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TRADE SCHOOL NEWS

THANKSGIVING SPECIAL ! Nov. 23, 1972, Vol. 3, No. 1

BARTUNEK FOR EX-CHAIRMAN, DEPT.
(AN EDITORIAL)

Quaere: Who holds the pursestrings of political power here in the City of Trees?

Answer: Get in touch with Joe Bartunek, who will tell you that it's the parking lot owners. Why else should such a politically sensitive organism as the CSU Board of Trustees be so resistant to the prospect of providing commuting students with adequate on-campus parking facilities? Don't ask. . .

The parking issue at CSU does not involve convenience nearly so much as it does student safety: at 2.3 homicides per day, CSU campus is smack in the center of one of the nation's highest crime areas. Evening students must walk unescorted past sleazy topless bars, X-rated movie houses, transient hotels and the like to their cars (if their cars are still where they left them), beyond the scrutiny of the campus police. They are easy prey for any would-be mugger, dooper, drunk, or other obstreperous individual who feels like giving some college kids a hard time.

Caveat: If you are over 6 feet-200 lbs., have a 3rd degree black belt in korean karate, a face that shatters rock crystal at 7 paces, and pack a snub-nosed, pearl-handled .38 at the hip--you may survive to attend another evening class if you, with several thousand other patsies, drive down to school. But don't count on it.

One can only hope that not too many 'college kids' are mugged, raped and/or murdered before Bartunek et alia get the point--Big Ten Ball ain't where it's at where lives of commuting students are at stake. In the alternative, presuming that the parking situation will see no radical improvement after the publication of this editorial, escorts should be provided for students who must venture off-campus to their cars in the evening. In fact, the Trustees themselves should make the trip over to lots dotting Prospect Avenue between 2¹/₂st and 36th Street. On the way back, alone, by themselves, in the dark, they may well arrive at a re-evaluation of priorities about the campi.

**Can you really
afford 4 more
years of Nixon?**

TS NEWS - Published through the beneficence of the public sector -
EDITORS - Paul Hudson, Terry Saron
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BUSINESS MANAGER - Tom Beglev

ARBITRARY GRADING: AN END IN SIGHT

by
Paul Hudson
Student Member
Examination & Grading Practices Committee

As ex-law student Howard Cosell recently remarked, "The rank disparities in the scoring of our boys by certain judges leads me to inescapable questions concerning these gentlemen's judicial impartiality or their professional competence." Howard was referring to the great disparity between one judge's opinion (grade) and another's of American boxers and divers at the recently completed Olympiad. What Howard said in Munich applies equally to our grading situation at C.S.U. And just as those athletes will be measured by the folks back home by the medal they won (or lost), so too law students are judged by the prospective employer by the grades they received whether merited or not.

The problem is well known to all --- disparities in grading by course and by professor, the "Nice Guy" versus "Hatchet Man" philosophies of grading, with the whole non-system covered by a shroud of "academic freedom" making it impervious to reform.

"The Times they are a' changing" (Bob Dylan, 1963) and C.S.U. is keeping up! The faculty's Special Committee on Examination and Grading Practices has taken the ball thrown to them by Dean Craig Christenson last year and after due consideration has come up with the concrete proposal of a grading "guidelines" (i.e. a relatively fixed grade distribution or curve) which will formally be recommended to the faculty at their next meeting on November 17.

The Committee collected and evaluated data on the grading practices of over 100 law schools (including C.S.U.) before making its recommendations. The solution they propose is tough but then so is the problem (see Exhibit A).

The proposed guidelines recommend a certain percentage of students in each class or section be assigned each grade (A, B+, B, etc.). An instructor may vary the percentage of students assigned to each grade level within certain ranges (eg. In 500 level courses the number of 'D's may vary from 0 to 8% of the class or section.) Additional variations above or below prescribed ranges would be frowned upon, to what effect is presently undetermined. Seminars, institutes and small classes would be exempted from the guidelines.

The proposed guidelines would have a number of significant effects. First and foremost the system would put an end to professor shopping by grading reputation. The idea is that henceforth students will be able to shop for professors on the basis of professional competence without regard to grading practices. Secondly, as proposed the grading guidelines would slightly raise the average student's grade point average at graduation from about a 2.6 to a 2.7.

Some other less direct effects of the grading guidelines would be to eliminate the disparities between the GPA's of evening students vs. day students (nearly all the honors graduates in 1972 were evening division students yet the day division did better on the bar exam); help weed out incompetent professors (few students will want to take their courses without grade incentive) and students (padding of grade point averages by electing "easy" courses will be more difficult); employers may consider C.S.U. Law College grades in a more favorable light if they are less than all A's.

Finally, the grading system may inch forward toward its purported functions:

- (1) Indication of the student's proficiency in a particular course and in legal studies generally;
- (2) Incentive for the student to engage in systematic study of the materials involved in his various courses.

PROPOSED GRADING GUIDELINES

	First Year		Upper Classes	
	Norm	Range Permitted	Norm	Range Permitted
A	8%	(4 - 10%)	12%	(8 - 15%)
B+	14	(10 - 16%)	16	(13 - 19%)
B	19	(17 - 23%)	23	(21 - 28%)
C+	23	(20 - 30%)	23	(21 - 28%)
C	28	(25 - 35%)	21	(19 - 26%)
D	5	(0 - 8%)	3	(0 - 7%)
F	3	(0 - 6%)	2	(0 - 5%)



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EXHIBIT A - GRADING PRACTICES OF SELECTED PROFESSORS (1970 - 1972)

Instructor	No. of Course Sections	Total Students	A	B+	B	C+	C	D	F
Garee	8	235	43%	13%	18%	13%	9%	3%	1%
Dyke	8	389	40	14	25	13	6	1	0
Flaherty	8	150	31	24	28	7	8	0	1
Moody	10	435	11	14	29	25	17	9	1
Oleck	7	333	12	8	21	20	25	10	3
Tabac	7	323	6	12	27	31	17	7	0
Goshien	6	184	9	12	19	27	21	5	2
Werber	4	201	3	4	13	29	37	12	2
Sonenfield	8	496	4	7	11	17	34	17	9
Leiser	8	185	2	4	9	11	51	17	6

COMPARISON OF GRADING DISTRIBUTIONS FIRST YEAR

	<u>17 Other Schools</u>	<u>C.S.U.</u>	<u>Proposed Guidelines</u>
A	10%	9%	8%
B+	14	9	14
B	19	19	19
C+	25	21	23
C	25	30	28
D	7	10	5
F	2	3	3

UPPER CLASSES

	<u>17 Other Schools</u>	<u>(600,700 C.S.U.levels only)</u>	<u>Proposed Guidelines</u>
A	12%	10%	12%
B+	14	12	16
B	19	24	23
C+	24	23	23
C	24	24	21
D	6	6	3
F	2	2	2