

RC571717383

Faculty of Arts

The regular bi-monthly meeting of the Faculty of Arts was held on Wednesday, April 1, 1964. There were 30 members present.

The minutes of the previous regular meeting were read and adopted on motion by Rev. Murdock MacLean, seconded by Mr. Yves Brunelle.

Subsequent to the discussion on term papers at the previous regular meeting Dr. Monahan mentioned that he had made a survey in his classes. He found that the majority were assigned three or four papers. Some, however, didn't have any and others had a larger number although in this case it is questionable whether they understood fully the meaning of the term. The Dean also mentioned that some professors did not think that term papers were conducive to study because the students waited until the last minute to do them. These professors felt that short regular assignments were much better.

Mr. Brunelle then asked the meeting what was to be done about the style sheet. Mr. Kontak expressed the opinion that professors were free to use it this year and that it's use would be rigidly enforced next term. It was too late to enforce it this term, he said. It was moved by Dr. Monahan and seconded by Mr. Kontak that the Faculty of Arts officially approve the use of the style sheet prepared by Mr. Brunelle. Fathers MacDonnell and MacKinnon spoke against the motion because certain professors already had established methods and it would be unfair to impose something new and different on them. It was pointed out that although the Faculty approved the use of the style sheet, it did not make it mandatory. Motion passed.

On the question of student averages Rev. Murdock MacLean questioned why there was a difference between our standards and those of American students. Monsignor Bauer answered this question by using the example of one of our students with an average of 82% who was refused admittance to an American University because he did not have a B average (85% according to their standards). He was however admitted



on trial and during his course he did not make below an A which according to their standards is 90% or better. This, he pointed out, proves that our standard of marking is more rigid than theirs. Incidentally, Monsignor Bauer mentioned that professors should be careful when marking papers because a difference of a couple of marks could decide whether a student gets honors or not. He pointed out that this was especially true in the case of majors.

Dr. Monahan then remarked that a high percentage of seniors attained distinction average. He felt that this was due to three main reasons.

1. Their ability improved through the years.
2. Some arrange to have easier courses during their senior year.
3. Marking is probably easier in senior year.

Father Ginivan tried to prove by means of graphs and curves that this is due to the weeding out process in the earlier years. As a result, he said, in the senior year we arrive at a more normal student population. The discrepancies which exist in the curve of the first two or three years are levelled off. Averages show, therefore, that our system of marking is quite normal. It was pointed out that on the average about 1/3 of the graduating class receive honors; 1/3 receive majors; 1/3 receive pass degrees.

Dr. Woodfine indicated that there should be more correlation between grades and I.Q's. We should, he said, see if our students are making use of their potential. Maybe we should mark more according to the curve. In some cases, he said, the failure rate is indicative of one's success as a teacher. Father Ginivan remarked that the curve is often upset by two factors. In the first case some students do not live up to their potential and secondly, other students attain higher marks because of the extra effort they put into their work. Monsignor Bauer pointed out that professors should be careful of extremes in marking. Some courses end up with practically no failures and others with practically no passes. New professors often have a high failure rate. Father MacSween asked if some



ZB for next year

guidance could be given to new professors on the question of marking. This had been done by Dr. J.J. MacDonald at the beginning of the term. The heads of the different departments could give assistance on this question.

Mr. Sanderson raised the question "what to do with marks between 56 and 59?" He pointed out that after he had raised a couple of students to 60 he found out that most of their other marks were also 60%. Monsignor Bauer suggested that quiz marks should not be raised--even marks of term exams--in order to give the student a true picture of his position. It was also pointed out that professors should make more use of grade cards. It was then moved and seconded that the Committee on Studies consider changing the passing grade in order to give the professors more freedom in marking.

Dr. Connor mentioned that some students had complained that they were unable to make use of the library during the past Easter recess. These students had remained here to work on essays, etc. only to find the library closed.

Mr. Joseph Campbell was elected as the new secretary of the Faculty of Arts.

Finally, Monsignor Bauer emphasized two points contained in the last Library News Letter. Firstly, he urged members of the Faculty to review carefully the question of periodicals--add or delete--as the case may be. Secondly, some professors were abusing their privilege by keeping books out too long and thus refusing the use of these books to others.

Meeting adjourned.

J. W. Babin  
Secretary

