Faculty Senate considers new teacher evaluations

by Cliff Beach
exponent editor

A new faculty evaluation form for students may soon be available if the faculty senate approves it at their meeting tomorrow afternoon.

At the senate's meeting on April 19, the evaluation subcommittee presented its proposal for a new form to replace the computerized Student Instructional Report (SIR) currently in use. This new form consists of five questions to be answered in paragraph form by each student, thus eliminating the mechanical score produced with the computerized forms.

Senate Bill No. 148, as presented, states that "the purpose of student instructional evaluation should be primarily for academic improvement and not for the generation of mechanically derived scores," and that the form now in use "has lost its original purpose...and has become the primary instrument in judging instruction for purposes of determining incremental raises, tenure, and promotion."

Whether or not this bill will pass the senate this week depends on several factors including if the senate considers the few questions asked sufficient for proper evaluation and whether or not enough students were allowed to give their opinions in creating the form.

Students protest teacher's methods

Graduation plans for several administrative science students are uncertain as the students struggle to complete course work required to graduate.

A controversy centering around how Business Policy (MGT 420) is taught has been slowly building.

Business Policy is the capstone course for administrative science majors. The catalog describes it as "the integration of principles and methods acquired in the core curriculum of business strategy, policy, and management action."

The prerequisite for Business Policy is "to have achieved senior standing, completion of all core courses and fifty percent of major option courses," according to UAH's catalog.

Disatisfaction with how the course is being taught is the report of a petition of the students submitted to the senate by Cliff Beach. O'Donnell uses a system called clustering, a type of scaling, to determine grades for the course. Based on the total grades in the class, the instructor will arbitrarily partition the A,B,C,D,F scale according to his best judgement. The grades usually fall in clusters. For example, if a certain number of grades cluster near the top, they are assigned an A, and the next cluster down will be assigned a B, and so on down the scale. "The lines of demarkation," said Whitehead, "are cut-off points between grades." This grading procedure is fairly common, especially in the engineering school.

"The whole system is arbitrary," said Whitehead. "If a student approached O'Donnell and wanted to know how he stood grade-wise, O'Donnell would not be able to tell him."

A possible solution to the ambiguity of the grading scale is for the students to request O'Donnell do a spot analysis of their grades at this point in time," according to Dr. C. David Billings, dean of administrative science.

In the running

UAH students Casey Wilson (left) and LeAnn Crowson look over the qualifying information for the Harry S. Truman Scholarship. Crowson and Wilson, have been selected as semifinalists for the prestigious award.

Counts wins presidency

by Nancy Parker
staff writer

Taking 141 votes out of 196, Tom Counts won last Wednesday's SGA presidential race.

Molly Gremmels came in second with 54 votes and James "J.R." Roberts trailed with 21. Many consider voter turn-out for the presidential election relatively large, as it reached 90 percent of the first election's 300 voters.

Counts' victory was due in a large part to the support of the International Students Organization.

Counts' promise to look into providing tutoring services to all students. Currently only American students are eligible for this service according to Owoferia.

"I plan to uphold everything I said I would do during my campaign," Counts said. "I am going to do my best work to better relationships with the Student Programs Council, better funding for clubs, and more student involvement."

"I hope to keep the student [see COUNTS on pg. 5] in the running..."
Teacher evaluations

Changes needed

by Cliff Beach, exponent editor

Tomorrow, the Faculty Senate will tackle an important issue as they consider a new form for instructional evaluation. Although we are not convinced that this new form which basically has only two questions will be sufficient for evaluation, we do believe changes need to be made in the method of faculty evaluation.

Critics of the current form worry around the limiting nature of the twenty questions asked, the usefulness of a mechanical score, and the fact that many professors teach only to get a good score on those questions asked. All those criticisms are obviously valid and offer enough reasons in themselves for some change. But the need for change, in this case, is a sign of need for reform.

At most universities, faculty evaluation is done by and for the students. The information produced is public, and students use it during registration. At UAH, the current SRH scores are used to determine who gets promotions, raises, and tenure. It would seem that the same decisions could more effectively be made based on class enrollments.

In any case, the information needs to be public. Students make a tremendous investment in their education and we need and deserve the opportunity to make informed choices.

How the needed changes are to be effected is rightly a responsibility of the senate, but we believe that direct student input is an essential element in the creation of an entirely new process of evaluation. There are several in the senate, including Dr. James Horwitz, a physics professor, who support more student involvement. We hope their advice is heeded.

The new form under consideration is an advance over the current one but is still lacking in areas. By asking only for the strengths and weaknesses of the course and professors, this form forfeits the advantage of directed questions. How will department chairman evaluate these comments when they can cover so many aspects of instructional quality? More importantly, will they?

Also, there are advantages to mechanical scoring even though the current system allows for abuses. Mechanical scoring reduces the subjectivity possible in interpretation and is quicker, too.

