April 19, 2008

Class: Essay Writing

Prof: Gord Sellar

By: SUN Fangyuan

200429142

Should roll-call be cancelled?

The university originally should be a place to raise health, the freedom, the noble mind. However, in the present China, there are still too many system factors, the environmental factors, the artificial factors, make the university more like a middle school, or even an elementary school. Many lecturers make sure that there are enough students attending class through the roll-call. This behavior not only seriously reduces student's study enthusiasm, but worsens student-teacher relations. Moreover it caused the dissemination of knowledge passively. It would be better if roll-call was cancelled in the university.

Please look at a real example that occurred in the university campus few months ago. In the evening of January 4, 2008, Yang Fan a Chinese Politics and law University's Professor, was teaching. He was precious angry for the students who had handed over the work and left. Some students said in the canghaiyunfan BBS: professor Yang was worried that some students who were in the class to give short messages to the absent students and the ones return to the classroom, so he shut the door. After a

moment, a student who was outside kicked the door. He opened the door angrily and gave scold to the student. It is said that the words are “the bastard”, “the domestic animal”, “the bastard”, “mouse” and so on. After he shut the door once more, he ordered two students to guard there and gave some words to the present students. In the process, a female student stood and wanted to leave, professor Yang interrogated this female student, and let this female student roll out. At this time a physical conflict ensued. The professor said that the female student had insulted him when kicking. So the professor locked the female student in the rest room, and called 110. After a moment， 110 carried off the female student.

This kind of matter is very common in Chinese campus. If only carries on the simple education and criticism, the real problem cannot be fundamentally solved. Educational system's transformation is possibly the most basic solution. Such as let students choose classes freely not constrainedly. The student chose classes which interested them would study earnestly and self-consciously, also would not skip classes. If so, there will be no need to mention by name on class.

Some people maybe will disagree on this point. In their

opinion, roll-call is one kind of behavior that maintains teacher’s dignity as well as the normal teaching order. If there is no roll-call some students maybe will only play, and not study at all. The classroom order has the possibility to fall into the confusion and teacher's teaching possibly has no way to continue. So the school needs to have this system to supervise the student to study.

But if there is no roll-call the teacher and student's conflict in the above event would not be happen. The students had tried their best to accomplish the teacher's requests. In their opinion if there was nothing else they could leave and spend their time freely. But the teacher wanted to save his face and dignity through the roll-call.

In a sense, skipping classes is the symbol of freedom, because the student should have the rights to choose class and the teacher those they like. If the curriculum neither attract them, nor have any advantage to them, skipping classes is undisputable. The university student is an adult not the elementary student, the elementary student possible needs certain significance control, but the university student mainly depends upon the determination. The university is a place for raising free men, not for training lackeys and slaves. In the

foundation of completing all study tasks, each student has the freedom to arrange his own time, so long as they have not hindered others. The classroom is not a jail; and in a church, listeners are able to pass in and out freely. Why can't we do this in a classroom? Since the course and report may momentarily walk out, why can't the classroom?

Attendee’s numbers obviously will sometimes affect the teacher’s mood to attend class, but, even if the attending students are few, a worshipful teacher should not use the way of roll-call to force the students to attend a lecture. Teachers’ this behavior is not only self-respect, but also a respect of students’ freedom of choosing.

Professor Xiao Han once said, “I will not mention by name, I will not be able to throw this face. If I haven’t taught my class well, but request the students to attend class, isn’t dual unkind? If nobody listens to my class, I am no doubt sad, but if my class must use coercive instrument to ask people to listen, then I even sadder. I do not respect you that also mean I have no self-respect - - to skip classes is your freedom, if the roll-call is to guarantee the attending number, I do not have the roll-call authority, because I do not have the rights to request somebody attends a lecture threatening.”

Does not mention by name is the performance which between teachers and students respect mutually. In all my courses, Professor Ge's Public Relations class gave me the deepest impression. During his class, students could pass in and out freely, and he never mentioned by name. However, the strange thing is that during an entire semester of an 18 week-long course, very few students left ahead of time in the class relaxation time, but in the process nobody left. Why things can like this? It is because our respect is mutual, since the professor permitted us to come in and go out freely, we students respected him not to pass in and out at will, for fear that if would will affect our professor’s mood as well as other classmates. The respect was mutual.

Between compelled study or study based on one’s own initiative, the effect is completely dissimilar. “Bodily exercise, when compulsory, does no harm to the body, but knowledge which is acquired under compulsion obtains no hold on the mind” (By Plato). No roll-call, no force, just let the student study freely. As a person's mind only occupies in the highly free condition, the thought will be keen, active, and then has the possibility to creative. Though that the knowledge can disseminate and develop well.

Roll-call should be cancelled in the university in order to respect the teacher, the student and the knowledge. The teacher should spend much spirit to make their teaching interesting and living, and should think much for his students. A formal teaching arrangement and an experienced teacher that is worth being respected is the student’s true wish. On the other hand, it is our duty to go to class, as we are university students. As well it is the student's essential duty to respect the teacher’s achievement. When a teacher is giving a class, we should remember that never to go out from the front door, no reasons. If we really have something to solve, we can go out from the back door, being careful not to disturb other students. That is an action to show respect to others. “If you respect the human’s freedom, the human will repay you the responsibility.” Wish there will be some changes on Chinese college education system. And hope that the Yang Fan event will no longer perform.