Freshman Grades Vary From '63; Math Up; History, Biology Down

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The Math 100 grading curve, perennial subject of academic debate, is improving according to first semester grades revealed to the Thresher by the Registrar's Office. A Thresher study of this year's grades indicates that freshmen S. E. courses have once again produced more "I's" than the academic history courses.

The increasingly large number of students who have had calculus in high school probably accounts, in part, for the improvement of grades in Math 100. The percentage of "5's" decreased from 14.9 to 10.7, while the percentage of "1's" rose from 9.5 to 15.6. Interestingly, the curve in Math 101 almost duplicated that of 100.

Chemistry 120 has fluctuated again, bringing less "I's" and more "5's." This year's percentage of 11.5 "I's" compares with the Fall semester of two years ago when 11.8 percent had "I's." Last year under Dr. John Margrave and Dr. Ronald Sass, who is now on sabbatical leave, the class produced 24.9 percent "1's." The number of fives has risen from 0.7 percent to 6.3 percent.

Chem 120 Changes

Drs. Margrave and Sass not only improved the grading curve in chemistry, but also reorganized the class into sections based on ability in Chemistry. The more advanced students were given more detailed lectures, but were graded with the entire class.

Dr. Sass' position on grades was that they are necessary primarily for grad school and beyond, as a means of evaluating college work. Because outside evaluators tend to regard a "3" as a "C," the grades at Rice should reflect a student's standing in relation to students at other universities as well as Rice.

Dr. Margrave is this year chairman of the faculty Curriculum Committee, which is investigating the grading policy, freshman curriculum, and course load.

History Grades Down

Histories 100 and 110 gave the cum laude candidates the most trouble, producing only a total of 28 "1's." Dr. Masterson has abandoned last year's high-

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Pearce Williams, also from Cornell. He will speak on the "Romantic Reaction to the Chemical Revolution."

"Darwinism Yesterday and Today" will be the topic of a lecture on April 7 by Professor John C. Greene of the University of Kansas.

Professor I. I. Rabi, Columbia University, is lecturing on "Physics and Philosophy" after the Easter vacation and the final lecture will be delivered by Dr. Bronowski on May 14.