

Edith Florence McDermott was raised in Meadville, Pennsylvania. She attended Allegheny College, Drexel Institute Philadelphia, and Cornell University, eventually graduating with honors. She was the first professor of Domestic Economy and Household Science at Michigan Agricultural College (MAC). She was appointed in 1896 and that first year taught all of the courses for the Women's Course and was matron of Abbot Hall, the dormitory assigned to the women. Prior to MAC, McDermott had been a teacher of domestic science in Allegheny's Fifth Ward Manual Training and Domestic Science School. During the second year of the Women's Course, Harriet Bacon relieved McDermott as matron, which allowed her more time to focus on academics. McDermott left MAC the next year, 1898.