The Academic Board has set up a working party to examine Business School's GPA plan to introduce a grade point average (GPA) system in 1986 to monitor student performance.

The issue was debated at the November meeting of the Institute Council, which referred it back to the Board for detailed advice.

The School's proposal has met with strong opposition from the Chisholm Student Association, which told Council it was "totally opposed to the introduction of the System in any form."

Grade point averages are used extensively in the United States as a quantitative measure of student performance based on subject grading.

It works on the basis of each grade from fail through to high distinction being allotted a numerical value, enabling results to be added and averaged. DBSS is proposing that grades be allotted the following values:

- High Distinction = 6
- Distinction = 5
- Credit = 4
- P level Pass = 3
- PO Pass = 2
- PP level Pass = 1
- Fail = 0

Under the DBSS proposals, students would be required to maintain an average of 3.0 passes over all subjects - a GPA of 3.00.

DBSS firmly believes the system is an effective device for monitoring student academic performance and a means of maintaining academic standards.

The Student Association is just as firmly opposed, for a range of reasons, believing the system would make life more difficult for students under a harsher set of regulations.

The Academic Board working party comprises Dr Ken Tucker, Dean, as convenor, DBSS staff members, Mr Don Lyell and Mr Noel Huggan, Dean of the Faculty of Technology, Dr Roy Williams, the Dean of Social and Behavioural Studies, Mr Richard Sneddon, and the School of Education's Dr Richard Tremban, and three students nominated by the Student Association, including at least one student from DBSS.

Why DBSS wants it...

David Syme Business School Dean, Dr Ken Tucker, believes the Grade Point Average approach will benefit both students and the School.

He and several members of the DBSS staff have observed its application in the USA where it is widely used as an overall indicator of academic performance.

The School's decision to introduce GPA followed the establishment of an Academic Standards Working Party in 1983, set up in response to concern about differences in academic standards of some DBSS graduates.

The Working Party was charged with developing a method whereby the School could provide early warning signals to students whose overall progress in any of the 16 courses offered by the School was unsatisfactory.

The School was becoming increasingly concerned about the high number of students consciously aiming no higher than a 'PP' (poor pass) who and were able to draw a result of student regulations, to pass their courses with a large number of PPs obtained only after several attempts, and by passing a minimum number of subjects at first attempt.

The Working Party commissioned Mr Noel Huggan, Adviser to the Dean, Student Administration, to carry out a detailed investigation of the problem, resulting in the Report on Academic Standards for the Undergraduate Courses Offered by the David Syme Business School.

Mr Huggan's research found that "by comparison with American standards, the results of our students on course and of those who have graduated appear much lower. This could affect their competitiveness with graduates from other colleges and also tend to reduce the image of Chisholm."

The study concluded that introduction of a GPA system as a means of monitoring overall academic performance was a logical step towards raising the School's standards within the School.

Since then the School has examined the proposal in depth, in consultation with both staff and students, and developed plans for its implementation next year.

Dr Tucker believes a GPA system has several benefits, not only for the School but for students as well.

He says although GPA will be used as a means of raising standards, it will be used simply as a method of failing students who now succeed through with a large number of PP grades.

Working Party to examine Business School's GPA plan...

The working party will report to the Management Committee of the Board which will then present its findings to Council.

More details were given to both the DBSS and the Student Association positions on GPA are given below.

More details of both the DBSS and Student Association positions on GPA are given below.

Dr Tucker also believes the system would mean Chisholm's reputation would be "totally destroyed": those vying for places in DSBS courses would be able to see the system is not clogged by consistent poor performers.

"In most of our courses, we turn down about four students for every one student we take," he points out.

The size of the School and the number of courses it offers is another reason DSBS is anxious to introduce GPA.

Dr Tucker argues that with the highest number of students per member of staff, and the largest number of students in addition to the vast numbers of students attending coffee courses on a sessional basis, a computer assisted method of evaluating student progress is necessary.

He emphasises that the School plan to introduce GPA next year is only one of several actions being taken aimed at raising academic standards.

In an address to the November meeting of the Institute Council Dr Ken Tucker told Council:

- Was the only School which regularly and systematically undertook evaluation of teaching and subjects by students.
- Had developed, over the last two years a comprehensive set of guidelines for academic program management.
- Had established prizes and awards for all of its programs to encourage improved student performance and the achievement of excellence.
- "The School wants this, it has experience in using it, it has done its homework, and it is anxious to implement fully a program that will give double insurance to students," Dr Tucker told Council.

