



## Growth of probation list unreasonable

Illinois Tech's probation percentage has reached a dangerous level. The academic council deserves criticism for the way the probation policy has been affected by the changeover to the new four-point grade system.

As it now stands 761 students out of 2890 day undergraduate students who could be liable for probation are in that status—25.3 percent, or about one in four.

Something is wrong somewhere: is it the student's fault? Look at the probation figures from spring, 1949, to date:

Semester	Spring '49	Fall '49	Now
Day Undergrads	3,543	3,356	2,890
Probation	507	471	761
Per cent	14.3	18.3	25.3

These figures are particularly significant since they cover a period in which the cumulative grade point average determined academic standing. Look at the terrific jump in one semester, and remember that a "1.0 before is not a 2.0 now" as brought out by a recent editorial.

Is 25 percent too high? Or even the 14.3 per cent of Spring 1949? Dean of Engineering John T. Retallata seems to think so, for, according to his opinion expressed last spring, the upper limit should be 10 percent.

It is the opinion of this newspaper that the possible consequences of the move were not examined completely. We realize that the adoption of a four-point system puts us on a basis comparable with a majority of other colleges, and we welcome it for that purpose.

The question of changing the grading system differs from that of raising or lowering the probation level. We feel that this important point has been overlooked. This difference was of no concern to three elements of our administration.

This difference was of no concern to the registrar's office, which, following procedure, merely read data from the IBM tabulator and sent 500 probation notices after the semester had started.

This difference became of no concern to the Academic council until a portion of these 500 receivers of ill news complained that it jeopardized their positions of responsibility in student activities or employment by the Institute itself.

Some gracious attempt, however, was made to alleviate this situation when

the Academic council hurriedly revised the probation policy to exempt at least students in the above categories.

Finally, this difference seems of no apparent concern to some instructors. It may well be that this is the greatest problem facing students.

We, as students, are told that we represent a highly selected portion of the college population, qualified by high intelligence and aptitude to pursue our studies. Though this swells our chests, we are confused by a situation in which some members of our instructional staff persist in handing this "cream of the crop" a liberal dose of E's and D's, neglecting "curve" grading, while the probation level creeps up. Here we are, the "cream of the crop," sandwiched in; squeezing from the top is a practice defended by "academic freedom," squeezing from the bottom is a practice defended by academic necessity. The result: 25.3 percent "cream" squeezed out.

What might be done about this. As a first step, we think that the probation level should be dropped. A level reduced to 1.8 might be found consistent with a reasonable number of students on probation and can be compared to a 1.0 in the former three-point system.

Regardless of the arguments against a revision of the probation policy, it must be faced that the dangerously high number of students on probation is a threat to student morale and, consequently, to the reputation of the Institute.

Secondly, we sincerely hope that this editorial is enough to arouse in our faculty a serious consideration of their grading methods. In grading, it should be remembered that E's are more punitive than they once were, and that a grade distribution that seemed satisfactory under the three-point system, if continued, may well be contributing to our already swollen ranks of probationers.

As a parting comment, we feel that the increased number on probation and their discouragement has done great disservice to any attempts on the part of students and faculty to reduce cheating on examinations.

The Editors of  
Technology News

'As I See It' was omitted from this issue to permit a greater space allotment for the editorial about probation.

## Honor I explains moves to secure insignia ban

To the Editor:

It has come to the attention of the members of Honor I that there has been a grave misinterpretation of the character of and the ideas behind the ban on letters and insignia foreign to Illinois Tech.

In place of the physical persuasion used on hundreds of other college campuses and used here at Tech in the past, Honor I was anxious to have the approval of ITSA in its campaign, since it does not believe in dealing with an intelligent student body by such base physical means. The ruling sanctioned by ITSA prohibits members of the student body from wearing letters and insignia not awarded by the Institute. Fraternity and club insignias affiliated with Illinois Tech are not affected by this measure. There will not be any disciplinary action taken by the academic committee on discipline nor at any time was action of this type contemplated or desired. The dean of students has promised his cooperation in this matter but did not make any mention of dismissal from school as a part of this cooperation. Honor I asks only that the students cooperate when asked by its members to remove foreign insignia.

Honor I went to ITSA seeking only approval by the representative student governing body and not seeking any dictatorial powers, as has been mistakenly assumed by many people.

Honor I, in making this move, acted in good faith and felt that it was taking a step towards developing an awareness of Illinois Tech activities and tradition amongst the student body. The members of Honor I feel that the editors of Technology News and our other student leaders are correct in their campaign against the lethargy and apathy which at times seems to exist on the campus. Therefore, it was decided that Honor I, as a representative of the athletic program, should step forward and help carry the crusade onward in a concrete manner with action instead of words, in order to help promote allegiance and loyalty to the Alma Mater.

Honor I's idea is to minimize club and prep school loyalties by eliminating the insignias of non-campus groups. Honor I would replace these old associations with an active con-

sciousness of what our school offers and what it should mean to all Tech men.

From the standpoint of the athlete himself, it may be said that at a school like IIT the athletes' reward is not measured in terms of student or press adulation—rather, it is measured by the experience gained from competitive efforts and in the everlasting lessons of fair play, sportsmanship, and the will to win.

Honor I

Editorial Note:

We heartily endorse Honor I's desire to reduce apathy toward school activities, but we take issue with the means they employ.

Forced removal of foreign insignia will incur resentment, such as that expressed editorially last week, rather than increased appreciation of the importance of athletics on this campus. What seemed to Honor I and to ITSA to be a logical method of attacking the problem appears to us to be detrimental to attainment of their goal.

We would, therefore, suggest that Honor I embark on a positive program independent of the sanctions of the dean of students, and so formulated as to gain the approval of the student body rather than its antipathy.

John Scannell  
Mel Friedlander

## TECHNOLOGY NEWS

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## Slipstick

The little moron's watch had stopped ticking and he tried to find the trouble. Finally, he took the back off, probed into the works, and found a dead bug. "No wonder it doesn't work," he said, "the engineer is dead."

"Do you know what good clean fun is?"

"No, what good is it?"

A traveling buyer had been on a trip for three months. Every few weeks he'd send a telegram home to his wife, saying, "Can't come home. Still buying."

The wife stood it for a while, but when the fourth month started, she decided to do something. She sent him a telegram. "Better come home, I'm selling what you're buying."

Then there was the farmer's daughter who always went out with city slickers because farm hands were too rough.

The minister was explaining to his congregation the essential difference between faith and scientific knowledge.

"Now, brethren, it's like this. There's Brother Johnson sitting on the front bench with Sister Johnson and the five little Johnsons. She knows that they're her children—that's knowledge. He believes that they're his children—that's faith."

Getting out a newspaper is no picnic. If we print good jokes, students say we are filthy; if we don't, they say we are too prudish. If we publish original matter, they say we lack variety; if we publish things from other newspapers, they say we are plagiarists; if we stay in our office, we ought to be out getting material; if we're out rustling up a story, we aren't attending to business in the office; if we wear old clothes, we are poor college students; if we wear new ones, we got the money from our graft. What the hell are we supposed to do, anyhow? Like as not someone will say we swiped this from an exchange. We did.

Customer: You made a mistake in that prescription I gave my wife. Instead of quinine, you used strychnine.

Druggist: You don't say. Then you owe me 20 cents more!

Love is the delusion that one woman differs from the rest.

"Why on earth do all the fellows call Liz 'Muscles'?"

"Why! 'cause they all want her in their arms, of course."

Carbolic Gussie.