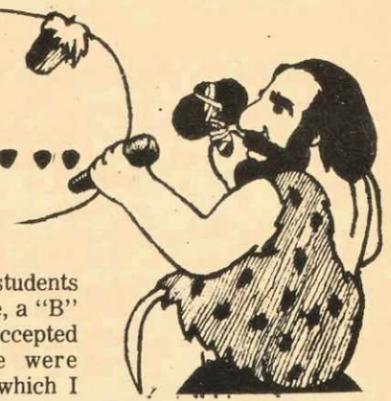


# WORDS FROM THE WISE ...



### To the GAZETTE:

My year as student Senator comes to an end in a couple of weeks time. So, in the ensuing article, I am going to provide you with a brief resume of what I have personally done over the last 11½ months, rather than what has transpired on the individual Senate agendas.

During the summer months, I came to the self-realization that I was truly token representation and that I was accomplishing absolutely nothing by being on Senate. I decided, therefore, to touch upon the subject that hit closest to home to most students, that being the marking system employed by our university.

I wrote a report on the letter grading system, and submitted it to Senate Council for

discussion. In the report, I outlined two major pitfalls of the letter grades that the students have experienced and are still encountering. I told of how the purpose of letter grades was often defeated when a lecturer relied heavily on mathematical computation. In giving an assessment, the lecturer often took a numerical mark and converted it to a letter grade; at the end of the term the letter grades were reconverted to numerical grades, then averaged to produce a new letter grade. It was often left to the lecturer's option as to what a numerical grade warranted in alphabetical terms or vice versa.

I personally feel that the letter marking system is far superior to a numerical marking system, yet the better system is often negated through the intertwining of two completely different systems.

The second major problem associated with the letter grading system is the system itself. By this I simply mean the non-uniformity of a test or examination. Two lecturers will obviously give two different tests. One lecturer's test may be more difficult than the second, so that a "B" from one lecturer could indeed be equivalent to a "C" from another. The result of this problem is most prevalent when a student applies for a scholarship or to a graduate

school. Although two students are of equal intelligence, a "B" is more often than not, accepted above a "C". There were three major items on which I acted. The marking system was the first. The second came during the January 15 Senate meeting.

The first item on the Senate's agenda was a motion favouring the abolition of supplemental examinations for the Faculty of Arts and Science. The motion had the approval of the faculty; it also had the approval of the Senate Council, who had further recommended the passing of the motion to the Senate.

Both I and Peter Mason spoke against the motion. Within minutes, other senators were speaking on the motion, both for and against. Dr. Hicks remarked during the meeting, "I cannot remember when we have had so many divisions in Senate before."

The motion to abolish supplemental examinations was amended to the effect that supplemental exams must be given in any course which has a final compulsory test or exam which is valued at 40 percent or more. The amended motion passed.

I (also) felt that students were not democratically represented on Senate. Only 1.3 percent of all the senators were

student senators. (ed. note: 3 out of 219) So, when I went to Senate Council on Monday, February 5, I told them the problem and asked them for approval to have both elected student senators sit on Senate Council. Here, the membership is only 22 and the increased member would increase the percentage to 9 percent. Senate Council not only agreed to favourably recommend this to Senate, but also agreed to favourably recommend that student representation on Senate be increased from three to six.

So, that's the story. You may be wondering why I even ran as a student senator. Those who know me best may say that I was ego-tripping. Well, maybe I was. But, after much soul-searching, I can sincerely say that I ran for the simple reason — that unlike J. Alfred Prufrock, I am not prepared to measure my life out in teaspoons. To the ones that elected me, I give you the famous words of Bob Hope: "Thanks for the memories."

Eric Swetsky.

## Continued from page 1

# Another side ...

In the meantime, Canadian University Press, in a move that reeks of internment without trial, suspended services to the paper, then asked for an investigation. This means that our contract with Youthstream, their national advertising co-op, is now void, unless Youthstream cares to exercise their 120-day option clause they have in their contract with the Union.

This is of no particular consequence to the GAZETTE, since this co-operative was losing revenue to the paper, not making the vast sums of money that were tossed around in the last issue of the GAZETTE. It

was estimated that our membership in Youthstream cost the paper over \$4,500 in revenue annually. National advertising in the GAZETTE, before the contract was signed with Youthstream, was approximately \$6-7,000. Last year, according to the auditing of Union books, revenue was approximately \$1,200. This year, the revenue will be about \$2,000.

However, our temporary loss of membership with Canadian University Press is another story. Despite their shoddy handling of our case, membership in this organization is

desirable. It is the only effective organization in Canada capable of gathering and disseminating news information of particular interest to the university community. The article which appears on pages 6 and 7 of this paper should give students on this campus an idea of the services this organization can provide.

It is hoped that the CUP investigation will clear up the facts in this case, so that relations can return to some semblance of normality. Even so, it is quite probable that feelings will remain bitter for some time to come.

## Course monitoring needs students

Two student members are required to sit on the Course Monitoring Committee of Student Council. The purpose of this Committee shall be to monitor and investigate academic comments and complaints filed by students with the Committee.

### QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must be reasonably familiar with the academic process of Dalhousie

University's Faculty of Arts and Science.

2. Must be prepared to devote a few hours each week to active Committee investigation and discussion with members of Faculty.

For further information, please contact the Student Union office, second floor Student Union Building or phone 424-2146.

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Professor Reg Lang of the Faculty will be in Halifax Feb. 15-16. Interested individuals are invited to contact him at The Citadel Inn.

If unable to meet with Professor Lang in Halifax please contact:

Gerald A.P. Carrothers, Dean  
Faculty of Environmental Studies  
York University  
4700 Keele St.  
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