

College Grading Hurts Teaching

Editor's Note: The following address was delivered before the 19th National Conference on Higher Education in Chicago in April by its author, Paul Goodman. Permission to reproduce the article was given to the Daily Nebraskan by the Association for Higher Education.

By Paul Goodman

The retaining of grading in the colleges is an interesting case of bureaucratic inertia and subservience to the social climate. Almost a consensus of teachers say that grading hurts teaching and learning and the spirit of the community but is inevitable, apparently because of extramural pressures. Yet the colleges are fairly autonomous and could do what they want in such a respect, and indeed some colleges do not have grading without disastrous results.

It is said, "Without grading, how will corporations, graduate schools, foundations, etc., know whom to select?" By admissions testing, just as the student was first admitted to the college. Why should the college test and grade for these extramural persons?

Furthermore, each employer or graduate department has its own specific requirements for which it can test far more efficiently than it can rely on college grades, often outdated. In fact, civil service, accounting, medicine, etc., do test specifically for licensing, apart from college grades.

It is absurd when the dean of a leading university praises the high predictive value of the aptitude-and-achievement tests for entrance and then condones the unnecessary grading system in the school itself.

Need Clear Exam

We need a clear and distinct idea of examining. We properly examine a candidate to see if he is acceptable into an enterprise or community. Once he is in, why distinguish one from another in the class, like first- and second-class citizens? If a student is not performing, it is more courageous and sensible to fire him out of the class, rather than to downgrade him.

An Analysis

A second proper kind of examination is to see if the youth has now grown up to be a peer. In medieval times, he proved his entry into the guild by a masterpiece—academically, a lecture and disputation. The point of this, however, is to do something that wins respect—not to pass somebody else's questions, which would maintain him precisely in his conditions of inferiority and immaturity.

Perhaps the chief objectors to the abolition of grading would be parents and the students themselves. The parents would object because of their anxiety and insecure competitiveness, but these attitudes have already done too much damage to their children and should be rebuffed. The students would feel at a loss and unstructured, because they have been used to nothing else.

But it is the duty of the col-

lege to make them grow up in this, as in other respects, to become self-reliant, self-initiating. With the grading and the tutelage on sexual and other moral matters, how do we expect the young to be suddenly independent and make important choices at twenty-one?

Hurts Testing

In my opinion, the worst defect of grading is the use of testing. The pedagogic use of a test is to help the student structure what he knows and discover what he doesn't know. It is contradictory to punish him, by downgrading, for revealing his ignorance, rather than encouraging him to place himself at the level where he really is.

Inevitably grading invites faking. Testing is a good diagnostic for the teacher, both of the student and of the teaching. But what does a grade mean? If out of five questions in algebra, the student misses two, what does sixty percent mean? It is, rather, particularly logarithms and permutations that the student doesn't know, not forty percent of the subject.

Consider the important case of science teaching. According to the colleagues of Jerome S. Bruner (professor of psychology at Harvard University in The Process of Education, the young creative scientist must be taught not facts but the basic ideas and methods; and he should be encouraged to guess and make wild hypotheses.

The Process explicitly warns against grading. For the average youngster who will not become a scientist, it is the humanistic and moral value of science, and the meaning of science altogether, that are important. For instance, it is most instructive if the student spend the whole term checking up why his chemistry experiment did not work—his carelessness, dirty test tube, etc.—this is more profitable than repeating the table of the elements or memorizing formulas. Is this really gradable?

The middle type—technicians and lab assistants—could be tested by their future employers, as suggested above. (Incidentally, I fail to see why the corporations should benefit by so much apprentice training at the public and parents' expense.)

Lazy Students

Many students are lazy and do not do the work, and it is said that grading is a necessary extrinsic spur. By and large, laziness is a character neurosis; e.g., it may be a way of avoiding failing, or it may be a way of proving one is superior and does not need to (won't) learn anything more. In such cases it is certainly unwise to repeat the traumatic demand which caused the neurotic pattern in the beginning.

Most often, however, not doing the work means exactly what it says: that the work does not really suit—either not that subject, or not at that time, or maybe not in a school setting at all at that time. Then the terrible thing is that the bright student, threatened by failure, will cram and pass—and at once forget what he

has learned; he has given up his own instinctive demand and wasted the teacher's time.

In an atmosphere of ungraded testing, he might discover what he really wants to do.

Conversely, some students who fail and are flunked out are really fit for the subject but have not quite found themselves. The teacher might guess this, but the computer is inexorable.

Lastly, the competitive grading, the credits, the lock-step scheduling, and speed-up are all part of the cash accounting and logistic mentality that is exactly what we do not need in the automated future, when most of the serious work in life will, or should, be concerned with community culture, citizen initiative, worthwhile leisure, and social service. These are not gradable and cannot be subdivided into credits.

