

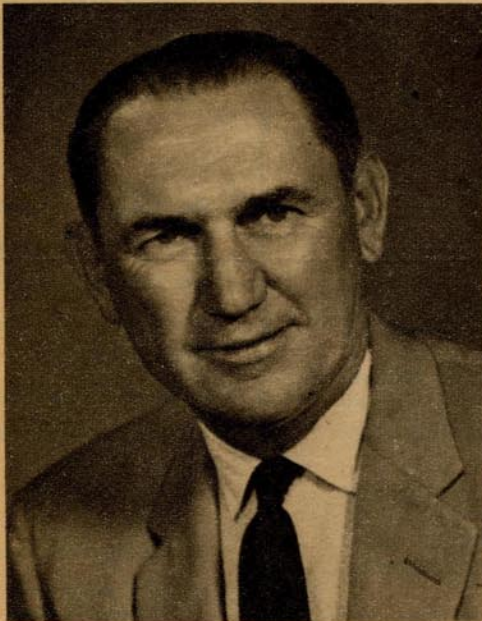
# Student Government Program

By DEAN SMITH

## Is Experiment In Democracy

**A**LMOST HIDDEN under a mountain of headlines about a championship football team, record enrollments, and research advancements, an exciting story of an experiment in student government is unfolding at Arizona State.

Students have been electing officers and councils at American universities for at least 200 years. But few, if any, institutions have put so much responsibility in the hands of students. More-



*Dr. Weldon P. Shofstall, Arizona State dean of students, who has been the prime mover in establishing the AS student government.*

over, few can boast that their students have used responsibility so wisely.

To those who scoff at student government as a popularity contest to select students who will do what few minor chores a patronizing faculty will allow, these facts about Arizona State's Associated Students will come as a shock:

**THIS YEAR** Arizona State's student government will have spent \$150,000 in activity fees—all of it without control from faculty or administration.

This spring the students are preparing to set up a traffic court to deal with violations previously handled by the City of Tempe.

Student disciplinary boards last year processed more than 100 cases and assessed their own penalties, none of which was overruled by the administration.

A Student Orientation and Guidance Committee is empowered to go far beyond the usual realm of student activity and make suggestions to the deans about what they want in curriculum teaching procedures, disqualification, and classroom ethics.

There's more, too.

**STUDENTS DECIDE** how much they will pay for intercollegiate athletics, cultural activities, religious programs, Homecoming, elections, and dozens of other items. They decide what group can hold a talent show or a chrysanthemum sale on what weekend, in order to avoid costly duplications. They publish a semi-weekly newspaper and a year-

book. They manage their own social program.

Each year they come closer to a long-cherished goal—that of full participation with the faculty and administration in the building of a better institution of higher learning.

The man most responsible for this vital program is Dr. Weldon P. Shofstall, dean of students at Arizona State since 1950. Dean Shofstall is a man driven by a somewhat radical belief: That college students are people, mature enough to manage their own affairs when properly trained and organized. That belief has led him into occasional battles with those in the administration who hold the more traditional view that students should be closely controlled when they venture into any area of real importance.

**HOW DOES ARIZONA** State avoid the pitfalls of unwise and impetuous decisions by relatively inexperienced student officials? The checks and balances of the Associated Students governmental setup is one guarantee, and the use of tested governmental procedures is another.

This government has an executive branch, composed of an elected president, two vice-presidents, and other members of a 10-student executive council; its legislative branch is the student Senate, elected from many strata of the student body; and a judicial branch, the Supreme Court and disciplinary boards.

The annual budget and all other legislation must run the gamut of multiple readings, committee study, discussion in