

ADVOCACY BRINGS CHANGE

Through the activism and collaboration between various parts of the University during the previous decade, the following organizations were created to address women's issues:

- The President's Commission on the Status of Women, 1972
- The Sexuality Center, 1974
- The Affirmative Action Office, 1974
- The Women's Studies Program, 1977

Recognizing the need for women's issues to be addressed represented a clear cultural shift on this campus as well as elsewhere in New England and across the nation.

Other groups to give voice to specific concerns included the Professional and Technical Staff Welfare Committee, which formed in response to a request in 1967 from President McConnell; this later became the PAT Council, which represented the salaried professional staff. The Operating Staff Council as an hourly staff organization formed in 1975 to represent their interests.



Sarah Curwood, a staff member at UNH, and a member of the first President's Commission on the Status of Women in 1971, continues her work here as an administrative assistant in the Social Work department. The Commission is composed of representatives from faculty, students, and staff with a coordinator to facilitate activities.



Occupational Therapy students learn how to intervene therapeutically in people's lives to restore and revitalize occupational functioning. Foundation in the biological sciences as well as occupational theory and practice is suited to an active learning style. Cooperative group work, learning through experience and by solving problems are the primary learning modes. Students gain experience working with people in the community and in various other settings.



Betty Crepeau graduated from UNH in 1966 in the Occupational Therapy Program, returning to teach from 1973-1978 and from 1981-2000. She was department chair from 1990-1996 and the initiator of recording the department's history.

A Black Studies program was initiated, and the number of black students on campus increased. Many groups began to feel that their voices and interests were being recognized, putting in place the organizational structures for more diverse representation. In 1975, Merrimack Valley College became the University of New Hampshire at Manchester to better serve this region and the city of Manchester. Each of these organizational changes would carry the institution forward into the 21st century.

Initiatives in the forefront of change include steps taken during the 1970s by the newly created President's Commission on the Status of Women: The Commission

- issued the first annual report on the status of faculty, staff, administration and students, 1973
- recommended establishing a day care center for University staff and students, 1974
- studied operating staff's upward mobility, 1976
- founded the women's studies program, 1977
- revised maternity leave policy, 1978
- issued "Connections," a newsletter about campus women

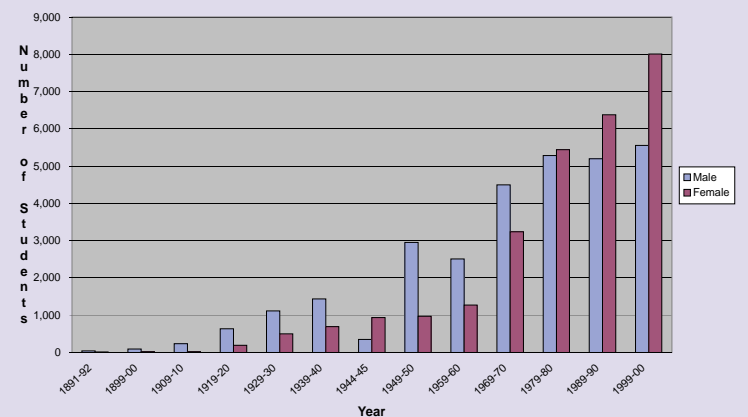
Social life on campus dramatically changed in the 1970s. Out of the restrictions of the previous 70 years, equal treatment of women and men was now achieved. The first co-educational dormitories appeared, offering choices of single sex sections or mixed floors of a dormitory. In the single-sex dormitories, unlimited visitation by either sex was permitted. Women students could now drink alcohol on campus. House mothers were replaced by residential assistants (RA's), who were carefully selected graduate and undergraduate students.

These actions on campus existed side by side with the development of the University's nursing program, created from a long tradition of women caring for and healing others. In 1965 Louise Fernald (1931) became chair of the department, joined by Ann Kelley in 1966. Both women developed the nursing curriculum and began teaching students. The Occupational Therapy Program, started in 1942, continued to grow. The words of Donna Gatti (1974), illustrate the conflict between women's traditional focus on family and on a new world of work in this important field.

"Seems like the relationship between work, family, and social roles is always evolving. Just when I feel like I am getting on top of one developmental phase, I find myself catapulted unprepared into the next life passage. It's a constant juggling, jack of all trades, master of none. OT is an innate part of my identity at this point and while motherhood is always my first priority, work and career have vied for a close second place...It has afforded the privilege of working closely with people and sometimes making a positive difference in their lives. OT has also allowed me to support my family financially and is also the basis of much of my social network."

The actions of women and men from all segments of the university created organizations that would continue to advocate for change and the ongoing development of the University of New Hampshire.

Enrollment Female vs. Male Stats By Year and Gender At UNH Durham



Ann Kelley, who joined the nursing program in 1965 to teach and develop curriculum, mentored many students and faculty. She developed a course on death and dying, which was a general education elective. Director of the Nursing Laboratory Grant, which built the first Nursing Skills Laboratory at UNH, she served as chair of the department from 1996 to her retirement in 1999.



Nursing education resulting in a B.S. and RN is an active combination of theory and practice. It requires extensive knowledge of human anatomy and physiology, microbiology, human growth and development as a foundation for specialized nursing courses. Application of theoretical concepts takes the form of learning, practicing the technical skills in a laboratory and later with supervision in the clinical setting of a hospital. Students have experience with people of all ages and with both well and ill individuals.