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Linfield at 150: Professional Education at Linfield

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Professional education at Linfield

Greek, dictation, home economics and typewriting have disappeared from the curriculum of Linfield College. During the early years of the Baptist College at McMinnville and McMinnville College, most students were in primary or secondary school, with only a few advanced students working on baccalaureate degrees. Although the curriculum is vastly different today, Linfield has always been distinctive in offering a combination of theoretical and practical courses. During this sesquicentennial year, Professor Marvin Henberg traces the history of professional education at Linfield which is grounded in the liberal arts tradition, always emphasizing Linfield's mission of Connecting Learning, Life, and Community.

Although the Baptist College at McMinnville met the educational needs of primary and secondary students in the Yamhill Valley, it wasn't until 1884 that the college had its first graduate – J.H. Smith, who became a prominent attorney in Astoria and poet laureate of Oregon.

Law, science, teaching and the ministry were central to the professional goals of students who studied at the college. Greek and Latin classics, coupled with a strong scientific knowledge and a serving of faith-based philosophy, prepared students for the next stage of their lives. The most advanced students took courses from a classically based college curriculum. For decades, students needed only a year or two of college to become teachers, qualify as a minister or take the bar exam after serving an apprenticeship with a practicing lawyer.

The truth was, "Old Mac" had existed as a college more in name than in reality. By around 1915, McMinnville College's expenses were covered almost entirely by students who were not enrolled in college level courses – "commerce," "pedagogy" and other subjects. High school students continued studying at the college well into the second decade of the 20th centu-

ry. In the early 1900s, enrollment in the Music Conservatory accounted for more than half the college's revenues, and a non-standard bachelor of music degree (less than four years in duration) was granted to conservatory students. As early as 1902, a Commercial Department taught the useful skills of stenography and typewriting, but those courses were never included in the college curriculum.

The roots of professional education

So where and when did Linfield's professional, college-level education begin? As with much of history there is no easy answer.

During the darkest days of the college's financial crisis prior to and immediately following Leonard Riley's election as president in 1906, the college worked hard to attract students of any stripe. High-school-level certificates and non-standard degrees requiring less than four years of study were offered.

Riley, in his quest to establish McMinnville College as a standard college defined by the U.S. Bureau of Education, eliminated all of those programs. McMinnville needed at least six faculty members devoted full-time to collegiate instruction. All bachelor degree offerings had to conform to a four-year model, so the college reassigned faculty away from high school and certificate teaching.

Among the early professional programs, only the bachelor of music degree survived the transition to four years when the conservatory was moved into the liberal arts curriculum. In 1926, the faculty voted to change it to a B.A. degree. Today's Music Department descended from the conservatory after its original status as a professional training program was broadened by the liberal arts mission.

