ChE letters

RATINGS REACTIONS

Sir:

The letter by H. Y. Cheh and E. F. Leonard (Winter Issue of CEE, page 3) discusses the productivity of doctoral degrees from various chemical engineering schools. I am constantly involved in convincing my Dean that our department is very efficient, thus it was dismaying to note that the Cheh-Leonard table is in error. For the 71-75 period listed, the University of Illinois produced 28 Ph.D.'s and the faculty size averaged 8.75. Thus the productivity was 0.800 doctoral degrees per faculty per year. This would put us in fifth place in the table rather than completely off. As a matter of fact, if one takes the 10-year period 1966-1976, our average is 1.035, which is above all the schools in the Cheh-Leonard list.

J. W. Westwater
U. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Sir:

One curious feature of the proposed systems for rating graduate programs has not received appropriate attention. This is the merit awarded for "productivity" as measured by the number of Ph.D.'s granted per faculty member. This is somewhat equivalent to ranking the goodness of mothers by the number of offspring, or of husbands by the number of wives. What makes it curiouser and curiouser is the tendency to treat this parameter in precisely the opposite sense when ranking undergraduate programs, viz., large numbers of B.S. graduates per faculty (high student/teacher ratios) are considered negatively. Somewhat similar, but less convincing, arguments could be made about productivity measured by numbers of papers published per faculty.

It may be inappropriate for faculty to use such standards on each other, but still be useful to suggest them for use by Deans, Provosts and legislators. It may suppress their natural inclination to judge us in purely monetary terms, e.g., research income, or that ultimate quantitative measure of academic excellence, overhead recovery per faculty.

John C. Angus
Case Western Reserve University

ChE news

ANDERSON NAMED CHAIRMAN AT MSU

Donald K. Anderson, professor of chemical engineering and of engineering research, has been appointed chairman of the department at Michigan State University. Anderson, 45, who has been acting chairman of the department, succeeds M. H. Chetrick, who died unexpectedly in January of a heart attack. He holds the B.S. from the University of Illinois and M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of Washington and in 1973 he received the MSU Distinguished Faculty ward. He has served as chairman and secretary-treasurer of the chemical engineering division of the 12,000-member American Society for Engineering Education. He is the author of numerous technical publications.

PROFESSOR LEON LAPIDUS DIES

At press time CEE received word that Prof. Leon Lapidus, 52, Chairman of the ChE Department Princeton University, died suddenly in his office May 5. A more complete obituary will be included in the next issue.

BRENNER NEW CHAIRMAN AT ROCHESTER

Prof. Howard Brenner of Carnegie-Mellon University will become professor and chairman of the Chemical Engineering Department at the University of Rochester July 1.

Brenner won the 1976 Alpha Chi Sigma Award given by the AIChE. In 1975 he was selected as a 1975-76 Sherman Mills Fairchild Distinguished Scholar at California Institute of Technology. In 1974 he was named a Senior Visiting Fellow by the Science Research Council of Great Britain. He was the recipient of the 11th Annual

Continued on page 96.

ChE book reviews

The Application of Mathematical Modelling to Process Development and Design

By L. M. Roe
Halsted Press, 1974

Reviewed by C. A. W. DiBella

This book concerns itself with modelling in the field of Chemical Engineering and of process design in particula. In the Preface, the author states that the book is written for the many engineers who use programs, and not for the few that write them. In this reviewer's opinion, the book has few useful features for users of programs. If the book were to be used together with large amounts of supplementary materials, it might be useful to a mathematical modelling specialist.

Chapter 1 is an attempt to define mathematical modelling and systems engineering and to explain where they fit into a chemical company's organization. In general, this chapter is much too long for the value that can be gleaned from it, introduces extraneous discussion of company structure, lacks depth, and suffers from inadequate nomenclature and references.

Chapter 2 discusses reactor models. By discussion and examples the author presents

Continued on page 95.