

Sheridan develops 'new secretary'

A changing world, automation, Women's Liberation — many things have combined to alter the role of the secretary from that of the shorthand typist to that of the administrative assistant or executory.

It's at the stage where one-ninth of the working population of North America are secretaries, and the most horrible thing imaginable is if all secretaries on the continent went on strike.

The National Secretaries Association has been forced to re-define the word "secretary" for the seventies. The new definition is:

"A secretary shall be defined as an executive assistant who possesses a mastery of office skills, who demonstrates the ability to assume responsibility without direct supervision, who exercises initiative and judgment, and who makes decisions within the scope of assigned authority."

"Office skills", "responsibility", "decision making"—these qualities demand an attitude Sheridan College hopes to instill in its secretarial students.

At the same time "the ability to get along with other people" was the quality for which Rockefeller was willing to pay the earth. Realizing this, Sheridan is incorporating a human relations course in its Secretarial Program.

Model Office

Graduating students in Executive, Legal and Medical Secretarial Studies operate a model office on each Sheridan campus.

"It's good, realistic training of what to expect in an office," explains Avanel Scherer, supervisor of the Oakville model office.

The office houses a variety of business equipment and students may be asked to perform any secretarial duty.

"It's like a real office," says Verlyn Francis, second year Executive Secretarial student. "You work for different people and learn so many people's likes and dislikes."

"There's a lot of confidential work done in the model office for faculty and staff and the girls have to realize it is confidential," says Mrs. Scherer. "In this way the girls develop a sense of responsibility and independence. And they have to get along with strangers as in a real job."

Although the model offices have been set up to deal with work for faculty and staff, students have undertaken some work, at a small fee, for organizations in the community.

Word processing

Sheridan has been training all graduating students to operate automatic typewriters for the past few years. However, college officials hope to offer "word processing" as a separate subject to all secretarial students in the near future.

The Dartnell Corporation says the average cost of a business letter in 1972 was \$3.20. Big business has found a method of reducing this cost to \$1.43. It's called "word processing" and it can't be ignored!

The dictator uses remote-control dictating units to feed input to the W.P. system. An automatic typewriter, such as the IBM Magnetic Tape Selectric Typewriter (MT/ST) or the Magnetic Card Executive Typewriter (both available at Sheridan for student training) becomes the output.

At the time of creating a rough draft, the typist creates a magnetic tape of the material. If she strikes a wrong key, she simply backspaces and types over her error. Simultaneously, she automatically corrects the tape so that, after the rough draft is completed, she sets the machine on automatic and the machine produces perfect copy at the rate of 180 w.p.m. She may stop the playback to make insertions or alterations.

In Germany, they emphasize repetitive letters or paragraphs and they have built a whole profession of text programmers who prepare "canned" text. "Clause" tapes can be bought for most common business situations and text is automatically typed out when needed.

It has been suggested that, as a result of word processing, there will be specialization in the secretarial field into: Word Processors or Correspondence Secretaries and Administrative Assistants.



Students simulate medical office.

Recipe for a medical secretarial career

Take one individual full of ambition. Add: a little knowledge of medical terminology, anatomy and physiology and first-aid.

A cupful of typing skills.

A pinch of determination and willpower.

Mix well.

Bake for two years in a moderately-heated college.

The result is one excellent medical secretary, prepared for a challenging career in this chosen profession. This is the recipe Sheridan College uses to produce the best medical secretaries around.

The course is designed to provide high school and mature students with a further education enabling them to enter a wide field of positions and interests upon graduation. Anyone interested in the medical field, but with no inclination to become a doctor or nurse should find this course rewarding and beneficial.

The second year of the two-year course deals

directly with the medical aspect, leaving the first year to develop general skills needed in the course. Direct entry into the second year can be obtained with a minimum of 40 w.p.m. in typing.

"Good morning, Dr. Brown's office," is a more than common phrase heard in the simulated doctor's office at the college. The students have set up and are operating the office as part of their course of study.

O.H.I.P. has agreed to co-operate with the program, and students are continually booking appointments, completing O.H.I.P. claim cards and mailing these each week to O.H.I.P.'s office in Hamilton.

After five months at the college the students are ready to go into the medical world for some practical application of their newly-acquired skills. A work week is arranged and the students placed in doctor's offices, clinics and hospitals in the location of their choice.

There is no "typical-day-at-the-office" in the medical field. Every day reveals a new, unpredictable experience. Routine jobs do exist but there is a continual challenge for learning and improvement.

Throughout the course there are guest speakers who come to talk to the students about their future jobs.

Help for legal beagles

Perry Mason-type courtroom lawyers attract most of the attention in our legal system but much of the hard work is done back in the office by their secretaries.

To prepare students for such yeoman service, Sheridan's Legal Secretarial Program offers students intensive training in the areas of real estate, litigation, corporation, estate and family law practices.

In addition to being trained in the operation of auto-

matic typewriters (IBM MT/ST and MC/ST — now standard equipment in most legal offices) the students' stenographic skills are developed and improved through the use of the most modern secretarial teaching methods, materials and machines.

Knowledge of the legal field is augmented through field trips to local registry offices and courthouses, films and guest speakers during the year. A one week session spent with local or Toronto law firms gives students valuable insight into their future careers, practical experience and often leads to permanent employment.

Business, social science and humanities subjects are also an important and integral part of the Legal Secretarial Program. Students are allowed to select these subjects, based on their own interests, from the options available.

Simulation: jobs come to student

Simulation is coming to Sheridan's Secretarial Studies Division in September.

The new subject will be incorporated in the Executive Secretarial Program during the first year and then, after a trial run, offered as an elective to all secretarial students.

Simulation is designed to offer the student a realistic office experience. The set-up used is one in which Sheridan College serves as Tallidata—a data processing organization that handles all orders, accounts receivable, accounts payable, correspondence and banking for all customers and suppliers of Lester Hill Corporation.

Lester Hill Corporation is a national distributor of hotel and motel supplies and equipment. Its operations will take place in a local high school.

Advantages of simulation are that it will offer the students: an opportunity to interact with one another as they perform their specific jobs within the office; varied job experience; realistic work patterns; motivation to perform on the job; and a new self-image of success.



"I had a successful business until my secretary quit before she taught me how to run it!"