

ADMINISTRATION

DR. WORTHEN, WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION TO THE RECENT CONTROVERSY OVER THE ADMINISTRATIONS ROLE IN CONTROLLING STUDENT LIFE?

I ASSUME YOU ARE REFERRING TO THE DEBATES WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IN THE PAST, PARENTS AND THE PUBLIC AND EVEN SOME STUDENTS EXPECTED THE UNIVERSITY TO STAND IN LOCO PARENTIS AND TO MONITOR AND CONTROL STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM. IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, THIS CONCEPT HAS BEEN BREAKING DOWN PARTLY BECAUSE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING UNIVERSITIES IS SO GREAT THAT EFFECTIVE CONTROL IS IMPOSSIBLE. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY THE UNIVERSITY NOW EMPHASIZES INDIVIDUAL GROWTH AND RESPONSIBILITY. TO CONTINUE TO TREAT STUDENTS AS IF THEY ARE CHILDREN RATHER THAN YOUNG ADULTS IS ANTI-THETICAL TO THESE GOALS. AT THE UNIVERSITY WE BELIEVE STUDENTS OF COLLEGE AGE GROW, MATURE AND DEVELOP A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY BEST IN AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH EXTERNAL RESTRICTIONS ARE MINIMIZED AND THE STUDENTS MUST ASSUME A GREAT DEAL OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTROLLING THEIR OWN PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. MY REACTION TO THE CONTROVERSY THEN IS THAT IT WAS LONG OVERDUE AND THE CHANGES WHICH HAVE RESULTED MAKES THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE POTENTIALLY MORE EDUCATIONAL AND MORE REALISTIC.

DO YOU FEEL THAT THE STUDENT'S RECENT DEMAND FOR MORE FREEDOM FROM ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRICTIONS REFLECTS A DISTINCT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE STUDENT OF TODAY AND THE STUDENT OF 15 YEARS AGO?

YES, ALTHOUGH IT IS DIFFICULT TO GENERALIZE, STUDENTS TODAY DO SEEM TO VIEW THE UNIVERSITY AND ANY RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THEM DIFFERENTLY FROM STUDENTS OF FIFTEEN YEARS AGO. STUDENTS TODAY ASK FOR MORE FREEDOM FROM RESTRICTIONS, BUT THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE WAY PEOPLE IN SOCIETY AT LARGE ARE REACTING. VALUES AND MORALS HAVE BEEN CHANGING RAPIDLY IN THE LAST TEN YEARS TOWARDS MORE INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND LESS RESTRICTIONS ON BEHAVIOR. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE IN SOCIETY'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SEX. WHAT CAN APPEAR IN PRINT AND WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE DRESS IN PUBLIC HAVE CHANGED SHARPLY IN THE LAST FEW YEARS.

THE FACT THAT THERE IS CHANGE GOING ON ALL AROUND US ACCOUNTS FOR A GOOD DEAL OF THE PRESS OF STUDENTS FOR MORE FREEDOM. BUT, IN ADDITION, STUDENTS HAVE LEARNED HOW TO USE PROTEST AND THE THREAT OF DEMONSTRATION TO BRING THEIR CONCERNS TO THE ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY AND THIS HAS UNDOUBTEDLY LED TO FURTHER REQUESTS OR DEMANDS.

WHAT IN YOUR OPINION IS THE STUDENT'S REASONING BEHIND THEIR DEMANDS FOR MORE FREEDOM?

I WOULD SAY STUDENTS FEEL THAT MANY OF THE RESTRICTIONS WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN CHANGED WERE OUTDATED AND INCONSISTENT WITH THE NEW VALUES DEVELOPING IN SOCIETY. MANY DELAWARE STUDENTS COME FROM FAMILIES IN WHICH THEY ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE ON A VARIETY OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE MANY OF THEIR OWN DECISIONS. HAVING BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN HANDLING THE FREEDOM, STUDENTS FEEL STRONGLY THAT THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE MORE RESTRICTIONS AT UNIVERSITY THAN AT HOME. THEY HAVE IN SEVERAL INSTANCES, BEEN JOINED BY FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION IN ARGUING EFFECTIVELY FOR MODIFICATIONS.

