Council Approves Pass-Fail System

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By PHIL KALBAN
Lantern Staff Writer

Faculty Council approved a pass-fail grading system Tuesday which would allow undergraduate students to elect up to 15 credit hours of courses to be graded either pass or fail.

The plan will now be considered by the council's Rules Committee which will decide what faculty rules must be changed to correlate with the proposal. The Board of Trustees must then approve the rule changes before the system can go into effect.

To take courses graded pass-fail, the student must have completed at least 48 credit hours and have an accumulative point hour ratio of 2.0 or higher.

Coursers required by the college for the major program could not be taken on a pass-fail basis. Pass-fail credit would apply toward the required hours for graduation but would not be computed in the point hour ratio.

Students could take physical education, health education and the national defense studies (ROTC) requirement on either a pass-fail or graded basis.

"Fear Challenging Courses"

Cornell said, "Students are afraid to take some challenging courses because it might lower their accumulative point hour ratio." They would have an easier choice on taking an alternative to the ROTC requirement since they could choose on interest rather than grades, he added.

David N. Brown, Arts-4, director of academic affairs for Student Assembly, said, "Scholarship money and acceptance to the better graduate schools rely on grades, and this causes students to avoid tougher courses they might like to take."

The Parallel Committee on Academic Affairs, one of the student committees set up by the new Constitution to parallel faculty committees, first presented the plan for the pass-fail system in November and worked with the faculty Council on Academic Affairs in developing it.

Assessment Committees

Also at the Faculty Council meeting, Jack R. Frymier, professor of education and chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Office of Ombudsman, recommended the following:

- Systematic review of procedures for handling problems in sub-units and agencies, such as the colleges and the health center, within the University.
- These units' consideration of establishing problem assessment committees.
- Establishment of a temporary University Assessment Committee for the next 18 months.

After almost an hour of debate, the first two proposals were passed and the third was defeated.
'No Grade' System Under Study At OSU

The Faculty Council at Ohio State University heard a report from the Council on Research Tuesday and sent back to the College of Law faculty a proposal for a pass-non-pass grading system.

The law faculty had recommended adding pass-non-pass option for junior and senior law students taking courses outside their area of specialization.

UNIVERSITY Registrar Dean O. Clark objected to a part of the law school proposal which would have made "non-pass" equivalent to the regular grades of "D" and "E". Under university rules, Clark said, "D" is a passing grade.

After law professor Richard E. Day indicated any change in the proposal might make it unacceptable to his colleagues, the council voted to return the measure.

DR. JAMES A. Robinson, chairman of the Council on Research, reported that projects under way at OSU in 1970 are expected to have a value of $17 million, an increase of about $900,000 from last year.

Interdisciplinary research will receive more attention at OSU in the future, Robinson predicted. Project-oriented research is being questioned by many faculty members, he said.

Formal wording of five rule changes discussed earlier received final approval.
Pass/non-pass not passing

By ROBERT SPECTOR

Ohio State's Registrar claims the pass/non-pass system is not achieving the goals originally set up for it.

One of the objects of pass/non-pass is to get students to take subjects outside their major without fear of receiving a bad grade. Dean O. Clark, University registrar, said.

However, a recent study at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Illinois showed students do not take advantage of the similar systems to take subjects outside their major, according to Clark.

He also points out a major problem has arisen when students try "to transfer pass/non-pass credit. Students have discovered that other universities will not accept pass/non-pass credit and they are forced to take these courses over again.

Some of the major complaints on the system, according to Clark, have come out of the College of Medicine, which is on a pass/non-pass system.

"Medical students have complained that the only thing that appears on their transcripts are honors, satisfactory and unsatisfactory," Clark said. "Since there are no grades, hospitals to which they applied for internships have a hard time evaluating their performance in medical school. Many students think this puts them at a disadvantage."

Clark said he sees a need for a re-evaluation of the grading system as a whole.

"Our grading system today is a patched-together system, mostly taken from a more perfect grading system that has been eroded over the years," Clark said.

