

FOR RELEASE: Immediate

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YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio -- Court reporter: a stenographer who records and transcribes a verbatim report of all proceedings in a court of law.

Court reporting: an interesting but demanding field.

Dr. Violet F. Boggess of Youngstown State University, where court reporting has been taught for the past nine years, says this is a career that pays well and currently has a shortage of qualified practitioners.

Many people are not aware of the existence of YSU's court reporting program, which leads to an associate degree in Applied Business.

"It goes virtually unnoticed," notes Dr. Boggess of Atwater, chairwoman of YSU's Department of Business Education and Technology.

The two-year degree also enables graduates to sit for the state exam which requires that one be able to take dictation at 225 words per minute and transcribe with 95 per cent accuracy. Currently, there are 13 students enrolled in the program.

The program's curriculum includes eight stenograph machine shorthand classes, courses in information processing, typewriting, medical and legal terminology and the use of computers to record transcripts, which are the word by word record of all courtroom proceedings.

Also, each student, as a final course after two years, does 100 hours of practicum in a courtroom.

Dr. Boggess says that YSU's program is a difficult one, but she feels that it effectively prepares students for the demanding job of court reporting. She stresses that court reporters must not only be skilled in dictation and grammar but also must be "on the ball."

Anthony Cordova of Boardman and Shirley Bercini of Warren, two students in the program, agree that the requirements are tough but believe they can meet the challenge.

"Thank God for our terrific instructors," exclaims Bercini, who credits their teachers for helping her through the program.

Dr. Boggess suggests that the quality of YSU's instructors stems from the fact that several of them are practicing court reporters and understand the work and the students' struggle.

"It is a tough field, but there are a lot of job opportunities," says Cordova, referring to The National Shorthand Reporters Association which reports there is a definite shortage of court reporters throughout the nation.

YSU's Court Reporting Program prepares students for positions in courts as well as in free-lance work, such as in Youngstown's Nagy-Baker Court Reporting, a firm owned by Lisa Baker, one of the first graduates of YSU's program.

Mrs. Baker says her firm was one of the first agencies to employ the use of the computer to record transcripts. "The computer has really cut transcription time," she adds.

Baker cites the low cost of YSU's program, "and the fact that when you graduate from YSU, you have a degree." If a graduate should choose to earn a higher degree, the associate degree credits are transferrable.

Add Two

Dr. Boggess recommends YSU "not only because of our excellent program, but also because the University's program offers so much more to students than just academics."

YSU's Department of Business Education and Technology is part of the University's College of Applied Science and Technology.

--By Alison Barret/YSU News Service

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CUTLINE

Much of the homework for Anthony Cordova of Boardman, a student in YSU's court reporting program, is practicing with his stenograph machine. Requirements for the state exam are a minimum of 225 words per minute.

(YSU photo by Elise Cleary)

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