

Opinion

There but for my computer card(s), go I

By MAXINE KOPEL

The old cliché that "truth is stranger than fiction" seems to sum up the situation for new students at York.

One recognizes that problems arise when a large institution has to deal with thousands of applicants. Being merely human myself, I realize that mistakes are made and sometimes unavoidable, to a certain extent, that is.

A great sigh of relief is usually released when an applicant reads his - her letter of acceptance. This sigh can easily change to a groan of disillusionment when the student is later told to ignore the letter because it was merely sent by mistake.

I received a not so patiently awaited notice of admittance much earlier than expected. I called York to verify the letter; and was told I had received an error, and errors, of course, are to be ignored.

The week after my "letter of acceptance" arrived I received a very courteous letter thanking me for my interest in York, and

because I supposedly had no application on file, I was sent an application. In other words, according to the York files, I had been accepted to the university without having applied.

Again, I called the admissions office, and they agreed with me that there was indeed some mistake. These events did not do much for my morale, not to mention my phone bill.

As in so many tales, mine ended happily with an actual, unmistakable letter of acceptance, almost ended happily, that is.

I was given my choice of residence when I registered in mid-summer. Orientation information from this college was forwarded to me, but no actual room number was mentioned. Meanwhile, another college sent me a "roommate questionnaire to fill out, and thanks to my extraordinary intuition, I decided to complete it. As it turned out, the original college did not give me a room, let alone acknowledge my existence. The other college, fortunately, reserved a room,

thereby solving the trivial matter of where I would live for the year.

My tales goes on and on. My I.D. card had me registered in the wrong college, as well as having my birthdate listed as 88-88-88. It took me four trips to three different offices to have my college listing corrected; my birthdate, however is still wrong.

SPACE GRANTED

Two letters have been sent to my home (which, as luck would have it, is outside Canada) indicating that I am not on the computer registration for two of my classes, although space has been generously granted to me.

In addition to my preparations for York, I had to obtain a student visa.

There are other minor matters that have to be cleared up. Naturally, my never-ending curiosity is mounting to discover what other surprises lie in store for me.

During my trials and tribulations of admittance, I have luckily encountered two or three ad-

ministrative members, who, without question, have saved me from fates worse than nervous breakdowns and enormous phonebills. Their help got me to York, and even into courses that were previously closed off to me.

I am not the only victim in this state of mass confusion. One student living, 2000 miles from Toronto received a similar letter of acceptance and sent a requested \$50 deposit. It was returned to her, with a letter explaining that it, too, was an unfortunate mistake.

An Alberta student called twice to find out if she was accepted to the university after having received a letter informing her that she was accepted into residence. During the second call she was told it was too late to be accepted. In her morning's mail, however, was her letter of acceptance. She received her registration schedule two days before leaving for school.

A transfer student was given fifteen credits when he came to York. This, in a sense, allowed him to transfer, pick up his sheepskin,

and leave. When he pointed this out to the admissions office, they agreed, and changed his status, giving him no credit at all.

It gets rather frustrating when your file is in one office and you are in another. It is particularly upsetting when the personnel in charge decide to wait until you are at school with a carload of paraphernalia to tell you that you cannot obtain your room keys until your entire residence fees are paid for.

A tremendous burden would be lifted from many students if they could witness a desperately needed improvement within the administrative organization. The offices must be aware of the mistakes; one can usually tell a crucial situation exists when problems continue to rise.

Students are paying to attend York; this additional bureaucratic red-tape is definitely unwarranted.

Awards

At this time in the school year many students have applied and have received, or shortly will be receiving, their student awards through the Ontario Student Assistance Programme and or the Canadian Student Loan Programme. Within the last few years there has been a louder expression of inequities in the student financing situation, and as a result, the CYSF has appointed an ombudsperson to examine this critical area of student life.

My name is Michael Kates, and I will be acting as ombudsperson for student awards. If you as a student have applied for a student award and are not happy with these programmes, and feel that you are not getting satisfaction with the York University office of Student Awards, you are encouraged to come to me at the CYSF office in Central Square.

I will be available there on Mondays from four to five p.m. and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

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