Teachers Named to Students’ “Honor Roll”

Rice students have been issuing their own “report cards,” grading individual professors and the courses they teach, since the 1960s when they published Student Course Evaluation Program (SCSEP) reports in The Thresher. Officially sanctioned by the faculty for several years now, the evaluations are of interest to students and faculty alike, enabling students to see how a majority of their peers judged the quality of teaching in a class, and allowing teachers to reflect on their own effectiveness.

Scores are based on a five-point system covering thirteen categories, with 1.00 being the highest rating and 5.00 the lowest. Teachers are judged on preparation, organization, presentation, assignments, responsibility, responsiveness, knowledge, independence, stimulation, challenge, learning, effectiveness, and the course itself.

The first eleven categories were “always intended as diagnostic, aimed at informing the instructor of various ways to improve his performance,” says history professor Thomas Haskell, a member of the University Standing Committee on Undergraduate Teaching. The last two questions, on the effectiveness of the instructor and the course itself, ask the students to make overall summary judgments on the course, and are really evaluative, according to Haskell.

In the most recent evaluation for fall, 1984, analyzed by the Office of Information Services, eighty-two Rice faculty members achieved the distinction of being judged superior by their students for their effectiveness as teachers, as well as for the individual courses they taught. Graduates, including Tina Holden compiled the computerized results from the 12,817 student evaluations received for 661 courses.

One hundred and ninety-six courses received at least one 1.00 rating in one or more of the 13 categories. Combined results for all seven academic divisions reveal that humanities courses, which comprise almost half (294) of the total number of courses in all departments, also scored the highest, averaging 1.69 for effectiveness and 1.70 for the individual course. Overall Rice totals were commendable, ranging from a high of 1.58 for “preparation” and “knowledge” to a low of 2.06 for “presentation” and “stimulation.”

It is important to note that this analysis was limited to classes of ten or more students, with at least ten respondents per course. The “summa cum laude” list includes teachers whose effectiveness and overall course received scores of 1.00-1.25, rated by at least two-thirds of the respondents. The “magna cum laude” list includes teachers who were rated 1.26-1.50 in the two categories by at least one-half of the respondents.

Many smaller classes scored very high in all categories. Other courses might have been included had the percentage of respondents been greater.

In previous years, the Office of Information Services has considered all 13 categories equally when analyzing the results. This year, the last two categories have been given primary consideration in selecting the “summa cum laude” and “magna cum laude” lists. Based on this new criterion, Humanities Dean Allen J. Matusow tops the list of 21 “summa cum laude” teachers, with a perfect 1.00 score on both categories for his history course, “Post-World War II American Foreign Policy.” Matusow’s course scored highly in last year’s evaluations, also.

Number two on the list is Deborah Nelson of French, who also scored 1.00 on both evaluative categories, but not quite as well on the “diagnostic” categories, for her first-year course, “Elementary French I.” Nelson’s first-year and third-year language courses were also rated highly last year.

Record 3,800 Applications for 500 Opening

Rice’s Office of Admissions completed its evaluation of a record 3,800 applications on Mar. 29 in time to send out acceptances to approximately 25 percent of this number. From the 950 acceptances, the university hopes to retain 500 young men and women to comprise the Class of 1989.

The 3,800 applications represent a 26 percent increase over the 2,990 of a year ago. Major gains were made primarily outside the state of Texas, though there were a few more Texas students applying for admission in the fall of 1985 than applied for the current freshman class last year.

Of those accepted, 35 percent reside in Texas and 65 percent are from the other 49 states; the District of Columbia and 26 foreign countries. Behind Texas in number of acceptances were New York, Missouri, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, Georgia, Louisiana,
Last year's top winner, Robert B. Jones of English, is third on the list for his first-year course, "Critical Reading and Writing." Jones' third-year course, "American Fiction: 1910-1940," also made the top ten of the "summa cum laude" list.

The other faculty members who made the "top ten" include F. Barry Dunning of physics, a 1964 George R. Brown teaching award winner, for "Introduction to Quantum Physics;" T. Hugo Engelhardt of philosophy for "Philosophy of Medicine;" Fred R. von der Mehden of political science for "Politics of Southeast Asia;" Susan Gillman of English, last year's "triple winner," for "American Literature to 1860." Her first-year course, "Critical Reading & Writing," also made the "summa" list; Roy Jones of German & Russian for "Elementary Russian I;" Dennis Hutton of English for courses, "Critical Reading & Writing" and "Major Interpretations of the West;" and Linda Phenix of health and physical education for "Basic Movement - Dance."

