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College Housing Revamp Planned

Black Students & Alumni
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HANOVER — Three new experiments in residential arrangements combined with academic and social programs were announced today by Dartmouth College Provost Leonard M. Rieser and Dean Carroll W. Brewster.

The new programs — involving black students, foreign students, and residents of the Choate Road dormitory complex — will go into effect next fall.

All three experiments represent, college officials said, to the need for new residential arrangements expressed by students in recent months. Students, faculty and administrators participated jointly in discussions leading to the new programs.

Recommendations were made last month by the Committee on Equal Opportunity (CEO), and in reply, the College is designating Cutter Hall as the focus of a multi-purpose experiment in the Afro-American area. In a related development,

Nathan Lord House, for the past two years a social center for black students, will become an International Student Center for Dartmouth's undergraduate and graduate foreign students.

Finally, the Choate Road dormitories — Cohen, Bissell, Little, and Brown — will form an experimental residential unit. The active participation and residence of two faculty members in a program more in keeping with the academic purpose for which this dormitory complex was originally designed has been proposed as part of the plan.

A statement by the Afro-American Society several weeks ago calling attention to the inadequacy of Lord House for the present and anticipated level of black student needs led to discussions in the Committee on Equal Opportunity and to recommendations by that body that

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larger quarters be found to house the Society's activities.

In describing the new Cutter Hall experiment developed to meet those recommendations, College officials stressed the close relationship of the experiment to the institution's academic program. "As we explored the implications of the CEO's recommendations," Rieser said "it became increasingly apparent that what we faced was an opportunity rather than a problem."

Cutter Hall will, in effect, serve three purposes — it will be closely linked to a developing program in Black Studies; it will serve as a temporary "transition house" for those black freshmen who may need fairly constant counseling as they make the social and academic adjustment to Dartmouth; and it will replace Lord House as the social and cultural center for black students and provide office space for the administrative functions of the Afro-American Society.

Students presently living in Cutter Hall and enrolling for the fall term will be given special priority in room assignments elsewhere on the campus, including the Choate Road complex, according to Dean Brewster.

A seminar room will be used for classes and discussion groups. In addition, the Cutter Hall library will emphasize materials in the Afro-American area and a guest suite will be occupied much by visiting lecturers in the Black Studies program.

Brewster noted that close identification of Black Studies with the Cutter experiment could in the long run positively affect the quality of life on the Dartmouth campus. "There has been a great deal of discussion lately by students, faculty, and administrators about ways in which the existing residential system might be improved," Brewster said.

"What many feel is needed is a closer intergration of academic and social life on the campus, or more precisely the establishment of living patterns in which a student does not

have to escape from the residence in order to function in an academic role. In this sense, Cutter might eventually serve as a model or other campus residential experiments," he said.

While it is expected that large numbers of students will be participating in the program, four categories of students will be eligible for the 35 residential spaces in Cutter — black freshmen in need of special counseling; undergraduate tutors for these freshmen; students who have taken or plan to take Black Studies courses; and other who feel they have special reasons for wanting to live there.

White students in the last three categories will be eligible for residence in Cutter. To give as many students as possible the opportunity to participate in the new Cutter Hall experiment residence will be limited to one year.

Speaking of the use of Cutter as a "transitional house," for freshmen, Professor Jerome Daniell, chairman of the CEO, said some black freshmen have a difficult time adjusting to life at Dartmouth.

"Not only do some lack the study habits and skills which would enable them to handle academic requirements easily," Daniell said, "but for many of these students, living in a predominantly white culture creates constant anxiety, especially for blacks who have had little contact with whites before. Sometimes the combination of the two sets of demands — Academic and social — becomes so overwhelmingly that the student ceases to function productively," Daniell said. One of the aims of the Cutter experiment will be to provide a setting in which such problems can be handled with maximum sensitivity and discipline.

Acquired by Dartmouth in 1953, Cutter Hall was initially used as an experimental residential unit for students interested in international affairs, including foreign students.

The new International Student Center in Lord House is expected to house three foreign students and three American students. They will be working with faculty committee to be designed in the near future and composed of persons interested in creating a program of activities which will take into account both the special needs of foreign students and the special resource they constitute for the College community.