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Nutrition Month Spotlight: UD Marks 77 Years of Dietetics Education

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WEDNESDAY MARCH 20, 2019

Nutrition Month Spotlight: UD Marks 77 Years of Dietetics Education

By Amy Rohmiller

March is [National Nutrition Month](#), and to celebrate, we're taking a look back at the history of UD's nutrition and dietetics programs.

The [dietetics program](#) dates back to 1942, when UD created the Department of Home Economics in the College of Arts and Sciences. At the time, students could specialize in food and nutrition, clothing and textiles, home management, or general home economics. In the [1942-43 Bulletin](#), the University touted the value of its home economics courses, especially Nutrition in the Defense Program, as a special advantage of attending UD during the wartime emergency.

The first “cookery laboratory” was in Chaminade Hall and could accommodate 12 students (all women). Students invited the dean of the College to their first luncheon, and he sent a thank you note commending the delicious meal.

In 1944, students went on a field trip to the Air Service Command restaurant at Patterson Field (now part of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base) to learn about the mass production of food. Restaurant staff showed the students all parts of the restaurant's operations, including the kitchen, bakery, supply room, and meat and dairy refrigeration rooms.

In 1944, Charlotte Stidham received the first Bachelor of Science in home economics from UD. She completed graduate work at Western Reserve University and a dietetics internship at University Hospitals of Cleveland.

In fall 1945, the department offered its first evening class in foods to 18 students. By then, the program had changed its name to dietetics and institutional management. The

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names of the classes look more familiar too: Institutional Buying, Nutrition and Health, and Quantity Cookery and Food Purchasing.

Early graduates of the dietetics program worked as dietitians in New York City, as a visiting dietitian for the city of Dayton, and in Miami Valley and St. Elizabeth hospitals in Dayton. Today's dietetics program at UD features a rigorous, science-based curriculum integrating topics such as sustainability, food security, acculturation, integrative and functional nutrition, sports nutrition, and food science throughout the curriculum. Students are active in a variety of community nutrition education programs.

— *Amy Rohmiller is an associate University archivist in the University Archives and Special Collections.*



Cookery Lab, Chaminade Hall

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Early home economics students cook in the first food laboratory in Chaminade Hall in the 1940s. (University Archives and Special Collections)



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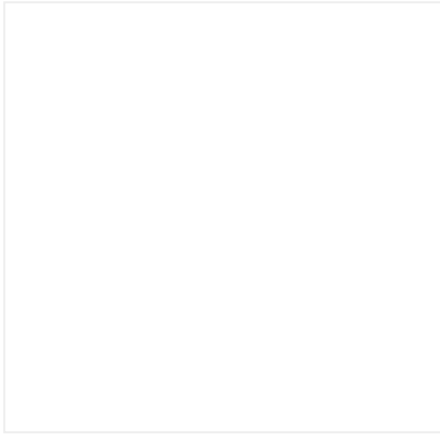
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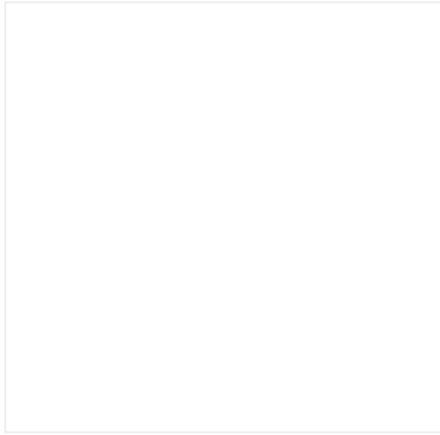
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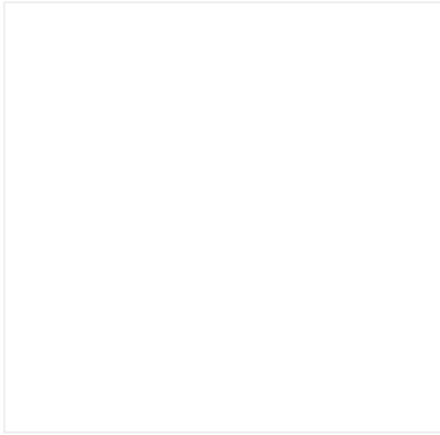
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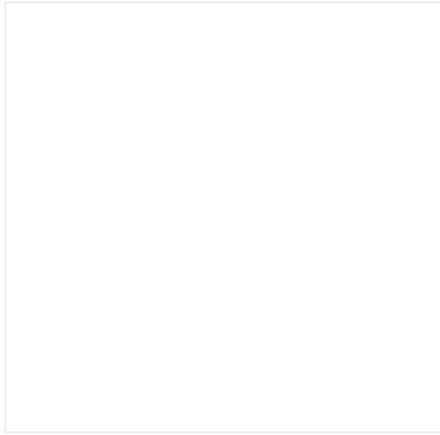
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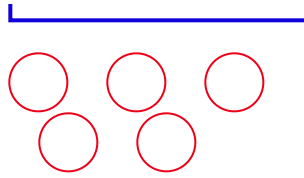
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