Faculty and staff open enrollment for University insurance benefits is now underway and will continue through Nov. 5.

This year’s open enrollment marks the first time that all salaried employees are eligible for the TIAA Major Medical Insurance. Clinical - technical staff were previously ineligible for this coverage.

Also effective during the enrollment is increased coverage, without increased premium, in the Aetna Long Term Disability plan. The monthly maximum benefit has been raised from $1,000 to $2,000, and a 4 per cent cost of living rider has been added for both the monthly cash benefit and the TIAA-CREF payments.

Other programs open include the American Plan, Mutual of Omaha’s accident insurance and, for those eligible, Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

Coverage is effective Dec. 1 for all insurance benefits or changes applied for during the enrollment. Premiums will be deducted beginning with the Nov. 30 paycheck.

Gary J. Posner, director of staff benefits, pointed out that persons already employed in group programs and who plan no coverage changes don’t need to participate in the open enrollment or contact his office.

AMERICAN PLAN coverage has been improved in six areas (Faculty News, Oct. 20), and provides total hospital protection for semiprivate service and unlimited hospital extra up to 365 days.

Posner emphasized that this is only the third open enrollment in nine years for the TIAA Major Medical program. Yearly open enrollments are not expected in the future, he added.

He noted that the enrollment is an opportunity for faculty and staff already under a group hospitalization plan to include coverage for any children who were not added within 31 days of birth or for spouses who were not added at the time of marriage.

Posner also pointed out that if both husband and wife are employed full-time by MSU, they may be eligible for "marriage couple" contribution toward hospitalization insurance. Further information is available from the Staff Benefits Office.

ALTHOUGH a general open enrollment for group life insurance is not being conducted, Posner said, any full-time employee who has not reached age 53 may enroll for coverage under either schedule or may increase his coverage. Persons can enroll at any time by submitting appropriate evidence of insurability, he said.

Where to enroll

Representatives of the Staff Benefits Division will be on hand to help faculty and staff participate in the open enrollment this week and next at the following locations:

* Wednesday, Oct. 28, Room 111, Brody, 3-4:30 p.m.
* Thursday, Nov. 5, Wells Hall, 5-8 p.m.
* Friday, Physical Plant, lunchroom, 3:30-5 p.m.
* Monday, Nov. 2, East Akers, conference room, 3-4:30 p.m.
* Tuesday, West Shaw, small dining room, 3-4:30 p.m.
* Wednesday, Union, Captain’s Room, 3-4:30 p.m.

The Staff Benefits office will also be open daily in Room 344, Administration Building.

Is there a science crisis?

"Is there a Crisis in Science?" is the topic for a public meeting scheduled tonight at 8 in Room 138 of the Chemistry Building.

The main speaker will be George S. Hammond, chairman of chemistry and chemical engineering at the California Institute of Technology. The meeting is part of a distinguished scientist series organ by the chemistry department and supported by the Science Development Program in chemistry, physics and mathematics.

The MSU chapter of the American Association of University Professors, which originated the two bylaw amendment proposals rejected this month by the Board of Trustees, is asking the Academic Council to reaffirm its support of the proposals so they can be reconsidered by the Trustees.

"We feel that the trustees probably misunderstood the intent of the proposals," said Sigmond Nosow, professor of labor and industrial relations and president of the AAUP Chapter.

"The essential thing is that these are advisory functions and nobody is taking away anyone’s power," he said.

He was referring to Trustee Stephen Nielson’s concern over “continued vegetarianism of the Board’s authority.”

Trustees also expressed concern over the phrase which said that decisions of the faculty tenure committee would be binding on the administration. Nosow pointed out that “the Board of Trustees always has the final say,” and that the term “binding” refers to administrative officers of the University.

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PROVOST John Cantlon, who presented and argued for the proposals, disagreed with the contention that the trustees misinterpreted the intent of the proposals.

"Binding in a legal sense and endorsement are two different things."

(Continued on page 2)

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The high energy physics group: From left, R. J. Srapka, Gerald A. Smith, Z. Ming Ma, Maris A. Abolins, K. Wendell Chen.

Photo by Dick Wesley

Physics group preparing to use national accelerator

By GENE RIEFTORS
Editor, Faculty News

When the world’s most powerful proton accelerator throws off its first beam of nuclear particles sometime in 1972, scientists from Michigan State will be among the first in line to use it for experiments.

Five professors from MSU’s high energy physics group — Maris A. Abolins, K. Wendell Chen, Z. Ming Ma, Gerald A. Smith and R. J. Srapka — have learned that projects they proposed have been approved for use at the new National Accelerator Laboratory at Batavia, Ill.

Indications are that a project proposed by Chen will be the first to make use of the NAL’s 200 billion electron volt (GeV) synchrotron. The facility is scheduled to be ready by July of 1972, quite possibly sooner.

The NAL, located about 30 miles west of Chicago, is being built at a cost of some $250 million. Its powerful synchrotron, which will eventually reach an energy level of 500 GeV, features an accelerator ring of 1 1/4 miles in diameter. The currently most powerful accelerator (76 GeV) is located in the Soviet Union.