Smaller classes that received superior ratings include Basillos Poules' third, fourth and fifth-year painting courses; Wesley Morris' fifth-year English course, "Literary Criticism: History;" Francois Loewenheim's fourth-year history course, "Bismarck to First World War;" Martin Werner's fourth-year history course, "Social Problems in 19th Century Britain and America;" A. Livandols' fourth-year military science course, "Professional Ethics and Military Justice;" Samuel Jones' fourth-year music course, "Aural Skills and Performance Techniques;" Werner Kelber's fifth-year religious studies seminar on "Symptoc Gospels;" and Neil Haven's advanced course in theater production and history.

The report is in the provost's office, with copies also located in each of the schools' dean's offices and at the colleges.
The Natural Way

After forty-four years of practicing and teaching karate, Grandmaster Kim Soo is not about to hang up his martial arts uniform. He still leads fifteen classes a week in vigorous self-defense exercises that promote mental and physical benefits.

His perseverance recently earned him a tenth-degree black belt—the highest rank in karate. The promotion is so difficult to achieve that it is often awarded posthumously as a ceremonial honor to those who have contributed substantially to the martial arts. But because Kim has trained consistently for nearly half a century, he managed to receive this distinction at the age of fifty-five. "For me, martial arts is a way of life, a form of religion," says Kim, who founded the Rice Karate Club in 1968. He has also taught an introductory karate course in the fall since 1981 in the Department of Human Performance and Health Sciences. "The martial arts teach the values of humility, patience, respect, and sincerity."

In Kim's early years, though, karate served a more practical purpose. As a youngster growing up in Seoul, South Korea, Kim says he was a weak "pretty boy" who suffered constant beatings by rougher kids. The abuse took a toll on his confidence to the point that his grades dropped. He began studying karate in the seventh grade and two years later received his black belt. "When I got my black belt, the whole world was smiling at me," he says. "So I decided that someday I would be a martial arts instructor so that I could help people like me who felt miserable."

After graduating from high school, Kim was recruited to teach karate to the bodyguards of the South Korean president, Syngman Rhee, and to instruct hand-to-hand combat in the South Korean army. In college, Kim started his first karate club at Han Kuk University of Foreign Studies, where he earned a B.A. degree in Russian language and literature. He eventually became a polyglot, speaking Korean, English, Spanish, and Russian. "I studied these languages because I wanted to go anywhere in the world and be a teacher," he says. But before he went anywhere, Kim opened a karate academy in Seoul, taught members of the United States Armed Forces, and served as a correspondent for Black Belt, a major martial arts magazine.

His dream of coming to America finally came true in 1968. With one hundred dollars in his pocket, Kim arrived in Houston and moved into an old downtown building at the corner of Clay and Jackson Streets. He lived alone upstairs with only the bare necessities and held classes downstairs. His wife and young child joined him a year later.

Since his arrival, Kim has taught at Rice, the University of Houston, the University of St. Thomas, and Texas Southern University. He operates three schools in Houston and oversees twenty-six branch schools in Texas, twenty-four throughout the country, and one each in Germany, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and Russia.

Many martial arts schools, explains Kim, emphasize the fighting aspect of karate over its original purpose, which was designed in part to enhance spiritual growth. "The traditional forms teach discipline, wisdom, and philosophical insight, traits that are not acceptable to a system that is trying to create champion fighters." According to Kim, karate, or tæ kwon do as it is known in Korea, was practiced as early as 37 B.C. A minority of the practitioners studied the martial arts as a spiritual exercise, but most studied it to protect the king or emperor. Today tæ kwon do is a worldwide sport and part of the Olympics.

Early in his training, Kim suffered rheumatism, ulcers, and lower back pain, because he concentrated too much on the fighting aspect of karate. So he developed Chayon-Ryu, or the "Natural Way," a system that would provide health benefits as well as teach self-defense. Kim believes that martial arts movements should be natural to the structure of the human body. Chayon-Ryu is founded on basic principles of proper breathing, proper footing, and proper body balance and is also based on natural movements culled from six martial arts styles that Kim has mastered and continues to improve. He frequently travels to Korea and other countries to study under legendary teachers.

"Unlike other grandmasters who have traded in their karate uniform for a business suit and taken a symbolic position within their system, I still practice karate and instruct classes," he says. "Maybe in another twenty years, I can get my eleventh-degree black belt."

—David D. Medina
Karate teacher fast on his feet

The best defense in a violent city is knowing how to avoid trouble. That is the advice of Houston's longtime martial arts instructor, Kim Soo, who attained his black belt in karate at age 13 in Korea. He is 52 now and has lived the past 22 years in Houston. He teaches at two of his own training halls - dojangs - and in classes at Rice and the University of Houston.

Jump on this man named Soo and first thing you'd know, you wouldn't know anything. You'd be picking yourself up asking, "Who'd a thought it?"

