Automation reaches Rice elections; computer will count student ballots

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Automation has reached even the Student Senate.

This year for the first time the Senate Election Committee will use a computer to count the ballots for campus elections.

At election time, instead of marking a mimeographed ballot as in the past, students will punch out holes on a specially printed pre-punched IBM card.

The reason for this innovation is that it took up to fifty man-hours per election to tabulate the results of various elections held last year. Charles Schade, chairman of the committee and chief engineer of the project, said he hopes that by initiating this system the results of every election will be out within one hour after the polls close.

The operation of the system is fairly simple and should not cause any extra confusion. In fact, Schade suggests that it will lessen the chances of incorrectly marking a ballot. Instructions on using the system will be available in the colleges shortly.

The system will permit write-in votes.

Schade has been working on developing the computerized process since last spring, when he took over the committee. The Rice system is not the pre-packaged standard IBM election system, which was too expensive, but is an original adaptation.