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At Ohio State University, seniors, graduate students and professional students have been allowed to take certain courses under the pass-fail system in selected schools and colleges including the Graduate School and the Schools of Medicine and Education for "several years."

Included are all courses in Medicine and specified courses either in or outside the student's major, e.g., thesis, minor problems, special seminars. There is no specific policy on the number of such courses a student may take and while the students will receive credit hours for an "S" (satisfactory) neither the "S" nor the "E" counts in his GPA. The respondent regarded their program, as outlined above, successful.

The California Institute of Technology began a pass-fail grading system in the fall of 1964 as an experiment to "encourage the development of an attitude in which a student sees himself as a self-guided scholar rather than as a competing grade-getter."

Their program is unique in that there is no real "option" since all courses in the standard freshman curriculum, which all freshmen must take, are graded this way but no upper division courses (with one exception) are available under the pass-fail option. This policy was so successful that it became permanent in May, 1966 as a result of a "unanimous less one" faculty vote.

Among the reasons for adopting this policy permanently was the fact that the freshman attrition rate decreased considerably and that freshmen anxiety was not as evident. The morale among sophomores who had participated in the pass-fail program was also considerably higher. One negative effect was that some freshmen had "so conditioned themselves to the top awards that they suffered a real psychological shock when these awards, in the form of grades, were not obtainable."

Of the remaining six respondents presently offering the pass-fail option, only Stanford University, with one year of experience, has had this policy in effect longer than one term.

THE CLOSED DOOR

by Kathy Upton

On Friday night, one will likely find the halls of the Administration Building deserted except for a few people who, in order to escape the cold, wander through on their way to the SU. But, as these people pass by Garber Chapel, they may hear shouts of laughter or murmuring voices filtering through "the closed door." If one of them happens to be a Freshman, he may ask, "What's goin on in there?" His upper-class friend would answer, "Oh, it's just the MSM." The Frosh comes back with, "What the hell is the MSM?"

What is the MSM? It is a group. Yes it is a group, a small but dedicated one. Dedicated to what? Well, it is dedicated to serving not just the Methodist students but all students of Wesleyan College. How do we serve the students? Well—that is a good question! I'm afraid that we have not succeeded in serving all of the students at Wesleyan College. Why? Because, we are such a small group, only 19 out of

At all six schools the option was available to both juniors and seniors and at all but one to sophomores as well.

All freshmen at Stanford and the University of California (Berkeley) and second term freshmen at Tufts University are allowed to participate in this program. At only two of six institutions was the option limited to selected schools, but four of these respondents limited the option to courses outside the student's major.

At Berkely students were allowed to take courses in their major for a pass-fail grade with their major department's consent. At Oberlin College, although the option is generally available only in courses outside the student's major, "a faculty member may elect to have the Satisfactory-Unsatisfactory grade option apply for all students in a course. Enrollment in such a course does not deprive the student of his option."

At Tufts, Mount Holyoke College and Lehigh University, students were also allowed to take distribution requirements under the pass-fail option although at Lehigh foreign languages are excluded.

At all six institutions a student was limited to one pass-fail course per term. Mount Holyoke restricts the number of such courses in a student's college career to three, Lehigh to four and Tufts to eight. At none of these schools was a grade of "Pass" entered in the student's GPA, but at Tufts, Lehigh and Mount Holyoke "Fail" is included in the GPA.

schedule a "safe" pass and reduce study and grade pressure.

Although there are many variations on the regulations governing pass-fail, several practices seem widespread. Generally, freshmen are not allowed the option. The student is usually only allowed one course a term, frequently with a maximum number of credits to be earned this way, and then not generally in his major field.

Practice seems split on whether it should be available in all schools. There is some indication that individual schools or departments should be allowed to decide which courses will be available. And finally, although a pass does not affect the GPA, fail often does.

approximately 650. It is hard for 19 people to know what will please 650. We receive criticism but sometimes we hesitate to accept it as constructive because we wonder how people know what is wrong with our organization if they have never attended our meetings and don't really know what goes on behind "the closed door."

The conversation continues as the Frosh asks his friend, "You are a Methodist, why aren't you in there?" His friend laughs and answers, "are you kidding me? That's the 'group.' They won't let any outsiders in. That door is closed to anyone other than the select few."

That group! that's what the MSM is according to the "outsiders." But, we can honestly say that it isn't true. We are eager to make the MSM an all-inclusive organization. We need some new blood. The MSM is your organization! It can be whatever you want it to be! We welcome any constructive criticism that you may have. We already have a list of ideas given by interested persons that we are considering seriously. What about yours?

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the opportunity for a much more thorough investigation of certain areas and the basic problems involved.

Other comments -- Dr. W. Maurice McLean, chairman, Education Department:

"I am very pleased with the new unit system. There is now the opportunity to pursue course content in greater depth, an increased chance for independent study, and more flexibility in class scheduling.

"The unit system permits the student to give his attention to fewer courses at one time. For our teachers particularly there is an increased freedom in scheduling their time because of the consolidation of the former one and two hour courses."

Dr. Charles S. Schutz, chairman, Political Science Department:

"The unit system in political science curriculum has had ambiguous results at this stage in its implementation. It depends upon the point of view of the student or the professor. I think that from the professor's perspective it can be said that the narrowing of the range of courses and the deepening of their content through

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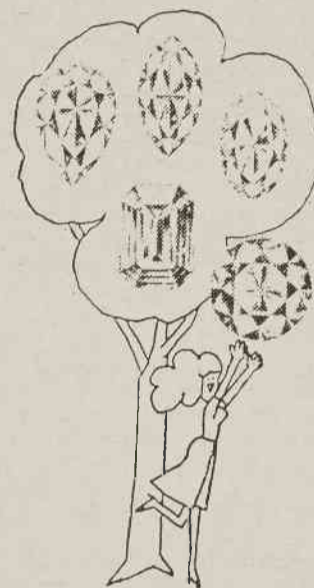


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