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THE FIVE MSU physicists represent three research teams. Chen’s group is collaborating with a team from Cornell University, and Abolins is working with scientists from Ohio State University. Smith, Srapka and Ma are cooperating with other physicists from the Argonne National Laboratory (also near Chicago), Iowa State University and the University of Maryland.

Collaboration that involves a large number of scientists is almost mandatory, Smith says, because a single group “usually cannot handle a whole problem at such a large installation” as NAL.

By 1975, it is estimated, NAL will have about 1,700 scientists and supporting staff, plus an average of 350 visiting researchers.

“The competition is very high just to get use of the machine,” points out Frank J. Blatt, MSU chairman of physics.

Nearly 90 proposals have been submitted so far to the NAL, from researchers throughout the U. S. and from around the world. Only about 20 have so far received firm or tentative approval.

(Continued on page 3)

AAUP will seek amendments again

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(Continued on page 2)
Nolen Ellison: The job is "nondescript."

By BEVERLY TWITCHELL
Associate Editor, Faculty News

Nolen M. Ellison, new assistant to the president, describes his job as "nondescript." His duties, he says, are to assist the president.

Beyond that, Ellison says that he is "nondescript," is interested in what one does works in this framework to bring about changes that need to come about.

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Thursday, Oct. 27: 1 p.m. (AM) "Advocacy and Objectivity in Urban Journalism," Paul Gapp and Don Hoft of Newseum.

Wednesday, Oct. 26: 10:30 p.m. (AM) "Radio Talks: The Rhetoric of Race," a talk by Mark Anthony Johnson of the University of Texas at Austin.

Tuesday, Oct. 26: 1 p.m. (AM) "The University and the City," a panel discussion on urban affairs.
Deans of the professional colleges earn higher median salaries than other university administrators, including presidents — according to a biannual National Education Association survey. In the portion of the survey devoted to four - year institutions, deans of medicine ranked highest with a median salary of $38,000. Deans of dentistry ($30,800), veterinary medicine ($28,500), law ($28,060) and education ($25,400) also were higher than presidents ($25,979) in median salary. Numbers in the sample varied widely, since 296 deans were surveyed, compared with only 54 deans of medicine, 36 dentistry deans, veterinary medicine deans, 97 deans of law and 142 engineering deans.

Letters

Retirement raise too low?

To the Editor:

May I comment upon your report in the Faculty News of Oct. 20 concerning the raises in retirement (noncontributory) plan (maximum retirement plan) from the maximum $3,000 set in 1958 to a maximum of $3,300. A figure of $3,300 in terms of current prices as compared with the price index of 1957-58, $3,000 in the 1957-58 dollars would have been raised today by an increase to $4,500, at the very minimum.

It is not fair that faculty "who were handicapped by 1958" is changing over to TIAA (and who were

(Editors note: Professor Hawkins has raised some concerns that may be shared by others who will be relying on their participation. The University's noncontributory retirement plan.

The University Council last December endorsed recommendations from the faculty affairs committee of the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate endorses the changes in the retirement plan that will provide a higher retirement benefit for faculty who are in the University's noncontributory retirement plan.

The changes include a higher maximum retirement benefit for faculty who are in the University's noncontributory retirement plan. The maximum retirement benefit for faculty who are in the University's noncontributory retirement plan will be increased from $3,000 to $3,300.

In addition, faculty who are in the University's noncontributory retirement plan will receive a higher retirement benefit for each year of service. The retirement benefit for faculty who have served for 10 years will be increased from $3,000 to $3,300.

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Toward ‘flexible rigidity’ on the campus

(Editors' Note: Following are excerpts from a speech—"Toward an Era of Flexible Rigidity for Criss Sake"—delivered recently by Paul L. Dressel, assistant provost and dean of research and development at MSU, to the faculty of the "Share-la" conference that commemorated the 25th anniversary of the University's Counseling Center, of which he was the first director. Dressel is also the current president of the American Association of Higher Education.)

For nearly three centuries, much of what has occurred in American higher education was based on the Protestant ethic and done for Christ's sake... Today, much of what we do is done in the name of Christ and for Christ's sake.

There is more here than an amusing similarity in the sounds of the phrases. Actions taken either for Christ's sake or criss sake are alike in other respects. Administrators have been brought up with those values in prayerful attitude for both 
sakes—and for the same reason. They have tanted a power which they do not understand and with which they are unable to cope effectively...

It may be cogently argued that the earlier rigidity of colleges based on classical education sanctioned on religious considerations gradually shifted to a rigidity enforced by a priesthood designated as Ph.D.'s. I am convinced that this latter-day rigidity has led in part to the crises of the day in higher education.

My concern is that in trying to avoid one rigidity, we do not simply invoke another. My thesis is that extreme flexibility is as undesirable as extreme rigidity. And hence I assert that what we should seek in higher education is flexible rigidity.

FLEXIBILITY, whether in a woman's girdle or a college curriculum, is not a virtue when it permits an individual to emerge unchanged in shape or character. Rigidity, whether in the structure of a bridge or in the standards and policies of an educational institution, is not a vice when it permits an individual to attain a desired goal or acquire a new capability.

