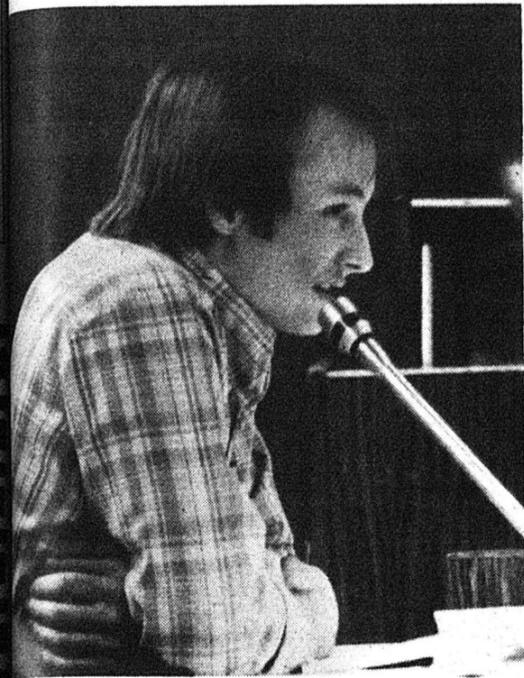


Olmstead: the new "Dean" of students

Dean Olmstead is the new president of the Students' Union. He and his executive took office officially on April 1.



by Alison Thomson

Gateway: Why did you decide to run for president?

Olmstead: When we first decided to put a slate together, the other people who were rumored to be running were either totally inexperienced or on a joke slate. A group of us were concerned about the direction the Students' Union was taking and we decided to run. Some changes were made in the slates that had been put together after we had decided but we still felt we would do a good job.

Gateway: What were the greatest differences between you and the other people running? The pamphlets were very similar in positions taken on issues.

Olmstead: It was a personality race to a certain extent. I think the main difference was the manner of approaching problems — the extent to which you want to push yourself on the university and the government. When you shake your fist and say they're full of crap, they'll be defensive. A better approach is to agree with what you can, then point out the disagreements. I don't mean you should compromise, but you should listen to what they have to say — their side of the story.

Gateway: What do you hope to accomplish this year?

Olmstead: In the area of internal affairs, I'm very keen on seeing a courtyard lounge set up. I'd like to get some estimates and see if it's feasible. Academically, I'd like to work with the departmental clubs in the science faculty and help them to organize. This is also an approach that can work in Arts. They're both such diverse faculties that it's difficult to organize on a faculty level.

Politically, we're not going to stand by and let the government continue inadequate funding. The university hadn't taken a strong enough stand. I'm not so

optimistic as to think we'll change everything, but I'm confident that we can work with the government to show them that our requests are reasonable.

Gateway: Have you arranged a meeting with Mr. Horsman (the new minister of advanced education) for the new executive?

Olmstead: There's no date set yet. I've sent him a letter but I think we'll meet after both he and I have settled into our jobs.

Gateway: What are your thoughts on the Grantham Commission Report?

Olmstead: I haven't studied it in depth. I think a lot of the recommendations are good — for example, the daycare recommendations. I wouldn't want to ignore those. I'm uneasy about the ideas about tuition fees. I believe that ideally there shouldn't be any fees. The ability to attend university shouldn't be based on ability to pay but on intelligence and willingness to work. However, you have to be pragmatic. You'd be unpopular with the public if you demanded no tuition fees. I'd be happy to see no increases.

Gateway: Since it seems likely that there will be increases next year, if not this year, what tactics would you use to oppose them?

Olmstead: A march, if brought off properly, if effective. My priority is with talking with the government, presenting briefs, and bringing public pressure to bear.

Gateway: In your view, what external political issues should Students' Council take a stand on?

Olmstead: Any issue that affects students can be debated. I don't believe we should take a stand unless it's clear what students think. It wasn't clear with the abortion issue — probably half of campus feels strongly one way and half the other. We shouldn't be taking stands on those sorts of things. In international issues we can debate and provide forums. I'm opposed to boycotting things.

Gateway: Will you introduce a motion to stop the boycott of Rothmans products at S.U. outlets?

Olmstead: I don't know — I have no plans about that yet.

Gateway: What role should the U of A be taking on FAS (Federation of Alberta Students)?

Olmstead: It should be a major role, obviously. We have nearly half the membership of FAS and we haven't got nearly enough influence. Although I don't want to overwhelm the colleges, I think it's obvious that we should be listened to a lot more than some college with three or four hundred students. We should definitely have someone on the executive.

Gateway: In your opposition of U of A membership in the National Union of Students you said we should work to change the organization until it is something we are comfortable joining. How should we do that?

Olmstead: We should go to the conferences and see where NUS is at. We should come up with concrete ideas for change and present them. We can take it from there.

Gateway: What were your personal objections to joining NUS?

