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## Tow away zone

The student teaching placement offices were relocated rather than rebuilt as part of a \$1.8 million package to expand the School of Education. A Junction City contractor jacked the frame building off its foundation and rolled it across the street Wednesday to make room for the school's new addition.

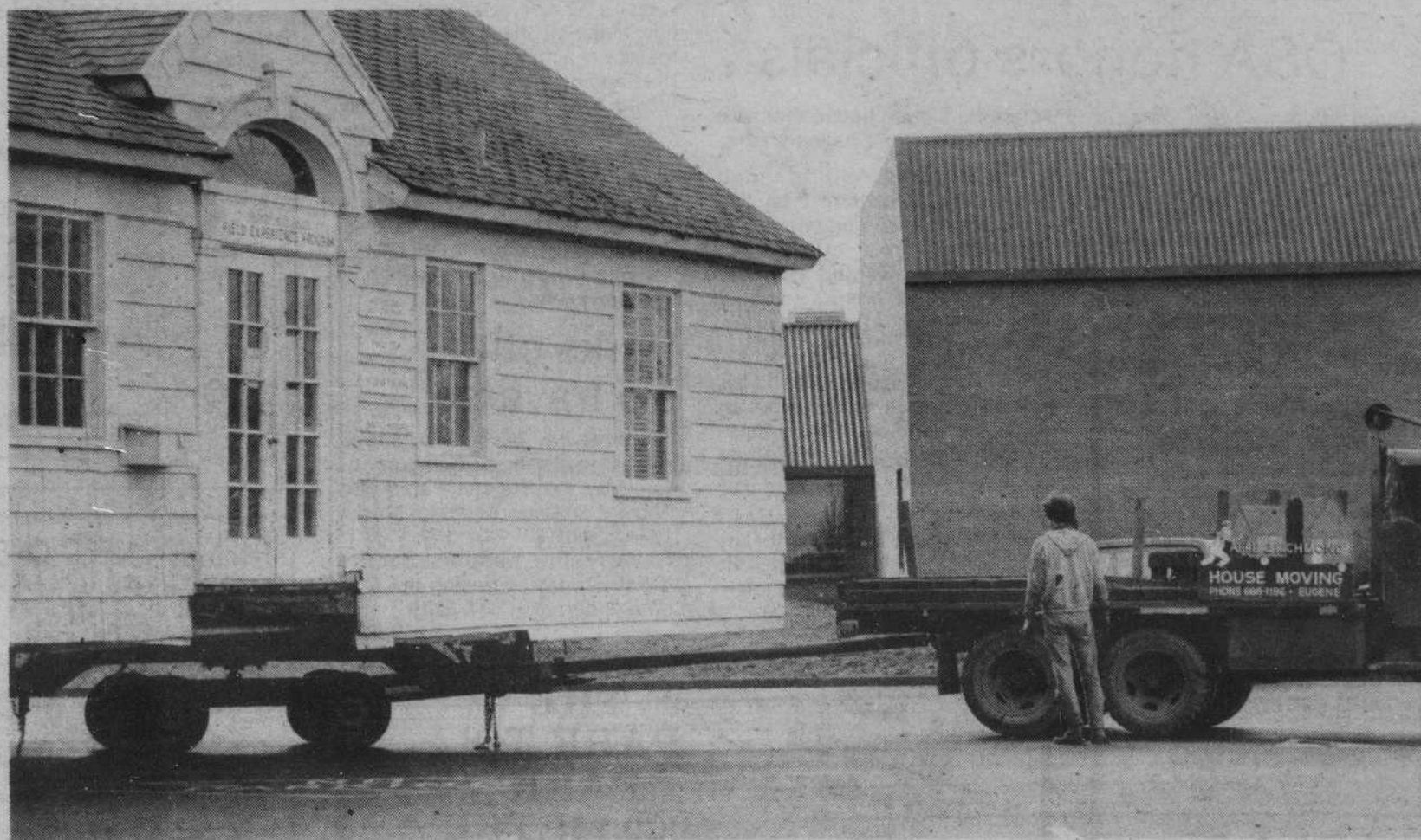


Photo by Doug Williams

## Exam settings promote dishonesty

By ROBIN DOROTHY  
Of the Emerald

### Students cleared of cheating

To the three University students accused of cheating, the not-guilty verdict was a relief.

To the Eugene attorney who conducted their hearing, the case itself was an indictment of the University's lax testing procedures.