A college exists to educate individuals, and it serves both individuals and society in so doing. Equally, it has obligations to both the individuals and to society. If every individual were truly capable of educating himself, we would need no schools or colleges. Obviously, most individuals do not have this capability. Rigidity would have been found desirable to establish colleges.

But colleges have erred in becoming too prescriptive in regard to all aspects of student behavior, and especially in unnecessary and unrealistic curricular requirements.

Some structure is essential to avoid complete chaos, out over—concern about structure, often based upon the bias and convenience of faculty and administrators, destroys flexibility and individuality.

(What) emerges (is) the concept of a flexible rigidity—a dynamic structure which adjusts to stress but continues to perform its essential functions and attains its specified goals.

THE PLANNING of university programs is and always has been a search for structure. We started with a completely required curriculum, based on mental discipline by exposure to a classical education. This mental discipline view of education, aptly designated as faculty psychology, is still in modified form, the learning psychology of the faculty today.

The psychology of the faculty insists that the diet of students be balanced, and balance is equated to control. And so a new structure is sought, based on faculty conceptions and convenience more than on a considered conception of what an education should be. The structure which emerged and which is still largely found in our universities is based on:

1. The organization of knowledge into disciplines and some type of requirement that's practical knowledge in various fields of disciplines. For emphasis is on the student knowing something about the disciplines rather than acquiring any significant and useful competency;
2. Requirements which purport to insure breadth and depth but interpreted as unrelated experiences with disciplines rather than as qualities of an educated individual;
3. Course and credit requirements—a doctrinal packaging conception of education rather than a flexible but planned and cumulative set of experiences productive of meaningful competency;
4. Grades, honor points, and simplistic arithmetical computations based on them, which are used to measure progress, eliminate students, and award honors and degrees;
5. Rules in the organization of residence halls, registration, transfer of credits, fee payments which are based on financial concerns and administrative or faculty convenience rather than on educational considerations;
6. A calendar which demands completion of prescribed units of work in specific periods of time, and places more emphasis on attainment of some minimum knowledge in these inflexible units than on the attainment of mastery;
7. An organization of courses which in content, timing and placement is based on faculty interests and convenience rather than on the demands of student learning;
8. An organization of the university into a maze of departments and colleges with artificial distinctions, contrived entry requirements, and meaningless degree standards which force student choice among these units rather than in reference to personal interests and goals;
9. An administrative pattern which separates the management of structured learning experiences from the extracurricular, the financial and the living experiences of the student;
10. A conception of learning in which the student gets three credits when the Professor teaches three hours per week but is given credit only after great hesitation when he does work on his own.

Of course we impose all of these rigidities in the name of efficiency and of standards, and view them as in some manner related to the outcomes of college education... * * *

We talk occasionally about learning, but we spend most of our time, so far as undergraduate instruction is concerned, in arguing about teaching loads, evaluation of teaching, and improvement of teaching. We concentrate on what the professor does almost to the exclusion of what the impact is.

We forget that what a professor does has significance only in terms of what it encourages students to do, and no matter how good the performance of the professor and how strong the evaluation made by his students, that professor who has not modified their insights, viewpoints or behavior has not really taught anything to anybody.

Our trouble is that the structures that we would impose have little to do with the results that we seek. We are much more adept at imposing classifications, categories and rules on our students than we are in educating them.

Any combination of courses into a curriculum developed by faculty committees is contrived. It is based largely on existing college and departmental structures which have a historical rationale but little relevance to the future. Individuals must have freedom with advice to develop a curriculum of their own which may turn out to be far more significant for their own interests and their future roles than rigid curricula which fill the many pages of the typical university catalog.

But these individual programs must be justified by their relevance to the development of useful competencies and a prospective field in which they will be used. Such programs will cut across departments and even colleges.

A significant element in the structure (the flexible rigidity) which emerges is that one of the educational experiences of the student is that of defining his own education and taking responsibility for it.

Another element... would require appraisal of the students progress toward the competencies and planning of experiences appropriate to further progress. In this pattern I should not care whether the educational experiences which produced progress were in scheduled credit courses, in community services, on the job, in the counseling center, in extracurricular activities or in social activities.

One inspired to learn can do so in many contexts, and learning which takes place in realistic contexts is more likely to inspire application and continued learning than is the traditional classroom.

We shall, from time to time, continue to have crises, and so long as the crises are in part generated out of the rigidity which presently exists in American higher education, we shall always be on the defensive in dealing with them.

For a college to attempt to have meaning, there must be structure and hence a certain amount of rigidity. But the structure and the rigidity should be related to the competencies to be achieved by attending college.

Hence rigidity should be imposed not in terms of requirements and courses and house, but by insisting that the individual recognize that certain competencies are required to get a degree from an institution and that certain progress must be evidenced at various stages, else the individual and the institution are both wasting their time and resources.

Within this framework there can be a great deal of variation in what individuals do, and so the structure can provide for flexibility, but always flexibility in terms of a choice of experiences selected with regard to their probable significance in producing growth toward the agreed upon goals...