CHAPTER THREE

Part II: The Development of Undergraduate Degree Programs

Over the next half decade, programs would gradually extend from two, to three, and finally four year curriculums leading to undergraduate degrees. Home Economics was the first program to develop a four year curriculum and the first department in the school to have a student graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree.

In 1920-21, the ISNS catalog described the program as “a technical course devoted entirely too specific preparation for teaching domestic science” and also told would-be students that “those who finish the curriculum will receive a temporary state certificate to teach Domestic Science and also a diploma from the school.” At this point, the program required two years of study beyond the high school degree.

By 1922-23, the two year program had been expanded to a three year program. Courses required included psychology and observation, food chemistry, physiology and personal hygiene, special cookery and dietetics, household bacteriology and had practice house requirements. In addition to courses on food science and child development, Home Economics students took a number of science classes that adapted the natural sciences to their discipline.

According to the Indiana Penn newspaper, Mr. Emmert taught Home Economics students a Household Physics class that included field trips to Two Lick Creek to examine “How we get a good water supply,” or expeditions through the steam tunnel that connected the heating plant to the other buildings on campus to examine
the heating systems in Leonard Hall and the new gymnasium. (October 19, 1928, December 14, 1928)

Part of the curriculum also involved a practice house, a standard component of Home Economics programs. The Practice House provided a laboratory for the practical application of the scientific theories of efficient household management in a real household setting. Rotating through the tasks of household management during their stay, students would manage the budget, create nutritious meals, serve dinners, and care for children who came for a nursery school or babies who had come from an orphanage.

The Home Economics faculty responded to Keith’s 1925 request in 1925 to develop a four year curriculum. The curriculum was accepted by state authorities and in May of 1927. Alice Clements, one of their students, was the first to graduate from INS with a Bachelor of Science Degree.

Though Home Economics was the first, three other programs soon developed four-year curriculum and were allowed to offer full degrees. Now able to award bachelor’s degrees, on June 1, 1927, the name of Indiana State Normal School was officially changed to Indiana State Teachers College (ISTC).