

Curfews at dormitories, bans on demonstrations, skyrocketing tuition and gender inequalities in school regulations are among the violations of student rights’ that are still common at schools, a group of students said yesterday after investigating 65 universities across the country.

“Apparently, many schools are still under martial law, since more than 60 percent of the universities in the country still have school rules restricting students’ rights to hold assemblies and demonstrations,” Cheng Yi-chan (鄭宜乾), a student at Chang Gung University’s Computer Science and Information Engineering Department and a member of the Student Rights Team, told a forum yesterday.

Cheng said his own school penalizes students with a demerit for involvement in “agitation for the student movement,” while Tatung University threatens to expel students for starting student movements or participating in petitions.

As many as 37 public and private universities across the country have some form of penalty for students organizing or taking part in demonstrations, he said.

National Taiwan University’s (NTU) medical student Chen Tsung-yen (陳宗彥) added he was shocked to find that 60 percent of schools demand to see articles before they can be published in student newspapers or magazines, while 95 percent of the schools require approval from the school before a student organization can be established.

“As a result, most gay organizations or dissident organizations often have to go underground,” he said, adding that “around 55 percent of schools impose curfew at dorms, among which, 46 percent have the dorm administrators do a roll call at night.”

As many as 46 percent of the schools even shut off all the lights or cut the Internet connection after curfew, Chen said.

Another member of the group, Tung Hung-chih (鄧鴻錫), an education major at National Kaohsiung Normal University, said that among schools that have roll call every night at dormitories, “40 percent of them only have roll call at female dorms.”

In addition to restrictions at dormitories or on student activities, the group is also concerned about skyrocketing tuition fees.

“You would think that private schools would raise their tuition more, because public schools receive more subsidies from the government, but it’s not the case,” Cheng said. “NTU and National Chengkung University (NCKU) have had the highest tuition hikes over the past 15 years — from NT\$13,930 to NT\$25,230, or an 81 percent rise.”

Following NTU and NCKU, National Sun Yat-sen University and National Chiaotung

## **‘Martial law’ still rules campus**

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University followed with 78 percent tuition hikes over the past 15 years, while tuition at other public schools rose an average of 50 percent.

“But when we look at the tuition hikes at private schools, it’s only around 10 to 30 percent,” Cheng said, adding that the consumer price index increased less than 20 percent over the past 15 years.

Several professors also joined the forum to show their support.

“We pay too much attention to curriculum design and pumping up school rankings, but we often forget that students should be the main focus on campus,” said Fan Yun (范雲), an assistant professor at NTU’s Department of Sociology.

“Martial law was lifted more than 20 years ago, and it’s quite sad that it still exists on campus,” she said.

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