

Program improves

By James Rhoades
Of The Print

The student nursing forum, held last October, has led to improvements in several areas for the nursing students on campus.

The meeting was for learning about students' concerns and their suggestions regarding the College nursing program. Recommendations from a committee formed for this purpose were sent to John Hakanson, College president.

One of the major concerns brought up at the meeting was the insufficient counseling for the students. Other concerns were that the program be maintained at a high level and proper information distributed to potential students. Course content and following prerequisites were also concerns.

"The committee did send a written report to each student and that's a plus," said Nancy Menath, nursing student representative. "They also have a counselor available at

Clairmont a half day Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we can see her on an appointment or drop-in basis. She's there to specifically help nursing students. That is a definite outgrowth of that meeting."

"We asked about the possibility of lockers, but there is a financial problem. In the memo it said they are working on a larger student lounge and one with smoking and non-smoking sections, perhaps with better ventilation. The one we have now is much too small," Menath said.

Another major complaint brought up at the meeting was a better clarification of requirements. Gloria Gostnell, assistant to the dean of instruction, said, "At this point the recommendations have been approved and the implementation of them will be done in time. Most of the problems have already been addressed. The nursing department has begun to take care of the information problem."



Last week's snow storm gave many a chance to partake in an old sport, inner-tubing. Turn to pg. 11 for more photos. Photo by Duffy Coffman.

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Grade inflation hard to find but it's here

By Sandy Carter

Of The Print

A look at grade inflation here at any other community college is like searching for the proverbial needle in the haystack. We know it's there by smell with the scenery that radiating it and finding out who stepped it there are complex tasks.

First in a series

Chuck Adams, CCC director of admissions and records, points to several facts that complicate consideration of the college's 3.1 overall grade point average, which is up from 2.96 of 1970-71's 2.96.

"C" is still considered an average grade," he says, "but what is and what should be are two different things. All the withdrawals, no-passes, drops and audits don't calculate."

"I don't know," he ponders. "It's a tough one. I sometimes think we do a student a disservice by sending him out of here with a 3.9 and having him get a 2.6 on his upper division work somewhere else. But maybe," he adds, "if he'd gone right there from high school, he'd only have gotten a 2.1. There's a seasoning process that goes on here that's very valuable."

Indeed, the community college system as it works at Clackamas may be seen as a seasoning and sifting process. The CCC accepts any and all students, with or without

diploma, even with "D" averages.

Says Shirley Cressler, science instructor, "Anybody can take a class, but poor students tend to just quit. We in general science—the 100 level—get a lower level of student, mostly P.E. majors and education majors who have to take either a math or science sequence. We don't have many at the 200 level: they go on to four-year schools." In general, she says, "lower level students drop, withdraw or take an incomplete if they're doing badly, which tends to raise the average grade among the remaining students."

John Hooley, division chairperson of the humanities and social science departments, echoes this complaint. "It's been the custom here for the last 11 or 12 years since the board set the policy, that a student could drop right up to the final exam time."

Admitting the existence of grade inflation in his division, Hooley says, "Certainly we're keeping up. But we wouldn't want to let it get ridiculous. We don't want to give an 'A' simply because somebody shows up," he adds. "But in some of the non-transfer areas, the instructors, who often come from non-traditional, non-academic backgrounds such as industry, have a different attitude toward grading. And as far as they're non-transfer, it doesn't really matter what those students

get," he says, "but it does raise the (College's) overall G.P.A."

Besides the case of the disappearing "D"s and "F"s, Hooley sees the unique strengths of older students, the smaller class size, and the informal atmosphere at CCC as contributing factors to grade inflation. In a school with an average class size of 20 and an average student age of 25 to 27 years, he says, "small classes and more accessible instructors work against the depersonalization often encountered at four-year schools," which he says makes grading simpler for instructors there.

Dick Andrews, English instructor, agrees. "We have an

awful lot of 'A's running around on campus," he says. "We in English tend to think that grades are sometimes inflated where there's a lot of student-teacher interaction," he says. "It's a lot harder to give a student a 'D' when he's been coming to you for help with his paper."

Another opinion on grade inflation and its causes comes from Don Epstein, history instructor, who says that grades at all community colleges are too high. "Many of the vocational courses give out too many 'A's and 'B's," he says. "The range of students here is so great that we tend to be grateful for any work at all."

Placing a strong emphasis on writing skills, Epstein tests subjectively. "I hardly ever give a 'D' or an 'F,'" he says, "because the student nearly always drops, withdraws or takes an incomplete. We allow students to repeat a course for a better grade if he gets less than a 'C' the first time."

In light of the testimony, CCC students would seem to receive every consideration, as their "B-plus" average bears out. Yet according to many campus sources, grading is a sensitive, emotion-laden problem for students and teachers alike.

Next: Is there a solution?

McCoy steps up to position

The new face in the Associated Student Government office these days isn't exactly a new face after all.

Terri McCoy, a 25-year-old Santa Rosa, Calif., transplant, is merely stepping up from her one and a half years of general office experience in the student government offices into the official position of ASG secretary recently vacated by Beth Thompson.

"I was the only one who applied for the position," she said ruefully in an interview Jan. 2,

her first day back at school and on the new job. "Don (Porter, ASG president) talked me into it."

Her new duties will include minutes, agendas, club files, receptionist work, typing, duplicating and taking roll at ASG meetings.

A sophomore accounting major who plans to work after graduation in June, McCoy has her hands full with a 15-hour schedule, the new ASG duties, and the responsibilities of being a single parent with two young boys.

Hobbies? Beaming, she admitted she won the winter-term Jack White "Ladies" Billiards competition, earning a new cue

stick and trophy, then added bowling, macrame, and volleyball as her lesser interests.

A little nervous her first day on the job, McCoy still looked ahead optimistically. "I have an

extra advantage," said the attractive brunette, "because I already know all the people I'll work with."

