University to study policies on release of students' records

By Lorelei Van Wey

The Council on Admissions and Registration is considering a University-wide policy on the release of confidential student records.

Kenneth Bader, dean of students, and two students brought the matter before the council Friday.

Jack Reindl, from the Council of Graduates, indicated his main concern was the release of grades without the student's knowledge.

Jack Stets, a member of a Speech 110 class which investigated the release of student academic records last fall, said, "The concept of a general policy seems to be lacking."

When Stets' class called five colleges for the release of grade transcripts, two colleges gave out the information while three refused.

Bader said the University needs to have a standard policy on the release of grade information.

He said the Dean of Students' office keeps files on every student, including locator cards for the quarter, honors a student receives and disciplinary action imposed on a student.

He also said these files are used as a service for the student, usually in getting a job, and release of such information is carefully supervised.

Stets said the class's investigation did not include the Dean of Students office because the class knew that records filed there are held in "strict confidence."

Stets said the most concern should be on the release of academic records to employers outside the University.

He recommended that the records be released only if a student signs a statement authorizing release of a transcript to an employer.

Robert Arns, vice provost for the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences and chairman of the council, agreed that there are many policy differences among the colleges on the question of transcript release.

He said there is a need for a University-wide policy on the release of academic records.
Problem of misplaced grades shelved by University Senate

By Tom Rinderle
Lantern staff writer 10-19-83

The question of how to eliminate the accumulation of missing grades, first studied by the Council on Admissions and Registration last spring, is likely to remain unanswered for at least the remainder of the quarter.

A proposal intended to resolve the problem was tabled Saturday by the University Senate and sent back to committee for further study.

The proposal, brought before the 120-member Senate by the Council on Academic Affairs, would have required that a missing grade be automatically changed to an "E" by noon of the sixth Saturday of the quarter following the quarter in which the course was taken.

"This is very serious to the student involved because under the current circumstances there is no way to get final resolution of a missing grade," said Elmer Baumer, chairman of the Council on Academic Affairs.

Baumer said 1,565 missing grades have accumulated in the registrar's office over the last 10 years. But the incidence of missing grades, he added, is not uniform across the campus.

"Half of the missing grades occur because a small number of instructors refuse to give an "E" to absent students," he said. "And in many cases, students are happy to let the missing grade stand because they know they deserved to fail the course."

But Richard Firestone, professor of chemistry and a member of the Council on Academic Affairs, said missing grades are often accidental or the result of an error in registration.

"I object to giving a student who has screwed up in the registration procedure an "E" in an academic subject," he said. "It isn't a measure of his academic performance at all.

"It seems to me that to blindly and automatically penalize a student with an "E", that may be very difficult to get off his record, isn't the right approach."

According to Daniel Hughes, who headed the Council on Academic Affairs committee that first studied the problem, a student who received an "E" due to a missing grade would be informed of the appropriate appeals process to redress any grievance.

Some faculty members, however, think the proposal would place the burden of resolving incorrect grades on the student, instead of the instructor who assigned the grade.

Gene Schuster, director of registration, records and scheduling, said every grade change has to be initiated by the faculty member who assigned the grade. Therefore, a student given an "E" as a result of a missing grade would have to convince the instructor that the grade was incorrect before any change would be made.

The proposal, Baumer said, was not intended to be a punitive measure.

Because Senate members were divided on the issue, the proposal will be sent back to the Council on Admissions and Registration to be modified, he said.
Second-day class drops proposed

By Maureen Kilkenney
Lantern staff writer

A proposal to require students to be in class by the second day or be dropped would open positions sooner for others trying to add classes.

The Council on Admission and Registration presented the proposal Wednesday to the Council on Academic Affairs.

Frank Carroll, chairman of the admission council, said the intent of the proposed change is to alleviate the problem of closed courses. "The no-shows occupy space on rosters, and therefore, that class space cannot be assigned to students waiting to get into the course," he said.

The rule currently says the chairman of the instructor's department may drop a student from a course if "by the third instructional day of the quarter..., the first Friday of the quarter, or the second scheduled class session of the course, whichever occurs later, the student fails to attend the scheduled course without giving prior notification to the instructor."

The amendment to the rule would change the word "later" to "earlier."

The proposal would also amend the rule to say, "Students enrolled in courses that do not meet by Friday of the first week of classes may not be disenrolled under this provision if they attend the first scheduled class meeting."

Carroll said this amendment will protect the student who is enrolled in a class which meets infrequently.

He said each department uses the rule differently and the proposed changes will not affect that flexibility.

Joan Leitzel, chairwoman of the academic council, said the proposals have been sent back to the admission council to clarify wording, and will be sent to the University Senate — which reviews all rule changes — if it is approved. Final approval is up to the Board of Trustees.

Carroll said it is difficult to know how many students are affected by closed courses each quarter.
Proposed drop rule on hold for spring quarter

The proposal has been included in the University Senate's agenda for this Saturday's meeting, and if passed by the Senate, it will go to the Board of Trustees for approval.

In the Feb. 23 issue of the Lantern, Frank Carroll, chairman of the Council on Admission and Registration, said the intent of the proposed change is to alleviate the problem of closed courses.

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Committee to broaden duties

By Gemma McLuckie

University Senate on Dec. 5 approved a proposal to change the Council on Admission and Registration’s functions, structure and name.

The changes reflect the group’s interest in monitoring policies and procedures that have an impact on students from before they enter the University until after they graduate, Alan J. Randall, 1991-92 chair of CAR, told the Senate.

The proposal goes now to the Rules Committee.

The new Council on Enrollment and Student Progress (CESP) will have four duties:

- Participate in enrollment planning.
- Initiate recommendations and review proposals concerning student recruitment, competitive admissions, registration, financial aid, retention, graduation, student records and the University calendar.
- Help develop informed policies by encouraging the collection of data and participation in analyzing it.
- Serve as a channel of communication from other committees to the University Senate.