HOW VALID DO YOU FEEL THEIR ARGUMENTS ARE?

IN MANY CASES, I BELIEVE STUDENTS' INTUITIONS REGARDING UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN QUITE ACCURATE.

WHAT IS THE REASONING BEHIND THE CONTINUANCE OF THE POLICE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY?





YOU KNOW, OF COURSE, THAT THE QUESTION IN THIS FORM CAN'T BE ANSWERED. THE UNIVERSITY DOES NOT ACT IN THE ROLE OF POLICEMAN. I ASSUME YOU ARE REFERRING TO DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS. THE REASONING BEHIND THIS IS SIMPLY THAT A COMMUNITY AS LARGE AS OURS NEEDS CERTAIN REGULATIONS WHICH PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR THE BEHAVIOR OF THE MEMBERS. THE UNIVERSITY HAS AN OBLIGATION TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE WHICH IS CONDUCTIVE TO OUR PRIMARY GOAL — EDUCATION. THE FACULTY HAS A MAJOR ROLE IN ESTABLISHING POLICY IN THIS AREA. IT IS OUR AIM TO BRING UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS INTO LINE WITH THOSE IN SOCIETY WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND TO HAVE AS FEW RESTRICTIONS AS WE CAN.

IN THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF FOLLOWING ACCEPTANCE OF THE STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT AND THE NEW STUDENT JUDICIAL SYSTEM, I THINK WE HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD THIS AIM. FOR EXAMPLE, SELF-REGULATED HOURS FOR WOMEN AND THE VISITATION PROGRAM WERE MAJOR CHANGES CLEARING AWAY PREVIOUS RESTRICTIONS AND SEEM TO BE WORKING RELATIVELY WELL. USE OF ALCOHOL BY PERSONS 21 YEARS OF AGE AND THE AUTOMOBILE REGULATIONS FOR RESIDENT STUDENTS ARE TWO RESTRICTIONS WHICH ARE CURRENTLY UNDER STUDY BY STUDENT-FACULTY-ADMINISTRATION GROUPS AND CHANGES WILL SURELY BE SUGGESTED IN THESE AREAS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF IS ENCOURAGING RESIDENCE HALLS TO MOVE TOWARD "SELF-REGULATION", BUT ONLY A FEW RESIDENT GROUPS HAVE INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH GO ALONG WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDIVIDUAL HALL REGULATIONS AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.

HOW DO THE ULTIMATE GOALS OF THE STUDENT COMPARE WITH THE GOALS YOU AND THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE LAID OUT FOR HIM?

THE PRIMARY GOAL OF STUDENT AFFAIRS IS THE TOTAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENT — INTELLECTUAL, PERSONAL AND SOCIAL. THERE ARE DOZENS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF STUDENTS, EACH WITH HIS OWN SET OF GOALS. SO IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO TALK ABOUT STUDENTS AS IF THEY ARE ALL ALIKE OR AS IF THEY HOLD THE SAME GOALS. WE DO, HOWEVER, KNOW THAT MANY STUDENTS COME TO THE UNIVERSITY TO PREPARE FOR A CAREER, OR TO DEVELOP COMPETENCY IN THEIR MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY, OR TO LEARN ABOUT THEMSELVES, OR TO DEVELOP MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER STUDENTS, OR TO DEVELOP A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE. OUR PROGRAMS IN STUDENT AFFAIRS ARE DESIGNED TO ASSIST THE STUDENT TO SET HIS OWN GOALS AND TO WORK TOWARD THEM. IN SOME CASES THIS MAY MEAN CONTACT WITH THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT OR THROUGH A GROUP. IN OTHERS, IT MAY MEAN STAYING OUT OF THE STUDENT'S WAY.

