

Registrar's job may rival students'

'The staff cares about their work. They're sensitive to their role.'

By Caroline Petrich
Of the Emerald

The Registrar's office means hassles, late fees and red tape for most students. However bad their image, these clerks are human and without them college life might not run as smoothly.

"The staff out there cares about their work," says Registrar Wanda Johnson with conviction. "They're sensitive to their role."

Johnson and her 26-member team keep track of grades, de-

gree analyses, graduation requirements, address changes, grade changes, adds/drops, and academic records for every University graduate since 1880.

That's the easy part. The hard part is keeping tabs on about 16,000 students who currently are enrolled.

Her office also handles the more obscure, but just as important, duties such as planning graduation ceremonies, mailing the diplomas and storing the leather-bound volumes of all faculty senate meetings since 1880.

The office, with a annual budget of \$880,000, dominates Oregon Hall's second floor. Bulging files that contain valuable academic information cover the office.

Johnson treats those files with deep respect. The Registrar's primary concern is to "protect the integrity" of the records, she says.

The files have grown to monstrous proportions, despite a 1973 move from Emerald Hall to the present office. To alleviate the space problem, Johnson's team has been translating 82,000 records (not including the cumulative academic file) to a data-base fiche system since last June. But the reams and reams of paper still are necessary in the case of a mechanical breakdown. For insurance, the office uses a paper and tape back-up system.

The registrar's office also is responsible for the infamous time schedule of classes. Packed with University policy lowdown, class times, registration directions and the tuition payment schedule, the time schedule may be one of the most important and most widely read document at the University.

A majority of red-tape related problems arise from misreading, or not reading, the time schedule, Johnson says. She attributes this to a lack of student "self-management," but "that doesn't mean we don't need to improve our communication."

Consider this example of a bureaucratic snafu that could have been avoided:

Wanting to drop a math class, a student slid his drop/add form



Photo by Bob Baker

Wanda Johnson

through a window at the Registrar's office. The clerk slid it back out after one glance.

"You need a stamp from the department," he explained.

"What!" cried the incredulous student. "Since when?"

"1964," replied the clerk.

"Next." Johnson says she regrets scenes like these, that tend to give her workers a bad name for doing their jobs, and leave students frustrated.

"I think they probably perceive us as those people who say 'no'," she says. "Sometimes we have to say no."

But not always. Johnson proudly discusses the current office system, which has one clerk assigned to a specific number of students. When students have questions about their academic records, they see the clerk assigned to their social security number.

"I think students appreciate that personal touch," Johnson

says. "I'm very conscious of the treatment of students. Students will be more acceptive (sic) if they're treated as adults."

Students are polite, "by and large," Johnson says, adding her own theory that "I may be a mother image with my gray hair."

With all those responsibilities, Johnson says with a smile, "I've had several people say 'I wouldn't have your job'."

She admits feeling frustrated at times, but never bored. "Sometimes I get very impatient."

Her release? A pragmatic philosophy that includes watching football and stepping back to get a better perspective.

"You do the best you can," says Johnson who has worked in the registrar's office since 1962. After working up the office ladder, she became the registrar in 1978.

"I like to be able to figure out alternatives," Johnson says. "It's challenging, I think."

People who need people
need an Emerald Heart
Throb to be the luckiest
people in the world.
Tell that special someone
how lucky you are by
placing your Heart
Throb by 1 pm Feb. 11
at the ODE, 300 EMU,
UO Bookstore, or EMU
Main Desk.
15 words for \$1.50,
coming Feb. 12.

Wear your heart
on your sleeve

PHOTO
BUTTONS

EMU WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 10TH

Get the ODE

EMU Cultural Forum presents

an evening with

Leo Kottke



opening with: Chris Tsefalas

Tuesday, Feb. 9th

EMU Ballroom

8 p.m.

Tickets: \$5.50 UO Students
\$6.50 General Public
Available at EMU Main Desk,
Earth River Records and
Diana's on the Mall.

Rainbow
Optics

SERVICE
Own Lab On Premises

STYLE
Over 1,000 frames on display

SENSITIVE To Your Needs

Present this Ad and receive

\$ 10.00

OFF ON PRESCRIPTION
EYEWEAR (Frame & Lenses)

(Offer expires Feb. 28, 1982
Only one coupon per person)

766 E. 13th ST. • 1 BLOCK FROM U OF O • 343-3333

Resident Halls
Student Manager
Positions

available for academic year 1982-83.
Previous Resident Assistant experience is
required (at UO or elsewhere).
Applications and job descriptions available at
Housing Office in Walton Hall.

Completed applications must be turned in
by Monday, February 15.