

ACTION ITEM #1

WSU Pullman, Facilities Names Recommendation "Elmina White Honors Hall" (Daniel J. Bernardo)

May 6, 2016

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS

SUBJECT: WSU Pullman, Facilities Names Recommendation,
Elmina White Honors Hall

PROPOSED: That the Board of Regents approve the recommendation of the restoration of naming Honors Hall on the WSU Pullman campus to "Elmina White Honors Hall."

SUBMITTED BY: Daniel J. Bernardo, Interim President

**SUPPORTING
INFORMATION:**

The University Administration proposes that the building currently known as Honors Hall be renamed in honor of Elmina White. Honors Hall was originally named White Hall in honor of Elmina White, but during a restoration the name was removed. Elmina White graduated from Washington State College in 1908 and worked at WSC in the School of Home Economics. Though she was active in teaching, research and extension, she served most of her time in Extension Service. Elmina White made great contributions to WSC and society in general. She was instrumental in the development of the school lunch program and the 4-H program that are enjoyed by today's youth. She was one of the first female administrators in the Cooperative Extension Service among USDA's nation-wide network of land grant universities. Because of the history of White Hall/Honors Hall, it was thought that the reincorporation of Elmina White's name into the name of the building would be most appropriate and propose the name to be, "Elmina White Honors Hall."

Appended as Attachment A is a brief history on White Hall.

Attachment A

Following is a bit of history on the former, “White Hall” as documented in a publication titled, “History of Home Economics at Washington State University: Year 75 to Year 100 (1978-2003)” written by Dorothy Z. Price, Professor Emeritus:

The first location of the Home Economics program at Washington State University was Van Doren Hall. It was built specifically for the program and updated in 1908. However, for many years Home Economics and White Hall were considered synonymous on campus. In 1928, a new building was needed for the College of Home Economics, since it had outgrown the facilities at Van Doren Hall. The building (the future White Hall) was planned by Florence Harrison, first Dean of the College of Home Economics, and her staff, with Stanley A. Smith as college architect.

Although White Hall and Home Economics became synonymous on campus, it was not until 1960 that it officially became known as White Hall. The building was named for Elmina White, a 1909 graduate. In 1917 she served as one of the first two county demonstration agents in the state and, at the end of her career, was Assistant Director of Home Economics. From 1928 on, White Hall served as home base for home economics students. As programs developed, were dropped, added, or changed, the building was adapted to serve current needs. However, as time went on, it became obvious that White Hall, as with Van Doren Hall before it, had outgrown the growing needs of the college. In the 1970’s, discussions regarding remodeling and building an addition to White Hall began. Demolishing White Hall or completely leaving it were never mentioned as realistic alternatives. As people recollect, this was also never discussed during the merger talks.

However, after the merger in 1982, pieces of the former College of Home Economics were gradually moved to other locations on campus. Logically, various parts of the college should be located near each other to encourage comradery and shared responsibilities of all faculties in the merged college.

Faculty and staff in foods and human nutrition were the first group to be relocated. They moved to the new Food Science building, therefore bringing most members of the new department —Food Science and Human Nutrition—to one location.

The second group to be relocated were those in the former Department of Child, Consumer and Family Studies. Prior to the move, discussions were held about merging parts of several departments with this ongoing one. Faculty in both Home Economics Education and in Agriculture Education had been in the College of Education but they became part of the new merged college. Eventually, faculty in community organization, family economics, and 4-H (primarily involved in extension and Home Economics Education) were also brought into the new College of Agriculture and Home Economics. As a humorous aside, it should be noted that the department found it so difficult to agree on a suitable, descriptive department title, it was unofficially and officially called the New Academic Unit or the No Name Department. These changes created the Department of Human Development, all located in Hulbert Hall. In 1992, one more element of the former College of Home Economics had exited White Hall.

Various configurations involving all design aspects of departments in various colleges, including the former Department of Apparel Merchandising, Textiles and Design, were the focus of ongoing discussion, both pre- and post-merger. This former department remained in White Hall for the longest period of time. The concept of a design building had always been included in these talks. In the summer of 1999, a “temporary” move was made by the apparel merchandising part of the department. Interior design is now located in the Engineering building and in Spokane. This final move meant that all aspects of Home Economics had left White Hall—the exodus was complete.

Shortly afterward, White Hall was totally renovated as a residence hall and classroom building for the Honors College. The building was renamed Honors Hall. Therefore, after serving home economists since 1928, home economists were no longer in the building, and White Hall no longer existed. This was a sad moment for many students, alumni, faculty, and staff.