The National Institute for Career Development was officially hatched at the First National Conference on Career Development. Ed Watkins, Doane's Director of Career Development, was named Executive Director. The Institute Advisory Board consists of:

- Don Clark - President of the National Association of Industry Education Cooperation
- Oluf Davidsen - President of American College Testing
- John Holland - Professor at Johns Hopkins
- Sidney Marland - President Emeritus of the College Board and former U.S. Commissioner
- Ralph Tyler - the Father of Educational Evaluation
- Millicent Woods - Associate Director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Watkins has played a significant role in the so called 'career movement'. In 1972, Watkins wrote the proposal and became the director of the Pembroke State University Human Services Center. This center became the first experiential learning center to be funded by the state of North Carolina. In 1974, Watkins became the first dean level director of the Doane Career Development Center and in 1976, he wrote the Career Development Process outline. This process is being implemented at schools like Clarke College, Macon Junior College, the University of South Carolina and many others. Watkins has taken the process to over 40 colleges in the last two years. "Sitting around commiserating with the place director about the state of affairs makes for interesting conversation but frequently leads nowhere. Many college universities are taking a life development approach for their students seriously. The Institute believes that the college leadership must be committed to and involved in this process."

The purposes of the Institute are as follows:

1. Provide consulting services to colleges, high school and educational organizations.
2. Host periodic meetings and conferences on appropriate career issues.
3. Initiate research projects to evaluate the effectiveness of the career process on students’ lives.
4. Publish periodic information designed to encourage and support career professionals.

The management board of the Career Development Center includes former publisher Bob Marvin, Goodyear Employer Manager Tom Booth, and Nebraska Welfare Training Coordinator, Don McCammond.
Mixing Theory and Practice

Doane College at Crete, Neb. has started what seems to be a promising experiment in its new Career Development Institute.

The institute is aimed at researching job and education needs and operating models of career development.

Doane President Phil Heckman said he is concerned about helping students learn how to fit the liberal arts into the world of work and “find joy in the fitting.”

Heckman’s program brings to mind a statement by former Health Education and Welfare Secretary John Gardner that unless a nation values both its philosophers and plumbers, neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water.

In recent years, growing numbers of college graduates have found they were “overeducated” for the jobs available to them. Was all that education wasted? It shouldn’t have been, not if the student had some genuine desire for learning rather than just acquiring a piece of paper to entitle him to hold a white collar job.

The Doane experiment seems to be directed at reconciling the need for academic and practical education.

Perhaps a good start would come by helping persons with large amounts of academic education develop a greater appreciation for the intelligence and skill required to perform many manual jobs. In turn, workmen might be surprised to find how much exposure to academic subjects would enrich their lives.

If the Doane experiment enables the world of work and the world of formal education to come together in a creative partnership, it will have done society a great favor.
Crete, Neb. — Work might be a subject that should be taught in American colleges, U.S. Commissioner of Education Ernest Boyer suggested here Thursday.

Appearing as keynote banquet speaker at the second annual National Conference on Career Development at Doane College, Boyer said, "Work is an essential issue about which students learn little. If you mention work on many liberal arts campuses you are labeled 'basic courses theme unclean.'"

Boyer, who has pushed to restore basic courses to college curricula, said he felt the central message of the conference was his belief that, "If students are to acquire the wide understanding of which Gompers spoke, they must understand the meaning of vocation and they must feel prepared for a useful and productive life."

Earlier he had said, "Today the safest thing one can say about a college diploma is that the student probably has been around the campus for about four years."

"Today we seem more confident of the length of a college education than we do about its substance," he said.

Boyer also noted that while America's commitment to equal educational opportunity "is still an unfinished agenda in this nation and must be vigorously pursued," he suggested that "the American commitment to education is not just a commitment to access to our schools and colleges, it is a commitment to excellence and service, too."

Entrance Limits

He said that while we push for expanding opportunity, "it is essential that we focus not only on the entry point to college but to its ends as well."

