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## Accreditation Visit

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# Accreditation Visit

by DR. HENRY H. WEBSTER  
Head, Forestry Department

An accreditation visitation committee examined the forestry program at ISU on April 10-11. This committee represented the Society of American Foresters, and also included a generalist appointed by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Following was the membership of this visitation committee:

Paul Y. Burns (Chairman), Director, School of Forestry and Wildlife Management, Louisiana State University. Was formerly chairman of the SAF national Committee on Accreditation.

Thomas H. Ripley, Director of Forestry, Fisheries, and Wildlife Development, Tennessee Valley Authority.

Donald R. Theoe, Director of Professional Programs, Society of American Foresters.

Robert L. Williams, Administrative Dean, Office of the President, University of Michigan. Served as representative of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

This visit was a regular 10-year reexamination of our program and its accreditation status. Our program was first accredited in 1935 when the Society of American Foresters began its accreditation program. We were last examined in 1961.

The function of accreditation is to recognize educational institutions maintaining standards that qualify graduates for quality professional practice. The Society of American Foresters examines universities in terms of six factors that contribute to program quality: (a) strengths of the parent university, (b) role of the forestry school in the university, quality of (c) the forestry faculty, and (d) the forestry student body, (e) the level and quality of budgetary support and physical facilities available for the forestry program, and (f) the strength and imagination shown by the forestry curriculum.

The committee that visited us were a fact finding group. They reviewed a written self-evaluation that was prepared by the Department of Forestry faculty, and explored in some detail items not fully covered in the self-evaluation. They will report to the SAF National Committee on Accreditation, which in turn will make a recommendation to the Council of the Society of American Foresters. The Council is the body which actually takes action concerning accreditation status. **These additional steps will occur next October. Our department head currently serves as a member of the national Committee on Accreditation, but obviously will not partici-**

pate in discussion or recommendation concerning ISU.

Accreditation, done properly, can have considerable program benefits. It can help within the university to make a particularly cogent case for additional resources needed for a quality program. For example, the new building which the Department of Forestry has occupied since 1967 traces in some modest but important part to the 1961 accreditation examination.

The process of defining goals and evaluating our own strengths and areas that require development is a particularly beneficial part of the accreditation process. In developing our self-evaluation, the departments of program development.

partmental faculty identified the following goals and

*Long-term goal. To provide quality education for modern management of forests and related land resources via a balanced program of undergraduate and graduate education, research and public service.*

*Major short-term goals for the 1970's*

a. To complete integration of curricula in Forestry and Outdoor Recreation Resources.

b. To develop a more cohesive program of research and associated graduate education that will stimulate and directly aid integration of undergraduate instruction in modern land resource management.

c. To develop greater relevance, in both teaching and research, to regional and state resource management without weakening a historic national orientation.

d. To develop greater depth of faculty expertise in a few interrelated fields that tie both to modern land resource management and to principal strengths of Iowa State University.

e. To develop more effective ties with related resource fields within the university.

*Problems in program development*

a. Current fragmentation of natural resource programs within the university.

b. Moderate difficulty in maintaining faculty contact with resource management developments, problems, agencies.

c. Budgetary limitations and competition with substantially larger quality forestry programs at other strong universities.

d. Associated difficulties of choosing subject areas to emphasize strongly vs. those to de-emphasize. ■