In reality, both systems, the objective mechanical one and the subjective written one, are needed. There is a place on the current form for written responses but it is not used or ever read. That is another area for reform.

We support the senate in its efforts for change but encourage them to look a little closer and see the need for true reform. We also encourage students to find out who the senators are from department and to let them know the students’ viewpoint.

This is indeed an important issue and it needs to be addressed by all the affected parties, faculty and students.

Alcohol policy story clarified

To the editor:

In last week’s exponent you carried a story which implied that the University has changed the policy regarding alcohol on campus. The University policy remains as it is stated in the UAH catalog. “No alcoholic beverages shall be consumed in any open areas on University property.”

With the exception of the Norris House and inside UAH Community Housing apartments, alcoholic beverages will not be permitted inside any UAH buildings.”

Dr. Jeanne Fisher
Vice-President
for Student Affairs

Editor note: The legislature originally considered a policy submitted by Dr. Fisher of which they disapproved. The policy ultimately chosen by the legislature is in their recommendation to Dr. Fisher.

Counts’ win called unethical

To the editor:

I would like to congratulate Mr. Tom Counts on his victory in last week’s altered presidential election. But how did he win so easily? Let’s just say that it was due to questionable ethics. On the day of the election there suddenly “appeared” a trashy publication called the SCAM. And, who might you ask, is this fine example of dirty politics? Well, oddly enough, it’s our fine, upstanding president-elect Tom Counts. If asked, I’m sure he will deny any connection with it. But last spring, when it first appeared, Mr. Counts admitted he was its editor and publisher. Reading it, of course, will confirm that fact anyway, as it is hardly objective.

Mr. Counts, does wearing baggy blue jeans and being an “asshole” really count Mr. Roberts out as a good prospect for the presidency? Is this the spirit of friendship and cooperation you Greeks are so fond of speaking of? And furthermore, when speaking of Ms. Gremmels, you stated that SPC was united against her yet she knows of SPC members who voted for her. You also stated that she only had one committee member left on Special Events when she actually has at least five or six. But when you publish a trash, it doesn’t necessarily mean you have to be accurate!

For the record, Mr. Counts, you neglected to mention in the last issue of “SCAM” your own poor record as Vice-President. I believe you are supposed to keep something like six or eight hours in your office each week, yet last summer I think I might have seen you there three times the whole quarter. But I know you had to have come out there more than that, because you had to pick up your check for being Vice-President.

I would also like to point out that without your buddies on the Elections Board, i.e., Tim Miner, one of your fraternity brothers and his fiancée Margaret Doyle, a PKA little sister, you would have been disqualified for election violations. Even though there was obvious conflict of interest, your buddies stood behind you and saved you from being thrown out because of cheating in election procedures. You indeed have a lot to be thankful for.

Sincerely,
Glenn L. Wills

Grading system deemed unfair

To the Editor:

Why are seniors who are about to graduate, honor students, and other hard-working students suddenly dropping MGT 420 (Business Policy)? The answer—they are facing failure because of an arbitrary grading system used by the instructor, and I use the term loosely.

At the beginning of the quarter we were told we would get points for “oral contributions.” Fine, but how can the instructor say that what one student says is worth 50 points while another student's is worth only 6 points? The points given out are even more lopsided in some situations. There are no standards!

How are these points given out? The class divides into groups and discusses a specific case. Meanwhile, the instructor wanders around putting down points in his black book whenever he hears a “contribution.”

There are at least two problems with this system. I don’t care if you are 20 years old or 80 years old, there is no way you can hear, let alone understand, what everyone is saying over all of the chatter. Thus, you may be expressing a good idea and get no points because he didn’t hear you speak. The next problem area is a classic. When he leaves the room, as he does on occasion, how do you get points? It’s simple—you don’t.

An instructor is supposed to make himself available for the students after classes to answer questions, right? Not this one. If you want to know why you got a certain grade, he simply says he won’t change a grade or he’ll put you down and put an end to the conversation.

This problem has been going on for too long and it has been made clear to some people in the administration, but, for some reason, they allow the problem to perpetuate. We students are not afraid of hard work, for if we were we would not be honor students and seniors about to graduate.

UAH has high standards, which we are proud to achieve. What we want is a fair instructor who applies the same standards to each student and is willing to hear the student. We don’t need a “professor” who rules by attrition.

Name withheld
In tennis

UAH slips past Marion, 5-4

by Stacye Poer
staff writer

The UAH Tennis Club eked out a 5-4 victory over Marion Institute Saturday, April 21.

Nick Lioco, the number one player, won quickly in two straight sets, as did Chip Travis, playing at number two. Other singles winners were Mike Torres and Joel Beasley.

The fifth win was delivered by Lioco and Travis in number one doubles play.

