

Sir:

You have recently expressed interest in our publication, the Tower List -- a student evaluation of the faculty at San Jose State College.

The Tower List is both a quantitative and qualitative professor evaluation, firmly based on a questionnaire sampling of the student body. Professors were rated on the basis of lecture interest and content, testing, grading, and interest in the student.

The questionnaire used consisted of eight questions dealing with various aspects of an instructor's teaching proficiency. The student was asked to evaluate each instructor he had enrolled under during the previous two semesters on a numerical scale from one (poor) to five (excellent). The student's year in school, major, grade point, and the particular class or classes he had taken from that instructor were required on all forms -- space for a qualitative comment was provided and such comment was urged. All numerical evaluations were averaged and published with a qualitative evaluation derived from the students' comments.

In preparation for the publication of the Tower List, Tau Delta Phi published a limited and infant list last fall (1963). This list was distributed only to faculty members for their analysis and evaluation -- it was not made available to the student or general community. The infant list served as the bedrock of experience for the Tower List we published in May, 1964.

After distributing some 20,000 questionnaires on the San Jose State campus last fall we were quite disappointed at the 4,000 return. This was a severe limitation in the evaluation of a faculty of 1,000. This limitation and others were noted in our publication. We printed a professor evaluation on as few as five returned questionnaires. Some instructors personally known by members were evaluated on as few as three questionnaires. The number of returned questionnaires was of course noted with each evaluation.

Faculty reaction has in general been very good. The majority of the professors who have made their opinions known are in agreement with the spirit and philosophy of the Tower List. Many disagreed with some of its evaluations, many criticized its limitations, and a select few bitterly condemned it. A libel suit was threatened by one irate academician. The majority expressed favor with it, and many praised it.

Student response has been very enthusiastic. The limited 4,000 copy printing was sold out in two days. There was a definite demand for the Tower List during registration this fall.

Tau Delta Phi plans to publish a second and completely revised Tower List this spring (1965). Tentative plans are to distribute 100,000 IBM rating cards and completely revised questionnaires, in anticipation of a 30 to 40,000 return -- an average of 30 to 40 evaluations per professor. All statistical data will be computer

processed and tabulated. The most difficult task will be the consolidation of the students' comments into a responsible qualitative instructor evaluation. We are considering including grade-point studies with the evaluation, i.e., numerical ratings by the average student may be contrasted with those of the honor student if the difference is significant. We intend to publish and sell over 8,000 copies of our second edition.

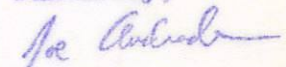
A copy of the questionnaire we used is attached for your information. Although this questionnaire was devised with professional assistance, a new and more valid revised questionnaire will be employed this year.

The publication of a Tower List for a student body of some 20,000 and a faculty of over 1,000 is a difficult, demanding, and sobering project. It requires an extensive student sampling and response, a statistical consolidation of all numerical evaluations, and a mature and thoughtful qualitative professor evaluation based on student comments. It is not a project to be lightly considered. A publication of the scope and distribution of a Tower List may directly affect student-faculty, student-administration, and faculty-administration relationships, in addition to being a strong indicator of a professor's teaching ability. It is not a work of fiction, and, being a work of fact and opinion, it is the responsibility of the author and publisher to insure that it is accurate, responsible, dignified, and rational. It requires a large organization, a tremendous amount of active member support, and a responsive faculty and student body.

We are anxiously looking forward to our second edition and wish you the best of luck with your first.

If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to write.

Sincerely,


Joe Andrade,
Master of Records
for

The Brothers of Tau Delta Phi