When asked at a press conference if entrance to Nebraska state colleges should be limited, he said: "I know of no legislator willing to limit his child to a 12th-grade education."

At the banquet attended by some 350 education and career counselors and business specialists from three states, he turned to turn-of-the-century labor movement leader Samuel Gomper's statement that, "Education should provide so wide an understanding of the relation of one's work to society that no vocation could become a rut and no worker should be shut off from a full and rich life in his work."

Theme Praised

Earlier, Heath Larry, president of the National Association of Manufacturers and former vice chairman of U.S. Steel's board of directors, praised the conference theme of a "Convergence of Government, Business and Academia" to better prepare people for life and living.

In his speech he urged educators to remember that education is a business and that students, its product, must have the qualities of "marketing and attractiveness."

He decried "the arrogance of indifference" by students in the troubled '60s and said "business did not get turned off on the liberal arts student until the liberal arts student got turned off on business."

He said faculties should teach the dignity of work and students should be taught something of the value of success.
Competition for jobs, devaluated degree makes career planning vital to students

by Joan Van Pelt

"Career means life planning," said Ed Watkins, director of the National Career Institute. "It means more than just preparing for a job, it means preparing for academic, vocational and personal life decisions." Watkins has been chosen as the keynote speaker for Career Day, which is sponsored by the University Programming Board and other campus career-planning offices.

As director of the National Career Institute, Watkins has been recognized as one of the leaders of the career movement. His kick-off speech will be Feb. 1 at 8 p.m. in the Atwood Ballroom.

The movement began because "the market value of the degree declined in the '70s and we started to face a competitive job market," Watkins said. The movement was designed to create more interest and enthusiasm for career planning.

The National Career Institute, on the Doane College campus at Crete, Neb., created the Doane Career Development Program to abolish "occupational illiteracy." The institute provides a variety of services to help students discover their needs and to aid in answering career questions.

Occupational illiteracy results when students are unaware of their occupational interests, skill weaknesses and real talents, Watkins said.

The first step in the Doane program is to begin a life file, Watkins said. It is called a life file because it is a process that begins prior to a student's entering college and extends through life.

The first thing to enter the file is the Watkins Occupational Literacy Exam. The exam is designed to make students aware of their occupational interests and to encourage them to take ownership of their careers. Watkins explained.

"We define certain skills that are needed for life," Watkins said. "These skills are important regardless of what major a person chooses." Life skills are the ability to communicate, both in writing and orally, to think critically, to solve problems, to make decisions and to use math reasoning skills.

The importance of life skills was reiterated by a survey conducted by Michigan State University, Watkins said. "A large number of employers were questioned to determine the most important skills that an employer looks for in a college graduate." Watkins said. The most common response was the ability to communicate in writing, followed by the ability to communicate orally. Third was the ability to think critically.

"Students should realize it is their responsibility to become more active and involved," Watkins said. "Students should also be aware of their weaknesses and realize what they can do to change immediately." Watkins explained.

"When a person becomes familiar with what he can do, he can concentrate on those skills rather than covering up weaknesses," Watkins explained.

The second step in the program is for students to match their skills with their occupational interests. "The average college student can identify only one or two or three jobs that would be real career possibilities," Watkins said. "Students should identify 15–20 occupations that are possible and realistic," he said. "Out of 2,500 occupational titles in the United States, it should not be as difficult as it seems," he added.

"You find your strengths and talents along with your weaknesses, and then you can say 'Here is some hope. Here are 15–20 things that I could do,'" Watkins explained.

The next step is to research the occupational titles and find out how many are really possible, Watkins said.

"In the late '60s, three reports surfaced that criticized higher educational institutions and accused them of suffering from academic isolationism," Watkins said. "Academic isolationism stems from the fact that universities were long on theory, but short on practical applications." Placement offices have typically had the responsibility to meet with a student's employer. Until the senior year, the placement office is not involved in career preparation and planning.