THE UNIVERSITY'S ULTIMATE GOAL FOR THE STUDENT IS THAT HE LEARN OR, AS I HAVE SAID, DEVELOP. WHAT HE CHOOSES TO LEARN FROM AMONG ALL THAT IS OFFERED IS LESS IMPORTANT THAN THAT HE LEARN WELL AND GAIN THE SATISFACTION AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH FROM BECOMING COMPETENT.

WHERE PRECISELY DO YOU FEEL THE DIFFERENCE IN IDEOLOGY LIES?

I THINK MANY STUDENTS ASSUME THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY WANT TO CONTROL STUDENTS AND KEEP THEM FROM DEVELOPING INTO SELF-INITIATING, INDEPENDENT PERSONS. FOR SOME THIS PROVIDES A RATIONALIZATION FOR NOT MOVING MORE VIGOROUSLY TOWARD BECOMING INDEPENDENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT.

SOME STUDENTS ARE HAVING THEIR FIRST REAL EXPERIENCE ON THEIR OWN WITH A COMPLEX SYSTEM—THE UNIVERSITY—AND SEE THE GUIDELINES AND DIRECTIONS AND MODE OF OPERATION AS RESTRICTING. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION SEE BEHAVIOR SUCH AS THEFT AND PROPERTY DAMAGE IN THE RESIDENCE HALLS AND APATHY IN THE CLASS-ROOM AS EVIDENCE THAT STUDENTS DON'T HOLD THE GOALS APPROPRIATE TO AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

I THINK, THEREFORE, IF THERE ARE DIFFERENCES THEY ARE MAINLY IN THE PERCEPTIONS THAT PEOPLE HOLD AND THAT THESE MIGHT DISAPPEAR IF THERE WAS MORE DIRECT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN STUDENTS, FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION REGARDING GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS. IT IS OUR INTENTION IN STUDENT AFFAIRS TO FACILITATE THIS COMMUNICATION AND TO ATTEMPT TO REDUCE WHATEVER DISCREPANCIES THERE ARE BETWEEN THE GOALS HELD BY STUDENTS AND THOSE HELD BY FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION.

DO YOU FEEL THAT THE UNIVERSITY SHOULD CONTINUE ITS ROLE AS "QUASI-POLICE" INDEFINITELY INTO THE FUTURE?

I BELIEVE THE UNIVERSITY SHOULD CONTINUE TO FULFILL ITS OBLIGATION TO MAINTAIN AN EDUCATIONAL ATMOSPHERE, BUT THE WORD "QUASI-POLICE" IMPLIES SOMETHING QUITE CONTRARY TO OUR PRESENT PHILOSOPHY. STUDENTS SHOULD PLAY A MAJOR ROLE ALONG WITH FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION IN WORKING OUR GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS IN THE STUDENT LIFE AREA. STUDENTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO HANDLE VIOLATIONS OF THESE AGREED-TO RULES IN WAYS WHICH WILL HELP TO PROTECT OTHERS IN THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY AND EDUCATE THE PERSON WHO VIOLATES THE RULE.

HOW SHOULD THE FUTURE DEGREE OF UNIVERSITY CONTROL BE DETERMINED?

THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS GOVERNING BODIES AND COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS THAT HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ESTABLISHED TO HEAR CONCERNS AND SUGGESTIONS OF STUDENTS, FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION. WE HAVE FOUND THAT STUDENT PARTICIPATION HAS LED TO MUCH BETTER DECISIONS AND THAT STUDENTS HAVE LEARNED A GREAT DEAL FROM THE PROCESS. OUR GOAL IS THE MINIMUM RESTRICTIONS WITHIN THE PARAMETERS OF LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LAW. THIS COMES ABOUT AS STUDENTS AGREE TO ACCEPT MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNING THEMSELVES.

