

# Letters to the Editor

you brought to my attention two arguments concerning the use of grades by the university.

I wish to deal with these arguments, and am sending a copy of this letter to EXCALIBUR because the Council of the Faculty of Arts is currently discussing its use of grades and the issue is, I believe, of general interest.

Here then are two arguments, with comments:

First argument. Grades are essential for purposes of selection. Comment. Two things are essential for selection. A description telling what the student has done. And an evaluation certifying that he has done it well. A written description included in the student's transcript will satisfy the first criterion. As to the second,

**Grades irrevelevent** Dr. Tatham, in our talk earlier, sufficient evaluation is contained in the word "credit", indicating a student has received credit for work described.

If further evaluation is required, one or two letters of recommendation should do the trick. If the selector requires further information to insure the quality of the student's work, he should go to the student himself.

The grading system, in effect, ranks students. He who uses grades as a means to selection judges a student's work in relation to others' rather than on its own merit.

One is tempted, however, to use grades as a means to selection because one has most of his work already done for him.

Grades, unfortunately, do the job poorly. In a well known study Hoyt (1965) suggests "that college Continued on Page 13

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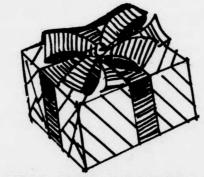
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