In its report, CAR reported that enrollment planning, based on principles it developed last year, is a major focus for 1992-93.

In addition, Randall noted, the Office of the University Registrar has implemented CAR recommendations for priority scheduling.

Also, the registrar’s office is considering establishing a “sequence priority” to give first chance to students who are in a series of courses, such as language 101-104 classes, and a “wait-list priority” for those who have been closed out of a course the quarter before.

CAR denied proposals to increase the mathematics and language requirements for unconditional admission. Of concern, Allen said, was the time school districts would need to change curricula.

Study of these proposals, the committee reported, “suggests that a comprehensive review of unconditional admissions requirements in all subject matter areas is warranted.” The review could involve coordination of requirements with other state schools.

The Senate tabled a resolution from the Undergraduate Student Government that voiced opposition to the state’s Managing for the Future Task Force recommendation concerning community colleges, which proposes merging the regional state university facilities and technical colleges that share campuses.

Senators said they were sympathetic to the students’ opposition, but a vote on the resolution could be premature because the Ohio Board of Regents will hold a meeting on the state’s proposal on Dec. 16. Also, the senators had not had a chance to review the Floyd Report from the University’s own Task Force on Regional and Columbus Campus Relations, chaired by Gary Floyd, dean of the College of Biological Sciences.

In its annual report, the Faculty Hearing Committee recommended that the University formulate a rule to outline where and how complaints, charges and allegations about faculty or staff be placed in personnel files. The rule also would make clear that faculty have a right to know about and refute such charges, and that whistleblowers have a right to protection against retaliation.

The hearing committee found that in the two cases it heard in 1991-92, faculty had no knowledge of allegations on record in their personnel files, explained Amy Riemenschneider, chair of the Faculty Hearing Committee.

The committee conducts hearings on allegations or complaints of improper evaluations; on personnel decisions that might be unconstitutional; on allegations of incompetence or misconduct; and on terminations of tenured faculty during fiscal crises.

The Hearing Committee also recommended that University guidelines on scholarly and scientific misconduct be developed into formal rules. The current guidelines, Riemenschneider said, “allow for the non-use, misuse, abuse and inconsistency” in the response of departments, colleges and the University to allegations.

The Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility presented a gift to the University in memory of Nathan Fechheimer, professor of dairy science and poultry science, a long-time senator who died recently. Several senators spoke of the impact he had on their lives.
OSU progress council readies itself for 1994

By Damon Taylor
Lantern staff writer

The OSU Council on Enrollment and Student Progress met Tuesday to review issues facing the university in 1994.

The council devoted most of its discussion to student retention rates, the changing demographics of the traditional applicants and the increase in students working outside the classroom. A subcommittee was also appointed to find ways to implement the Council on Academic Affairs' earlier decision to abolish early senior finals.

Gene Schuster, the university registrar, expressed concern over the typical age range of students. "The traditional pool that the university wants (18 to 22-year-olds) . . . has hit a low point in these years now and begins to grow more slowly than it did 30 years ago," Schuster said.

"It's important that we make sure who our student body is . . . because that's going to help when we get down to retention," Schuster said. "If we know the things that we do that frustrate people, then they aren't going to leave the university."

Schuster and Associate Provost Robert Arnold commented on the number of students they come into contact with who work part time, full time, or those who "stop out"—attend classes one quarter, work fulltime the next, and then enroll again after making enough money.

Arnold said this phenomenon complicates the overall retention picture because there is no way to know when or if these students will return.

Currently, 19 percent of OSU freshman graduate after four years, 46 percent after five, and 54 percent after six, said Admissions and Financial Aid Director James Mager.

The national average for six-year graduation is 53 percent, Mager added.
Low graduation rate revealed by council

By Chris Nelson
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State has the second lowest graduation rate among all Big Ten schools, according to information handed out Tuesday at the Council of Enrollment and Student Progress meeting.

Four years after entering Ohio State, only 65 percent of students have received or are still working on a degree, and only about 20 percent have graduated, according to the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid.

Six years after entering Ohio State, only 54 percent of each class has graduated, said Gail Stephenoff, assistant to the director of admissions.

This places Ohio State ahead of only Minnesota in the Big Ten, according to the figures.

The low number of students who graduate in six years can be directly related to the competitiveness of the students Ohio State admits, Stephenoff said. Michigan graduates almost 90 percent of its students in six years, but the credentials of Michigan's incoming freshmen are much stronger than those of freshmen at Ohio State, she said.

James Mager, director of admissions and financial aid, said the open enrollment policy of Ohio State, which was not changed until 1987, hurt Ohio State's efforts to improve graduation rates.

According to other data Stephenoff presented, the graduation rate for students that score higher than 1200 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test and finish in the top 10 percent of their classes is about 86 percent after six years.

Stephenoff also said the number of students a university retains or graduates is often negatively affected by the university's size.

The graduation rate for blacks at Ohio State is only about 33 percent after six years, said LeRoy Pernell of the Office of Minority Affairs and the Retention Council.

Lack of preparation and a less than ideal atmosphere that blacks at Ohio State have to endure are big reasons for low graduation and retention rates, Pernell said.

Other minorities' rates are also low, with the exception of Asian-Americans, Pernell said.

Building better relationships with high schools, offering more financial aid that is contingent on scholarship, and creating a more diverse faculty are important steps to make to improve graduation rates, he said.

The Retention Council is considering the possibility of improving orientation programs to more fully prepare students for both academic and social life at the university, Pernell said.

The council is also considering ways to improve bridging programs that create stronger relationships between the university and high schools, he said.