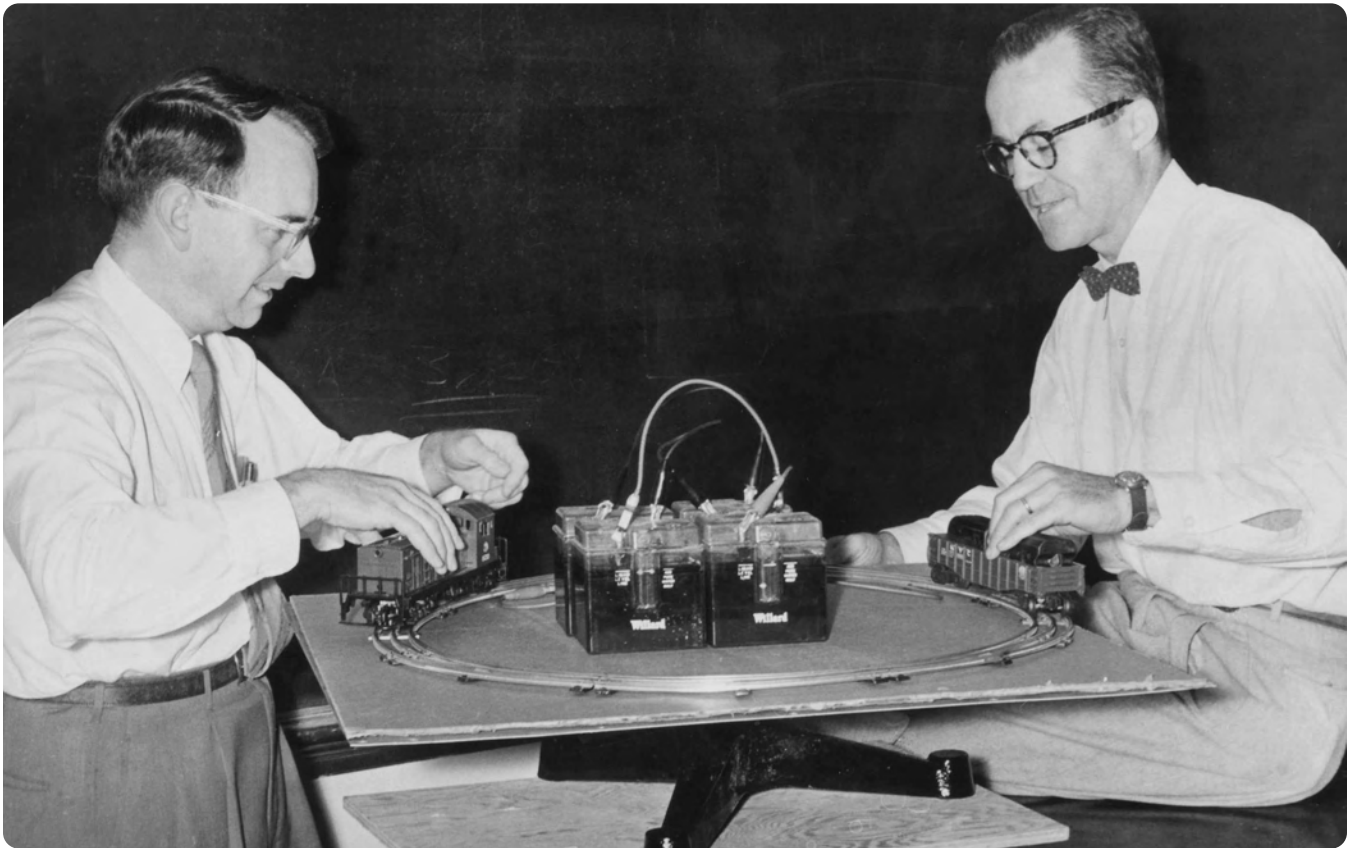
Educating educators

Today's Education and Business Departments are rooted in humanities and social sciences. In 1917, Curtis P. Coe, the former head of the college's Commercial Department, became professor of education and mathematics as a result of new state laws requiring teachers

to complete a specific core of education courses. Coe's successor in 1920 was the wonderfully named Lebbeus Smith Schumacher, who seemed perfect for the title professor of philosophy and education and dean of men. In 1927, Paul J. Orr became professor of psychology and education, solidifying education as an extension of the psychology and philosophy curricula. Under Orr, who served with distinction until his retirement in 1949, education emerged as a mainstay within the social sciences. It is Orr who led the way for a master's of education, the college's first graduate degree, in 1947-48.

Building business curriculum

The early business curriculum was the exclusive creation of Professor Harold Elkinton (1927-69). Educated as an economist, Elkinton received an explicit charge from President Riley to organize a college-level curriculum in business administration. He fulfilled this charge, first by adding it to offerings in economics and, in 1949, by developing a separate bachelor's degree in business administration. He was the first faculty member at Linfield to teach accounting and the first to organize internships.



Bob Jones, left, and John Day, both professors of physics, working in the physics laboratory in 1959. Jones served on the faculty from 1955 to 1986. The Bob Jones Advanced Physics Lab is named in his honor. Day served as professor from 1958 to 1978 and was involved in a number of initiatives, including launching an experimental bachelor of arts program for nursing graduates that has since grown into the Division of Continuing Education.