An important part of the career development program is an internship, Watkins stressed. It is important for students to have some short-term career internships that put them in touch with professionals in the field and show them precisely what the occupation is about.

"Students should not regard an internship simply as a chance to receive credit or income. It is the experience that is more than worth the effort," Watkins said.

"Employers want experienced employees and students become really frustrated when they fail to get a job because they do not have experience," Watkins said.

Students should make sure they have on-the-job experiences, volunteer their services and expect only a quality experience in return, Watkins said.

By the time a student on the Doane program reaches his senior year, the life file will contain the occupational literacy exam and interest test, the initial 15–20 job possibilities that match the student's skills, the research findings that narrow down the possibilities, records of internship experiences, letters of evaluation, a resume and a letter of introduction.
Ed Watkins: Speaking From Experience

Ed Watkins' concern for career development emerged in 1967 when he worked for the Jasper County Department of Welfare in Joplin, Missouri as a Caseworker II with an Old Age Assistance caseload. He says, "I was anxious to apply my sociology classroom theory to my new experience. My first case involved a visit to an 80-year old woman's house. She was living on $80 a month, had no relatives or friends in the community, and she lived in a dump. She listened to me explain why we could not give her additional funding, and when I was through she looked me in the eyes and said, 'Young man, help me.' I thought of what Comte, or Spencer, or Durkheim, or Veblen, or Parsons might say, but found nothing to comfort her or me. Shortly after this experience I left the Department of Welfare and found comfort in more theoretical questions raised in graduate school."

Watkins next confronted the theory/practice issue in 1970 when he became an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Pembroke State University. In his second year of teaching he received the Outstanding Educator Award and later received a yearbook dedication. "I probably would be teaching sociology today had it not been for a conversation with a former graduate. He told me that I had been his favorite teacher, but in the last year he had found a great deal of difference between what I was then preaching in the classroom and what he now was experiencing in his career. Watkins followed this visit with a plea to his 200 students to voluntarily seek out professionally-related experiences. One hundred and fifty of the students responded and this ultimately resulted in a proposal for a Human Services Center that was the first of its kind to be funded by the state of North Carolina."

In 1974 Ed Watkins became the first dean level director of Career Development at the oldest liberal arts college in Nebraska - Doane College. "My work in the Doane community convinced me there is indeed a rationale for integrating the career (life) development concept into the liberal arts experience." Other leaders like Boyer, Hoyt, Marland, Tyler and Holland agree.

In 1976 Watkins wrote the Career Development Process. The process is designed to turn the traditional placement process from a back door to a front-end operation and is designed to bring all the career (life) development elements into a coordinated focus. Watkins says, "Traditionally our placement efforts have been too little, primarily because they have been too late. Also, placement is the responsibility of the entire academic community and not just of those who hold the title. If we placed half the emphasis in placement of graduates as we do on recruiting, we might eventually find that a good career development effort is the best recruiting strategy."
Theoretically, program aims at practicality

By TERESA BARKER
Telegraph Herald Staff Writer

College honor students have failed Ed Watkins’ test, and college presidents have asked him to visit their campuses, even though he usually tells them their students are illiterate.

Watkins isn’t comparing traditional exam grades or standardized test scores. He uses one test, his own copyrighted creation, and says that, despite different responses to questions, he usually sees the same answer.

“They are occupationally illiterate,” he said. “In liberal arts, the educational system has failed to make the connection between the theoretical and the practical, and most of these students don’t have any idea what to do with themselves after they graduate.”

Watkins, a former college professor, now is president of the National Institute for Career Development, based at Doane College in Crete, Neb.

This week, he is at Clarke College in Dubuque, where faculty and staff are coordinating an internship program for Clarke students and Dubuque-area businesses.

Most students who have taken the “Watkins Occupational Literacy Test,” score low, which means they have little idea how their talents, interests, or skills can be translated into a career, Watkins said. But most students also are eager to do something about the academic-professional language barrier, he said.

The internship program gives them a chance.

