Freshmen

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After their sometimes traumatic first round of tests, Rice freshmen seem to be maintaining a relatively confident attitude toward the University as an educational institution. Although opinions of the tests were somewhat mixed, general freshman opinion was that the tests were not "nasty" but rather thorough and straightforward. Some expressed surprise at how little they had to study to pass.

General criticisms of the tests ranged from their failure to stimulate any kind of original thought to failure to test material emphasized in the course. Freshmen explained that some tests required pure memorization of the material traditionally emphasized by the prof.

"Barfing Back"

Biology 100 was such a test one freshman illustrated. "It was what I'd heard it was. A test to see whether I'd memorized lecture notes, old tests, and old reviews." The time element was all important also, allowing only a "barfing back." One girl complained that the material emphasized was in itself obscure.

In much the same manner, the History 110 test required an understanding of the professor in order to do well on the test. The test covered material emphasized by the professor; "it did not differ much from the past tests I'd seen," a freshman responded.

Here again, however, opinion was that the time element was very important. "I panicked when I first went into the test and didn't leave enough time for the last question." Most agreed that they had learned by experience to allot equal time for each question and to organize material beforehand.

"History 100 Praise"

In contrast to opinion of History 100 and Biology tests was that of the History 100 test. Most freshmen praised the test explaining that it succeeded in stimulating perceptive analysis of the major historical movements; most found it quite different from any high school history test.

One girl said that she was somewhat pressed for time, mainly because she had never been required to analyze facts in such a manner, but in the future she would study with the major movements in mind.

Opinions varied more widely about the Chemistry 120 and Math 100 tests. As one freshman explained it, "The Math test was very good and thorough, a good test of the material covered; unlike the Chem test where it didn't do you any good to know anything."

"Chem 'Unbelievable'"

Another freshman, when asked whether the Chem test was anything like what she expected, replied, "I guess I didn't know what to expect, but whatever it was I expected, it wasn't. It was . . . unbelievable." Apparently most agreed that the Chem test did cover the material but was extremely difficult, much more so than last year's test.

A good grasp of math, particularly calculus was necessary for the test. One freshman lamented that he guessed if he had studied harder, he might have gotten a high five. The Chemistry department did give a review and did post a copy of last year's test, which all agreed was a help.

"Math Surprise"

The Math test was more of a surprise than the other tests taken, freshmen thought; probably because of the change of the text. One boy complained that he had thought he was taking a calculus course, but analytical geometry was emphasized more than the elements of calculus.

The last problem, he noted, was not a fair test of the material covered. "If you thought of the trick to solving it, you worked it; if not, no matter how much math you knew, it did no good."

Students taking the Math 101 test had no strong complaints about the first test, one frosh 101 student said he guessed it was a fair examination of individual comprehension of the lectures and the text, since no outside explanation of material was offered by the department. The grades did not vary from the mean, and only six scores were far above or below the mean.

"Simplex"

As indicated previously the Mathematics Department is offering no organized tutorial program for freshmen this year. Instead, outside help must be sought from the individual professor.

Very few complaints about the Physics test were heard. A group of freshmen that had taken the text described it as being "simplex," although a bit tricky in its simplicity. With a good high school background in physics, one had no trouble on the tests.

Of the miscellaneous other tests taken by freshmen, the Humanities 100 test was described by one freshman who had taken it as being similar to those given in previous years, taken directly from the text and lectures. A German 100 student found the first test fairly difficult, but reasonable, although a bit lengthy.

"Poor Schedule"

The scheduling of the tests was generally criticized since a majority fell within a three-day period. Freshmen who were faced with a Chem 120 test along with the History 100 test the Wednesday after the Texas game were hit hard, but were given a Math 100 test the following Friday to help them recover.

One boy found that he had the Chem and History tests Wednesday, the German test Thursday, and the Math test Friday. He admitted that the tests offered a comprehensive examination of his knowledge, but he wondered just how much he was able to learn.