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Black Studies Program Cleared for University

By ROGER GRIBBLE
(Of The State Journal Staff)

Creation of a Black Studies Department at the University of Wisconsin's Madison campus won final approval of the Coordinating Council for Higher Education (CCHE) here Thursday.

No additional approval of the department is needed for it to become operational this fall. Funding would come from money already available in other UW department budgets.

Only one dissenting vote was cast. Joseph Noll, Kenosha, claimed that the proposal "is a 'now' thing trying to cool things off.

"APPROVAL OF a program of this sort is kind of political and takes the heat off for a while, but in the long run won't it be harmful for society as a whole?" he asked.

Noll, State Vocational Board president, contended that "black students already know about black culture. This is sort

of like me studying about fat industrialists." (Noll, a man of considerable girth, is an industrialist.)

Noll argued the creation of such a major might mean that "this could be a place for black students to sort of hide out for a four-year uncomfortable period.

"THIS COULD easily become a center for people who don't like the way things are run," he said. "They (black students) have some problems and rancor and what we'd be doing is providing a central place for them."

Roy Dingman, Milwaukee, State Vocational Board vice-president, disagreed with Noll. Experience with a similar program at UW-Milwaukee shows the program had a majority of white students, he said.

UW Regent President Dr. James Nellen, Green Bay, conceded he, too, had reservations about the proposal when it first was presented to the regents "but my doubts were short-lived."

MADISON Letters and Science Dean Stephen Kleene said that "if I believed this program would be one that is segregationist and would put the blacks off to think about their own history, I would be opposed to it, too."

Most of the students taking courses within the department

wouldn't major in black studies, he said, and there probably would be many white students taking courses.

Nellen asked Kleene if speakers could be found within the department who would be willing and qualified to refute views presented on campus by a speaker such as Eldridge Cleaver.

Kleene said in response to a reporter's question later that two members of the department already have been hired, "Two offers are out on which I'm very optimistic, and two candidates are close to a point where I can make offers." Plans call for a six-member department.

In other action, the CCHE took final action which resulted in placing all areas of the state into 18 area vocational school districts.

ENROLMENT planning maximums for each of the state's higher education systems are approved on a full-time equivalent student basis.

A Madison enrolment of 40,000 full-time equivalent students is a part of the projections.

Total UW enrolment at four-year campuses would be 77,800 students and enrolment at the nine State Universities would be 85,200 under the approved maximums. Another 6,000 students would be enrolled on two-year campuses of both systems.