Following the Marion victory, the tennis team had a 3-4 record on the season.

Joel Beasley, a graduating senior, voiced the team's appreciation for the efforts of tennis club entrepreneur, Mike Guest. "With everyone having work and school to contend with, it's hard to get everybody together. Mike has been doing a great job organizing the matches so that we can have the whole team there, ready to play," said Beasley.

CMA names new lecturers

Representatives from Bread for the World, an interfaith world hunger network, will provide the program for Campus Ministry's May campus-wide luncheon on Tuesday, May 8, at 12:15 at the Trinity Presbyterian Church (east of Housing on Holmes). Cost will be $1.00 each for students, faculty, and staff, and there will be the usual opportunity for informal fellowship. The program will outline how each of us here at home can make a difference in combating the pervasive problem of world hunger. Along with programs like the Quickline (a telephone legislative network) and the Offering of Letters Campaign, Bread makes available a Campus Organization Project and an Intern Program for student involvement. All of these will be examined with an eye to UAH's involvement.

Applications are being taken for exponent editor and business manager. Send resumes and work samples to Mike Simmons, University Relations, Rm 225 Madison Hall by May 12.

Qualifications must include student status with a minimum 32 hours, experience, 2.0 GPA and more.

Mother's Day is coming and do we have a sale for you! The UAH Bookstore is having a special collection of records shipped in just in time for Mother's Day! Everything from classical to jazz to pop at very special savings.

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Monday & Tuesday 9 — 6
Wednesday thru Friday 9 — 5
National Humane Sunday this weekend

by Ann Davidson

May 6, the first Sunday in May, is national “Humane Sunday,” a time to remember the helpless—especially children and animals.

It is also the first day of “Be Kind to Animals Week,” the oldest celebrated week in the nation. BKA week has been celebrated during the first full week of May each year since 1915. Sponsored by the American Humane Association, the week’s goal is to increase public awareness about humane animal treatment.

The American Humane Association is a non-profit federation of humane societies now in its 107th year, that is dedicated to preventing cruelty to animals.

BKA week and all weeks, pet owners and potential pet owners are urged to consider the basic health needs of their animals. Pet ownership is a responsibility. But it is full of love.

Robert Wagner has been named 1984 Chairperson of BKA Week. His devotion to animals is well known throughout the entertainment community. Recently, he narrated the Jacques Cousteau special, “The Warm-Blooded Sea: Mammals of the Deep,” for PBS. In addition Wagner maintains an active interest in raising Arabian horses.

For further information or to volunteer call GHHS at 881-8081.

Robert Wagner, chairperson of BKA week

HLT presents ‘Tribute’

Huntsville Little Theatre will present Bernard Slade’s comic play “Tribute,” at the VBCC Playhouse on May 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12 at 8:15 p.m. Directing “Tribute” is Dr. Robert E. James, Associate Professor of Psychology and Adjunct Associate Professor of Communication Arts.

“Tribute,” says John Simon in New York magazine, is a play that takes the sting out of adultery, divorce, prostitution, failure in business, non-achievement of artistic aspirations, family infighting, and, best of all, death itself.”

“Tribute” is about a father searching for a son, about friendship, and about “the archetypal 20th-century joker...everyone’s friend, nobody’s hero.”

Included in the cast are Bill Goodson, Mel Haskell, Ken Parker, Susan Porter, Carol Stanford, Jackie Walker, and Beth Winkler. Susan Porter and Jackie Walker have previously had leads in the University Playhouse productions of “Fiddler on the Roof” and “Blithe Spirit.”

Tickets are available at the VBCC Box Office. A limited supply of free student tickets are also available at the Morton Hall Information Desk.

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Contact Al Cox at 2519 NW Memorial Pkwy, Huntsville, AL or call 554-2449 or TSgt Chuck Crawford at 615-251-7104 collect.
Union construction gets office relocating underway

by Utica Garrison
staff writer

Construction on Phase One of the new Student Union Building, which will house food services, the bookstore, and a gameroom, should be complete by May 18.

If construction goes as planned, the bookstore will be moved on the weekend of May 19 and 20 in order to avoid disturbing services. Stage pieces, lights, sound, couches, and chairs will be moved throughout the week. Food services will be moved the following weekend of May 25-26.

Before the bookstore can be moved, the textbook buy-back must be completed. Because this is two weeks prior to the end of the quarter, the timing of the move may be delayed. As Stephen Bruce, Director of the Student Union says, "the bookstore is the key to the whole thing."

Until Phase Two of the Union is completed, SGA and SPC offices will be housed in the Ashburn House on Holmes Avenue. The exponent will be temporarily relocated in Building 602-B of On-Campus Housing. The office of the Director of the Student Union will be temporarily located in a corner of the new building.

