

Grade inflation: It stretches even to the job market

Grade inflation, a phenomenon receiving widespread attention last year, is forcing professors and students alike to reconsider their views on the University grading system.

Simply explained, grade inflation happens when professors give students who lie on the borderline between a 'C' and a 'NP' a 'C.' In this situation, that professor may decide it is only fair to give that same break to all students — hence, a 'B+' student receives an 'A.'

Now grade inflation is under attack. A group of faculty has presented a proposal to return the 'D'

grade, and while the proposal may drag on for months before any resolution results, it signals a change in the academic attitude.

By KATHRYN SLADE
of the Emerald

During the tumultuous 1960s, students experienced a radical shift in their goals. This manifested itself on the academic scene with students demanding a more 'relevant' kind of education. At that time there was a

change in grading policy, along with a proliferation of alternative and brand-new course offerings. Competition became scarce. The 'NP' grade symbolized the new belief that students did not fail, they merely did not do the work.

Things have changed, however. Students face the very real possibility to 'fail' to get a job, and while competition is still considered 'not a good thing,' students have looked to high grades as their salvation from the unemployment lines. In other words, while Bob Biology may not believe in competition, the job market is telling he has to.

Judy Loring a junior in psychology says "I think this school is pretty easy. In a way it's good, but in a way it's not, because it lowers your marketability. Your education isn't worth as much as it used to be. I want high grades because I'm going to grad school, but I don't see that I'm competing with others... I just believe in individual motivation."

"I just transferred from OSU," says Karen Barton, sophomore. I like the curriculum better here, but I have heard this school is easy. I think I would like a 'D' grade... stiffening up the reputation of this school would be good."

Dennis Gabel, a freshman interested in biological sciences comments "I don't believe in individual competition—it should be within yourself. But if I heard that the OSU biology department was harder than the UO one, I would go there."

Richard Littman, psychology professor says, "I think the notion

of grade inflation has merit—but I am not sure at this point how to resolve it."

J. Spencer Carlson, former registrar, shed light on the statistics involved in grade inflation. "We hit a peak when grade point averages went from 2.6 to 3.0; however, it has stabilized. Its activity now can be compared to the cost-of-living index. As far as the issue goes, an instructor follows his or her own perception of what constitutes satisfactory work. There is much more talk among the faculty members about this now, and I think this concern on the part of faculty will tend to dampen grade inflation."

Other schools have already solved the problem by returning the 'D' and the 'F.' No one can tell what will happen here, but present activity indicates both faculty and students are not overly happy with grade inflation.

Disputes hit the (trailer) courts

By TOM BERNINGHAUSEN
Of the Emerald

"If I'd known what I know now, I'd never have moved into a mobile home park. Our rental agreement required us to do the landscape work at our expense and to donate the shrubs to the park when we leave... When we tried to sell our mobile home the manager told us we couldn't sell it ourselves, only he could and that we'd have to pay him a commission... The new (park) rules tell us we can't even call the police, only the manager can. Even if the people next door are screaming that they're being killed!

These were some of the complaints heard by Rep. Nancie Fadeley, incumbent Democratic candidate for state representative from District 42, at a meeting in Springfield Wednesday night. Fadeley called the meeting to hear complaints from constituents regarding alleged violations of Oregon's Landlord Tenant Act of 1975.

Presently, the law offers no clear course for prosecution of offenders, but the primary cause of most complaints stemmed from ignorance of the law.

The Landlord Tenant Act of 1975 clearly defines the rights and responsibilities of landlord and

tenant alike and provides for the fair and equal treatment of both parties. A section of that act deals specifically with mobile homes, and this was the main area of interest at Fadeley's meeting.

Copies of the law were distributed and the bulk of the questions were answered by readings from the document.

But problems of unwritten and unpredictable changes in the rules and regulations were harder to deal with. One tenant complained that his rental agreement forbade the presence of trailers, campers or boats in the park, but now the manager had changed his mind and was moving them in.

When asked if that meant a change in the rules, the tenant was told "as the manager felt, so could he do."

Another tenant suggested the state make violations of the landlord tenant act criminal violations and thus subject to police enforcement.

Fadeley proposed an amendment be added to the law making violations civil violations which could be resolved through the

courts. This met with general approval and she said she would look into proposing an amendment dealing with the issue at the next meeting of the Legislature.

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