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The Rise and Fall of the Library Science Program at Eastern Michigan University

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The Rise and Fall of the Library Science Program at Eastern Michigan University



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Why?



Library Reading Room- Old Main, MSNS

*Note: All images in this presentation courtesy of the EMU University Archives.

EMU - A Brief History

Established by the State of Michigan in 1849, Eastern Michigan University opened its doors as the Michigan State Normal School in 1853. Michigan State Normal School was the first teachers' training school west of the Allegheny Mountains and initially taught students at a basic secondary level, instructing them in teaching methods and material to cover at a variety of levels.

In 1899, Michigan State Normal School changed its name to Michigan State Normal College. Professor Richard Boone lobbied to establish Normal as four-year college, rather than a secondary school. Normal entered the twentieth century as Michigan's premier teacher training school and had become the first teacher training school in the United States to have a four-year degree program.

In 1956, the school became known as Eastern Michigan College. Three years later, the school gained the status of a university by formally establishing the Graduate School (graduate classes had been offered since 1939) and changed its name again, for the final time, to Eastern Michigan University.



Michigan State Normal School - Old Main, c.a. 1900

The Department of Library Service

The Department of Library Service was established in 1940 because of a growing demand for school librarians.

Elsie A. Andrews, the College Librarian, was the driving force.

“First teachers college in Michigan to establish a course for the training of school librarians.”

In the early 1950s:

- The State Certification Code of Michigan required that schools employ qualified librarians.
- ALA sets up the Association of School Librarians.
- The name of the program was changed to the Department of Library Science.
- “First institution of higher learning in the State of Michigan to establish a basic undergraduate training program for school librarians.”



Elsie A. Andrews

Changes to the Program and Connection to the School of Education

- ▶ In 1952 when Andrews retired, Margaret Robinson was promoted to Professor of the Library Science Program.
- ▶ Robinson formerly held the position of Roosevelt School Librarian from 1937-1952.
- ▶ The 1952-53 school year brought many significant changes to the program. It became a division of the College of Education and completely revamped its curriculum. Courses were still taught in the Library.
- ▶ The program was billed as qualifying you "for a 'top pay' professional position."



Margaret Robinson at Registration, 1955



Ford Hall (Library), 1939-1966

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the slide, creating a modern, layered effect. The text is positioned on the left side of the slide, set against a plain white background.

Student Life in the Library Science Program

Roosevelt School as a Lab

Founded as a laboratory school in 1924. The school originally housed only 9th grade students and was called Roosevelt High School. It expanded the following year to include instruction for grades 7-12, and later, when expanded to include elementary grades, the name was changed to Roosevelt School.

The Education Appropriation Act was passed by the Michigan State Congress in 1966 eliminated funding for this type of laboratory school. Roosevelt closed its doors to students in 1967.



Roosevelt School

Library Club

Students enrolled in the program were welcome to participate in the Library Club. It was in operation from 1942 - 1977(?).

The Club hosted:

- ▶ Teas
- ▶ Guest Lectures
- ▶ Annual Book Week
- ▶ Library visits throughout the state






