Referendum Vote Monday

By GRIFFIN SMITH

Rice students go to the polls Monday to vote on two referendums which could significantly affect the future of the school. They will be asked to decide whether to keep the present class organizations or to abolish them and assign their present functions to the colleges and the Senate. (For full explanation of changes see sample ballot, below.) The amendment, to pass, requires a ¾ favorable vote.

THE PRINCIPLE involved in racial restrictions is the subject of the second resolution. Students will vote for or against the resolution, “In a university, no restrictions based solely on race should be exercised in admissions policy or use of facilities.”

The class-government referendum is the latest in a series of changing relationships between the colleges and the classes since the College System was introduced in February, 1957.

A DEBATE RAGED the following year when Ann Farmer and Mike Reynolds, Campanile Editors, proposed that individual pictures in the Campanile be arranged by colleges instead of the traditional class method. A system developed. Before 1957, the Student Council was composed entirely of officers elected by an all-school vote, and representatives of the classes.

From 1957 to 1959, the Council consisted of officers, class representatives, and two delegates from each college.

In March, 1959, a new constitution resulted in the union of the informal Intercollegiate Council and the class-dominated Student Council, forming what is now known as the Student Senate. The new Senate consisted of the customary officers, three representatives from each college, and (except for the Freshman class president), no class representative. Under this system the classes have been dissociated from student government since 1959.

THE DESEGREGATION resolution was passed by the Student Senate November 29, in a 15-2 roll call vote. The Senate proposed the all-school referendum so that the students and faculty could also register their sentiments.

Stimulus for the resolution, according to Reed Martin, President of the Rice Student Association, was an action by the University of Texas Board of Regents. The Regents refused to integrate facilities at Texas until a majority of the Southwest Conference Schools were ready for desegregation.

“THE TEXAS students,” said Martin, “are looking to the student bodies of other S.W.C. schools for an expression of support.” A favorable vote here on the referendum would apparently constitute that expression of support.

The resolution of course will not necessarily result in desegregation of Rice. But although it is phrased as an “academic question,” Martin said, “anyone can see the practical implications involved.”

MARTIN EXPLAINED: “We don’t want to recruit Negro students, but we don’t want to bar Negro students—we just don’t want to make any judgments based solely on race.”

If Rice students vote in favor of the referendum, it will not be for the first time. In a March, 1957 poll sponsored by the Thresher and the Forum Committee, 522 Rice students and faculty voted on the question of integration of Rice Institute—“immediately, eventually, or not at all.”

Voters favoring integration of Rice totaled 61.4 per cent. 32.7 per cent favored immediate integration, 28.7 per cent favored eventual integration, and 37.7 per cent opposed it at any time.
portion of the Student Council, charging the editors with “abolishing the classes,” offered a referendum to the student body which would have forced retention of the old class picture arrangement. After heated discussion for several weeks, the referendum was defeated, 366-356.

Since that time, it has been standard practice for the Campanile to arrange pictures by colleges.

THE CLASSES have also consistently lost power in student government as the College Sys-