MANY PERSONS WOULD LIKE FREEDOM WITHOUT CONSTRAINT. ALTHOUGH THIS IS UTOPIAN MORE FREEDOM IS POSSIBLE IN A COMMUNITY IN WHICH EACH INDIVIDUAL FEELS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING CERTAIN HIS ACTIONS DO NOT INFRINGE ON THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS. GOOD LAWS ARE ONES WHICH PEOPLE RESPECT BECAUSE THEY FEEL THEY ARE NEEDED. IN THE FUTURE, WE SHALL HAVE TO CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER ON THESE MATTERS.



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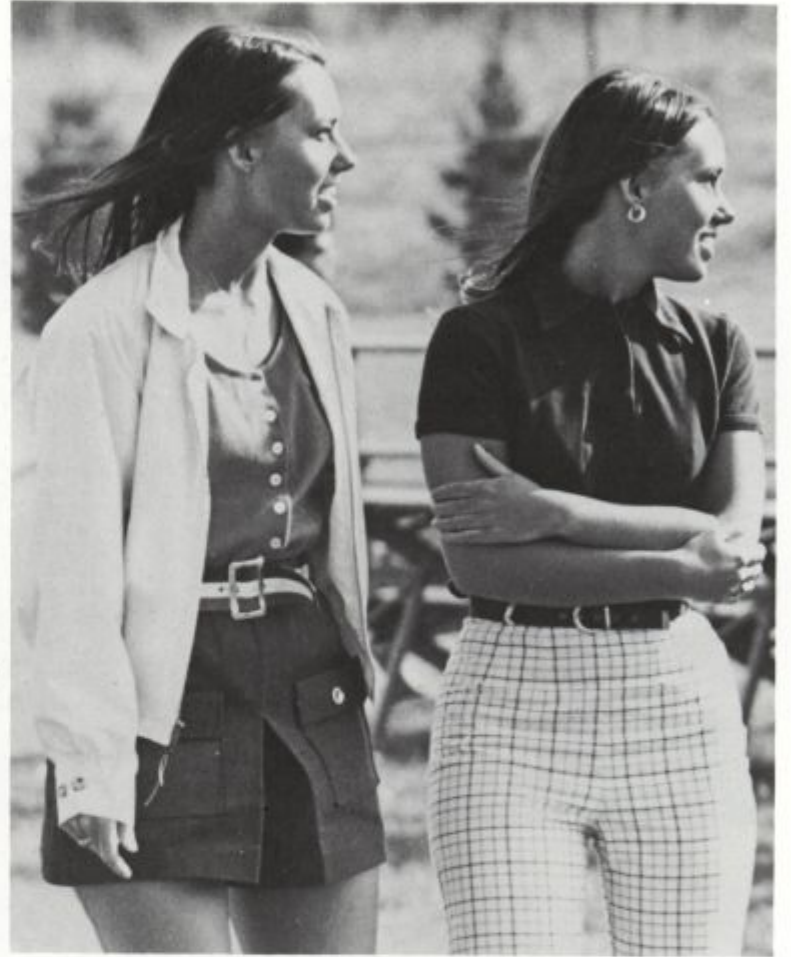