But that doesn't happen because Soo doesn't get jumped on. Not in a long time. Not since he was a kid in wartime Korea and bigger kids beat up on him. Promised him to study karate. He quickly became quite proficient, but he did not seek out and get even with those bigger kids. A story like that might make a popular movie, but it isn't what Soo believes or teaches.

Out of harm's way

Years ago in Korea, and now in an increasingly violent and crime-plagued Houston, Soo's philosophy has been constant: An ounce of prevention is better than pounding someone with karate chops.

"First of all, I don't go to dangerous places," he said. "I don't go to a place where there is a lot of trouble going on."

That's good, you say. But you know someone who was beaten and robbed between the downtown office buildings where he worked and the garage across the street where he parked. Trouble and troublesome types cannot always be avoided, you say.

Well, Soo does recall one time several years ago when he was confronted in a parking lot by two thugs obviously intent upon mayhem.

"These two guys, they took some karate pose," he said. "And I'm a karate teacher. I'm a karate professional. I know I can win. So I just laughed at them."

Imagine, two tough guys intent upon mugging a smallish, slender fellow. They threaten him with their best theatrics. He laughs at them.

"I laughed real loud," Soo said. "They looked at each other like, 'What's going on?' Then they were gone. I laughed and these two guys were looking around and then they're gone."

"Doesn't that remind you of Davy Crockett grinning down the bear?"

And there was once, 15 or 20 years ago, Soo said, when two thugs came into his downtown dojang, near the current site of the George R. Brown Convention Center, wanting to fight him and wager $50 on the outcome.

"I realize these two guys must be nuts," Soo said. "Why do I have to fight a nut? I didn't come to United States to fight nuts. I came to teach people."

He told the challengers that he had students to teach and they should come back later. They left and Soo figured he was rid of them for good. But, sure enough, they returned as he was finishing the class, walked right into the training area without removing their muddy shoes and restated their desire for a fight.

"It was the muddy shoes, as much as anything, that got Soo's goat. Showed no respect for the training area. Violated a basic rule of the dojang."

"I was very mad," Soo said. "But I cannot hit them and knock them out or something like that. Fighting with this guy and I'm in trouble. I don't like to do that. I look at them, I was so mad. I faced toward them. I yelled 'kee-yah,' real loud. They were paralyzed. They turned a gray color. Then a few seconds later, they walked outside. I just yelled. It cut their spirit."

Mind over madder

Another time a guy walked into the dojang when Soo was there alone and he asked, "What kind of place is this?"

"He thought it was a bar or something," Soo said. "I looked. The guy looks mean. And I look at him again. He's got a gun. I saw the pistol right here, in the pocket. So I looked at his face. I look at his pocket and I just said, 'Why are you carrying a pistol? This is a karate school. We teach how to defend yourself. When you get the confidence, you don't need to carry around a pistol. Don't carry a gun. You're in trouble. That's not a good self-defense."

The man pushed his gun deeper into his pocket, out of sight, and turned and walked away. Soo was convinced that if he had acted nervous or frightened, the man would have pulled the gun and robbed him.

Talking, yelling, laughing - all applied as means of self-defense by a master of martial arts, a man who has taught karate to an estimated 50,000 students in Houston, including many doctors and lawyers and corporation executives.

"Self-defense is to avoid as much as we can," Soo said. "Why fight with them? There's no reason to fight with a punk. No reason to fight with a crazy."

Inside

- An autopeny performed Thursday on a body found abraded in plastic in a ca­asket in a Montrose-area townhome left more questions than answers, police said. Page 22A.
August 19, 1992

Korean Broadcasting System
18 Youido-Dong
Yong Dung po-KU
Seoul, Korea 781-1317

Dear Sirs:

This letter is in support of Grand master Kim Pyung Soo for recognition as an outstanding citizen of the Houston community and representative of Korean culture, not only in the Houston area but also elsewhere in this country where his schools of martial arts have been established. I have known Kim Pyung Soo and have been a student in his Cha Yon Ryu system of martial arts for over seven years.

I am 65 years old, and I began my training in the Cha Yon Ryu system as therapy for a degenerative neurological deficiency that was affecting my balance and coordination. Many of my friends thought that martial arts was not suitable or possible for a person of my age. In most systems, that would be true; but it is not true in Kim Pyung Soo's system. People of all ages are welcome, and he emphasizes martial arts as a life-time endeavor that can improve your life both physically and mentally. That certainly proved to be true in my case, since my neurologist is convinced that martial arts is responsible for halting the progress of my disease. Kim Soo has designed his system to be accessible but challenging to people of all ages and abilities.