To the third-year law student who defended two of the students, the case highlighted several glaring deficiencies in the academic dishonesty section of the Student Conduct Code.

And for some faculty members, the incident may signal yet another intrusion into their traditionally unquestioned authority in the classroom.

The students were accused of cheating on a fall term final exam by having their notebooks open or in sight, and, in one case, by concealing lecture notes inside a blue book.

Eugene Attorney William Wiley, who conducted the Jan. 31 hearing, found the students not guilty of cheating, but said in his final finding of fact that their actions may have appeared improper and were "less than desirable" behavior from University students.

Wiley took the University to task for laxity in testing procedures and for possibly providing unnecessary temptations to students in testing situations, specifically citing crowded exam rooms, lack of proper monitoring and allowing students to bring their notebook paper and blue books.

Tim Renn, University coordinator of student conduct, calls the case unusual because it reached the hearing stage.

Under the code, faculty members are required to submit a written report on any incident of suspected cheating, but it is widely accepted that most cases are settled between the instructor and student. Failing that, a conference with the conduct coordinator usually brings a solution.

Historically, settlement of academic dishonesty cases have seldom required a hearing. "It was always pretty much open

and shut until this came up," Renn says. "They (accused students) came in, said they were guilty, begged for mercy and that was it."

The hearing was the first this term and the second this academic year conducted under the revised Student Conduct Code.



Graphic by Tom Eiler

The controversial code was changed in 1977 after charges that the old student court method of hearing cases was illegal and unfair.

This latest case emphasized the difficulties of making a determination of guilt.

"Unless you find a student with the answers to a test written on his arm, it's pretty hard to prove," says Joe Olexa, a third-year law student and former college instructor who acts as a student prosecutor.

Dealing with cheating after it happens, he says, is almost always going to involve discrepancies and ambiguities.

"It's really the instructor's word against the student's. So you're pitting the two against each other. That's a bad situation—it's not conducive to learning."

Mildred Robeck, chair of the Student Conduct Committee, agrees. "There's a potential cleavage here between students and faculty, and that's bad. Both have the students' learning at heart."

Renn and Olexa suggest monitoring

exams and controlling what can be brought into the classroom, perhaps banning books, notebooks and backpacks during exams.

"It's valid to assume that some students will always be tempted to cheat," Olexa says. "But if you're going to test people, I think you can try to eliminate them from helping each other or trying to bring in outside information."

Don Chalmers, director of the Office of Student Advocacy and the person who defended two of the students, believes "the vast majority of students is not engaged in cheating," but says the University community is damaged when cheating does happen.

"Let's face it," adds Renn, "if somebody cheats in a class that's graded on the curve, everybody gets screwed."

Olexa said the push for standardized grading procedures could come from either students or faculty. "It may require not giving tests to 50 people in a room built for 30, where they're sitting in each other's laps," he says.

But Chalmers says much of the problem lies in the code itself which he says needs to be changed in the following ways.

- Any evidence on the charges is currently made available to both parties in the case, which is unfair to accused students, Chalmers says.

- Under the present code, an instructor can still give a student a no-pass course grade even after the student has been found not guilty at a hearing.

- Robeck says a faculty memorandum currently limits an instructor to giving a zero on the particular exam or assignment in question in a situation of suspected cheating. Even that has been controversial, she adds.

"To many professors, cheating is still a moral issue and not a legal one," Robeck says. But to explicitly prohibit instructors from giving a grading option in a cheating case would "limit the options for the faculty member," she explains.

"Some may resist that — they feel that not passing a student is their prerogative."

"It's an unsung rule that the professor is the one who controls grade sanctions," Chalmers says. "But we have to accept the fact that adjudication will be how we determine the facts, not some professor subjectively stating, 'I think you cheated.'"

Olexa says these attitudes reflect a modern view that students pay their tuition and receive a specific educational service in return.

"We don't always assume anymore that the instructor is automatically telling the truth and the student is lying," he says.

Although members of the University community disagree on the problem of how to deal with academic dishonesty, they all agree that the result of cheating is the eventual devaluation of a college degree for everybody.

"I don't think anyone can defend cheating," says Olexa. "Even students admit it's ripping them off."

## today

Roy Lieuallen has faced controversial social issues during his 17 years as Oregon's chancellor of higher education, and the future seems to hold more of the same, with budget woes and student demands for the minimum wage looming. See Page 4.

Most people are retired at 80, but not Earl Kelley. He spends his "golden years" entertaining crowds at the Saturday Market with his trombone. See Page 4B.

