

FROM ADMINISTRATION TO BUSINESS

Joe McGuire has seen many changes at the Graduate School of Management during the last 15 years.

Joseph W. McGuire, Professor of Management, came to the Irvine campus in 1974 from Berkeley, where he was Vice President of Planning for the UC System. "I felt that Southern California would be an excellent place to live and to work," he remarks. "The school here was forging an exciting and unique identity and faculty, students, and administrators were remarkably open to, and involved in, growth and change." As it turned out, McGuire did play a role in the many significant changes which occurred in GSM in the 1970's and 1980's.

"In 1974, GSM was formally a Graduate School of Administration, based largely on the premise that management could be taught and studied "generically," without much attention being given to the type of organization in which it was practiced. The concept was that management is management everywhere, and the same abstract principles are important whether it occurs in a religious institution, a hospital, or a company," he explains. "The School offered one M.S. degree in Administration. However, the faculty did recognize that there might be some differences in practice because of locale, and each M.S. student was required to take at least two seminars in public administration, or in business administration, or in the administration of higher education, or in the management of health sciences, in addition to their other required courses in economics,



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quantitative methods, and organizational/managerial behavior."

McGuire adds that when UC Irvine opened its doors in 1965, educators throughout the nation were experimenting with diverse curricula and different ways of teaching. In line with these trends, the Graduate School of Administration was considered one of the most innovative educational ventures for its philosophical approach to management as well as its curriculum. The school did not offer courses

in accounting, marketing, production, or strategy, and very little in finance.

"By the mid-1970's," McGuire remarks, "it became obvious that the generic concept was not holding up very well." Students were less satisfied with the M.S. degree, which they found less meaningful and helpful in the job market than, for example, an M.B.A. Employers were familiar with the M.B.A. The M.S. had to be explained and interpreted. The faculty was also finding it increasingly difficult to maintain the generic management abstraction, and professors began to align themselves more and more with either the business or the public sector. Further, as the School grew, students demanded instruction in traditional areas such as accounting and marketing, where the typical textbooks and examples were institutionally specific. Thus, as the decade of the 70's ended, programs in the School were increasingly pointed toward separately preparing students for managerial careers in either business or government.

In 1980, GSA became the Graduate School of Management, and admitted its first M.B.A. candidates. For a while it also offered a M.P.A., but relatively few students opted for the latter, and it was not clear that public employers did not actually prefer the M.B.A.

The program of courses offered today is composed largely of traditional business subjects which prepare graduates for careers as