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of imparting information, inspiring, guiding, and tutoring, he need not do any of this. He is supposed to serve students, but anyone who has been to college classrooms knows that the service can be minimal. Not a single person from the department or administration comes to visit any teacher. The only indication of the quality of his work can be found in offhand remarks by students. Political officeholders also continue in their employment without much discipline. Only a change in administration affects them.

If a student protests any aspect of faculty service and decides to go through channels, he generally wastes his time; stone walls are met almost everywhere. The department chairman protects his charges unless adverse criticism is plentiful and the chairman feels the heat; the dean supports the chairman, and the president supports the dean. Faculty and administration have learned to form a united front through the incessant practice of politics.

College faculty at almost every school are forever concerned with reducing what they call their "load." The word is well chosen, but the term simply means the number of hours per week of classroom instruction. Administrators, too, seek reduced working hours and strive for long vacations, short days, and many assistants. Political action is used by both groups to attain their end. Faculty load reduction is awarded to the politically powerful—the researchers and writers. Those who are voted the best teachers by students or peers are awarded a plaque or a few dollars.

As in all legislative bodies, faculty committees are subject to pressures, and each of their deliberations is a result of compromise. Such important affairs as votes of confidence for administrators and revision of the curriculum are decided politically. An energetic faculty member can collect all others with real or imagined grievances and form a formidable group to oppose an administrator. The latter, on the other hand, must not only choose the proper time for his assessment by the faculty, but also must pay his respects to the political powers among the teachers. The curriculum is molded in a similar way, rather than in response to the needs of students. In some schools, a gentleman’s agreement exists whereby departments approve each other’s offerings without question.

In any event, departmental sovereignty is always very strong.

The establishment of the curriculum is a simple and political process. Whatever its origin—student, faculty member, or department chairman—a course is described in vague terms to a curriculum committee where hardly anyone, except the sponsor, is interrogated. The entire faculty then votes its approval. Occasionally a question or two may be asked by the faculty troublemakers, but little attention is paid to the boat rockers unless morale is low.

Faculty members who needle and prod are not the ones who are catapulted into administration posts. When newspapers announce that Professor X is appointed president of Y college, it is almost certain that Professor X has shown great political skill in faculty committees. Either he works out compromises between the opposing positions exceptionally well or he has acquired a coterie of supporters by virtue of his personal magnetism. He does not have to show any characteristic of a university president to be chosen; all he must do is show his acumen in academic politics. It is a realm replete with railroading, logrolling, pork-barreling, and sandbagging.

Political science and sociology departments have veritably neglected the study of academic maneuverings for individual and departmental power. More important, students have been barred from observing the process or participating in it. Academic politics could serve as a laboratory for developing future Woodrow Wilsons. Why not offer the course for credit?

Morris Goran
Roosevelt University,
Chicago, Illinois 60605

I deeply appreciate the many letters that I have received personally in response to my article. Most of these included extensive ideas or were accompanied by published materials that have substantially amplified my own perceptions.

The letter from Stokes provides an encouraging report of his own experiences, but I must take exception to his last paragraph simply because the alleged exaggerations to which he refers imply a position that I don’t recognize in my own writing.

Robert Strauss
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Textiles: Fiber Science

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John P. Knudsen, chairman; H. Dieter Weigmann, vice chairman.
8 July. J. E. Spriuell and J. L. White, "Structure development in polyolefin fibers during melt spinning and drawing"; J. A. Cuculo, "Flow induced crystallization of poly(ethylene terephthalate) melts in the extrusion process."
9 July. R. E. Cunningham, "A novel technique for preparing inorganic filaments from inviscid melts"; R. W. Work, "Some relationships between the conditions of formation and the physical properties of spider amputate silk fibers."
11 July. B. Miller, "Autoignition of textile systems"; S. Schulman, "An instrumented mannikin to determine burn damage."
12 July. J. Skelton, "Changes in interfiber forces during wetting and drying."

Toxicology and Safety Evaluations

Kimball Union Academy

Harold M. Peck, chairman; Ralph C. Wands, vice chairman.

Water and Aqueous Solutions

Holderness School

George J. Safford, chairman; Frank H. Stillinger, vice chairman.

Physics and Chemistry of Aqueous Solutions

water”; H. Yasuda, “Diffusive transport of salt and water in semipermeable membranes”; J. Wenzel, “Neutron scattering of amorphous ice.”


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