Kim Pyung Soo has been a great advocate for the martial arts. He has established branch karate schools at many locations, including two Houston universities, Rice University and the University of Houston. I am especially familiar with the Rice program, since I began my training there. I am chairman of the physics department at Rice, and I have been the advisor to the Rice Karate club for several years. In addition, Kim Soo teaches an introductory karate course in our Human Performance Department, as well as at the University of Houston, which serve as an introduction to his system. Many students have continued training after taking his course, and he has received recognition as one of the outstanding teachers at the university.
Korean language and culture is an important part of the Cha Yon Ryu system. Instruction and advancement in the system require familiarity with Korean terms and customs, and students take pride in this aspect of their training. As a physicist, I have also been interested in the scientific aspects of the discipline. The Cha Yon Ryu system is based on natural body movements, and Kim Soo has encouraged me to examine these movements from the point of view of basic mechanics. It has proven to be very interesting to do so, and many of the techniques can be better appreciated from this point of view. We are planning a paper on this subject which would be submitted to the American Journal of Physics, a popular journal for the physics teaching community.

Kim Pyung Soo has been an outstanding ambassador for Korea in this country. He is an expert in the martial arts, knows its Korean roots thoroughly, and communicates them clearly to his students. Beginning in 1968, he has built a system of martial arts that has been popular, enduring, and a great asset to the Houston community. He deserves great credit for his dedication to the preservation and promotion of an authentic system of martial arts available to people with many different levels of ability.

Sincerely yours,

H. E. Rorschach

H. E. Rorschach, Chairman
Department of Physics
Rice University
Houston, TX 77251
August 18, 1992

To Whom It May Concern:

Master Pyungsoo Kim, also known as Kim Soo, has been teaching martial arts at Rice University since 1969. He has taught the Rice Karate Club since 1969, and in 1981 became the head instructor of the Human Performance department's for-credit Karate classes.

1992 marks the twenty-fourth consecutive year of Master Kim's contributions to the university. The karate classes are a very popular part of our curriculum, not only with the students but with the parents of the students as well. Over the years, he has received very high faculty evaluations from the students.

Master Kim is a great asset to our program. His diligent and dedicated efforts have been of great value both to our school and the community as a whole.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

GR: jgb
August 19, 1992

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my understanding that Master Pyungsoo Kim has been nominated for consideration by the national television network of Korea as a Korean national who has made outstanding contributions in his community and thereby enhanced the reputation and standing of the nation of Korea in the eyes of the world. It is my privilege and pleasure to write in support of Master Kim Soo as a worthy recipient of this honor.

Master Pyungsoo Kim, known to many of his students as Master Kim Soo, has taught martial arts at Rice University since 1981. He is received with enthusiastic student support and acknowledged as an outstanding teacher in the field of martial arts. He is nationally recognized for his knowledge and teaching expertise and we feel very privileged to have him as a part time member of our faculty.

In addition to his master teaching in the basic instruction program, Master Kim Soo is an active sponsor and participant in the karate club sports program. Throughout his years of affiliation with Rice University he has led the student, staff and faculty members of the club in learning and competing in martial arts. We view his contributions as a meaningful part of our instructional, recreational and personal enhancement programs.

Master Kim Soo's students and the faculty of the Department of Human Performance and Health Sciences acknowledge him as a strong asset to our program. His outstanding teaching and dedicated effort have been of great value to our department, the university and the greater Houston community.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Hally B. W. Poindexter, Ed.D.
Professor and Chair
August 10, 1993

Dear Kim Soo:

What a delightful honor and notification from Ann Richards, our Governor. It has been an impressive year of well deserved honors for you.

May I add my personal congratulations in celebration of twenty five years of teaching karate and of your significant influence on the status of martial arts in the United States.

The students and staff look forward to your return to Rice this fall.

Sincerely,

Hally B W. Poindexter
Chair
At head:

University Relations

14 August 1996

Grand Master Kim Soo
President
Kim Soo Karate Inc.
via facsimile: 681-9262

Dear Grand Master Kim:

On behalf of Rice, the Hugh O'Brian Youth Foundation, and some 240 HOBY ambassadors from more than 30 countries, I write to thank you for the contribution you made to the success of the 1996 World Leadership Congress.

I can't imagine a better beginning to our World Community theme day (nor a better preamble to the Asian consuls general panel which followed) than the Chayon-Ryu demonstration given by you and your assistants.

As I mentioned to the student ambassadors during the day on culture which preceded the day of your demonstration, in an increasingly global society, understanding of and respect for cultural differences are essential prerequisites for effective leadership. By helping them to discover and appreciate the marvelous richness of human diversity, you and your assistants helped the HOBY ambassadors to appreciate the truth of that statement. For that, please accept my sincere thanks.

Cordially yours,

Greg Marshall
Director of University Relations
Program Chair, 1996 HOBY WLC