And more than 50 Dubuque-area employers have expressed an interest in giving the Clarke program a chance, according to Watkins and Louise Ottavi, Clarke assistant academic dean and director of the career planning office. Ottavi coordinated the career development program as part of an 18-month pilot project funded by the Northwest Area Foundation of Minneapolis.

“They need good people out there,” Watkins said.

“They need good people out there,” says Ed Watkins, who helps college students discover what careers they might be suited for. “But a lot of business people in general have a negative feeling for liberal arts majors as a classification. The liberal arts major often doesn’t even know what skills a job requires, and hasn’t looked at his own abilities to see what he’s suited for.”

“They need good people out there,” says Ed Watkins, who helps college students discover what careers they might be suited for. “But a lot of business people in general have a negative feeling for liberal arts majors as a classification. The liberal arts major often doesn’t even know what skills a job requires, and hasn’t looked at his own abilities to see what he’s suited for.”

“It takes the support of everybody, the faculty and the administration, in setting up for the internship program,” he said.

“Clarke has that kind of leadership, very innovative,” he said. “Right now it’s one of a few programs in the country, and other colleges are going to be looking at Clarke’s experience to see how it’s done.”
Career development director modern 'matchmaker'

By ELIZABETH KECK
Gazette Arts Reporter

ATCHISON, Kan. — Ed Watkins is a matchmaker.

But his couples don’t end up in a church repeating vows before a minister.

Instead, this son of a Methodist minister prefers matching people with careers.

As director of the National Institute for Career Development, Watkins is intent upon making sure students in liberal arts colleges can find jobs after graduation.

“We have an obligation to place our people and an obligation to know how many we’re placing,” Watkins told some 200 people attending a career night dinner at Benedictine College recently.

Watkins was in Atchison for two days last week to teach Benedictine’s 158 graduating seniors job-hunting skills and to stress to Benedictine’s board of governors the need for integrating a career development program in the liberal arts curriculum.

The skills of a liberal arts student — ability to communicate, think creatively, cope, complete projects, relate to other people, and understand the nature of science — are in demand by employers, he said. But too many students are never matched with those employers because they suffer from “career ignorance,” not knowing their options.

Watkins’ remedy is a six-step career development process he pioneered at Doane College in Crete, Neb.

Doane, the oldest liberal arts college in Nebraska, bills the program as “a process that begins prior to a student’s entering college and extending on through life.”

The volunteer-participation program begins each summer when high school juniors and seniors spend a week at Doane exploring the world of knowledge, work, and leisure.

Throughout their stay at Doane, they can participate in career decision-making workshops, take advantage of the career library, and visit with career center counselors.

Students also are counseled on a one-to-one basis by faculty members in tune with the requirements of specific vocations. Watkins said they are trying to avoid the classic situation of the senior with low test scores and a low grade point average, trying to get into medical school.

He said the faculty also is trying to prepare students for careers in the broadest sense, taking into consideration the 5-to-midnight leisure time, as well as the 8-to-5 work time.

Through experiential learning, students have a chance to test their career interests through internships.

Last year, more than 75 percent of the Doane seniors participated in the program during their undergraduate career.

Watkins terms placement as the “last-minute check” on students’ future plans. Through a questionnaire, students are asked about future plans, long-range goals, and the need for additional career counseling and testing. Students also learn about interviewing, writing letters of introduction, and resumes.

Last spring, he said, 58 percent of the non-teaching majors were placed in jobs or graduate schools before graduation.

And if graduates discover they chose the wrong career, they can return to Doane, tuition free, and re-educate themselves for a more suitable career.

Since the warranty program began in 1974, Watkins said only 25 graduates have returned for further training.

The Doane program has become a national model, and earned the school a $1.25 million U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare grant in 1978 to facilitate integrating the career development concept into the liberal arts curriculum.

This May, the first National Conference on Career Development was held at the campus and resulted in the formation of the Doane College-based National Institute for Career Development.

Watkins is executive director of the Institute and now travels the country talking with college and university officials about the benefits of the career development-liberal arts marriage.