Library Club Book Fair, ca. 1960



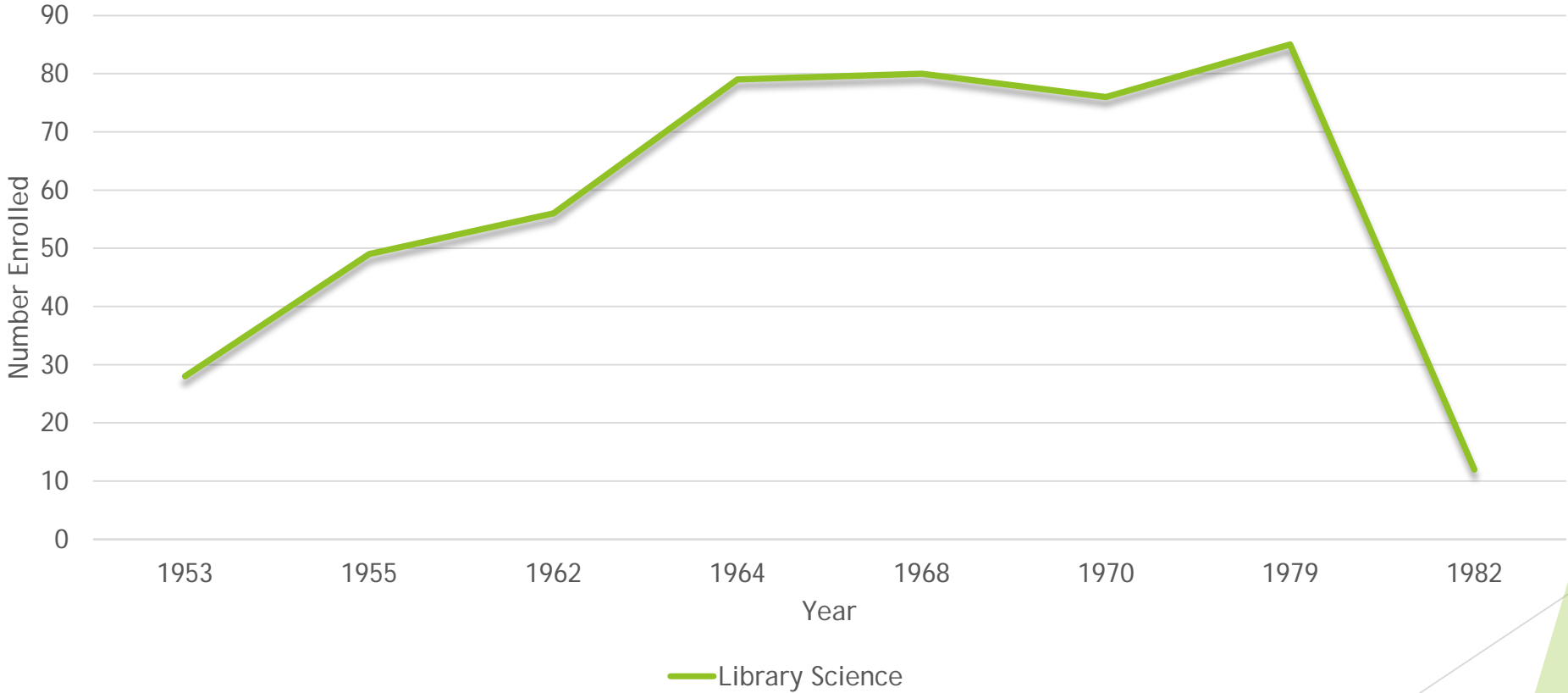
Library Club, 1955 - with Margaret Robinson (top, center)

Curriculum Pursuit

Does it appear in the catalog of Library Science classes?			 (in 1951)
Reference Books & Their Use			
History of the Book			
School Library Media Management			
Collection Development			
Classification & Cataloging			

Enrollment in the Library Science Program

Student Enrollment



The End of the Library Science Program

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the slide, creating a modern, layered effect. The text is positioned on the left side of the slide against a plain white background.

End of the Library School

Part One: Retiring Faculty

- ▶ After 32 years of service, Margaret Robinson retired from EMU. Frances Cook was hired to replace her as head of the Department of Library Science in 1970. With her retirement in 1973, the program was led by Henry Corbacho.
- ▶ Henry Corbacho's (AKA Mr. Library Science) retirement in 1983 was among the factors behind the decision to close the Library Science program.