Olmstead: I think my concerns were the same as the

reasons why it was defeated. There were just too many questions unanswered. They kept talking about how the handbook needed updating as an answer to objections to its content. There were also discrepancies in the membership which the budget reflected and that which the organization was claiming. I think there are serious questions about what the organization is doing.

Gateway: What do you think of the NUS brief on education to the federal government?

Olmstead: I haven't read it yet.

Gateway: What role should students take at the Board of Governors where we're so outnumbered by government appointees?

Olmstead: Our job is to show them that their actions affect students. They come to meetings at University Hall and that's as close as they get to seeing a student. They approach problems from a viewpoint that's quite different to that of students. It's like businessmen making decisions for peasants.

Gateway: What about following Mr. Schlosser's suggestion and joining the Conservative party in order to have some influence?

Olmstead: If we used that kind of reasoning we would have joined NUS. It would have no effect. Look at all the Ministers who haven't returned to this government. I think it was because they were having no influence on Lougheed... We'd have no more say from inside the party than we have from outside it.

Gateway: Do you anticipate any problems working with Kyle Peterson (from the Fenna slate)?

Olmstead: No, none at all, or at least no more than any of us will have working with each other. We've already had discussions and we've all agreed and disagreed — it's a nicely balanced executive.

Gateway: How would you evaluate the performance of your predecessors?

Olmstead: They've accomplished a lot. They came in at a time of turmoil and are leaving things very much more settled than they were. We've gone forward in many areas.

The biggest drawback has been the bickering due to ideological differences. They could have accomplished more, but the disagreements hampered them.

Gateway: How will your leadership differ from Cheryl Hume's?

Olmstead: I'll be lower key. Cheryl got excited and threw her opposition on the defensive. I'm not going to shake my fist at people.

Gateway: What will your first activities be?

Olmstead: The operating budget will be the first concern. We've got to scream if we don't get the full increase. It scares me that we didn't get the money before the election. The government can afford to be arrogant now. The government is ridiculous when it comes to priorities.

Gateway: Are you going to be an engineer or will you follow Mr. Ekelund into Arts?

Olmstead: Well, I haven't finished my degree yet — I'll probably take a course a term and maybe summer school — but definitely in engineering.

Most between 18-24, lots of women

Registrar's office reveals typical U of A student

A "typical student" at the University of Alberta is someone between the ages of 18 and 24 who is a native of the Edmonton area enrolled full-time in a faculty offering undergraduate degree programs. Also, the chances are slightly better than half that the student is a woman.

This student is an aggregation of the most common characteristics of the 29,294 students who attended the university this past year, as recorded in the 1978/79 Summary of Statistics recently released by the Office of the Registrar.

The actual percentages of the total enrolment so neatly lumped to arrive at this "typical student" are: 45.12 per cent between 18 and 24, 63.65 per cent full-time winter session, 87.98 per cent undergraduates, and 35.92 per cent from the Edmonton area. Female students make up 52.81 per cent of the total student population.

One fact taken from the summary is that the total enrolment decreased last year by 4.46 per cent which, according to statistician Donna Herman, is common to many Canadian universities in the last couple of years. The decline from 30,857 in 1977/78 to 29,478 in 1978/79 occurred mainly in undergraduate programs and was only partially balanced by an increase in the graduate student enrolment.

The largest number of registrations in a single faculty occurred in the Faculty of Education, with 7,965 attending some phase of part-time, full-time, intra- or extra-mural, and evening credit programs, in spring, summer and winter sessions.

The next largest was the Faculty of Arts, with 4,525 attending, followed by the Faculty of Science at 3,752. Graduate students ranked fourth in terms of groups of registrants, at 3,539,

with the Faculty of Engineering fifth at 1,858.

Analysis of the male/female ratios of students also provides some interesting observations. Most female students who attended were between the ages of 18 and 21 and accounted for 51.96 per cent of the students in that age group. After the age of 21, their numbers fell sharply to 38.65 per cent at age 22, and 36.5 per cent at age 23, to a low of 30.64 per cent at age 29.

Full-time winter session students came from a variety of backgrounds in urban and rural Alberta, from centres in all other provinces, and from 92 countries. Of the total of 14,419 students from Alberta cities and towns, 10,524 were from Edmonton, 1,136 were from Calgary, and 2,759 were from towns, between Peace River and Cardston. Almost 2,000 students came from rural Alberta.

In out-of-province enrolment figures, Ontario led with 368 out of a total of 1,579. During winter session, 601 students from Hong Kong topped the visiting international student enrolment while the United States ranked second with 287. The remainder of the world total is made up by students who hail from, in alphabetical order, Australia to Zambia.

In 1978, the University of Alberta awarded a combined total of 4,475 undergraduate degrees in all faculties. A total of 646 graduate degrees were granted. Since its opening in 1908, the university has granted 73,771 undergraduate and 10,285 graduate degrees in all faculties.

The statistical summary is prepared for use by the faculties and departments of the university in planning courses and administrative needs, and for the use of the Alberta department of education.