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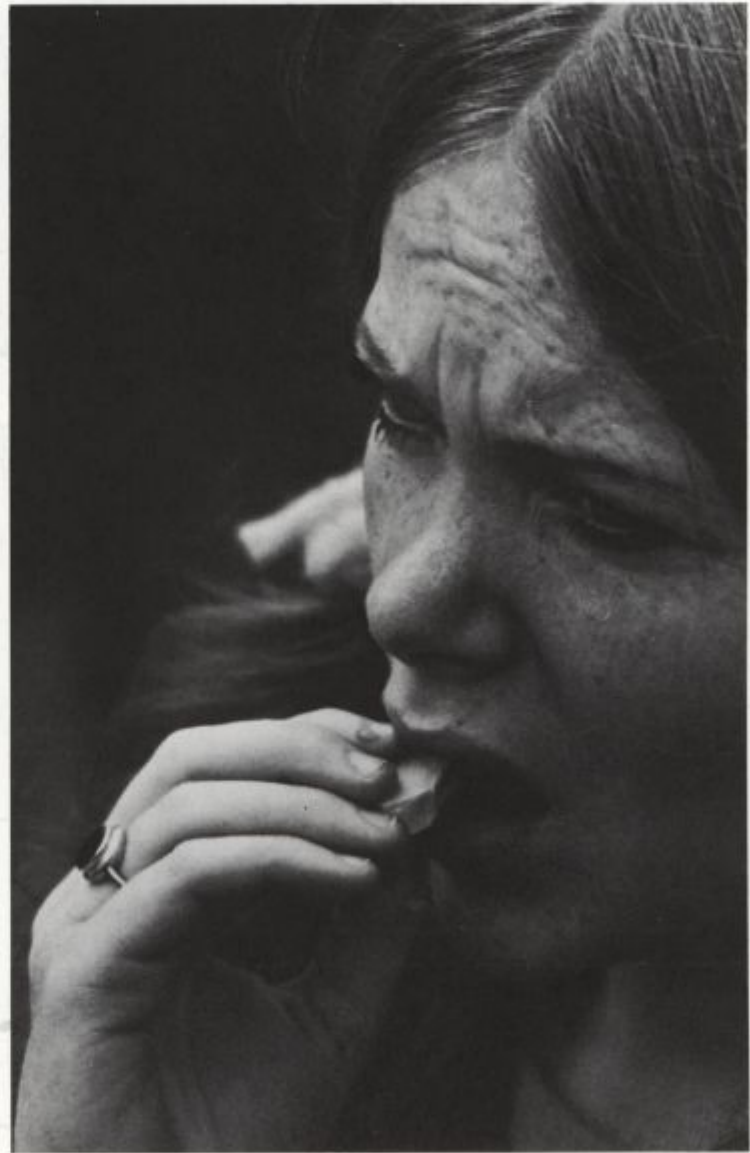
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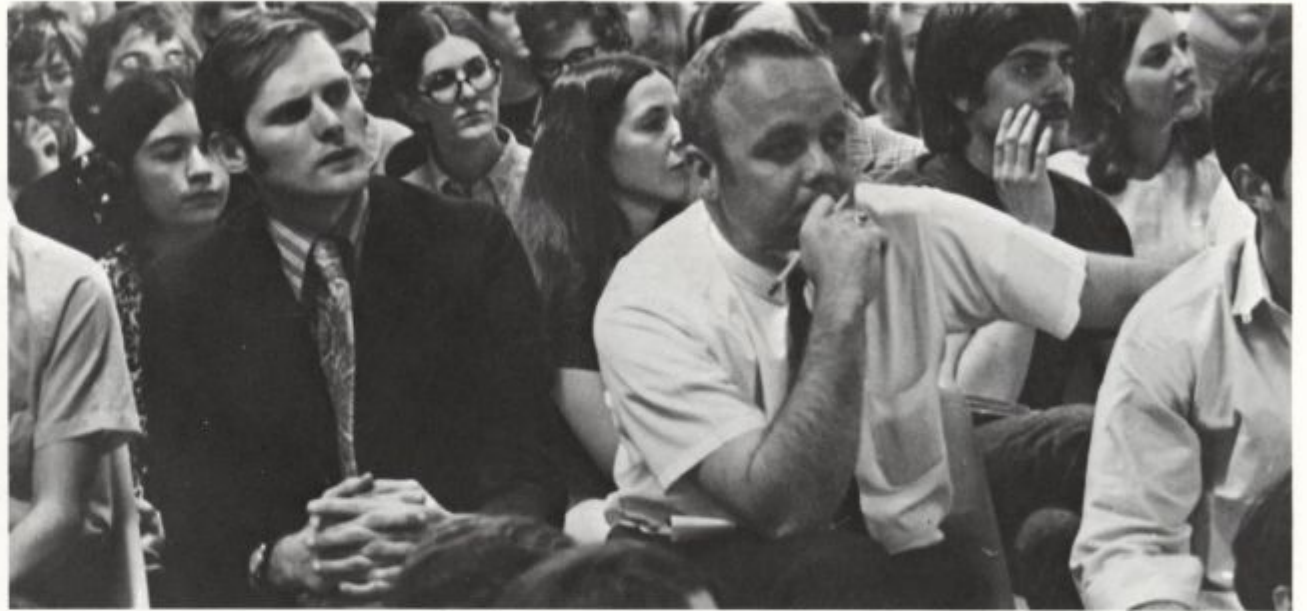
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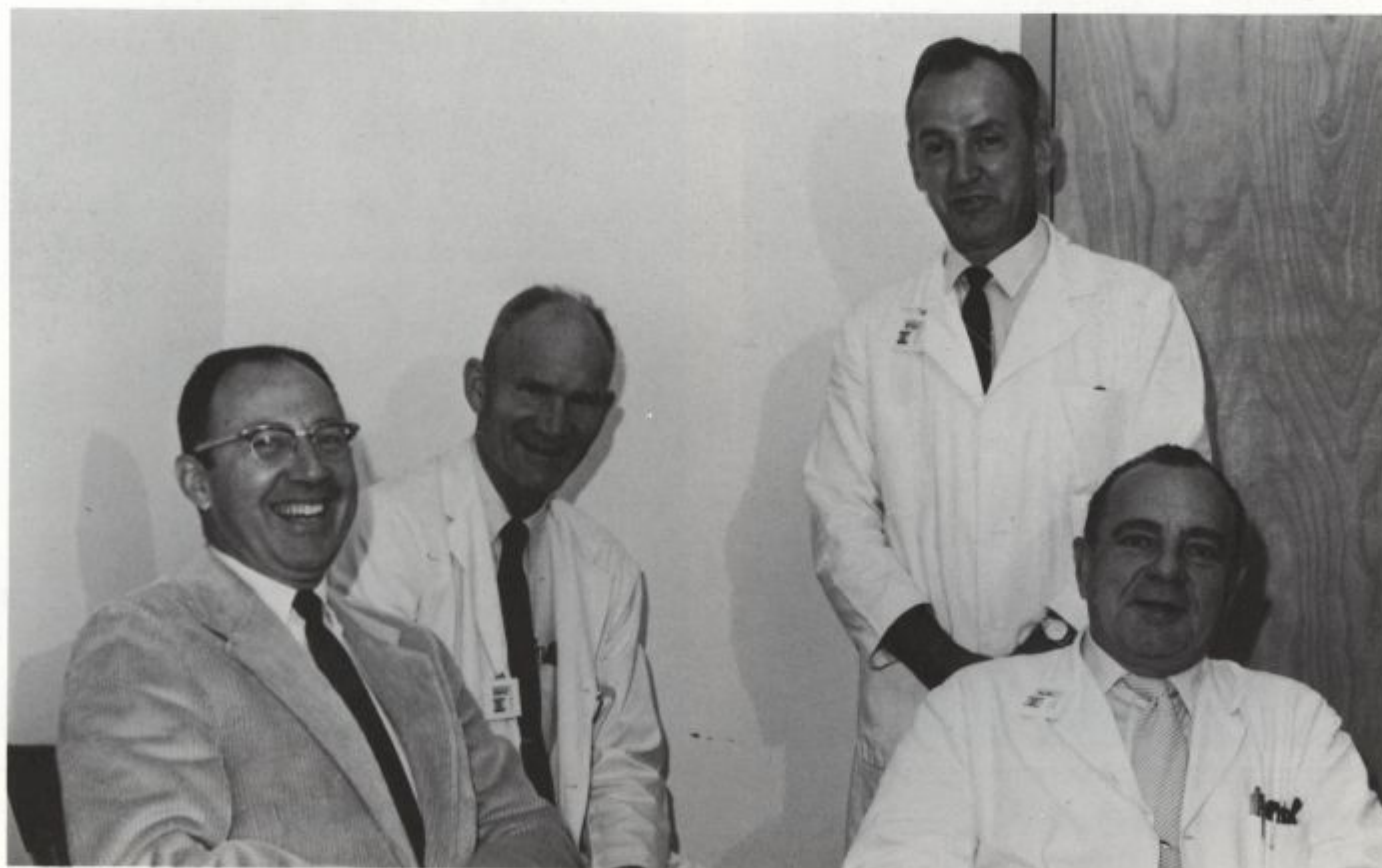


