home economics. If we look at the country, and at the world as a whole, there are many issues of extreme importance to individuals, families, and households. Many study these issues from some perspective; for years, home economics approached these questions from a holistic view. Different perspectives were considered, but of most importance, these were integrated in teaching, research, and application. Some of this is missing today. The program that most completely encompasses this is Family Consumer Sciences Education, which has been housed in the Department of Human Development for about twelve years. Unfortu-



nately, the program has few students and only one faculty member, Dr. Deborah Handy.

The theme of a recent issue of *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, published in 2001, was “The Soul of a Profession.” In rereading these articles, they may point to one descriptive phrase for Home Economics at Washington State University: It has lost its

soul. Energetic, productive, dedicated faculty and students are still here, and they are in the three former Home Economics departments, as well as in others. But the soul of the Home Economics profession is not here, and therefore, I believe that Home Economics no longer exists at Washington State University. As one person said, “It appears that Home Economics is going, going, and soon to be gone.”

Epilogue

Since the manuscript is titled History of Home Economics, I have taken that to heart and have focused on the concept of Home Economics and how it has been seen in the past 25 years and, perhaps, into the future. Although individual departments have been discussed, the major point of interest has been “Home Economics.” I admit that some of the manuscript is tinged with my own memories and feelings about the past 25 years, and especially about the merger. I have, however, attempted to report as many facts as I could find. (My past training is in journalism, and I have hopefully learned the importance of objectivity!) However, having been a faculty member for 40 years and department chair during the merger certainly affects my own personal point of view. It is my wish that you recognize this, and view the past 25 years from your own perspective, whether you were or are involved in Home Economics or are reading this as an innocent bystander. Look at change and how you view it. I have always considered myself to be an advocate of change, and still do, but, I suppose there is change and there is “change.”

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