In that capacity he visited Benedictine College to acquaint that school with the career development concepts.

Benedictine Director of Placement Bill Robey said Watkins’ visit was “breaking the ice” to encourage the school’s administrators to evaluate their need.

“Placement records and the job board are not making placements,” he said in reference to Benedictine’s career development program. “To do more you have to sell people on the idea.”

That’s what Watkins has been doing since he jumped on the career development bandwagon more than five years ago while teaching at Pembroke State University in Pembroke, N.C.

When one of Watkins’ students returned for a visit and reminded him of the gap between classroom theory and practice, he decided to do something about the problem.

He dared the 200 students in his sociology class to volunteer in the community. After 150 students took him up on the offer, Pembroke administrators caught on to the idea and moved Watkins out of the classroom and into career development.

In 1974, he left Pembroke to take on the challenge of developing a career program for Doane College. Now, he’s flying across the country flaunting Doane’s success story, hoping to seal the bond between career development and liberal arts in the next five to 10 years.

To Watkins, it all comes down to accountability. “Institutions have to be accountable when you pay the kind of money we do for education. Students have to be prepared to come out and face the world.”

“Placement records and the job institutions are doing to help people be placed should be as much of a priority as recruiting students.”
By WILL LESTER

Record Staff Writer

Edward Watkins believes that career planning is life planning and he is traveling the country spreading his theories about new ways to educate students about career possibilities.

He says that plenty of programs attempt to help educate students to their career needs but there is still not enough of an overall plan to give students the amount of information they need.

Watkins is the career development director at tiny Duane College in Crete, Nebraska. But his interest in career development goes far beyond that job.

He's also executive director of the National Institute of Career Development, which was formed last year by several leading educators and is dedicated to restructuring how career development is handled in high schools and colleges.

THE PURPOSE of the institute is to examine new ways of organizing career development programs at colleges and high schools and to spread the word about the importance of career education.

Watkins was here to visit Columbia College and talk with students and administrators about the process of training for career and for life.

"Our young people are suffering from occupational illiteracy," said Watkins in an interview. "Many young people don't know what life skills they have.

"What we are dealing with is career ignorance, life ignorance. Not only do we need to help young people deal with their lives from 8 to 8, we should also show them what's possible from 8 to 12."

THE FIRST conference of the National Institute of Career Development was held last spring at Doane College, which has a student body of 650, because of Doane's progressive and comprehensive system of career planning started in the early 1970s, according to Watkins.

Watkins believes that universities have "all nice fancy programs that kids aren't using."

With the many different career development programs now offered, students are getting multiple messages and are getting confused, he said. With the competitive marketplace of today, the students need to be more job intelligent than they are today.

Watkins said that most colleges and universities have all the resources already, available to start a coordinated career development approach and they could start one without any additional money.

THE APPROACH, advocated by the Institute, includes: close contact between high school counselors and college counselors so that common goals can be agreed upon.

Other steps in the comprehensive plan for students would include:

- Starting a life file on a freshman student which could be carried throughout his college career.
- Inviting professionals on campus to talk with students periodically and using a career library.
- Offering career counseling making workshops.
- Providing faculty internships in fields relating to their areas of expertise.

Grant, for example. If you watch that show you think that journalists are responsible for great social upheaval. They emphasize how important a reporter can be and they neglect to tell about the everyday life of a reporter. They're selling the show every day.

Watkins said he feels that the high schools are not awakening students to the job possibilities. "They're spending all their money on pom-poms and helmets," he said.

He said the purpose of the career development process is "to shake up." students and make them think about what they're doing with their lives.

"STUDENTS OF the '70s are part of the 'You know' generation," he said. "They say 'you know' rather than explaining what they actually mean, possibly because they don't know what they

This includes a mixture of career education, counseling and experiential learning.

Watkins has visited more than 50 campuses and says he has had a good reception concerning his talks about a more coordinated and thorough system of career development, starting in high schools and coordinated with college development in college.

