

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Training for Homemaking

Wherever women go for higher education, home economics should be provided for them. The education of women when adequately conceived will include preparation for effective personal living, family participation and community responsibility as well as the satisfying experience which education should be in itself. Vocational choice and training must also be available. It is this type of education which home economics provides.

Approximately 75% of college women marry. Home and family thus become the lifework for the majority of young women. Adequate preparation for this means: acquisition of skills and techniques which facilitate modern living and the knowledge of basic principles underlying these; understanding of and insight into self and personal relationships; and above all, a broad background of general education which makes intelligible the physical and social world in which they live. This type of education is equally valuable for young women who do not marry. To woman falls the peculiar responsibility of preserving the values of home life.

The homes of Alabama as well as of the nation are of the utmost importance, not only now, but in the days of social and economic adjustment which must follow the war. More than ever women will need to prepare for the tremendous responsibility of safeguarding the family, this family which has been threatened by hasty marriage, long separation, new patterns of behavior, and other forces concomitant with war.

Because the average income in Alabama is low, the homes of the state fall far below desired standards. Studies have revealed inadequate nutrition of numerous families, lack of comfortable and attractive homes, meagerness of family wardrobes and poor living standards of many. It is the trained home-maker who has the tools for improving diet; setting new standards of efficiency; bringing aesthetic qualities into the home; planning and selecting attractive, low-cost clothing; finding many creative outlets for individual and family satisfactions; making the income go farther because of

intelligent purchasing; understanding the development of children and facilitating better relationships among family members.

The chief function of the School of Home Economics is to offer the young woman who chooses family life and homemaking as her career the opportunities of being well-trained for her responsibilities which she must face realistically. The future homemaker should derive [derive] the greatest possible satisfaction from her chosen work. She should also be able to help in facing the ever changing problems of family life.

Training for Home Economics Careers

Most young women today see the need of vocational readiness. Home Economics gives the woman ample opportunity for a wide choice in careers. She may select from among the following: teaching; social service; research and testing; government laboratory projects; distributive education; nursery school work; retailing; radio programs; family counseling; community nutrition group feeding; photography, writing and fashion fields. The girls may wish to become: a nutritionist; dietitian; interior decorator; demonstrator; consultant; or a specialist in foods, clothing, textiles or family life. Such vocations are closely related to homemaking. Preparation and experience in the one reinforce preparation and training for the other.

New careers opening in home economics add to those already long established. The young woman is enthusiastic over these opportunities because of the motivation of her basic interests in home and children, food and dress. She is richly challenged by such jobs as dress designing, institution management, and work with pre-school children. She sees in these and similar jobs work that is peculiarly hers.

Research

It is the function of home economics to carry on research in its various subject matter fields—no group can progress faster than research provides with knowledge and tools. Our problems are regional. Research in Home Economics is needed in all its areas particularly in child development, textiles and

clothing, foods and nutrition. Such a program will at the same time strengthen the undergraduate offerings and train young women for positions and services in the South.

Graduate Study

Graduate training and refresher courses must be offered to those graduates now in the field so that they may be helped to grow in their profession and be brought up to date in the latest subject matter and methods.

Services to Community, State and Region

The School of Home Economics extends its service far beyond the boundaries of the university campus. These services, which are varied and broad in scope, make the role of home economics a leading one in the development of the region. The following work of the staff indicates the type of services offered in the community, the state and the region which are considered functions of this school:

- a. Talks and addresses
- b. Radio programs
- c. Study groups
- d. Conferences, institutes and workshops
- e. Program and policy planning with leaders of women's organizations of the state through membership at their executive boards.
- f. Service on committees
- g. Consultant services to government agencies and other educational institutions
- h. Counseling service
- i. Demonstrations and exhibits
- j. Publications
- k. Cooperation with national research programs
- l. Cooperation with regional and state organizations.

Services within the University

Home Economics provide certain specific services on the campus which are peculiarly the criterion of this school. In addition to the courses set up especially for other departments the following are given:

- a. Selection and purchasing of furnishing for dormitories and student residences.
- b. Counseling of students as a part of the guidance program of the University
- c. Lecturing on request for other departments and organizations
- d. Faculty advising of student organizations.

Courses for non-majors

Courses are open to the non-major who is interested in having work in foods, clothing, nutrition, grooming, and child care, the house, etc. Certain courses are planned for other departments of the University such as those offered to the Schools of Education and Commerce.

Extension

From time to time courses in Home Economics are offered through the Extension Division of the University.

Correspondence

Ten correspondence courses are given by the School of Home Economics. These cover the fields of clothing and textiles, home furnishings, home management, consumer problems, family health and child care.