

The Graduate School

In 1994 Joanelle Long received the first doctorate awarded by Eastern Michigan University, five years after the Board of Regents approved the University's first doctoral program. The school's first graduate degree had been awarded more than 100 years prior to that event. Egbert R. Isbell provided this account in his history of Eastern Michigan University:

Graduate instruction, in the sense of a program leading to a post-graduate degree, was provided for at Michigan Normal as early as 1889. In that year the State Legislature gave the State Board of Education authority to grant "...such diploma as it may deem best, and such diploma when granted shall carry with it such honors as the extent of the course for which the diploma is given may warrant and said board of education may direct." Under this authority the State Board established the degree of Master of Pedagogics, based primarily on a post-graduate thesis. ... With the coming of President McKenny in 1912, the MPd as an earned degree was dropped. Henceforth, it was conferred strictly as an honorary degree and graduate work disappeared from the scene.

Twenty-seven years would pass before Michigan Normal would again offer a graduate program. Even then, the program was a nominal feature offered in conjunction with the University of Michigan, where most of the courses and exams took place. The arrangement



EMU's first doctoral class, pictured in 1991, included Norma L. Ross, Kathryn Ann Malner, Esther E. LaMothe, Stuart Redpath, Larry Dale Leapley, Susan M. Matz, Joanelle Long, Sherill L. Pryor, John Savel and Joan L. Tucker.

compelled the Normal to shift from a quarter schedule to a semester schedule to accommodate the University of Michigan. Isbell offered this acerbic comment: "It is obvious that the attitude

of the U-M underlying this arrangement was one of jealous protection of its hegemony in the graduate area." This arrangement existed until 1951, when the state Board of Education finally granted

EMU independent authority to confer the Master's Degree in Education. Even then the program of courses was offered jointly. In 1952 the State Board approved separate graduate status for the Normal

IN BRIEF

The following master's degrees were approved May 16, 1966: Master of Arts for Teachers of Mathematics, Master of Science in Chemistry Education, and Master of Arts in Speech and Dramatic Arts.

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Master of Science degrees in Computer Based Information Systems and in Industrial Technology were approved in February 1975.

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Everett L. Marshall was one of the first instructors to teach a graduate level class. When he retired as dean of Academic Records and Teacher Certification in 1979, Marshall was lauded for his contributions to the early development of the graduate school.

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A Master of Public Administration was approved in March of 1980. Among the reasons noted for the program's viability: growing employment opportunities in the public sector.

According to the program proposal, "Focusing on more specific career choices, encouraging learning that results from relevant experiences gained outside the classroom, and aided by an interdisciplinary environment, the new program projects structural qualities that make it unique in the state of Michigan."

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The Graduate Student Organization formed in 1986. "Current concerns of the GSO are the need for clarification of Graduate Assistants' roles, and the need for a substantial increase in their stipend," according to Board of Regents minutes.

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College. The College then offered a specific graduate program in the fall of 1953.

Having at last regained its independence as a graduate institution, Michigan Normal College might have expected clear sailing on the sea of advanced study. Unfortunately, mutiny erupted. Despite a year's worth of planning and numerous requirements, the Master of Education program drew fire from Normal's own faculty. Isbell himself raised the question, "Was this indeed a graduate program? Here was no emphasis on scholarly advancement of the frontiers of pure knowledge, an object derived largely from the German influence, and long adopted as a major function of graduate work in America. Rather it (the master's program) was simply an additional step in the education and training of the teacher."

Graduate enrollments increased rapidly, forcing the creation of off-campus courses and the hiring of additional staff and faculty. The requirement of teaching experience was dropped due to pressure from students to continue without break from baccalaureate to graduate study.

When Eastern Michigan College became a University in 1959, it established a separate Graduate Division with

James Glasgow as director. The following year EMU offered a Master of Arts and Letters, the school's first non-education graduate degree. Accreditation followed in 1963. For the next 12 years, Graduate Studies at EMU would continue on this relatively placid plane.

In April of 1975, the first doctoral program in the University's history was authorized by the Board of Regents. But despite the Board's approval, no doctoral program was established in 1975 or any other year in that decade. In 1978, plans for doctoral programs in Communication Arts and Educational Leadership were officially put on hold. Regent John Ullrich explained, according to Board minutes, "While it is undoubtedly true that neither of the highly innovative programs projected for this University is precisely duplicated at any other institution in our service area, one is hard put, under present conditions, to perceive the significant level of public need and conscious demand for the programs which existed earlier in the decade."

He also noted that the University's budgets over the next few years were expected to remain tight, "which will have little room for programs of limited or questionable demand."