Random Picture of Unhappy Students in Starkweather Hall

End of the Library School

Part Two: Change in Standards

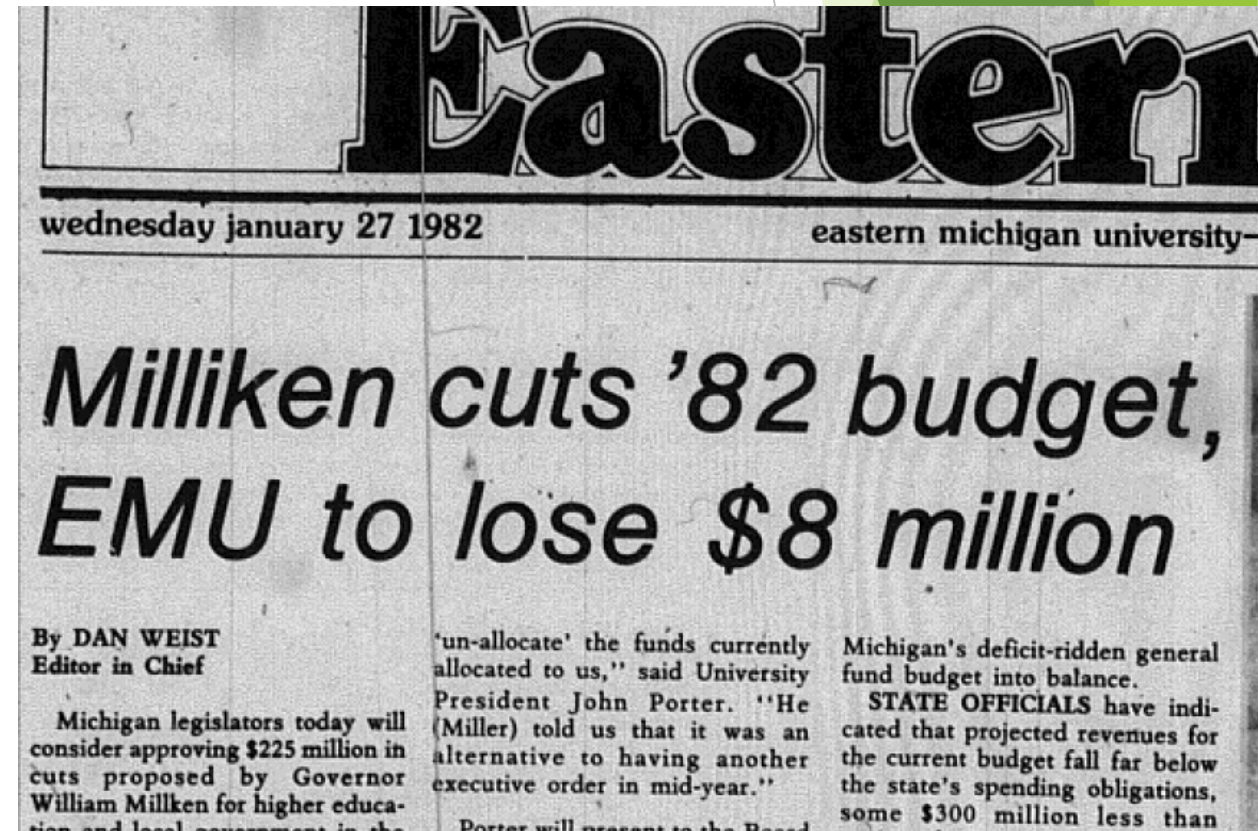
- ▶ 1972 ALA Standards for Accreditation
 - ▶ A library school could offer a single specialization if it was in addition to general professional principles.
 - ▶ Library School should be “an integral *but distinctive* academic unit.”
 - ▶ “The program of professional education in librarianship is a graduate program.”
- ▶ In 1952 met “tentative” requirements for the American Library Association’s accreditation.
 - ▶ A letter to the current ALA Archives shows that MSNC/EMU never received accreditation from ALA.
- ▶ The Library Science Program met North Central Association’s accreditation requirements for school librarians.
- ▶ The Library Science Program met American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education accreditation requirements.



End of the Library School

Part Three: Money (as always)

- ▶ State Cuts lead to program review at EMU (and all throughout the State).
- ▶ Many programs are cut - including the Department of Library Science.
- ▶ It was voted on and unanimously approved by all levels of review (Dean, Department Head, Faculty Council, etc.)
- ▶ According to the Board of Regents documents, EMU had the last undergraduate degree program left in the state for Library Science, but it had a "limited market for students trained at the bachelor's level."



Further Research?

Every project ends with more questions:

- Where were most of MSNC/EMU's Library Science graduates placed?
- Which other Colleges and Universities had undergraduate Library Science programs?
- Why, after the standards changed, didn't EMU work towards getting a Master's level degree program?



Tea Time - Starkweather Hall

Questions?

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