

LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS



"SAY, DEAN PHILLIPS, WILL YOU RUN OUT THERE AND SEE WHAT THOSE YOUNGSTERS ARE UP TO WITH THEIR NOON HOUR RALLY?"

EDITORIAL

On October 24, the faculty after considerable discussion concerning the value of the Sophomore Proficiency Examination moved that the entire matter should be considered by the English Department. The English Department in turn is to make a recommendation to the Educational Program Committee of the faculty concerning the requirement. This committee is to study the matter and bring a report before the faculty in January.

It is well that the English Department is in the process of discussing this matter. I wonder if they are also concerned with the implied lack in the standards of our English Department, particularly on the freshman level? The sophomore "hurdles" stand as a symbol of the level of faith that Wesleyan has in its ability to train students to write. It is an established fact that it is necessary for a student to be able to express himself clearly and adequately in writing as well as verbally. This ability can be acquired to a certain degree in the freshman English courses. While the student develops themes on various topics, he is to work on the structure of his grammar and build his vocabulary as well as challenge his creative talents.

It seems to me that once a student has successfully completed this course he would be considered as a competent writer. Therefore there would be no reason to test his skills again.

Also, the average of a number of themes would be a much fairer basis for a decision than the one theme written during the exam. A student can improve his writing technique as well as express himself on several topics during a course. Whereas, he might not reveal his true ability while writing on a topic he finds uninteresting and certainly impossible to research during an exam. This necessitates repeating at least half of the exam and facing the possibility of another topic of little interest.

The student body awaits the decision of the Educational Program Committee and hopes that they will express faith in our English Department.

"PASS-FAIL" OPTION EXAMINED

--Amherst, Mass. - (I.P.)- The Office of Institutional Studies recently conducted a national survey of the "pass-fail" option at the request of the chairman of a Faculty Senate subcommittee on the campus of the University of Massachusetts.

Results: At Pomona College, juniors and seniors have had the pass-fail option available in elective courses outside their major for the past eight years. All freshman seminars are graded pass-fail.

A student is allowed up to two courses a semester under this option with a maximum of four such courses to count toward graduation.

The respondent felt that although a few students try to manipulate the option to improve their grade point average (GPA) - neither pass nor fail is registered in a student's cumulative average - valid uses far outnumber possible abuses.. making the program a general success."

Dr. Harry G. Fish, Jr.
400 Peachtree Street
Rocky Mount, North Carolina
27801

Dear Dr Fish;

I would like to apologize to you, Dr. Carter, Dr. Weeks, and the staff of Park View Hospital for the nature of the article "A Look Inside Park View Hospital" published in the October 30, 1967 issue of The Decree, the official newspaper of the student body of Wesleyan College.

The Decree is a student publication; it does not speak officially for the College and does not necessarily represent the thinking of a majority of students. It is a publication which operates with a great deal of freedom in what it publishes and in its editorial policy. The faculty and staff do not attempt to censor or proof read all that appears in this newspaper. This is, we feel, an educationally sound policy and defensible on the grounds that we want students to learn to make their own decisions and stand responsible for them. This policy also conforms to guide lines recommended by the national college associations and the A. A. U. P. regarding students rights. Any other policy such as demanding that students not be critical or not reflect their true thoughts, would require that the College publish the students' paper for them.

As a rule, all student organizations have faculty advisers to guide them in their activities. Since the College opened this term, I have served as acting adviser to The Decree while we were in the process of securing a faculty member as permanent adviser. In this particular article, I did not read the copy before it went to press simply because I have not required that copy be proofed by me before publication. I have, in short, preferred to advise rather than censor. I do believe that the editor and the author made some mistakes here -- mistakes which I have already called to their attention. Had I seen the article I would have advised that the use of personal names, the placement of the article on the front page as a news story

Although not included in this survey, Princeton University and the University of California (Santa Cruz) have also had some experience with the pass-fail grading option. The pass-fail option at Princeton, in effect since Spring term 1966, is available to all undergraduates. Only one elective course a year (outside the student's major) may be taken for a pass-fail grade.