In addition, Eastern's early attempts to establish a doctorate failed to win

support outside the University. However, the idea of a doctoral program or programs at EMU refused to die. According to Scott Westerman,

A 1984 report from Governor Blanchard's Commission on the Future of Higher Education in Michigan specifically recommended that only the "big three" (University of Michigan, Wayne State University, and Michigan State University) be authorized to award doctorates. President Porter aggressively challenged that recommendation indicating that he would not give up the fight to secure a doctoral program unless Eastern's sister schools throughout the state agreed to disband their existing doctoral programs. As a result of the persistence and dedication of many faculty and administrators, including the forceful and persuasive presentations made by Provost Collins and President Porter within their respective academic and political arenas, the program was approved by a supportive EMU Board of Regents in May of 1988, the same month that approval was granted by a reluctant Academic Officers Group and the Presidents Council. Final legislative authorization was achieved when Governor Blanchard signed the Higher Education Appropriations Bill on August 18, 1988.

Accreditation and staffing requirements delayed the opening of the doctoral program until 1991. Finally on

April 24, 1994, Joanelle Long received an Ed.D., the University's first doctorate. Long's research broke new ground in educational leadership, focusing on "how a principal's leadership style affects parental involvement."

When Long accepted her degree, the EMU doctoral program had 22 enrolled students. Martha Tack, professor and head of the Department of Leadership and Counseling in 1994, commented on the doctoral program's success:

"Graduating our first doctoral candidate represents 20 years of statewide effort dedicated to proving that Eastern Michigan University could do a doctoral program." College of Education Dean Jerry Robbins took note of Long's landmark achievement. "The occasion of the first doctoral graduate of the institution is historic – an occurrence that will become one of the major events in the long-term history of EMU."

In 1999, many advanced degrees and certifications were available, including: Advanced Graduate Certificate, Graduate Certificate, Doctor of Education, Teacher Certification Endorsement, Master of Arts, Master of Business Administration, Master of Business Education, Master of Fine Arts, Master of Public Administration, Master of Liberal Studies, Master of Occupational Therapy, Master of Science, Master of Science in Information Systems, Master of Science in Industrial Technology, Master of Science in Occupational Therapy, Master of Social Work, Specialist of Arts, and Teacher Certification.

Graduate School Deans



James Glasgow



Omer Robbins



Gary Keller



Ronald E. Goldenberg



Robert O. Holkeboer

The EMU Graduate School came into existence in 1953, and enrollments doubled each of the school's first three years. As the first dean of EMU's Graduate School, James Glasgow had the challenge of not only organizing the school, but also doing so in the face of overwhelming student demand. Egbert R. Isbell wrote that "Glasgow was not only efficient in organizing the school but was meticulous in preserving personal contact with the students at the counseling and classifying stages. In spite of the tidal wave of enrollments, he succeeded in preventing the Graduate School from becoming an educational mill." Glasgow remained dean until 1970, when he retired.

Omer Robbins accepted the mantle of leadership until 1975, when he returned to teaching. Clyde LeTarte took over as acting dean for the next two years, then Robbins returned to the dean's office on an interim basis. Taking a

leave of absence from the University, Robbins left the dean's office for the last time in 1979. The decade had been a difficult one for the Graduate School, plagued with debates over proposed doctoral programs and financing problems.

Gary Keller became dean in 1979. The minutes of the July 25, 1979 Board of Regents meeting record Keller's concern with program development in the Graduate School. "He feels approximately two-thirds of his role as the Graduate Dean will be occupied working on program development. He said there are three major areas in program development, namely: (1) academic programs; (2) research and scholarly activities; and (3) upgrading and maintaining the quality of programs at all levels of study." Further "he looked upon his role in part as being someone to expedite them." Keller had barely begun this great task when he accepted a similar position at

the State University of New York at Binghamton.

During the search for Keller's replacement, George McCloud became acting dean. McCloud went on to become the University's strategic planning director when Ronald E. Goldenberg accepted appointment to the dean's office in 1985. Goldenberg came to the office with an attitude of satisfaction with EMU's Graduate School. The Eastern Echo quoted his comments about the school: "You don't fix it if it ain't broke." Eventually Goldenberg would establish the Goldenberg/Schreiber Graduate Scholarship Fund at EMU for the benefit of full-time graduate students enrolled in a degree program at EMU. Goldenberg's tenure in the dean's office lasted 11 years. He retired in 1996.

Robert Holkeboer was named interim dean of the Graduate School in 1997, then received the permanent appointment in 1999.