Overcrowded Schools

Needless to say, the present emphasis and reliance on grading is partly a consequence of the incredible overcrowding of the schools by many who are not academically talented at all. But

this should be faced as a separate problem, and it would be salutary indeed if the Association for Higher Education would resolve somewhat as follows: Very many young people—including many who are bright—ought to be educated in ways other than under academic administration in high schools and colleges.

To subject them to long schooling is a misuse of their time of life, or society's money, and of the efforts of teachers. Therefore, we urge society and government to find out and provide numerous other ways to solve some of the present problems of technical training and unemployment, rather than putting a disproportionate burden on the schools.

Further, almost all youth need experiences other than twelve to twenty years of interrupted school lessons to grow up and find themselves; and many people profit by schooling when they are more mature. Therefore, let us, as school people, devise and provide more flexible and open opportunities for quitting and returning to the academic life than the present system allows.

Special Baby Pigs' Diet Includes Dried Bakery Scraps For Protein

Baby pigs, as well as human babies, love milk. The ration, or "formula," that a baby pig is started on usually contains about 30 per cent skim milk, of quality acceptable for human consumption.

This milk, because of quality and human consumer demand costs about 18 cents a pound. Dr. E. R. Peo, Jr., of the University animal science department, has found that dried bakery scraps consist of left-over rolls, bread, doughnuts with no holes in the middle and straight twists.

The tests Peo has run have shown that the pigs gain just as well on the DBS (dried bakery scraps) as on the milk. The protein content is of the same quality and the cost of using DBS is just three cents a pound.

More important, a product (DBS) which is normally wasted is being used and a human consumption food (milk) is released for human consumption.

When research is completed, and the data relayed to the public, the result could be

the savings of thousands of dollars for Nebraska farmers, and a more plentiful supply of milk for our babies, who just can't chew those dried rolls.

Teacher's Group Holds Convention

Mu Epsilon Nu, national honorary and professional teaching fraternity, will hold its first annual national convention at 3 p.m. Sunday in the Student Union at Kearney State College, the headquarters of Beta Chapter.

Active members will vote on a constitution and will elect national officers. The local chapters will read progress reports on the nationalization of the group.

Alpha Chapter of Mu Epsilon Nu was founded in 1958 at the University, and last year Beta Chapter was founded at Kearney State College.

Mu Epsilon Nu has plans for expansion at Wayne State University and the University of California at Sacramento.

PLACEMENT INTERVIEWS

Monday, Dec. 7
Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, receiving degrees in Bachelor's-Bus. Adm., Lib. Arts.
Federal Reserve Bank, receiving degrees in Bachelor's-Bus. Adm., Systems and Procedures.
Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, receiving degrees in All degree levels—Ch.E., E.E., M.E., Met.E., E.M., Engrg. Physics, Engrg. Sci., Met. Physics and Chem. (Inorg., Anal., Phys.)
Tuesday, Dec. 8
Union Electric Company, receiving degrees in B.S.-E.E., M.E., Acctg.: B.S., M.S.-Bus. Adm.
Parke, Davis & Company, receiving degrees in B.S.-B.A., M.S.-M.A.—Chem., Biol., Acctg., Techn. Writers, Microbiol., Bact., Zool., Gen. Bus., Ind. Mgmt., Pharm.
Wednesday, Dec. 9
U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory—White Oak, Silver Spring, Md., receiving degrees in All degrees—E.E., M.E., A.E., Physics.
Wilson & Company, Incorporated—Omaha, receiving degrees in B.S., M.S.—Acctg., Agr.-Bus., An. Husb., Bus. Adm., Lib. Arts.
Mason & Hanger—Silas Mason Company, Incorporated, receiving degrees in B.S., M.S.—C.E., E.E., I.E., M.E., Ch.E.
Monday, Dec. 14
Eastman Kodak Company, receiving degrees in B.S., M.S.—E.E., Ch.E., I.E., Physics, Chem.
Union Carbide Corporation—Plastics Division, receiving degrees in B.S., M.S.—Ch.E., M.E., Chem.
NEBRASKA PUBLIC POWER SYSTEM in the process of scheduling a recruiting date sometime in December.

Literature Expert To Lecture Here

Dr. Richard Ellmann, author and scholar in the field of modern British and Irish literature, will be on campus Monday, and Tuesday to talk with faculty members and students in the department of English.

Ellmann, formerly of Harvard and now professor of English at Northwestern University, won a National Book Award in 1960 for his biography of James Joyce (1959). He also published two well-known studies of Yates: Yates the Man and the Mask (1948) and The Identity of Yates (1954). His articles and reviews have appeared in many of the leading journals of criticism and opinion in this country.

Ellmann will deliver a public lecture, "The Indignation of Yeats," on Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. in Love Library auditorium. At 2:30 in Andrews 115 he will discuss problems and opportunities in the field of literary research.

Campus Calendar

TODAY

SYMPOSIUM on Motivation, 9 a.m., Student Union auditorium.