Clark said he does not think the pass/non-pass system is the answer to the problem of the grading system. According to the centennial history of the Registrar's Office, Ohio State started out with a pass/non-pass system and evolved to the letter system of grading. The pass/non-pass was reinstated on a limited basis in September 1968.

"I feel the solution to the problem of the grading system is to form a national committee to formulate a whole new type of grading system," Clark said.

"The colleges across the country have the same problems with the grading system. We need a standard grading system to be used by all colleges, which would make interaction among schools much easier," Clark said.
Pass/Fail Poses Problems

By Karl Todd Henning
Lantern Staff Writer

Think twice about taking all of those Mickey Mouse courses electives on the Pass/Non-Pass (PA/NP) option offered by the University.

There is growing concern among most professional and graduate schools, in how to evaluate the transcripts of applicants having PA/NP grades on them.

A recent survey taken by the Committee on Institutional Cooperation shows that PA/NP grades on the applicant's transcript forced an over-reliance on admissions tests by the admissions officers. One admissions officer said a substantial number of PA/NP grades can produce a "distinct disadvantage" for the applicant.

"Pass/Non-Pass is a fine option for a student to use for a portion of his work, however there are abuses and misuses of it," according to George P. Crepeau, associate provost for instruction at Ohio State.

"The intent of it is not to make it easier, but to give the student a chance to really jump into all sorts of things," he added.

Crepeau said that having "unconventional grading" in major subjects would definitely hinder getting into graduate and professional schools and that is why students at Ohio State are not allowed to take PA/NP grading in classes that are required or designated as required electives in the students degree leading curriculum.

At Ohio State the PA/NP option may be used by any undergraduate or Continuing Education student for a maximum of 30 credit hours as long as they have an accumulated point-hour ratio of 2.0 or higher.

Jack Henderson, assistant dean of law, said if a transcript comes through with "2 or 3 courses, we ignore them and just use the letter grades and their Law School Admissions Test (LSAT)."

"Larger numbers of PA/NP courses on the transcript" require a "written evaluation of the student's performance in the courses."

If evaluations are not available then more weight is put on the LSAT according to Henderson.

Margaret H. Hines, instructor of anatomy and member of the admissions committee for the College of Medicine, said that PA/NP creates no real problem since admission is based on four factors and the grade point average is just one of them.
Pass/non-pass takes an incomplete

By Deborah Armstrong

April 1974

Has pass/non-pass failed?

This is the question now being asked at colleges and universities across the country, according to articles in Time magazine and ...

Pass/non-pass (PA/NP) emerged in the late 1960's with hopes of encouraging students to explore and take courses outside their major field.

"The student would feel free to venture outside his field to explore subjects he's not sure of obtaining high grades in," Ohio State's Registrar Dean O. Clark said of pass/non-pass. "Yet, studies in the Big Ten Universities indicate no increase in venturesomeness."

On the Arts and Sciences (ASC) request form for PA/NP option, there is the following statement:

"An accumulation of PA/NP credits could be detrimental for students seeking admission to graduate and professional schools. Particular caution should be exercised with regard to courses required for admission to or recommended by such schools."

Disadvantages

Donald Good, assistant vice provost for ASC, explained: "A student who goes to any professional or graduate school is at a disadvantage if he takes courses pass/fail."

Good said that these schools could tell a lot more about the student if they had the grades instead of a pass or non-pass. "Sometimes we have people call and ask us to translate a PA or NP into a grade," Good said.

"It certainly doesn't help for someone applying to graduate school to have too many simple pass grades, and students know this," said John Gabel, chairman of the English Department.

Student reactions

Some Ohio State students tend to use pass/non-pass in subjects they are not sure of getting a good grade in or for physical education courses. Also, some students seem to like the idea of having the option available.

"I think that it's worthwhile. I took two courses pass/fail because I wasn't sure I would have a lot of time to spend on the courses to do well enough," said Robert Chambers, a senior from Belpre.

Eulalia Rodin, a sophomore from Fairborn, said that she used the pass/non-pass option for a physical education course.