Dr Tucker urged Council to endorse the School's proposal, warning that rejection of the system would mean Chisholm's reputation would sooner or later be questioned.

Council voted to refer the matter to the Academic Board for detailed examination.

... and why students don't...

See you in '86

This is the last issue of the Chisholm Gazette for 1985.

Publication will resume early in 1986. Otherwise it's business as usual for the Public Relations Office. For any assistance with publicity or public relations contact Mr P. Heald, the Public Relations Office, on ext. 2099, or call in at the office, 330, Caulfield.

For any assistance with publicity or public relations contact Mr. R. Heald, the Public Relations Office, on ext. 2099, or call in at the office, 330, Caulfield.

The Public Relations Office team wishes a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

The Robotics Centre held the third of its robot familiarisation seminars for industry personnel at the Caulfield campus last week.

The seminars have proven so successful the Centre has decided to repeat them on a four monthly basis.

Pictured: Mr Michael Lam, representing LM Ericsson P/L, puts the Rhino Arm robot through its paces during the hands-on robot programming workshop on 28 November.
From Page 1

Students fight GPA proposal

The Student Association re-affirmed its total opposition to the Institute's draft School proposal to introduce a Grade Point Average system next year, at a meeting of the Institute Council.

In a paper prepared by Student Association representative on Council, Mr. Michael Lyons, and the Association Education Research Officer, Ms Kristine Papadopoulos, the papers said they were opposing Council as a last resort.

They said the "extraordinary nature of this issue, and our failure to find a solution that would satisfy so many different parties" had forced the Association to request that Council consider the matter at a meeting which would include all the wide-areas of the Grade Point Average system.

A major concern of the Association was that the system would result in more students failing in order to create an impression of more "improved academic standards."

"There is no significant evidence that GPA systems can be "improved significantly by this system," the papers said.

"The introduction of the GPA system may be the "on the long funding squeeze to which tertiary education, and particularly the Education sector, has been subjected.

As the Chairman of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Council, Mr. Brian Hudson, pointed out during the year, Advanced Education had lost 11 percent of its funding in real terms during the past decade while being subjected to enormous pressure from students demanding places.

But the Association continued this year there was some indication that the State Government recognised the urgency of the need to make education more "affordable," and providing supplementary funding for 130 students in Chisholm campus.

Although it would be pie-in-the-sky, the Association return to the halcyon levels of the mid-1970s, there are indications that the hard work has bottomed out.

At the same time, the year also saw the resignation of the Director, Mr. Leese, which became effective on 30 December, after nearly three years of service to Chisholm during which he "did much through a period of growth and contraction.

Council already has been the onerous task of locating a successor. It is to be hoped the appointment will not be unduly delayed and will be made before the year is far too late.

Any corporate body of the size and complexity of Chisholm must experience some difficulty when it is left without a Head. That system would be kept on course and was able to continue to develop in desired direction. The system was designed to deal with its problems and uncertainties, and the paper concluded that if the GPA system was unsuccessful, it would be a priority in the coming year.

Without Mr. Gorse there would be no weekend access for essential services and many staff and students would be seriously inconvenienced, Mr. Lyons said.

Mr. Gorse began work at Caulfield as a contract cleaner in 1985 and became "Caretaker" in the 1986 issue of the 'Chisholm Gazette' of wishing all those associated with the "a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The year has been one of considerable achievement for the Institute — achievement all the more remarkable because it was achieved despite the difficulties and uncertainties.

The greatest difficulty, of course, came from the onerous task of locating a single project initiated this year and the Caulfield campus as an integral but Business Technology Appeal. To accommodate the achieved contributor. Mr. Gorse (left) is congratulated by Mr. Maynard on his 27 years service to the Institute.

The system would 'simply be more equitable. 
of regulations. 'Students who pass every
The Student Association re­... that the GPA system to a numeric score meant a introduction of GPA would mean next year, at the November

The Schoofs argument that a was unsatisfactory this was at the Caulfield campus for

Mr. Gerry Maynard, Acting Director recently invited Mr. Jim Gorse, Property Supervisor, to the Institute.

The detailed design of this building will be completed in mid-1988, and in early stages of the planning for the new education directions. In the non-recurrent area, the further criterion of the existing school building could be no priority in the coming year.

With these achievements behind us in 1985, I find myself looking forward to 1986 with considerable optimism and enthusiasm.

As we go into the new year I will be seeking your support in achieving these goals. In the meantime, my best wishes for the festive season.
Scientists win ARGs funds

Chisholm scientists have fared well in their bids for Australian Research Grants Scheme (ARGS) funding for 1986.

