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Southeastern News

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

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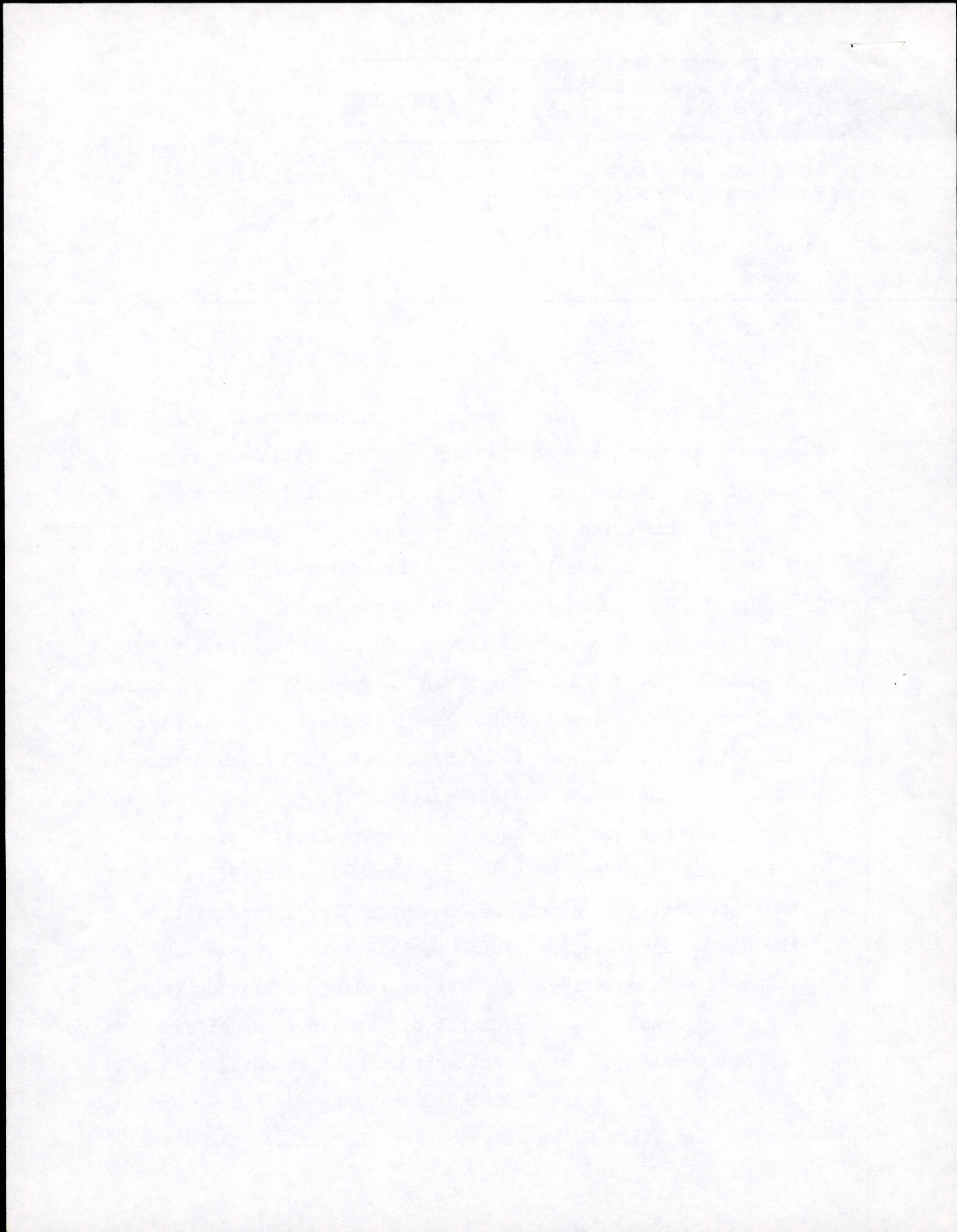
November 5, 1982

SOUTHEASTERN SEMINARY ENROLLS LARGEST NUMBER EVER

WAKE FOREST, N.C. - The fall enrollment of 1,282 students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary is the largest in the history of the 31-year old Southern Baptist Convention seminary, according to figures released by Registrar Fred Sandusky. There are 1,282 in all degree programs compared to 1,268 in 1981. Of those, 881 are in the Master of Divinity and 48 in the Master of Religious Education programs. Forty are working toward a Master of Theology degree and 53 toward a Doctor of Ministry degree. Also, 84 are in the Associate of Divinity program; 98 in night classes and 78 in off-campus centers at Shelby and Hendersonville, N.C.

The enrollment consists of students from 34 states and ten foreign countries who are graduates of 221 different colleges and universities. North Carolina with 445, is the state with the highest enrollment. South Carolina, with 156, is second, followed by Virginia (147), Georgia (69), and Florida (60).

More students are graduates of Gardner-Webb College than any other college. Other colleges with large numbers of graduates are Campbell University, Furman University, Carson-Newman College, Appalachian State University, Mercer University, the University



of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of South Carolina, Mars Hill College, and Averette College.