While most of the schools hadn't or all of the components of a career development system, he said, few had developed a comprehensive, unified system.

THE PROBLEMS faced by students as a result of this are that they are ill-informed about their own skills and career needs and about various job possibilities.

"Students get much of their job information from television," he said. "That's a hype job. Take 'Lou
Chinese view education

"The greatest difference between Chinese and American students is the extent to which the former regard education as a great privilege," says Ed Watkins, Doane College's vice president for life development, after spending two weeks in mainland China as part of a People to People exchange.

Watkins, who doubles as director of the National Institute for Career Development, said that while many American youth today consider college simply "a right of passage," Chinese students study very hard "just to get a chance to go to college." Only four per cent of all Chinese high school graduates go on to college.

"Once the student is accepted for further education, there is no problem with retention," claims Watkins. "He or she would sooner die than not continue in school." College graduates in China are guaranteed a job, although, as Watkins pointed out, it is in an occupation chosen for them by the state.

"The Chinese, like Doane, emphasize internships in which students sample the world of careers before fixing on a specific career. The Chinese term for internships is "to be in touch," a most appropriate phrase according to the Doane administrator. The Chinese universities emphasize a broad, liberal arts education, said Watkins, rather than technology.

\**Life skills\**

"The Chinese believe, as we at Doane do, that learning life skills prepares people for change and gives them an opportunity at fulfillment that purely technical training seldom does," Watkins did point out that young people slated for technical work are given training in technical schools.

"Noting that the Chinese have suffered through considerable educational dislocation as a result of the cultural revolution, Watkins said that they are just now beginning to conduct advanced degree programs. He also opined that the present Chinese government faces great problems in that their planning and implementation of the economy must move forward at just the proper pace. "Too fast puts the revolutionary element in charge," said Watkins, "and too slow leads to disappointment in people who have rising expectations."

\**Productivity problems\**

Watkins, who has focused much of his recent work on problems of American productivity, doubts that we can learn much from the Chinese approach to work. "They have some major problems with productivity. In fact, they now use some incentive systems to increase production, a rather bald admission of the failure of the purely communist notion." Further, said Watkins, "the Chinese transportation system is so poor that distribution of goods and supplies is very nearly chaotic. You see large groups of workers standing around doing nothing, not necessarily because they are lazy, but simply because they have no materials with which to work."

Watkins, who also visited Japan, said that he was considerably impressed by the Japanese attitude toward work and their complete loyalty to their employer. "There is no sense of a them-us adversary relationship between management and labor in Japan that one so often sees in the United States. Everyone is on the same team." Watkins added, "You have to say that the Japanese have outdone the Puritans when it comes to work ethic. They are workaholics of the first order. They rely on culture and classes to inculcate a love of work and a duty toward employer in their workers plus bonuses for virtually anything that advances production."
View From the Top

Are school grades related to career success?

Ed Watkins, director of the National Institute for Career Development, Doane College, Crete — I think the key issue is not grades, but what are the skills, technical or liberal, that are necessary. There's a report out from Michigan State, which has the largest placement office in the country, that says grades are not that important to an employer, but experience, like an internship, is an absolute essential, particularly for the liberal-arts student. The employers said they were looking for the ability to write, and the ability to express thoughts in speech. A history student may be able to remember the 1492s, but more important is critical thinking, decision-making, problem-solving. Students should be able to demonstrate those skills so they can sit down with an employer and talk without saying "you know" 50 times. In my book, "Preparing Liberal Arts Students for Careers," I make the point that employers are less interested in liberal-arts graduates. I polled those same employers six years later and listed the skills I've mentioned, and they said "if you know anyone like that send them over." We as educators have not been producing as much in that regard in the past decade as we've been promising. The actual market value of a degree has declined. Grades hold a declining interest because of grade inflation and because it's hard to demonstrate what they really mean. Critical thought, that's what's important. The challenge is to motivate students to know about themselves and about the world.