

Caldwell sees 'challenges,' not problems

By Robin Sawyer

In her own quiet way, Dr. Helen Caldwell has always been motivated by a dedication to excellence.

"If you do small things well," says Dr. Caldwell. "Then other things gradually come to you."

Dr. Caldwell is ECSU's new Acting Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Chancellor Jimmy Jenkins appointed her to the position on September (?), following the resignation of Dr. Johnny Houston.

"I don't consider teaching small things," said Dr. Caldwell, who has served ECSU for 32 years as a professor of English and speech, and, most recently, as Director of General Studies. "That's just the generic term, but I hope part of why I was chosen is that I had been doing what I had been assigned with dedication and enthusiasm."

"I think that may have been part of it, and maybe just a stroke of luck somewhere; there are certainly many competent people on this campus. I feel really privileged to have been given the opportunity to assume this position."

Dr. Caldwell said her appointment as Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs caught her by surprise.

"I had to go home and think about it, because of course I recognized the enormous responsibility of this office. I thought, I've always loved programming and designing programs. I love people and working with them. I also realized I had worked with all the chairpersons before, in executing the programs of the Division of General Studies."

"That was a serious consideration and an advantage, because much of the work of Academic Affairs goes through the

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Dr. Helen Caldwell



Dr. Helen Caldwell and Chancellor Jenkins.

Departmental chairpersons to the faculty and back in that direction."

When Dr. Caldwell discussed the new position with her husband, she recalled he said, "Terrific, go for it. You deserve it, you'll do it well."

"That was really a plus," she added. "He's been just absolutely supportive. Obviously, I couldn't swing it if he were not."

Caldwell's husband, Dr. Thomas Caldwell, teaches in ECSU's Department of Health and Physical Education.

The couple's daughter, Patrice, is a geneticist for the State Department in Germany. She is married to Captain Robert H. Smith, Jr.

Dr. Caldwell said her two biggest personal achievements are her daughter and "my years of successful marriage, with a very loving, supportive husband. He's really my best friend, and I wouldn't trade anything for that."

Dr. Caldwell, the first woman to ever serve ECSU as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, said that the University's

male administrators have been "very supportive," but she adds, "I think my greatest joy has probably been the reaction of the women who are sincerely happy to see me here."

"I hope that my interim period as Vice Chancellor will share the idea that women can very capably proceed with any responsibility given."

Her duties include working with the departments and faculty in planning for the General Administration Review, designing programs, ironing out details in academic council and curriculum committee meetings.

"A typical day begins about 6 a.m., I do a lot of drafting of memos and signing requisitions in my den at home. I arrive at work between 8:15 and 8:30, and then usually my day in the office is spent with appointments, back to back. And there are meetings to attend. Some days there is community involvement, and work with organizations."

Dr. Caldwell said she is dedicated to continuing the development of ECSU's academic programs in the next year.

"That to me will be my challenge and my happiness when it is accomplished. So I shall work very hard with departmental chairpersons and faculty to do that."

High on her list of priorities is helping students sharpen their abilities to do critical thinking.

"We must do more of this at the freshman level. I think we all tend to do it by the time we're teaching juniors and seniors, but we have to begin at the freshman level, imparting the techniques of critical thinking as we give knowledge. I would like to be a part of the leadership, to join my colleagues in moving this process forward on our campus."

Dr. Caldwell said she sees more challenges facing the University than problems. "We have found the means to meet the problems. We just have the challenge to use, promote and develop the potential of this University."

"ECSU has always been an excellent university. Having been here for 32 years, I say that based on the results we

have achieved with our students. Although we see some press to the contrary, those who have been here know that our graduates have always produced. All across the country, our students are hired and promoted in schools systems, they attend law schools, dental schools, graduate schools.

"I know you've heard the Chancellor say 'We are the rising star in the east. Well, we have the challenge of seeing that we move with that, and move with it well.'"

Dr. Caldwell admitted she will miss the contact with students, which has been a daily part of her job at ECSU. "I have had many student friends over the years. Now there is very little time, and those who come to visit often miss me because I am in a meeting."

Her advise to ECSU's students?

"Whatever task you have, it must be done well. And it would be well to remember that most people you deal with are good, if you expect them to be and if you trust them to be. Trust people with good common sense until they prove they cannot be trusted."

Dr. Caldwell said she learned many of her values from her parents. "They have taught me values that have served me well, that have allowed me to meet and understand people, and to love all people. It was an absolute miracle that I grew up without prejudice. I grew up in a family where we learned we must respect each other for what a person is, for his or her value as a human being. Many of the values I learned from them I try to carry over in my relationships with students, which is a respect for them and an understanding of where they are in life."