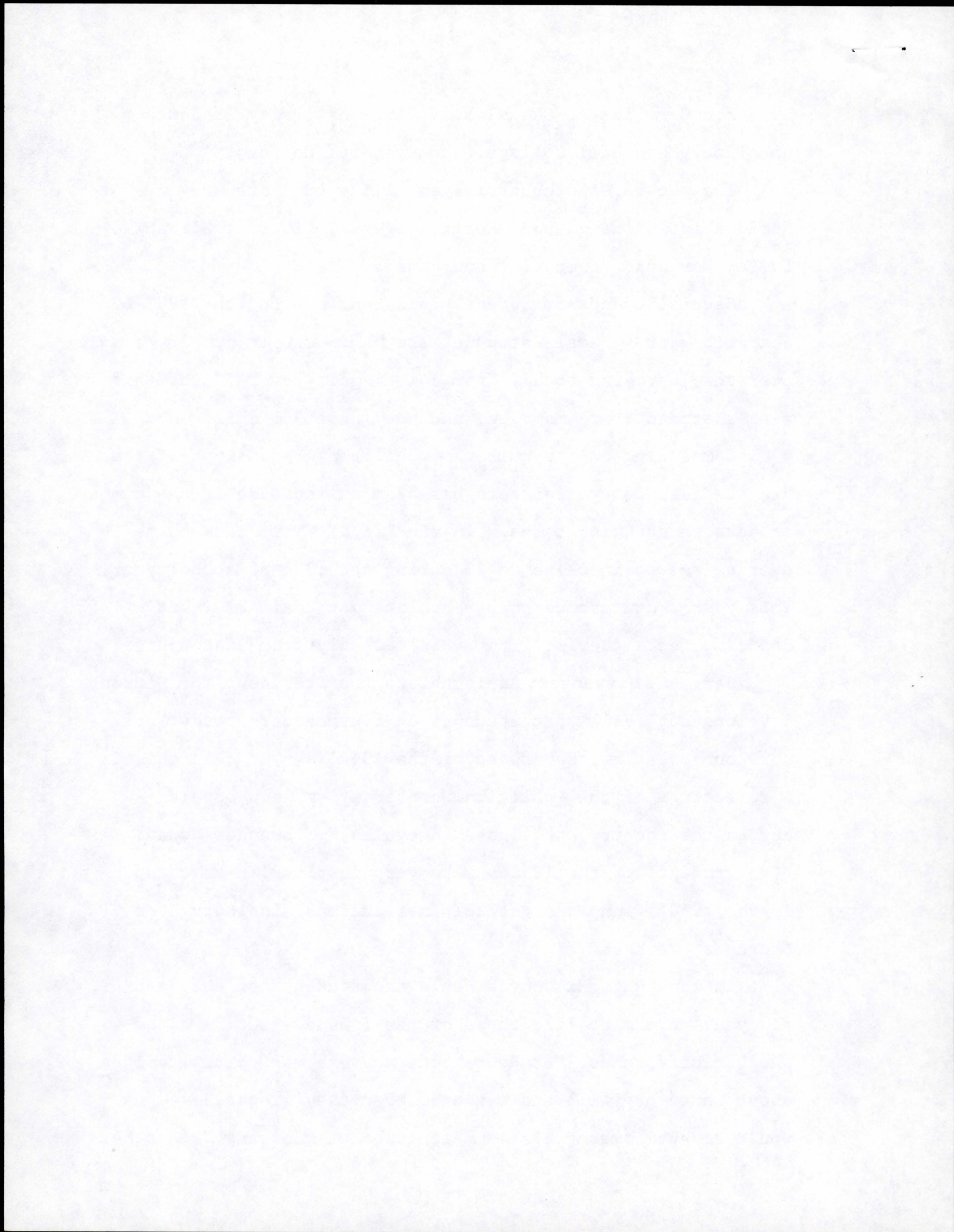
The ten foreign countries enrolling students are Nationalist China, Japan, Korea, Nigeria, Liberia, Zimbabwe, India, Bermuda, Venezuela, and Canada.

Several trends of recent years continue for the 1982-83 academic year. Female students are increasing in number, rising over the last year to 17% from 14%. Again, over 70% of this year's students are married, and they have 961 children.

Commenting on the number of children, Sandusky said that "In the last few years there has been an increase in the number of persons changing careers in mid-life." This caused the average age to increase to 29 during the 1981-82 school year. This year's statistics on age are not yet available, but Sandusky feels they will not vary markedly from last year's.

Jerry L. Niswonger, Assistant to the President for Student Development, feels that students at Southeastern today "are more conservative than those of the 1960's." He felt this is a reflection of the "political conservatism" now popular across the country. "It goes in cycles," Niswonger added. "The students of the 1950's were very institution-oriented. In the 1960's many thought all institutions, including the churches, were bad."

In many ways Niswonger feels the students of the last few years are more like those of the 1950's. But he cited one big difference, "Students today have a more definite idea about what they will and won't do when they graduate. They won't accept someone else's definition of ministry." Another



example of this attitude is the recent tendency of students "to inquire about and usually visit more than one seminary" before making a final choice.

Carl W. Catoe, Jr., Director of Student Affairs, expressed similar observations about the new breed of students at Southeastern. "They have a clearer idea in their vocational objectives," he said. Today's students are "less issue-oriented. They are more conservative in life-style and goals, and they are steadier in what they believe."

Catoe also noted that there are more applications for financial aid than ever before. "There are three to four applications for every available job on campus," he said. This problem was echoed by Sandusky. As Registrar he has had to deal with more students requesting morning classes and restricted schedules. This is because "more students are having to involve themselves in secular employment," he said. Both felt this was due to the general economic problems of recent years.

