

- \*\* Free Education of Technicians for Water Conservation and Wastewater Control — (October 1969)
- \*\* Free Preparing Supportive Personnel for New and Emerging Technologies — (May 1970)
- \*\* Free Environmental Career Education to Meet the Nation's Manpower Needs — (May 1972)

<sup>1</sup> Presentation by Walter J. Brooking, Education Program Specialist, Post Secondary and Adult Occupational Programs Branch, Bureau of Occu-

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## THE EMPIRE STATE CAMPUS

Dr. James Hall, President

Empire State College, State University's non-residential Arts and Science College, was created to explore and develop alternative approaches of higher education, building upon the strengths and resources of the entire State University system. It is not meant to be a replication of present college systems.

Instead, Empire State College is a response by State University to provide greater access to students throughout the state who require flexibility in time, place and method of learning. The College attempts to be responsive to the human and social circumstances of persons, especially to the need for flexibility of time and place, so that those previously unable or unwilling to attend a campus regularly may be able to pursue an education.

To meet the educational needs and purposes of diverse students in a rapidly changing society, the College provides content, affording initiative to each student in planning a program of study fitted to his specific needs and purposes.

Finally, Empire State seeks methods to lower the per-student cost of higher education. Its aim is to lower costs in a non-campus situation to 50 or 60% of the per-student cost in conventional institutions of higher learning. The College will evaluate and utilize learning resources within a community including, for example, public libraries, theaters, laboratories, government and social agencies, as well as those resources already on established campuses of the State University and private colleges and universities throughout the State. Empire State College doesn't intend to duplicate existing learning resources and facilities.

In order to achieve these purposes Empire State College is in the process of developing five basic alternatives to the traditional classroom/lecture method of study. Any or all of these alternatives may be used to produce a suitable study plan for each student of the College.

1. The first and probably most adaptable alternative is the individually tailored study plan prepared between a student and faculty mentor. This mentorship mode requires a full-time core faculty, supplemented by a larger number of part-time adjunct specialists. The mentor helps students define their goals, plan a program of study which moves the student toward those goals, and evaluates the progress.
2. The second alternative is the program mode.

Students may select from a wide range of faculty prepared independent study materials, including modules especially developed by Empire State College. These materials, which include use of television and other media, provide highly flexible sequences of study for students who wish to work in this mode.

3. A third alternative encompasses the field studies or experiential aspects of learning. Many students incorporate prior learning gained through job or life experience through this modality. Travel, international studies, internships are all possible sources for learning.
4. Empire State College will offer yet another alternative — the SUNY degree. This is actually a composite or regional degree in which a student completes a degree at several different institutions. Empire State College will bring together a panel of faculty from these institutions which then approves the academic validity of the student's plan, and supervises its effective completion. Empire State College will provide the mechanism which recommends the student to the SUNY Board of Trustees for a degree.
5. Finally, the degree by examination alternative (external degree) is offered by the New York State Regents. Students can incorporate such examinations into their degree plans at Empire State College; conversely students who develop competencies through studies undertaken at Empire State College can apply the credit earned toward a Regent's degree. In this way the two New York State programs are fully complementary in providing the full range of educational alternatives to students.

Presently, there are five Regional Learning Centers within the State, located in Albany, Rochester, Manhattan, Saratoga Springs and Old Westbury. Learning Units, staffed by one or two administrators and clerical staff, have been established in Plattsburg, Purchase, Utica and Manhattan for students who wish to study through the use of learning modules, media and other learning materials being developed by the College. Empire State also has a Unit in London for those students who wish to pursue international studies.

The College has also developed several special purpose programs. A Center for Labor Studies, located in Manhattan, is designed to give an opportunity to working people, especially union members, to pursue an undergraduate education. New Models for Career Education, located in Rockland County, funded by the Kellogg Foundation, will provide new career ladders for students in business, engineering technologies, community services and allied health fields. Students will have the opportunity of studying religion as it relates to large city problems through a spe-

cial program by the Hazen Foundation in New York City. They may also take advantage of a fine arts program being run in cooperation with the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

In the 18 months that Empire State College has been in operation, enrollment has grown to 1,600 students; the age of the average student is in the middle thirties with a range from 17 to 72. Presently Learning Centers have a list of students waiting to enroll as mentors are able to accommodate them.

Entrance requirements are a high school diploma or its equivalent and the possession of a high degree of self initiative and motivation. To continue in good standing, students normally carry at least a half-course load. The experience has been that about half are enrolled on a part-time basis. Students also may include courses taken on a conventional campus.

Presently four degrees are offered, namely: Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science.

It is important to reemphasize that Empire State College is not a re-creation of already duplicated resources of persons and facilities, but a different approach to learning.

Empire State believes that education is not confined to the walls of a classroom, and that people learn and require education throughout their lives. Empire State College was created to provide a true alternative to traditional higher education for those students who are unable, or do not want, to attend classes in a traditional campus setting.

What Empire State College hopes to do is to put the College into the community where previously the student has been provided with a "community" with which to identify (the campus community). Now the town library becomes the college library; the area expert on whatever subject becomes a professor or tutor; the local museum becomes a research facility. In all, the community truly becomes the campus.