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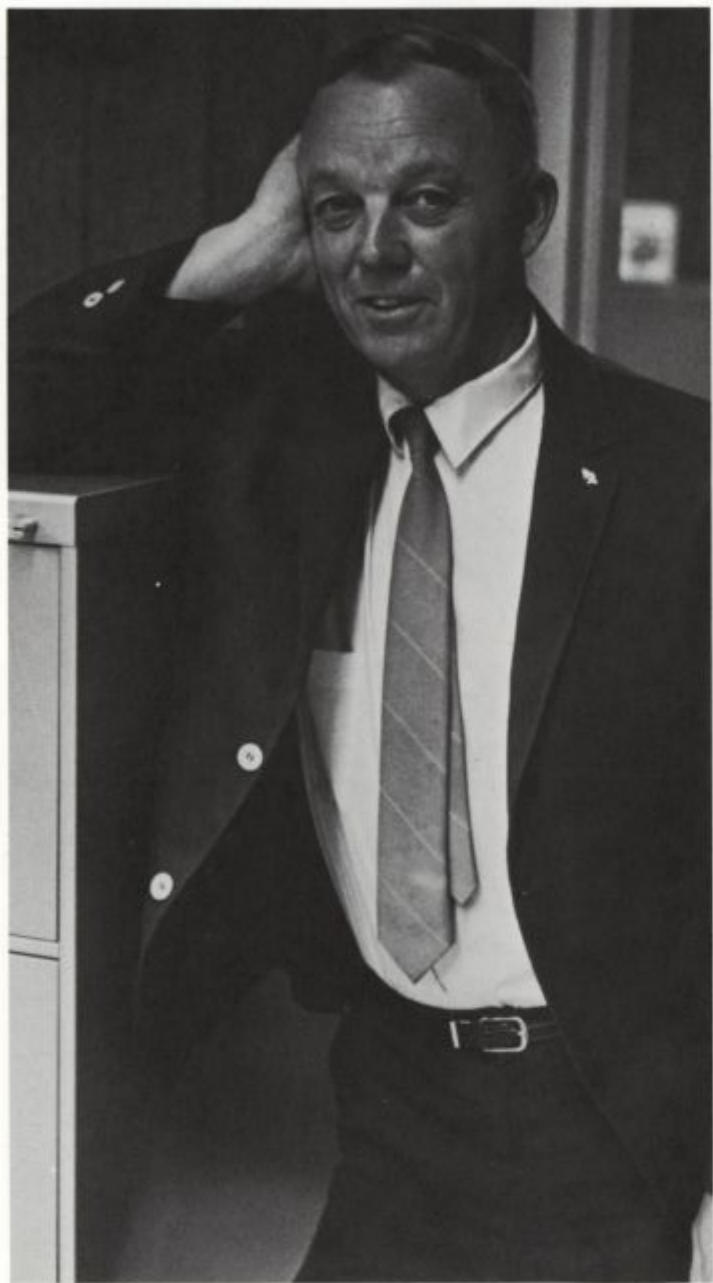
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