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As Undergraduate Home Economists—

Graduate Study Challenges Us

Beth Bailey McLean, M. S. '33, discussed graduate work at a recent Province Work Shop of College Home Economics Clubs. This article covers excerpts of her talk. Mrs. McLean is head of the home economics division of Swift and Company's research laboratories in Chicago.

WHY do so few home economic students plan on taking graduate work? Today in most fields students think of the 4 years in college as preparatory to 1, 3, or more years of intensified study in their chosen field.

Of course, home economics is comparatively new as a profession. Iowa State is celebrating 75 years of home economics, but it was only 30 years ago that a 2-year course was considered adequate for training a domestic science teacher. It was approximately 20 years ago that colleges and universities began demanding advanced degrees.

Marriage

But what of the woman who does marry right after college? Is a graduate degree wasted? I think not. Today a homemaker should be a wise and well-informed person if she is to be efficient in all the complex tasks of homemaking and in the larger role she must play in the modern economic, social and political world.

Today work for an advanced degree at Iowa State may be taken in any major you elect. Nutrition was the first to attract many graduate students. One may receive a degree in nutrition, foods, child development, textiles and clothing, household equipment, home economics education, institution management, technical journalism, home management and applied art.

Should one plan for graduate work while still an undergraduate? Yes, indeed. Junior and senior women should investigate the opportunities for graduate work and inquire into the prerequisite courses needed for advanced work.

Time for Graduate Study

Then one asks—should graduate work be taken right after a B.S. degree or should one work first? It is easier to go on for a year of graduate work while you are in the habit of studying, but I believe a young woman gets more out of any graduate work if she works a year or two to find out what her real interests are. As far as a Ph.D. is concerned, some maturity of experience is valuable before beginning this study. The real test is, are you taking advanced work just for the degree or do you really want to study a special problem? The true scientist goes on and on with investigation and research problems and considers the

Ph.D. degree as preparation for a life's work of research and study.

What, then, will graduate work mean to you financially and socially?

As any profession develops, the demand for persons with advanced degrees increases. Today many teaching positions require a master's and some a doctor's degree. In extension work, in business and in almost every home economics position, an advanced degree means greater opportunity for better positions and more money.



An example of the modern woman assuming her responsibilities in the professional business world is Beth Bailey McLean, M. S. '33, who strongly advocates advanced degrees for home economists

Work for a master's degree does not make one a scientist. But it should teach one to analyze a problem, to set up a project, to eliminate variables, to be alert to evidences of new factors and then to evaluate results. A master's degree does not make up for lack of personal and mental qualifications or for good sense and judgment. But in evaluating two applicants, the woman with an advanced degree has a definite advantage.

What provisions and possibilities are there for graduate work for home economists? Fortunately, colleges have been building up graduate staffs and graduate courses. To give financial aid, philanthropic persons and professional associations have made considerable number of grants available for deserving persons desirous of continuing their education.