ON MARGRAVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Students Endorse Most Proposals

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A questionnaire on curriculum problems and rules which Professor John L. Margrave circulated last semester to the faculty and students resulted in a number of the important changes in course requirements made last Friday by the Rice Faculty.

The questionnaire began with the assumption that “the Rice faculty is undoubtedly unified in its desire to provide the . . . students . . . with a unique educational experience which allows maximum intellectual development and to indoctrinate the students with an appreciation of scholarly activities . . .”

When asked if full-year courses and a final year grade were preferable to two semester courses graded separately, 62% of the students chose the latter alternative on the grounds that the change would make it possible to avoid being stuck in a boring class.

Ease Grading

This advantage, it was felt, over-rides the impossibility under the changed set-up of receiving credit for both semesters by pulling up a first semester 5 with a 4 or 3.

Queried about the possibility of a “skewed” grading system at Rice, an overwhelming 90% of the students replied in the affirmative.

The difficulties of competing with students in less competitive institutions for fellowships was cited as a principal disadvantage of the present system.

Many students indicated that a 2- average should be maintained in all courses. A small minority stated, on the other hand, that Rice should weed out those who will probably not be outstanding successes in graduate schools.

For varying reasons most students disapproved of an ungraded freshman year. The main difficulty was felt to be the possibility of not knowing one’s academic standing.

‘Honors University’

One person suggested an ungraded senior year, consisting largely of independent work. Others felt that the chief failing at Rice does not lie in grading, but in teaching.

On the question concerning the six-course load of the sophomore S-E, opinion was evenly split between those who felt that the sixth course is either “too much” or a superficial crib and those who maintained that the extra work “weeded out” the less industrious scholars.

Concerning the possibility of an Honors Program, a small majority favored the proposal, while a significant minority felt that Rice is an “honors university” and that such a system would institute an unwarranted distinction and would also provide an easy way out of general curriculum overhaul.