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Faculty Senate Gives ‘Pass’ to Pass-No Report Grading System

by Terry Nicholson

January 30, 1968 is a day to remember, for on that rather cold day last week, two milestones were passed on the Cscsb campus.

For the first time in its short history, students at Cscsb were allowed to attend a meeting of the faculty senate.

After taking an informal poll of the senate members and receiving no objections from them, senate chairman Dr. Ronald E. Barnes informed The Pawprint that students would be allowed to sit in on the senate meetings.

After acting on several reports from various committees, the senate began debate on a report submitted by the Ad-Hoc Pass/No Report Committee.

The committee has been working on what has been commonly referred to as the "Pass/Fail" measure. Proposals and debate on this subject has been going on for well over a year.

It was recommended by the committee that a controlled experiment with pass/no report grading be conducted from September 1968 through June 1970, under the supervision of the Director of Institutional Studies, Dr. James Freeman. It will be assisted by a senate committee.

At the end of the two-year period, the senate will decide to discontinue or retain this type of grading system.

All students at Cscsb will qualify for the experiment. The student may take a maximum of six courses on the pass/no report grading basis for the two-year period. However, no more than one of these courses may be taken in any one quarter.

Upon registering, the student will indicate which course he desires to be graded on with the pass/no report system.

Only two types of courses are excluded from this program, those offered by the Education Department and specified for education credential programs, and those specified for a student’s major, exclusive of the foreign language requirement.

To insure greater control over the experiment, faculty members will not know which students in their classes have selected a pass/no report grading basis. Grades will be given by the professor in the usual manner (i.e. A, B, C, D, F).

There are, however, two more steps needed to the full realization of the pass/no report grading system. The first is the Academic Council. This is a major problem since the majority of the council members are also members of the faculty senate, who voted unanimously against the adoption of the proposal.

The final step is the President of the College. But this again poses no serious threat, for students feel that the President will surely weigh any decision heavily, in the light of unanimous faculty senate support.

The Student Is A Nigger

By Gerald Farber
Professor of English
Cal State, L.A.

Students are niggers. When you get right straight, our schools begin to make sense. It’s more important, though, to understand why they’re niggers. If we follow that question seriously enough, it will lead us past the zone of academic bullshit, where dedicated teachers pass their knowledge onto a new generation, and into the nitty-gritty of human needs and hang-ups. And from there we can go on to consider what to do about it. It’s a matter, for students to come up from slavery.

First, let’s see what’s happening now. Let’s look at the role students play in what we like to call education.

At Cal State L.A., where I teach, the students have separate and unequal dining facilities. If I take them into the faculty room, my colleagues get uncomfortable, as though there were a bad smell. If I sit in the student cafeteria, I become known as the educational equivalent of a nigger lover. In at least one building there are even rest rooms which students may not use. At Cal State, also, there is an unwritten law barring student-faculty love-making. Fortunately, this anti-miscegenation law, like its Southern counterpart, is not 100 per cent effective.

Students at Cal State are politically disenchanted. They are in an academic Lowndes County. Most of them can vote in national elections—their average age is about 20—but they have no voice in the decisions which affect their academic lives. The students are, it is true, allowed to have a toy government of their own. It is a government run for the most part by Uncle Toms and concerned principally with trivia. The faculty and administrators decide what courses will be offered; the students get to choose their own Homecoming Queen. Occasionally, when student leaders get uppity and rebellious, they’re either ignored, put off with trivial concessions, or maneuvered expertly out of position.

A student at Cal State is expected to know his place. He calls a faculty member "Sir"—or "Doctor" or "Professor"—and he smiles and shuffles some as he stands outside the professor’s office waiting for permission to enter. The faculty tell him what courses to take (in my department, English, even electives have to be approved by a faculty member); they tell him what to read, what to write, and frequently, where to set the margins on his typewriter. They tell him what’s true and what isn’t. Some teachers insist that they encourage dissent but they’re always joking and every student knows it. Tell the man what he wants to hear or he’ll fall your ass out of the course.

"JUMP"

When a teacher says, "Jump," students jump. I know of one professor who refused to take up class time for exams and required students to show up for tests at 6:30 in the morning. And they did, by God! Another, at exam time, provides answer cards to be filled out—each one enclosed in a paper bag with a hole cut in the top to see through. Students continue overleaf
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The Student is a Nigger* continued from p. 1

TIMID TEACHERS

The teachers I know best are college professors. Outside the classroom and taken as a group, their most striking characteristic is timidity. They're short on balls,

Just look at their working conditions. At a time when even immigrant workers have begun to win and fight, college professors are still afraid to make more than a few bonehead gestures in the face of their pitiful economic status. In California state college, earnings of full professors are regularly and vigorously below the Governor and Legislature and yet they still won't offer any solid resistance. They lie flat on their stomachs with their pants down, mumbling catch phrases like "professional dignity" and "morality on a leash," the parents and teachers who created these wrecks are going to burn in hell.

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The saddest cases among both black slaves and student slaves are the ones who have so thoughtfully introspected their masters' values that their anger is all turned inward. At Cal State these are the kids for whom every low grade is torture, who stammer and shake when they speak to a professor, who go through an emotional crisis every time they're called upon during class. You can recognize them easily at finals time. Their faces are festooned with fresh pimples; their bowels boil audibly across the room. If there really is a Last Judgment, the preachers to make niggers of their students usually includes a more specific fear--fear of the black people themselves. Of course, student slaves are different, just like black people. You stand exposed to the general timidity which students are different, just like black people, You stand exposed to the general timidity which

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