U.C.C.F., 11:30 a.m., 240 Student Union.

GRADUATE STUDENTS in Psychology, 12 a.m., Pan American Room, Student Union.

PLACEMENT OFFICE Luncheon, 12:30 p.m., 241 Student Union.

STUDENT SANE—Organizational Meeting, 3 p.m., 235 Student Union.

A.W.S., Court, 4:30 p.m., South Conference room, Student Union.

BUILDERS, Publicity, 4:30 p.m., 232 Student Union.

HOME EC CLUB tree decorating party and election of officers, 4:30 p.m., Home Economics Lounge.

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE, Social Committee, 4:30 p.m., 241 Student Union.

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE Publicity Committee, 4:30 p.m., 241 Student Union.

UNION Music Committee, 4:30 p.m., West Cafeteria, Student Union.

INTER-VARSITY Executive, 6:30 p.m., 235 Student Union.

A. U. F., 6:30 p.m., 334 Student Union.

UNION Christmas Decorating Party, 6:30 p.m., Student Union Program Office.

STUDENT COUNCIL Quiz Bowl, 7 p.m., Student Union auditorium.

JUNIOR PANHELLENIC, 7 p.m., Student Union Conference.

NANCY CHILD Charm Course, 7 p.m., Student Union Ballroom.

ALPHA PHI OMEGA, 7 p.m., 332 Student Union.

DENTAL SCHOOL, 7 p.m., Pawnee Room, Student Union.

MATH COUNSELOR Program, 7:30 p.m., 349 Student Union.

AMERICAN CHEMICAL Society, 7:30 p.m., 240 Student Union.

Former Grad Named Public Health Director

A Native of Neligh and a graduate of the University, Dr. Wilbur Deacon, has been named director of the U.S. Public Health Service venereal disease research laboratory at Atlanta, Ga.

New 'Crusher' Dance Hits Minnesota Campus

Hospital business may receive a tremendous boom if a new dance created by a University of Minnesota rock 'n roll combo becomes a craze. The dance is called "The Crusher" and two of its more popular "steps" are called "The Eye Gouge" and "The Hammerlock."

The Crusher is to be danced to a song of the same name recorded by the Minnesota group. The Novas. The song was inspired by the fact that one of the group's members can growl just like a popular wrestler named The Crusher.

The song begins with him snarling and blaring "Heyyy! Do the Hammerlock! Everybody do the Hammerlock! Do the Eye Gouge! Do the Crusher!"

"We created the name of the dance and now the kids can take it from here," said the group's leader.

"Crushing" practice may be in order for some male students at the University of California.

A Men's Smoker was held there recently and a "chest check" was conducted at the door to discover any members of the female sex who might be attempting to sneak into the smoker. However, Candy Hughes (36-25-36) somehow got in.

"I don't believe she really got in," said the smoker's chairman, Doug Patterson. "But, there does seem to be

a strong possibility she did," he added.

"You can't hide - - um - - I mean - - well, a chest check is a very thorough method - - I mean how can you lose?" he said. "I'm questioning all the chest checkers," he said, "and I aim to find out who's responsible."

Miss Hughes said that she used a large Ace elastic bandage to successfully master her disguise.

A few other girls got into the building where the smoker was held, but they were caught and escorted out.

The coeds at the University of Cincinnati are not so eager to mix with the opposite sex as those at California though.

Upon hearing of the IBM dance held at Iowa State recently, an attempt was made to hold a similar event at Cincinnati. Sixty boys agreed to the mechanical matchmaking, but only ten girls agreed to take part.

Four men have been arrested at Kansas State University in connection with the burning of several homecoming floats there recently.

They have admitted taking part in the vandalism which caused over a thousand dollars damage to floats and equipment. Three of the men are students at Kansas State and the fourth is a former student there.

No action has been taken against the men as yet.

Scholarship Grants Open For Summertime In Japan

A trip to Japan next summer will be awarded to three college students or young adults from the United States by the Japan Air Lines to commemorate the ten years of international operations completed this year.

The trips have been made possible through a scholarship grant from Japan Air Lines to the experiment in international living, which will administer them.

Those selected as scholarship winners will take part in the experiment's college or community ambassador program. Before leaving for Japan they will gather information about their home and surroundings to answer any questions which may be posed by their Japanese hosts.

Details and application forms may be obtained from the experiment in international living, Putney, Vt. or the director of the west, experiment in international living 291 Geary Street, San Francisco.

Students applying for scholarships should state this fact in making inquiry and application. Applications will be accepted until Feb. 15. Final selections will be announced in March.

LITTLE MAN ON CAMPUS



"I WISH PROF SNARE WOULD ASSIGN THIS GUY A SEAT FARTHER FROM THE BELL—HE GETS MAD AS HELL WHEN HE'S SUDDENLY AWAKENED."

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