

Alma B. MacGregor – Professor Emeritus 1962

Professor Alma Beaver MacGregor received her AB degree from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1926. She was awarded her MA and PhD degrees, the latter in Child Development, from Columbia University in 1928 and 1932 respectively. Before joining the Department of Psychology at Santa Barbara State College in 1941, she taught at Mills College and engaged in clinical work in the Bay Area. She experienced the transition to Santa Barbara College of the University of California, and then to the University of California, Santa Barbara. She served as Acting Chair of the Department in 1956-7.

Her teaching emphasis lay in the area of child development. In this area, she offered courses in Child Psychology, The Psychology of Exceptional Children, and the Psychology of Adolescence.

In her research, Professor MacGregor was concerned with predicting scholastic success. In one area of research she examined how differences in interests, personality characteristics, and aptitudes related to the academic performance of nurses in training. She also investigated cross-cultural differences in child-rearing practices. In one investigation, she applied a child-rearing measurement developed at the Laboratory of Human Development at Harvard University to a sample in Copenhagen. In this study, she found generally less permissive practices among the less educated Danish parents than among a comparable sample of parents in the United States.