As boys, they made a pact to share their fortunes, their loves, their lives.
As men, they shared a dream to rise from poverty to power.
Forging an empire built on greed, violence and betrayal, their dream would end as a mystery that refused to die.
Faculty Senate to vote on new teacher evaluation forms

(continued from page 1)

According to Jack Dempsey, Senate Secretary, the five questions are enough because they do not limit responses. "The variety of criticisms you can make (using the written form) is so much more telling than what you can say on that 20-question form. They are trying to elicit ultimate truth in those 20 questions."

Concerning student representation in developing the new form, Dempsey said that the form was considered by students when it was first developed. "I was close to a lot of student constituencies (at that time). I would take each draft from the committee to the student leaders and take their response back to the committee."

That earlier version, though accepted by the senate in 1981, was recalled. Although this form is basically the same as the one rejected before, Dempsey hopes this one will be accepted. "What we didn't do before was cite any type of criteria. This time we just put in the criteria for good teaching from the faculty handbook as guidelines for possible responses."

Those guidelines, listed at the top of the new form, include: 1) knowledge of subject matter, 2) active concern for students' academic progress, 3) ability to organize and effectively present course work, 4) effectiveness as an oral and written communicator, 5) ability to motivate students' interest and participation, 6) ability to relate course work to other fields, 7) evidence of conscientious preparation, and 8) use of effective methodology and teaching techniques.

The areas of response desired based on those criteria are simply the strengths and weaknesses of the course and the professor and suggestions for change for each. A space is also provided for additional comments.

Tennis meet signups soon

An intramural tennis tournament for all UAH tennis buffs with valid student I.D.'s will begin soon according to Intramurals Director Mark Sewell.

The tournament will be played May 11 and 12, and May 18 and 19 on Saturdays from 10:00 until 6:00 and Sundays from 2:00 until 10:00. First and second place trophies will be awarded in each of eight divisions. Participants will be placed by the tournament directors. Registration forms will be available at the front desk in Spragins hall beginning May 6.

For further information, call Mark Sewell at 895-6589.

BSU holds car wash

The Baptist Student Union will be holding a free car wash at the South Trust Bank on University Drive next to Wendy's on May 5, 1984. Students have taken pledges for the number of cars they will wash. Donations will be accepted, but washes are free. Money raised will be used for the BSU's Summer Missions Program.

ENJOY SUMMER. SEE GREMLINS. JUNE 8
Students protest teacher with petition

(continued from page 1)

Another grievance of the students' is "O'Donnell's unwillingness to work with students on a one-to-one basis," said a current student who requested that his name be withheld.

O'Donnell, when contacted, had no comment to make to the exponent concerning his class or the way it is taught.

"Several people, myself included," said Whitehead, "have approached O'Donnell to get feedback on what they were doing wrong in the class. Instead of being given positive feedback, they were subjected to shouts of criticism before being dismissed."

"It was my understanding," said Whitehead, "that professors would be available and willing to help a student on a one-to-one basis. Such has not been the case in this class."

Whitehead, the originator of the petition, emphasizes that the petition is simply a statement of grievances concerning the way Business Policy is being taught.

"We are not interested in having O'Donnell fired," said Whitehead. "We are simply presenting a complaint to the University for something to be done—preferably to have O'Donnell quit teaching undergraduate and stick to doing administrative level work and teaching graduate students."

According to Dean Billings, the procedures established for any student grievances are threefold. First, the student should meet with the professor and present his grievances; then if the problem is not resolved, the student should take the issue to the department chairman for that discipline. Finally, if the student is still not satisfied, he or she should go to the dean of that school.

The students have followed the procedures outlined above.

"I am glad that the students came to see me," said Billings who met with them earlier this week. "I am very sympathetic with their concerns," he said.

Billings feels that the whole issue boils down to a communication problem.

This course, MGT 420, is unlike any other course," he said. "It is not an easy class to teach, or to take."

"The students," Billings says, "understand that the course is unique and are supportive of what it is supposed to accomplish."

Billings continued saying that the students' complaint is not against the context of the course, but rather against the ambiguity of the professor's grading schedule.

Billings feels that since this is a communication problem, that it can be resolved through effort by the students and O'Donnell.

Billings said that the administration has conferred with O'Donnell about the communication problem, and trusts that he will improve communication and reduce some of the ambiguity and unnecessary anxiety that the students have complained of.

The A's take volleyball tournament

The A's clinched the 1983-84 UAH Intramural Volleyball Championship Monday, April 23, with a victory over the Blue Leers. The victory marked the end of two consecutive years in which the A's were undefeated, and the third consecutive championship for the team.

The members of the team are Mostafa Abdelfattah, Roger Bell, David Cunningham, Eric Cunningham, Gregg Cunningham, Pat Dobson, Danny McCranie, Fred Schuler, Dan Stiles and Wade Thomka.
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