Majors Day an apparent success

By DEBORAH THEODORE

Majors Day 1967 provided unsuspecting underclassmen with everything from impassioned mathematicians to "free advice" from Dr. Douglas Milburn of the German department on virtually everything.

Apparently the program was a success: Dr. Ira Gruber of the History department said that he was pleasantly surprised at the large turn-out of freshmen and sophomores attending the informal discussions.

Prospective English majors appeared in "alarming numbers" to quiz Dr. Walter Isle and English grad students on the (Ford) Honors Program and career possibilities in English.

Major Bull-sessions

The most relevant knowledge students seem to have taken away with them from these major bull-sessions was information about the Honors Program at Rice, the quality and reputation of a given department at Rice, career opportunities with a degree from Rice in a given area, and requirements for B.A., M.A., and PhD degrees in the various fields of study offered at Rice.

Gruber, rotating with Dr. Matusow and other History professors in the 6 hour program, said he thought the results of the Majors Day program were both significant and relevant to the students who participated, trying to pick their majors.

Perennial Students

Students learned that courses like History and English are considered excellent preparation for law and medical schools. English was termed attractive for the perennial students as one graduate student stated; the thing to do with a major in English is teach, thereby spending your life reading, or writing, and with a wide variety of careers to choose from: in addition to law, medicine, or business, government service in the State Department, Diplomatic Corps, or CIA were suggested.

Recalcitrant math students unexpectedly found Math professor Morton Curtis enthusiastically describing the thrill and creativity attached to personal involvement in Mathematics. "You've got to insist on understanding everything to your own satisfaction," he said, "and building your own personalized frame of reference."

Pain and Frustration

He described mathematics much as one would describe an artist, "There's a lot of pain and frustration involved in arriving at certain truths in math, but the pain and frustration is worth the thrill of success."

Most students at Rice have found the pace of the mathematics department terrifying, but a math grad introduced a new aspect to the terribleness when he said, "...but it must be remembered that you reach the exciting frontiers of mathematics quicker that way."

One student summarized his impressions of Majors Day 1967, saying it revealed many things about the Rice departments and most of all proved that science-engineering at Rice indeed must rank among the best of the country. As for the Humanities at Rice—"...few are called at Rice, but many end up being chosen."