"For things like phys. ed. and your national defense option it's good, she said. "It's a chance to try more courses that you're not worried about getting a grade in."

The pass/non-pass grading system, like any other system has its good and bad points.

"It gives a student two options. One is to go in and not do very much work and get a passing grade — D. Second, it allows a student who has an interest in a subject to take it without hurting his grade," Good said.

Samuel Osipow, acting chairman of the Psychology Department, said that he wouldn't want to see pass/non-pass grading overdone, when a student would take a high number of courses pass/non-pass.

"If you can help keep it controlled you can achieve the purpose of getting people to try things out," he said.

"I think the option should be used more than I expect it is, for the right motive at any rate," said Gabel.

Marvin Zahniser, chairman of the Department of History said, "My understanding of the option was to encourage students to take courses in fields outside their major."

"My guess is that they're not doing this," he said.
Pass/non-pass still alive for upper-division credit in arts, sciences classes

By Lynne Brungarth
Lantern staff writer 10-20-82

Students in the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences who were told that they were not allowed to take upper-division classes pass/non-pass have nothing to worry about — yet.

On Tuesday, many students were informed by arts and sciences counselors that they might be unable to take upper-division classes on a pass/non-pass basis as they had done in the past. Upper-division classes are considered to be 300-level classes or above.

According to Jane Pletcher, arts and sciences counselor, advisers began informing students of the possibility of the rule change after a Tuesday morning staff meeting, where confusion arose over an arts and sciences pass/non-pass rule.

Thomas Willke, vice provost for the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences, said the confusion was the result of a mix-up in the interpretation of the pass/non-pass section of a rule stating that all arts and sciences majors must complete 60 hours of upper-division classes.

"There are two ways to interpret the rule," he said. One way interprets the rule to say it is all right for students to take upper-level classes on a pass/non-pass basis, and the other way does not favor that interpretation, he said.

Pletcher said that in a recent informal survey given to arts and sciences counselors, 11 out of 11 counselors interpreted the rule to mean that students may take the classes on a pass/non-pass basis. "We are upset because we have been telling students for the past year that it is all right to take the classes pass/non-pass," she said.

Some students majoring in arts and sciences were upset by the mix-up, while others were not concerned.

Bill Jackson, a senior from Columbus majoring in aviation, said he is not too concerned about the rule. "I figure if I am going to take a class I may as well take it for a grade," he said.

However, Bob Schultz, a junior from Wauseon majoring in journalism, was not as agreeable to the possibility of a rule change.

"I don't like the idea of a rule change. Taking a class pass/non-pass saves a lot of time," he said.

Marie Young, a senior from Columbus majoring in biochemistry, said such a rule change would be disruptive. "It makes a big difference in your life when you have already planned things. Once you start something, it should stay that way," she added.

An interpretation of the rule will be made sometime in the next two weeks, Willke said. If there are any changes or adjustments to be made, they will go into effect next quarter, he added.

According to Willke, the rule will be heard by the Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee to determine the committee's intended interpretation. The committee drew up the original rule.

Willke said he is in the process of researching to see if any formal interpretation of the rule was written when it was adopted two years ago.

Students who have already had their graduation applications approved or who have taken classes on a pass/non-pass basis will not be affected.
New pass/non-pass deadline brings about mixed reactions

By Cindy Dill
Lantern staff writer 2-15-83

The University Senate's decision to shorten the time students have to choose to take courses pass/non-pass has produced a mixture of opinions from the university community.

The new deadline was unanimously approved at the University Senate meeting Saturday. If the Ohio State Board of Trustees passes the policy in March, students will have until 5 p.m. on the third Friday of the quarter, instead of the sixth Friday, to take a class pass/non-pass.

"I don't feel there's a need for making it early in the quarter," said Carolyn R. Jensen, graduate administrative associate for University College (UVC).

"It's not a question of whether you will be taking a class — it's an option of how you will be graded," she said.

The pass/non-pass deadline is the same as the deadline for students to withdraw from a class and to use the freshman forgiveness rule.