His genuine popularity as a teacher was balanced in students' minds with the certainty that a course from "Elkie" would be demanding, especially when it came to assigning grades. Elkinton was also very much a man of McMinnville and the larger state. He served as general raconteur in and a president of the local Kiwanis Club. He issued annually an economic forecast for Oregon, delivering it orally with great zeal and conviction to local chambers of commerce throughout the state. He also provided a written version of his economic forecast to Oregon newspapers, many of which obliged by printing every colorful word he sent them.

Developing physical education and health

In 1930, three years after recruiting Elkinton in economics and business, Riley hired Henry Lever to teach physical education and coach, sowing the seed for athletics to carve its way distinctively into Linfield's educational focus. In subsequent years this seed, first planted and nurtured by Lever, would sprout into degree programs in physical education, health education, exercise science and athletic training. Equally



important, it was the beginning of Linfield's robust and winning tradition in intercollegiate athletics.

Lever, 47, provided exactly what the college needed during the Great Depression: leadership, a capacity for hard work and a personal integrity that would inspire many distinguished successors. His experience as an athlete, coach, teacher, farmer and engineer suited him for the rigors of a college where a coach was expected to help plan and build physical structures as well as conduct winning programs. Linfield's "building president," Harry Dillin, found a ready partner in Lever, who assisted in work on Maxwell Field and Memorial Hall.

Still, upon his retirement in 1948, Lever was best

known for his qualities as a coach who taught players to respect their game, their opponents and themselves. He was coach and mentor to Paul Durham '37, who succeeded him as football coach and athletic director, and to Roy Helser '37, who succeeded him as baseball coach. Lever won the college's first Northwest Conference titles in football (1935) and baseball (1947), while his winning percentage in basketball (.613) is the best in college history for anyone coaching at least two seasons.

It is no secret that coaches at Linfield actively recruit student-athletes to the college. It is also no secret that they take special care of those who accept the challenge to compete for the cardinal and purple. This pattern of



In 1937 students staged a "sit-down strike" in protest of a "super-stiff" exam from Professor Harold C. Elkinon. Elkinon is one of Linfield's most beloved and storied faculty members, serving as professor of economics and business from 1927 to 1969 and chair of the Department of Economics and Business Administration for 41 years. Linfield's newest residence halls are named in honor of him and Horace C. Terrell, professor of English from 1933 to 1961.



Students gathered around a printing press, circa 1939. The *Linfield Review* was established in 1895 by President Truman G. Brownson, who served as the first editor-in-chief. Early editions contained reflections on Christian commitment, a sketch of college history and occasional pieces by students. They also carried regular accounts of the activities of the YMCA and YWCA, predecessors of today's student government.

recruitment and retention was set by Lever and is exemplified by Durham's arrival as a student in 1932. Lever offered him, Durham recalled, "a job in a restaurant for food, a bed at Macy's funeral parlor in downtown McMinnville, and half tuition for academics and athletics."

Between study, work and competition, Durham hewed to Lever's model of dutiful time management. He likewise learned Lever's capacity for concentration, his skill at organization, and ultimately his longevity, as Durham likewise lived well into his 90s, dying in June 2007. His winning percentage in football (.694) is all the more remarkable in that, when his 1956 team set a course toward Linfield's current national record of 52 years of consecutive winning seasons, Durham was handicapped by an initial seven seasons featuring more losses than wins.

As athletic director, Durham soon partnered with Dr. Jane McIlroy, women's athletic director, to extend Linfield's athletic prowess into an entirely new realm. A military veteran who had helped establish the first women's sports programs for the U.S. Army, McIlroy did the same for women's sports at Linfield. She also led in pioneering a women's sports conference among Northwest colleges. Thereafter, she coached Linfield women's teams to championships in field hockey, basketball, volleyball, tennis, and track and field. To this day the Northwest Conference's all-sports trophy bears her name.