It is also interesting to note that if a student fails to take advantage of the option in any given academic year, he can not pick up the option later. Faculty members report only the regular grade; the Registrar's Office changes the grade to pass or fail and enters it as such on the student's record. No record is kept of the student's regular grade.

At Santa Cruz, an experimental evaluation program has been in effect for the past five years. As stated in their 1966-67 Bulletin, "Evaluation will take three forms: faculty comment, comprehensive examinations, and grades."

Concerning grades, "Students in lower division courses normally will be graded 'Pass' or 'Fail.' Students in upper division courses will be graded

when it was, in reality, one man's opinion as an interpretive feature, (the absence of a by-line was a printer's error), and that the implications covering the professional competency of the doctors was in very poor taste. I regret personally that this kind of advice was not given and I am willing to accept personally the responsibility for the article. I hope this type of carelessness will not re-occur.

I do know that the author of the article has personally expressed his confidence in you as his physician and that his parents, by letter to me ten days before the publication of the article, expressed their confidence in the way you were treating him. In fact, their letter to me stated: "...we feel that you have all done a very good job so far, for Steve, and trust that you will continue to do so. We were pleased to hear of the careful check Dr. Fish has kept of Steve's arm, x-raying regularly. This sounds good to us." I have interpreted this to mean that the parents were pleased with the way the college, the college physicians, and you have handled the young man's problems.

I am very much aware of the contribution that you, Dr. Carter and Dr. Weeks are making not only to the health services of our students, but as friends of the College in general.

I am of the opinion that your professional reputation, and those of Dr. Carter and Dr. Weeks, are so well established in the community that it would be impossible for the Wesleyan newspaper to damage them. It is my hope that all involved can accept the matter as an honest mistake made in our attempts to develop Wesleyan College into a strong and stable institution of higher education.

Please be assured of our continued support of better health services in the Rocky Mount area. If I can be of service to you in the future, do not hesitate to call on me.

Sincerely,

Sim O. Wilde, Jr.,
Dean of Students

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

November 11, 1967

Editor:

It is patients just like the one that wrote "A Look Inside Park View Hospital" who make our hospitals appear as prisons. I would agree that the writer would have had an ax to grind had the nurses and orderlies made sarcastic remarks about the injury rather than making jokes. Humor, even in its grossest forms, is always greeted more readily than sarcasm or indifference.

If the patient in the adjacent room had been as irrational as the writer portrayed then it seems only logical that the writer had no business trying to bum a cigarette. Does the writer actually believe that a paranoid or "screamer" would be allowed to have cigarettes? The writer would have really learned the meaning of the word "sickness" had he been given a pre-operative meal of solids rather than liquids.

I am stunned and disappointed that The Decree, as a spokesman for N. C. Wesleyan College, would publish such biased and warped opinion. I hope that the students of Wesleyan College and the citizens of Rocky Mount will take this article with a grain of salt!!

Sincerely,
Bill Brantley
Student
N. C. Wesleyan

ACADEMIC SHIFT EXEMPLIFIED

--Albion, Mich. - (I.P.) - Albion College is the scene of an academic shift exemplified in the development of new teaching methods, experimentation in educational concepts and the search for knowledge and answers to problems both new and old.

A completely revised curriculum and a unit system of measuring course work were introduced last year. Beginning freshmen are involved in a program requiring 32 units and two years of physical education for graduation. A total of 13 units is required in core subjects. Each unit corresponds roughly to what would otherwise be a four-hour course, though the number of class sessions is somewhat variable.

In addition to one - unit courses under the unit system there are 28 half-unit courses, as well as seminars and directed study, to provide variety and accommodate specialized areas. Each student also has two free - choice courses in which he may enroll on the basis of "pass-fail," but with no grade awarded.

Various comments, both pro and con, have been expressed concerning the new program. Dr. Arthur W. Munk, chairman of the philosophy department, feels that "the new curriculum and unit system offers certain noteworthy possibilities. While, on the one hand, it gives instructors more opportunity for research and scholarly production, on the other, it also provides students