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The UMass/Boston Friday Report #4

News and information about and for
the Community from the Chancellor's Office

November 8, 1991

Harbor Campus Rated Among Most Beautiful -- Our complex of buildings on Dorchester Bay is judged to be among the 35 most beautiful campuses in the nation, according to the author of a new book that measures the aesthetic quality of several hundred colleges throughout the U.S. Author Thomas A. Gaines, a Columbia University-trained architect, writes in his *The Campus as a Work of Art*, published by Praeger last September, that UMass/Boston possesses "a fine group of landscaped brick structures amid stately groves on an open plaza. The buildings are connected by handsome, trussed sky bridges. On a rainy day, the movement of students through these transparent conduits animates the campus."

UMass/Boston and Harvard University are the only local institutions to be ranked in the group listing the top 50 most beautiful campuses. Praising its brick interiors and high ceilings, Gaines, who began work on his book 30 years ago, calls the Healey Library, designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Harry Weese and Associates and completed in 1973, the most impressive part of the campus. His book for the first time presents the total physical world of the college campus as a bona fide art form. It analyses the aesthetic element involved in what his publisher calls "the spawning and savaging of college grounds." Gaines' system for determining aesthetic value consists of rating each campus on a scale of 1 to 5 in four separate categories. Rankings are determined by the total score. UMass/Boston and Harvard each received a 17 out of a possible perfect score of 20. The Harbor Campus scored a 5 for architectural quality, and 4's for landscape, urban space (defined as "the area between buildings") and overall appeal. Thirteen schools achieve the highest score of 19.

Gaines, who has written extensively on planning and architecture, told the *Friday Report* that many of the students he spoke with complained that the campus' brick buildings made it resemble a prison. "If you look at the campus while driving on the Southeast Expressway, it probably does," he said. "But once you get close, it's quite attractive." In general, Gaines noted that the majority of college campuses he studied are lacking in their overall appearance and architectural quality. He said that many institutions have detracted from their original design by failing to plan for expansion. As a result, while individual buildings are splendid, an organized sense of structure is often missing. As an example, he cited Harvard Yard, saying, "It is the ultimate place, but the buildings surrounding it are awful. The Widener Library is too big, and its imperial style isn't appropriate for the Georgian Colonial theme in the Yard."



Faculty and Staff Notes -- Professor Sumer Aggarwal of the College of Management has written an article, "Dynamic Japanese Manufacturing Versus Static U.S. Manufacturing: The Incomplete Picture," which has appeared in *Management International Review*, 3rd (Over)

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quarter, 1991. The article compares the strengths and weaknesses of the two major economic players in the world, and offers suggestions for the future. • Physics Professor **D.V.G.L.N. Rao**, conducted a seminar, *Nonlinear Optical Interactions in Polymers*, on October 17th at the Physics Department of Purdue University's School of Science. • A Japanese translation of *Power Struggle: The Hundred Year War over Electricity* by **Richard Rudolph**, CPCS associate dean for academic affairs, and **Scott Ridley** has just been published in paperback by Ochanomizu Shobo, Ltd. in Tokyo. • Professor **Ruth Butler**, chair of the art department, is available to advise colleagues who might wish to apply for a new grants program in the humanities sponsored by the NEH. This is the first year of the program, which offers a grant of \$3,000 for six weeks of study -- presumably during the summer -- to faculty with heavy undergraduate teaching loads who wish to study and read in an area in which they teach. Professor Butler recently served on one of the panels that awarded the first grants. • Chancellor **Sherry H. Penney** delivered two speeches last week in Boston: one on *Scarcity and the New Culture of Higher Education* to the annual national meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, and the other to an audience at the Ford Hall Forum on *Political Correctness: Dealing with Diversity on College Campuses*. • The work that Professor **Zelda Gamson**, of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, did with **Arthur Chickering**, *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*, culminated in Issue #47 of the Jossey-Bass series *New Directions in Teaching and Learning*, which appeared this fall. The *Seven Principles* identify the teaching practices that have proven most effective in undergraduate education.

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Salary Update -- Chancellor **Sherry H. Penney** and three faculty members (Economics Professor **Arthur MacEwan**, Mathematics Professor **Bernice Auslander** and Nursing Professor **Sherry Lynne Merrow**) met with Education Secretary **Piedad Robertson** last Monday (instead of last Friday - as previously mentioned -- because of a schedule change) to press for salary increases for staff and faculty. The group was pleased to find the Secretary understanding and sympathetic about the fact that faculty and staff at the University have gone without raises for more than three years.

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Gerontology Institute Study -- At a news conference yesterday, the Gerontology Institute and Center announced the results of a new study. The research by Paul Houlihan, vice president of the Conservation Services Group, Inc., and Elba Caraballo-Ireland, director of the Institute's policy division, is titled *Old, Cold and Alone -- The Impact of Fuel Assistance Reductions on the Elderly in Massachusetts*. Houlihan and Caraballo-Ireland interviewed 1,000 randomly selected elderly Fuel Assistance Program participants who had exhausted their benefits last winter. Their research brought to light the following facts:

- More than 7,000 elderly households in the state may be left in the cold this winter because of a lack of state fuel assistance funding.
- 46% of those who were interviewed reported going without heat for an average of 4 days last winter.
- 45% of those interviewed borrowed money to pay for fuel last winter. The study found that the elderly cut down on doctor visits and sold possessions to pay for rising home fuel costs.