Four projects submitted were recently approved with grants totalling nearly $31,000. The successful applicants were:

- Dr Barry Hart and Dr Ron Beckett of the Water Studies Centre for their project, ‘Characterisation and Behaviour of Suspended and Material in Fluvial and Estuarine Systems’ — $3,300.
- Dr Charles Don of the Physics Department, for ongoing research into the ‘Reflection and Propagation of Impulsive Noise’ — $13,583.
- Dr David Hewitt and Mr Kevin Chynoweth of the Polymer Research Centre, for research into ‘Thermal and Photochemical Reactions of PVC Model Compounds’ — $3,500.
- Dr Charles Osborne and Dr Imants Svalbe of the Physics Department’s Computer Imaging Group, for their project, ‘Fretile Dimensionality as a Measure of Texture’ — $6600.

More detail on three of these projects is given on this page.

Making plastics, particularly PVC, more durable is the broad aim of research being carried out by the Polymer Research Centre.

Centre Director, Dr David Hewitt and Chemistry Lecturer, Mr Kevin Chynoweth, have received a $2000 ARGS grant in support of that work.

The project is being undertaken in two parts.

The first, 'Free Radical Initiator', focuses on the defects produced in polymers when they are made, and how they develop.

This is studied using a process, of which Hewitt expects will help in the reaction in the very early stages of polymer formation.

Supercritical defects are then detected by careful analysis of the products.

The second project involves examination of the final product plastic-to try to establish how the defects built into their structure affect their stability.

Dr Hewitt and Mr Chynoweth are looking at which particular defects will cause the plastic to fall apart faster, and how they can find out how to eliminate them.

Dr Hewitt says this particular project, 'Thermal and Photochemical Reactions of PVC Model Compounds, has far reaching implications for the PVC industry.

If the product could be made more stable, and made, for example, capable of carrying hot water, the PVC pipe market could double in size as plastic replaced copper.

Dr Hewitt and Mr Chynoweth have been working on the project for about three years, and expect their research to wind up in about 12 months.

Dr Hewitt says they have 'had quite a lot of success' with PVC project to date.

By combining chemical studies with computer modelling they have been able to explain some of the details of PVC degradation.

Unravelling the polymer mystery

Quality — key to industrial competitiveness

Quality is the Australian manufacturer's prime marketing tool today, according to an acknowledged expert on quality control, Dr Brain Jenney.

Dr Jenney, who is the Chairman of the Division of the Engineering and Industrial Technology, believes quality is the 'road to profitability and expansion in the home market in the face of tough competition, and in the international markets',' says Mr Andrew Cramond, tutor, Mr De Cai spent a year with the School studying a non­ commercial credit program in commercial company law, marketing and business communications.

DSBS De Cai, Mr Ken Tucker, says the Acting Director, Mr Garry Maynard, has issued an invitation for a delegation from China Higher Education Bureau to develop closer links, perhaps leading to a DSBS exchange with China.

Pictureed at the recent farewell function are, clockwise, DSBS Secretary, Ms Margaret Hunt, DSBS lecturer, Mr Richard Morgan, Mr Ken Grant, and Mr Declan De Cai, DSBS Administrative Officer, Ms Gabielle Gwyther, lecturer Mr Peter Link, Mr Chen De Cai and Mr Tucker.

ACC. noise research by Chisholm physicist, Dr Charles Don, has attracted a $13,500 ARG grant, his third since the project began over five years ago.

To date he has received about $23,000 all told in ARGs funding for his project, 'Reflection and Propagation of Impulsive Noise'.

Dr Don's interest is in the way sound changes as it moves across a particular medium, the physical laws governing those changes.

The work began several years ago as a result of research by then MAppSc student, now tutor, Mr Andreedramond, who is currently working at Chisholm towards a PH D through Salford University, UK.

Dr Don spent six months at Salford last year on PEP leave, where he joined a team of acoustics researchers contracted by the British Ministry of Defence to investigate the noise level prediction techniques in weapons testing.

The research focused on providing a solution to the problem facing the Ministry of Defence of predicting whether they could test weapons so that the noise last affected the surrounding community.

Dr Don and Mr Cramond are still working into this problem with Salford.

They are currently examining the effects of variables like wind, ground moisture and topography on the propagation of impulses.

The pair have achieved significant success since the project began, and their work seems certain to continue for some time yet.

A key aspect of this work concerns 'shadow zones' caused by wind and temperature changes.

Dr Don says the widely held theory is that no sound should enter a shadow zone. But the researchers have measured small impulses inside the shadow region.

