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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Those of us who have been fortunate enough to be a part of the academic family of our professional society for the past 25 years or more are experiencing "these changing times" which, of course, influence all professions, activities, etc., sooner or later.

In the sixties, McIntire-Stennis legislation for forestry research became a reality—and the data began to pour! Since the majority of forestry-type schools are a part of the land-grant, state school systems, most of us enjoyed "university" status (graduate degree programs for one thing). Politics of the times dictated that state colleges also become state universities in the 60's, and it came to pass! Mushrooms could not grow faster!

Well now in many states, the "well" is going dry, "hard money" research dollars are disappearing, and new faculty members best have a course in either "grantsmanship" or how to find a "patron-of-the-trees" in order to survive. This is probably good—as well as bad.

The research faction of academia will take care of itself; it always has.

That's not what worries me. It is the *teaching* aspect of academia that I am concerned about. My specific concerns are: (1) As the "data-base" grows by leaps and bounds, who is synthesizing it and "packaging" it for the undergraduate student? This takes time. Don't try and *con me* with how well read you are, I know better! (2) As the gap between technological and theoretical advances on one hand and the need to put this information in a form usable for the student (and/or practitioner) on the other hand widens, who does this? The researcher?, The extensioner?, Who? (3) Why is teaching rewarded (in the bank dummy) poorly? This teaching "reward" unbalance goes all the way back to grade school—ask *any* teacher. And finally, (4) who out there is looking to the *needs* for an undergraduate curriculum for Wood Science and Technology for the 1990's?

A recent issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* addressed the "teaching" problem; I think it is time for those of us in academia in SWST to re-direct our thoughts on the importance of teaching in professional (and other) curricula, to reward excellent teaching the same as research, and—for heaven's sake—to realize that the "gap" between the research frontier and the classroom up-date is increasing!!

You all take care!

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