

# Business division head explains B.B.A.

By Linda McCarty

So just what is a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree?

According to Dr. Christopher McKenna, Division Head of Public Affairs and Acting Head of the Division of Business Administration, this degree title not strictly unique to Capitol, traditionally suggests a more broad-based curriculum in business. Conversely, the more widely recognized Bachelor of Science degree in Business usually suggests a quantitative requirement in a college of science.

"The B.S. requirements usually include a couple semesters of calculus as a minimum with a general science component of at least physics and chemistry," said Dr. McKenna.

For example, "someone with a B.S. in accounting not only would have the quantitative component, but a more intense string of courses in accounting with not as many non-accounting business requirements," he added.

Yet, said Dr. McKenna, the B.B.A. has evolved into a broad-based degree with a strong focus so that, "what is a B.S. in one school may very well be a B.B.A. in another."

"The differences have tended to merge."

Capitol did not always grant Bachelors of Business Administration. Up until nine years ago, graduates of business at Capitol were granted a Bachelor of Administration.

But just how do those outside of Capitol view the B.B.A.?

"Employers want a person to

have a degree in accounting; whether a B.A., B.S., or B.B.A. makes very little difference," said McKenna.

Coordinator of Career Planning and Placement Peg O'Hara, who also agreed that degree titles were not significant factors to employers, said, "What has happened over the past six to eight years is that there are more people obtaining degrees in business than there are jobs available--1983 was the worse year for college graduates in the past 25 years."

O'Hara said that it is the competitiveness of the job market that is more of a deciding factor allowing employers to be more selective. She has found that employers have hired students more on the basis of their GPA than their degree title.

Employers also pay little attention to whether a program is accredited or not, especially the regional ones, said McKenna.

Although the business program at Capitol is in the process of becoming accredited McKenna sees it more as "a way of taking a look at oneself by taking a standard and measuring oneself against it."

"Accreditation is not a snapshot, but a continuous process beginning with a self study to look at ourselves to improve," he added.

The proposed schedule for the accreditation is a formal self study next year and a site visit by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (A.A.C.B.) the year after, according to McKenna.

Because Capitol is an upper

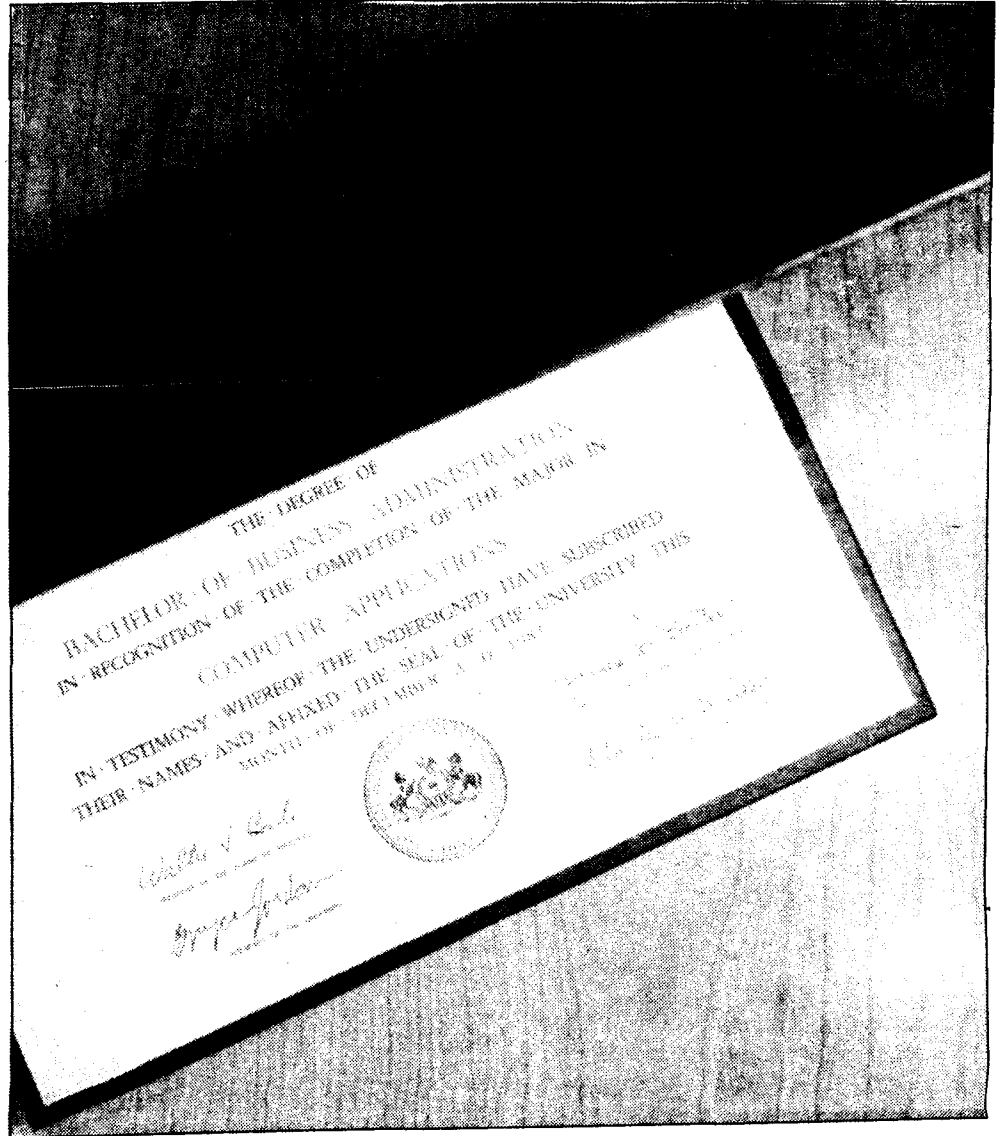


Photo by Jeffrey G. Shatzer

division institution, it encounters certain problems unique to schools catering to transfer students. According to McKenna, if the business department were to incorporate requirements of a Bachelor of Science into the program, it may mean students would have to back up. Instead of four semesters they would have to come for five.

But, said McKenna, "As a whole institution, we have to say, 'Now, is that our mission? Is that the right role for us to have for the students we are trying to serve?'"

"And in a larger world degree titles start to mean less."

When asked how the B.B.A. came to be at Capitol, McKenna reflected to the mid-1960's when, "this little campus was being set up... they really were not sure what kind of beast the thing was going to become, so they had to be very careful of what degrees they let them (the campus) have.

This is not unusual within an organization, said McKenna, comparing Capitol to a colony and its relationship with the mother country (U. Park).

"Well, eventually the colony grows up and becomes an America--so that in a sense Capitol Campus has been growing up all of these years and will continue to grow up," said McKenna.

"However, as we grow, we still have some degree titles that don't make sense," added McKenna.

"A degree title is supposed to connote something, and if you have to stop and explain it, obviously its meaning is lost."

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