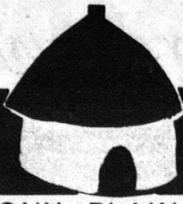


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Rankin and Council try course guide once more

by Durk Boivin

What has a cover, keeps tabs on professors and is paid for by Students' Council? It is a course guide and it is the latest thing on campus not to get off the ground. Lack of money is a factor. "The last time we published a course guide was 7 years ago, and at that time there was an uproar because the SU lost a lot of money," says vp Academic, Darrell Rankin.

The course guide was subsidized by the SU. Since the fiasco in '73 there has been reluctance on the part of the SU to undertake another.

Says Rankin, it requires a tremendous amount of time and when the cost factor enters, it complicates matters for the SU. The reason it was not produced last year was largely due to the cost.

"Basically", says Rankin, "a course guide revolves around the setting up on an instrument with which students can evaluate courses and their instructors. The cumulative results would then be published in the guide. Out of 2500 courses we would try to evaluate the ones which are most popular."

This requires employees, volunteers and, of course, money. "It's much more than a one man job" says Rankin. "First of all, it requires three part-time employees that may work well into the summer. These include an editor, a production manager, and a personnel manager. These

three would be responsible for all facets of production pertaining to the guide.

Another problem hindering the production of course guides is the lack of experienced personnel. "Because we have not had a course guide for 7 years we are short of people that have previous experience in that area" says Rankin.

To alleviate this problem Rankin says he will establish a committee through the Students' Council to bring students together to plan a course guide.

By January this committee will have drafted a series of recommendations, to be followed shortly thereafter by a full plan. Says Rankin, "the lack of experience makes it unfeasible to expect one in the first term."

The committee will also look into possible cost remedies. "We need advertising" says Rankin, "it can absorb a lot of the cost. There could also be a minimal fee, however, a fee usually affects a sharp decline in demand."

If the problems of developing the course guide can be overcome however; Rankin clearly indicates that it would be of substantial benefit to students and the university in general. "I went to the University of Calgary and talked with the course guide people there and received a huge amount of information" says Darrel.

"They have published so many course guides and received

such a great input that it has become an important component when evaluating an instructor's success. It becomes a factor indicating promotion of salary and tenure. It is also a great help to anyone doing research in teaching effectiveness because of the close monitoring of the instructors" says Rankin.

Of course, the guide would also benefit students, giving them an idea of what to expect before entering a class.

The guide will use individual students' comments "if they are significant, similar and statistically valid" says Rankin.

The implementation of the guide hinges on the SU Council meeting on October 21. The course guide is subsidized by student council, so its existence relies on their decision. Says Rankin, "whether it will be published this year is up to Council."

Power corrupts

The 3/4 page item "Big Brother is watching!" which appeared on page 7 of the October 15 Gateway was not identified as the Student Code. It was passed by General Faculties Council but was not valid until it was printed in the Gateway.

We regret any confusion this omission may have caused.



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