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In November of 1973, Richard Gordon became the first male to graduate from Radford University. The enrollment of males in 1972 marked a change from the previous all-female college.

According to the May 1997 edition of The Magazine of Radford University, the first co-ed class consisted of 92 males. Thirty-six members of the class lived on campus in Norwood Hall.

Danny Link, a member of the first male class who lived on campus, said in the magazine, "It was a crazy time. It was a hard adjustment for a lot of people. We kind of busted the door wide open as far as rules were concerned."

The change from a single sex college to a coeducational institution also changed a lot of the already existing rules.

According to the magazine, the women and men were restricted to limited social hours with the opposite sex and were intensely supervised. Women were also restricted to only date men from a list of acceptable dates. First dates were limited to the dating parlor or if they were going on a double date they could gather at some other approved location on campus.

The president of Radford College at the time, Dr. Donald Dedmon, made the decision to accept male students in effort to combat decreasing enrollment. Although there were mixed emotions regarding the change to a coed college, for the most part, the women accepted the fact that in order for Radford to stay financially stable, the college had to admit male students.

According to an editorial in the September 28, 1972 issue of the Grapurchat, students liked the change. One student said, "I think it will improve its academic standards significantly by offering a larger choice of curriculum. It will increase enrollment with the addition of men. It has improved morale of the girls."

Although many thought that the change to a coed college others felt differently. Other opinions by students noted in the included not liking the change. According to the book, Radford University: Investing in Lifetimes, Bonnie Hurlburt, said "There was some alumni

really strongly against it, and it was not popular with all the students because some of them had come here because it was a women's college."

Through all the controversy of Radford becoming a coeducational institution, Radford University has remained a place for both males and females to receive an education. Dedmon explained why such a university was important when he announced the change, as quoted in the magazine, "In fairness to the citizens of the Commonwealth, Radford can no longer in conscience deny admission to students on the basis of sex. Rather, Radford must serve citizens of the Commonwealth without regard to race, religion, or sex."