The demise of home economics

Consumer and Family Studies appeared in the Linfield catalog in 1986. In 1934, the major was founded as homemaking, pioneered by Frances Wright Jonasson and later known as Home Administration and Home Economics. CFS inherited a struggling history based on the expectation that most women would either teach or spend their careers at home rather than in business or industry. Practical arts, such as nutrition, home finance, cooking and clothing design were the heart of the program, and the college's homemaking graduates included Irene Hartman Dillin '39, wife of President Harry Dillin.

Consumer and Family Studies was singular for teaching skills that went generally unpaid, however indispensable they were to the national welfare. Equally, the program was singular in being the sole professional program to suffer termination. All degrees in Consumer and Family Studies were discontinued by faculty vote, effective for the 1990 catalog. The program's demise was a consequence of expanding opportunities for women, especially in the sciences, in government service, and in professions such as law and business.

The rise of journalism and communication

Jack Burrows Bladine, editor of McMinnville's *Telephone Register*, taught Linfield's first course in journalism in 1933. Teaching journalism later fell to staff members in College Relations such as Charlotte Filer '54, editor of the *Bulletin*, or to local freelance writers such as Victoria Case, a contributor to *Linfield's Hundred Years*. It was not until Professor Earl J. Milligan was hired in 1950 that journalism was taught by a full-time faculty member. Originally offered in the English Department, journalism became a separate major in 1970, and Milligan nurtured it until his retirement in 1979. In turn, journalism became a pillar of today's Mass Communication Department, which features additional instruction in radio and television broadcasting, visual communication, film history and public relations. The B.A. in journalism was folded into the major in mass communication.

The college's most senior communications program took root in the debate and forensics competitions sponsored by the 19th century literary societies. Roy D. "Hap" Mahaffey established Linfield's national reputation for

College catalogs mark change

Over the years, Linfield's annual college catalog has chronicled faculty and coursework for the student body. Early catalogs, such as the 17-page 1872-73 publication, are small, reflecting limited faculty and classes. One hundred years later, the 1972-73 catalog is more than 100 pages long and lists 20 academic departments.

Though times have changed, some things stay the same – such as Linfield's commitment to undergraduate education, excerpted here from the 1872-73 catalog General Information section:

"The great work of our American colleges is to lead the minds of the young into all truth, and so to develop their nobler intellectual powers, that in all the walks of life they may be prepared to grapple with and settle the great problems of life on the principles of eternal truth; 'for wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation.'"



A scene from the 1944 production of *Suspect*, which featured Roy "Hap" Mahaffey, who served as drama director from 1936 to 1946, and Elizabeth Randall '44. Mahaffey, who was on the faculty from 1928 to 1970, directed the forensics program for 36 years and became nationally known in the forensics field.

excellence in its speech program. Mahaffey likewise built up the theatre program, housed in today's Ford Hall, where it is annexed to forensics and communication arts.

The programs a college chooses not to offer also help define it. After experimenting with graduate programs in education, physics and neuroscience, Linfield now bears distinction among the Northwest's private universities for its exclusive focus on undergraduate education.

Nursing and the Portland Campus

A landmark agreement in 1982 between Linfield College and the Good Samaritan School of Nursing launched Linfield's Portland Campus. The Linfield-Good Samaritan School of Nursing transformed the hospital nursing school into a four-year program offering a bachelor's of science in nursing degree. GSH had long been a leader in nursing education in the Northwest, a reputation established by the truly

remarkable achievements of Emily Loveridge.

In 1890, Loveridge founded the Good Samaritan Hospital diploma program in nursing. A 30-year-old graduate of the Bellevue Hospital nursing program in New York City, she was devoted first and foremost to her patients. Her care and devotion inspired nursing graduates for the first 15 years, prior to her assuming directorship of the entire hospital in 1905. Despite this higher post and its imposing regime of administrative duties, Loveridge never lost touch with "her" nurses. During World War I, she corresponded with every one of the more than 100 Good Samaritan graduates serving at a field hospital in France.

