

Plagiarism motion fails again

A proposal to change policy for handling plagiarism and cheating cases failed again Wednesday to gain faculty approval as an appropriate means for dealing with the problem.

The Faculty Senate declined to give a favorable recommendation to a motion which would take cheating cases out of the hands of Student Court, and place them under the jurisdiction of the Scholastic Deficiencies Committee (SDC).

The motion, originally presented last spring by its sponsor, management professor Edwin Beal, has been rejected by the Faculty Senate in several different forms.

After amending the motion at Wednesday's meeting, the body still voted against recommending to the general faculty that it be approved. Instead, the senate will propose that the faculty refer the motion to an ad hoc committee composed of a student and faculty member from each of two committees, SDC and the Student Conduct Committee (SCC).

The proposal, as amended by the senate, states that an instructor who finds evidence of possible cheating or plagiarism may report it to the SDC. The committee may then place the student on academic probation "accompanied by such conditions as it may determine."

Beal's form of the motion states that the filing of a report by an instructor would automatically have the effect of placing the student on academic probation.

The SDC could refer cases to the Office of Student Affairs for disciplinary action under the University Conduct Code, according to the motion.

Currently, cases of plagiarism and cheating are handled by the Student Court System and such offenses carry a maximum penalty of expulsion or suspension from the University.

Beal told the senate Wednesday that his motion would "recognize cheating and plagiarism as a deficiency in scholastic standards. Terming the problem "an academic matter," he described his proposal as a "remedial, educational approach to the problem rather than a punishment."

Donald DuShane, Dean of Student Administrative Services,

representing SDC, said that the committee's first reaction to the proposal "was one of dismay. They were aghast at the prospect of this task being thrust on a committee with no background to handle it."

The proposal involves the SDC in setting up sanctions, said DuShane, who added that the committee was "exceedingly reluctant to get involved in judicial decision-making."

DuShane agreed that several problems exist in the current methods of handling plagiarism and cheating cases. "I think Mr. Beal has a valid point that the problem is not now being handled at all on a University-wide basis."

He pointed out that very few cases are reported and that there is no central reporting agency which could provide professors with information on the number of times a student had committed such an offense.

Chapin Clark, head of SCC, also agreeing that a problem exists, told the Faculty Senate that the

conduct committee had considered the motion that afternoon and felt the matter should be their responsibility.

"The machinery for dealing with the problem exists under the conduct system though currently it's not working effectively," he said. It was the consensus Wednesday of the SCC, he added, that "we (SCC) should tackle this problem."

Other faculty members, though emphasizing they shared a concern about the problem, found other faults in the proposed changes.

Robert Harris, head of the architecture department, said the motion enables a professor to submit a report without the student's knowledge, and gives the student no opportunity to present his own evidence or appeal the decision of the SDC.

Roland Bartel, head of the English department, said he felt the problem was "so complicated any legislation on the subject

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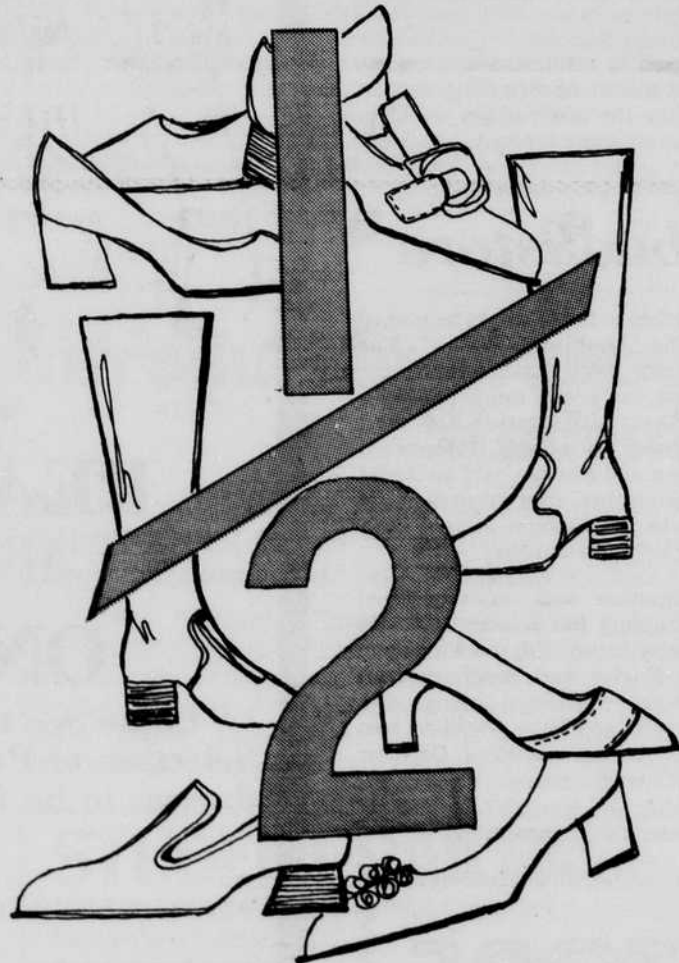
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