They are currently exploring the possibility of this 'acoustic creeping wave' and sound into these zones by hugging close to the ground.

People factors. would have far reaching implications for the development of technology for measuring the acoustic impedance of different surfaces, such as carpet or dress.

There have been many attempts at finding the satisfactory method of measuring texture, but to date, says Chisholm physiicist, Dr Charles Osborne and Dr Imants Svalbe of the Physics Department’s Computer Imaging Group, for their project, 'Fractal Dimensionality as a Measure of Texture' — $13,500.

The first, 'Fractals and Texture', is the development of a new method of measuring texture.

They plan to take a fresh approach to the problem, using a new development in physics, describing physical processes by fractals, as a means of quantifying texture and producing an objective measure of texture, which can be used to rank textures.

The second seminar, on 13 December, 'Human Factors in Total Quality Control,' will focus on the influence and role of the human factor in quality assurance and detail approaches and methods to ensure optimum inspection efficiency.

Topics covered at this seminar are:

- Quality management.
- Selection and training.
- People factors.
- Human factors.

Dr Jenney says the seminars have been designed for managers, engineers and quality assurance personnel in both large and small manufacturing firms.

His own interest in the field spans more than 20 years. At the University of Birmingham in 1962, he helped launch the first MSC course in Quality and Reliability Engineering in the world.

Dr Jenney is a member of the Council of the Australian Organisation for Quality Control, a fellow of the Institution of Engineers, Australia, and a member of the Victorian Division Committee.

We had hoped to run a full story detailing the research project being undertaken by Dr Harr and Mr Ron Beckett, but were unable to follow the matter up at that time. Instead the story will run in the first issue of 1986.

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- Northcote High School, St. Auditorium, Russell Street
- Essendon High School, School, Whitehorse Road, Box Hill. Hill. 1987: Call for nominations. Scholarships to non-Japanese Closing date: 31 December. Trust Fund grants, 1986/87. The amending legislation Writers for young Australian by the Fellowship of Australian RESEARCH ASSOCIATION: Sir ClOSing date: 10 January, 1986. The benefits provided are a pro-rata pension based on age 60 retirement entitlement with a lump sum. The Pearcey Centre, ANZ personnel comprises 300 personnel from diverse banking and computing backgrounds, so the challenge presented to the Pearcey Centre. ANZ personnel will be able to conduct further research and development. Tailoring the content to suit ANZ requirements, and the Pearcey Centre. ANZ personnel will be able to conduct further research and development. The Pearcey Centre had no competitors for the challenge, says Mr. Burns. The Pearcey Centre for Computing has been contracted specifically tailored to the Banking and Finance requirements, and the Pearcey Centre. ANZ personnel will be able to conduct further research and development. ANZ Training Manager, Mr Kim Stephen, approached the Centre because of its reputation in providing value-for-money computer courses, and its use of expert computer educators from within Chisholm, according to the Pearcey Centre Executive Director, Mr Doug Burns. The course, to be developed between now and March 1986, will be a $1,000 course, which is the Pearcey Centre. ANZ personnel will be able to conduct further research and development within their own organisation.

Building schedule outlined

The Assistant to the Director, Mr Peter Channon, recently met with staff at the Frankston Pearcey Centre to discuss proposed building developments there. He warned of the possibility of taking and other space problems as a result of increased student numbers, and stressed the importance of all the local educational building being available for 1987. Mr Chandon briefed staff on the preliminary design of the building and outlined the program for its construction, due to begin in the March 1986 and completed by March 1987. He also outlined the planning program for the proposed nursing studies building, due to commence in July next year.

Building developments at Frankston are also the focus of a meeting of the Management Committee, Frankston campus, on 26 November. The Committee, chaired by Mr Michael Thompson, comprises Deans or their representatives and the Assistant Registrar – John HICKS – and strategic issues. For further information from the Pearcey Centre. ANZ personnel will be able to conduct further research and development within their own organisation.

A group of 39 David Syme Business School students and three staff are preparing for the third International Studies summer semester program overseas this year.

In Hong Kong, their schedule includes first hand observation of Hong Kong (IBM, Fujitsu, Mitsui, Nortake and the Bursa) in Hong Kong and China business.

Mr Garry Harris of the Marketing Department and Mr Roger Newland of the Department of Banking and Finance will accompany Dr Onoto and the group of students on the trip.

The group will spend two weeks in Japan and one week in Hong Kong (IBM, Fujitsu, Mitsui, Nortake and the Bursa) in Hong Kong and China business.

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