That nursing program was shaped in later years by Lloydena Grimes, a teacher and director who, like Loveridge, served Good Samaritan for 30 years. Between 1952 and 1982, Grimes transitioned the school to a more science-based curriculum while maintaining the traditional focus on holistic patient care. Even so, her greatest challenge lay in understanding the lives and demands of 1960s and 1970s nursing students, who were determined to break out from stereotypical molds.



Nursing students train with a mannequin at Good Samaritan Hospital, in an undated photograph. The Good Samaritan School of Nursing program was founded by Emily Loveridge in 1890. When not caring for patients or attending classes, the students scrubbed, cleaned and even painted the facility. Loveridge oversaw the 300-bed hospital until her retirement in 1930, and was known to visit each patient daily. Linfield took over the program in 1982, developing a baccalaureate degree in nursing with a liberal arts emphasis.

These “new” aspiring nurses rebelled at standing whenever a physician entered the room, and some were comfortable in calling physicians by their first names. They insisted on the right to be married while still a student. Those who remained unmarried staked claim to a more robust social life. Like their 1970s student counterparts in McMinnville, the nursing students successfully campaigned to end residence hall policies restricting opposite-sex visitation. Without Grimes’ skill in managing such potentially explosive changes, the culture at Good Samaritan Hospital would never have opened up, making way for a merger with Linfield’s McMinnville Campus. John Day, physics professor from 1958 to 1978, who founded the college’s successful venture into adult education, played a significant role in the merger, which ensured a thriving nursing education program. That story, however, must be left for readers of *Inspired Pragmatism*.

Note: The author thanks Tim Marsh ’70, whose article on Henry Lever provided much of the information about Lever’s background and accomplishments.

– Marvin Henberg

McIlroy left her mark



Jane McIlroy left an indelible mark on the Linfield athletic department during her 32 years of service to the college. The former physical education professor, women’s athletic director and coach of five sports pioneered women’s sports in the Northwest.

Before McIlroy’s arrival at Linfield in 1950, there were no women’s athletics. Opportunities for women to compete in sports were limited to “play days” and “sports days.”

“After he hired me, I asked President Dillin, ‘Where are the teams?’” recalled McIlroy, now 88. “He said I was being hired to get the program going. So that’s what I did.”

Soon after, she developed the Women’s Conference of Independent Colleges.

“When I took teams anywhere, each girl had to pay 25 cents for the gas,” she said. “If they didn’t, there was no way I could afford to transport them. I bought a station wagon that carried six in the seating area and had a big space for the equipment. One more regular car would do it.”

McIlroy continues to follow Linfield athletics and remains a strong proponent of the scholar athlete.

“I’m in favor of women having opportunities in competitive sports, but sports should not be number one,” she said. “Academics should be number one. That’s the way I’ve always felt.”

Longevity at Linfield

Linfield is known for attracting faculty and staff who stay awhile – decades, in fact. Average length of service for Linfield’s 395 employees is more than 10 years. Some of Linfield’s longtime employees include:

Faculty:

Ken Ericksen, professor of English, 42 years

Administration:

Dave Hansen, vice president for student services, dean of students and professor of economics, 38 years

Staff:

Linda Taylor, computer operations coordinator, 27 years

Senior alumni:

Based on current records, our most senior alumni are: Delbert Edwards ’30 of Eugene; Edna (Breeding) Britten ’31 of Tigard; Helena (Gabbert) Moore ’32 of Union, Wash.; and Marguerite (Doak) Schreiber ’32 of Los Alamos, N.M.

Legacy:

According to our current records, our largest legacy families are the McBrides with 19 relatives attending Linfield; the Ezells with 16; and the Levers with 14.

Inspired Pragmatism

An Illustrated History of Linfield College



is the story of Linfield College from its origins to the eve of its sesquicentennial celebration on Jan. 30, 2008. Richly illustrated and written by Marvin Henberg, the book tells the story of the many men and women who have not only shaped Linfield, but played important roles in Oregon, the Northwest and the nation.

For more information or to order the book go to:

www.linfield.edu/inspired_pragmatism 