Counselors will have difficulty handling all the paperwork created by those simultaneous deadlines, Jensen said.

Other UVC counselors declined to comment.

John A. Yutzey, assistant director of the undergraduate program in business administration, said, "Students know at the beginning of a quarter what requirements need to be taken for a grade or what is counted as an elective."

Yutzey said business students usually take physical education classes pass/non-pass, but rarely take advanced business courses pass/non-pass.

Jodi F. Rice, an academic counselor for the College of Social Work, said, "It (the rule change) might affect the ones who are sitting on the border of two grades early in the quarter because it would force the student to make a decision without having an idea how well they're going to do in the course."

Some OSU students have mixed feelings about the third week deadline.

Angelika R. Young, a junior from Columbus, said the pass/non-pass option is a major decision, so students need more class time to make that decision.

Douglas N. Ruwe, a junior from Centerville, said the first couple weeks of the quarter are too hectic for students to decide if they want to take a class pass/non-pass.

He also said the change will cause confusion while scheduling because the deadline to drop courses is the same.

Dawn J. Yutzey-Showalter, a senior from London, agreed with the decision to have the third week deadline.

"I have heard of people waiting until the sixth week and dropping, then rescheduling the same course the following quarter to get a better grade," she said.

Russell E. Shuster II, the director of Records, Registration and Scheduling, said he does not foresee any problems with scheduling because the pass/non-pass forms are turned in at college offices.

"I would think the students would like to have the deadlines the same to avoid confusion," he said.

Elmer F. Baumer, chairman of the Council on Academic Affairs, which proposed the policy change, said at Saturday's senate meeting that the pass/non-pass deadline was originally the third week.

"It was increased to the sixth week during the early 1970s to reduce the number of student petitions the colleges were getting that requested an extension of the time period," he said.

The Council on Academic Affairs wanted to restore the policy to its intended purpose, he added.

Only 1 percent of the students use the option but they should use it for its intended purpose — to develop skills in areas other than their major without endangering their grade point average, Baumer said.

Robert L. Greer, an Undergraduate Student Government (USG) representative on the senate, was confused by the lack of discussion at the senate meeting because some students had argued against the change at Wednesday's USG meeting.

Discussion might have been averted because Baumer explained that the change was to move the deadline back to its original time, which was not known before, Greer said.

Those students who opposed the change at the USG meeting could not be reached for comment.
Class-drop deadline changes

New rule revises pass non-pass option

By Christine Casey
Lantern staff writer 4-5-83

Five p.m. on the third Friday of the quarter will probably take on new meaning for many students in the future.

The deadline to register to take a class pass/non-pass is now 5 p.m. on the third Friday of a quarter. This is also the deadline to register to disenroll from a class. The proposals were approved at the Board of Trustees meeting Friday.

Provost Diether H. Haenicke said these amendments will probably take effect summer quarter.

Glen H. Schmidt, chairman of the subcommittee which originally proposed the pass/non-pass deadline change, said the original purpose of the pass/non-pass option was misunderstood.

"It is our understanding that the original intent of the pass/non-pass option was to give a student the chance to take courses outside his major for broadening his fields.

"We were finding that students were using the pass/non-pass option as a bail out from courses in which they were doing poorly. We felt this was a violation of the original intent," Schmidt said.

Russell E. Schuster, director of registration, records and scheduling, worked on the committee which proposed the disenrollment deadline change. Schuster said the rationale behind the change was to encourage students to dedicate themselves earlier.

"It was the feeling of the faculty that students need to make a course commitment earlier in the term," Schuster said.

Schuster said another reason for the two deadline changes is to make it easier for students to remember the deadlines, since they both now fall on the same day.

The trustees also approved amendments concerning disenrollment. A student may be disenrolled from a course if he enrolls to audit a course without the instructor's approval, fails to meet the prerequisites of the course, or fails to demonstrate adequate preparation for the course.

Disenrollment for those reasons will be recorded on the student's permanent record by the Office of Registration, Records and Scheduling.
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