A native of Farmville, Va., Dr. Caldwell received an undergraduate in English and graduate degrees from New York University. She has a doctorate degree in speech pathology from George Washington University.

ECSU a 'win-win' situation Dr. Jenkins tells faculty

'88 freshmen show higher grades, SAT

This fall's freshman class is the largest in the history of ECSU, Chancellor Dr. Jimmy Jenkins announced at the October 4 General Faculty Meeting. "We're talking about solid, dependable growth," Jenkins said, adding that 28% of the University's students are now Incentive Scholars. "That will continue to grow."

Jenkins said beginning next year ECSU is scheduled to receive an additional \$600,000 for its Incentive Scholarship program, and \$1,200,000 the year after that.

"There's a tremendous development taking place in our academic programs," said Jenkins. "And it's beginning to show. People are talking about Elizabeth City State University. There is an excitement and an energy that you can feel."

Jenkins said Elizabeth City was not just getting bigger in terms of enrollment. "It's also

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Dr. Jimmy Jenkins

getting better, in terms of academic skills and the quality of education."

The average SAT score of this year's freshman class is 34 points above the last year's enrollment, said Jenkins. "And 70% of our new students are in the top 50% of their high school class."

"We're seeing the magnet effect. Quality students are bring-

ing with them other quality students, who have decided ECSU is the institution of choice."

Jenkins said that the buildings on campus have been renovated, and that the grounds look good. "But you can't often tell how good a book is by the cover. You pick up the book by the cover. If the contents meet your expectations, it's a win-win situation."

ECSU's new facilities and expanded programs do not come "unattached," said Jenkins.

"We are smart enough to know, we can't expect business as usual. We must present documentation that our students are doing better. We are not just talking about moving to the point of average. We're talking about excelling. We need to document we are making progress in every year."

ECSU's students will need to be challenged, said Jenkins, to perform well on national standardized tests.

"We must be sure we have been able to develop instruments that say to the state and the nation, how well our students are doing."

Time Out



Photo courtesy of Holly-Fonville Photography

The Mighty Marching Vikings take a breather in the grandstand following their performance at ECSU's home game against Virginia Union October 8.

Nations' colleges struggle with overcrowding problem

by Michael O'Keefe

(CPS)—Classes at the University of North Texas are so overcrowded this fall that campus workers, scrounging around in basements to find old stools and desks for students to use, put into classrooms furniture that features graffiti like "Nixon's a Cool Dude," and "Mike Was here 12/12/68."

It's no better at the University of North Dakota, where the registrar for years has posted a list of closed classes for students to check. This fall, the registrar's office decided the closed classes list was too long. It posted a far shorter list of open classes.

In fact, students at many campuses are reporting extraordinary difficulties getting into classes this fall.

When they do get courses, they find the classrooms themselves filled to overflowing.

"We're being stuffed into classes," groused University of Illinois senior Micheal Mallon.

Teachers hate it, too. "For the first time in my 17 years here, every seat in every section is filled," reported Ron Pynn, chairman of North Dakota's po-

litical science department.

"Students," added University of North Texas State English Prof. Robert Stevens, "have become helpless victims of my lectures. There's no room for give-and-take classroom discussions. And at a time when we're concerned about writing skills, there's no way I can give essay tests to 500 students."

Through reliable enrollment counts won't be out for several weeks, campuses in general seem to have become much more crowded this fall.

Schools as diverse as the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Del Mar College in Dallas, Villanova University in Philadelphia and Northeastern Louisiana report having more students than ever.

As a result, in recent weeks at Boston, North Carolina State, Tulane and Loyla and New Orleans universities as well as at Grinnell College in Iowa and the Universities of Miami and Connecticut, among others, have run out of dorm rooms.

Now they're running out of classrooms.

"In a history class I'm taking," Illinois Mallon said,

"There are 75 seats, which are bolted into the floor, for 100 people. We have 20-to-25 people standing through each class. The prof gave a 'weeding out' quiz so those that are not committed to the class will drop out."

At the University of Houston, Social Sciences Dean Harrell Rodgers had "no choice except to let classes get larger," to offer fewer sections...because we just don't have as many faculty or the money to hire temporaries. Those facts are just beyond our control."

Everyone blames state legislatures for their problems.

Economically depressed states like Texas, North Dakota and Illinois "have not kept up funding," reported Elaine El-Khawas of the American Council on Education in Washington, D.C. "There's a financial squeeze on the Rust Belt states and the oil states."

At North Dakota, many crowded classes are now taught by teaching assistants and temporary lecturers instead of full-time professors.



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(919) 338-1706