

**Lewis W. Webb, Jr.'s recollections  
about the first four-year degrees in the 50s**

Sweeney: Why were education, business administration, and nursing singled out as the first areas in which the Norfolk Division would offer a four—year degree?

Webb: *Chiefly to meet the needs of the community. The community needs were foremost in our minds. We were developing as an urban institution, and we found from experience that the students that attended Old Dominion, at that time the Norfolk Division, generally stayed in the community. And so, we surveyed the community needs and found out that business administration was one of the big needs and big areas which students could be placed, and that education — there were several thousand teachers in the area that needed upgrading. Many, many had only two—year certificates, and these needed to be worked into degree programs. Some of the ones having degrees needed refreshers, so those two were obviously community needs that we were filling because the students we were drawing from — appealing to — were local citizens rather than out—of—state, out—of—town citizens. At that time we were something like 92% of our student body was drawn from the local area. The nursing was another need. We had been working with the Norfolk General Hospital and DePaul Hospital to supplement their training of nurses. They needed more than just two—year nursing programs, and the great demand for nursing — trained nurses by these hospitals made an obvious curriculum that was opened, and we could place every nurse we trained, so we asked for that as our third avenue leading to a degree. (pg. 8)*

Full interview at:

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