

Action Stressed by 'Ecology U'

By Paul G. Hayes
of The Journal Staff

Green Bay, Wis. — Green Bay's first family planning clinic opens Monday, and that is one indirect measure of the community influence of the University of Wisconsin — Green Bay here.

The impetus for establishing the clinic in this strongly Roman Catholic community can be traced to a Population Growth symposium held a year ago at the university. That started the discussions that led to the clinic.

Furthermore, as part of a class project at the campus, a dozen students have helped write and record radio promotions that will advertise the clinic.

"In general," said Mrs. Donald E. Brown, the university's press director and a community worker for the clinic, "we have been really amazed at the turnout in this part of the country on population."

National Attention

Since its first buildings opened on a 600 acre campus overlooking the polluted southern end of Green Bay in September, 1969, the school has attracted national attention for its unique approach to education.

"I came away persuaded that it has the most exciting and promising educational experiment that I have found anywhere," writes John Fischer, contributing editor to Harper's Magazine, in its February issue.

He said that the Green Bay

campus was the embodiment of his "Survival U," where all work would focus on the idea of human ecology and the building of an environment "in which our species might be able to survive."

Broader Meaning

The university here does just that in colleges called environmental sciences, community sciences, human biology and creative communication. Here, "environment" takes on a meaning much broader than land, air and water pollution. It means the social, as well as the physical environment and it concentrates on relationships between the two.

Unlike one aspect of the environmental movement — that which would track down, expose and prosecute polluters and lax public officials — the university stresses another theme.

"An educational institution, if it truly is going to be educational, is going to have to avoid the angel-devil theory," said Chancellor Edward H. Weidner.

"We teach students that every one pollutes, every one consumes products that cause pollution and every body is going to have to pay to stop the pollution," he said.

Cooler Classrooms

It was in this spirit that he challenged students a couple of months ago to suffer through cooler classrooms and thereby cut down on fuel consumption.

Subsequent investigations



Edward W. Weidner

found that the impact on power consumption would be so small as to be insignificant, he said, and the idea was abandoned. Others are more promising.

For example, one committee now is considering testing each student owned car for its air pollution contribution before the student is granted a parking sticker on the campus lots.

Another group of students is organizing a communitywide program to collect and recycle aluminum cans, paper and bottles by organizing high school paper drives and contacting paper mills, and other industries willing to buy the discarded materials.

Rehabilitate Lake

A more ambitious project — one for which students are receiving course credit — concentrates on the problem of Lake Noquebay in Marinette County, a recreational lake that is aging rapidly because of overuse and development.

The project is being paid for by federal and county funds. It has students and faculty in biology, political science, chemistry, economics and sociology all working together on all facets of the rehabilitation of the lake.