

Wanted: New rationale for gen. ed.

By **MICHAEL MOURITSEN**
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(Second of two articles)

The Council of the Faculty of Arts recently approved a number of extensive reforms of its academic regulations. The traditional year-of-study has been replaced with a "course system", which will allow arts students to take between one and six courses during the fall/winter term. Summer courses now will count for degree credit, and students will have the option of delaying the compulsory natural science course and the college tutorial until the second year.

The council's committee on academic policy and planning (CAPP), which has been working on the revision of academic legislation since last spring, is to be congratulated for its fine job. Hopefully, the university senate will approve the legislation without amendment.

I would, however, take issue with the committee's claim that it approached the review of all existing legislation "from first principles". The new amendments to the first year general education programme exhibit fuzzy thinking and deserve further study.

The general education requirements consist of one course in each of the divisions of humanities, natural science and social science, plus a college tutorial. Under the new regulations, the social science and humanities courses must be completed within a

student's first four courses, and the natural science and college tutorial within the first seven courses.

Under the year-of-study system, a student was required to take these four courses together in the first year, plus a fifth course chosen from another divisional course, a language, modes of reasoning, mathematics or computer science.

The first-year programme traditionally has been defended as an interdisciplinary, integrated, unified whole. A 1968 report explained that "The fundamental purpose of a general education programme for arts students is to provide them with an integrated and engaging exposure to a host of important questions relating to man, his ideas and institutions, and his physical environment."

As recently as 1972, one professor wrote that "The (first year) programme is not intended as a cumulative series of interdisciplinary courses. On the contrary, its philosophical principle derives from the programme regarded as a whole".

Also writing in 1972, John Yolton, then chairman of the philosophy department, took issue with this view, observing that although "we can make a case for the unity of the three divisional courses (they do constitute a package of material with interconnections and even overlaps)... I do not think we can justify under one rationale the total first year requirement."

Dr. Yolton was arguing, in this case, for in-

clusion of departmental courses in the first year programme, since mathematics, computer science and languages were already allowed. First year students were permitted to take a departmental course as their fifth option for the first time this year.

In the same memorandum, Dr. Yolton also suggested the possibility of an optional college tutorial. He wrote: "What we have not done is to present a case for saying that the college elective fits into and belongs to the first year programme, nor have we shown how it supplements or relates to the divisional concept" of social science, natural science and humanities.

What CAPP has not done is to justify the inclusion of the college tutorial in the new general education prescription. The committee has not shown how, as it puts it, "the general education programme is supplemented by the college tutorial, where students have a unique opportunity for intensive discussion of a topic in a smaller context and less formal setting."

What is so unique about the college tutorial? Most tutorials are small. "Less formal" might have been an accurate description when the tutorial was ungraded (i.e., before this year), but now only refers to the fact that some tutorials are conducted in an instructor's home. "Intensive discussion" of a very specific and in many cases esoteric topic hardly qualifies as "general" education. The CAPP report states that "The com-

mittee is of the opinion that the courses in the divisions of humanities, social science and natural science constitute the core of the philosophy of the general education programme... "But that core was intended as an "integrated whole", to be taken at the same time. If natural science can be delayed until the second year, on what ground can general education be justified?"

Obviously, there is no general education "programme". Rather than a "package of material with interconnections," we have merely an unconnected series of three interdisciplinary courses.

The committee has "adapted", to use its own words, "the existing core of the first year programme under the year-of-study system to the course system." It has done so, I submit, without fully thinking through the rationale for general education.

No doubt one "first principle" the committee encountered was in the form of three large teaching divisions and the intercollege council.

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Just a note to second, third and fourth year students who are wondering how the new arts regulations will affect them. These details have not yet been worked out, and the office of student programmes asks that you hold off making enquiries about the effect of the new rules until mid-February.

Alberta student politicians want to play big business

EDMONTON (CUP) — The standard student council salary in Canada may become \$5,000 if the current trend continued.

York's Michael Mouritsen makes \$5,000 a year, and now the University of Alberta's student council has approved, in principle, a motion that would give the entire student council executive \$5,000 a year.

The motion was part of the U of A student council's \$150,000 deficit budget passed last month. The motion would mean a 40 per cent increase for the council president and a 50 per cent increase for the council's three vice-presidents. The increases would come into effect April 1, 1974.

The motion was presented by Wayne Madden (council's education rep.) who argued that the executive council members each required: \$115 per month for food, \$80 per month for entertainment and \$30 a month for clothes.

Science representative Jim Talbot said the Alberta office of student affairs allows the average student \$190 a month, including tuition. This comes to \$2,880 per year—\$720 less than the council president's current salary of \$3,600.

Former arts representative Joe Moghie argued that council executive members should not be considered "average students".

"They must be able to meet government officials and businessmen on their own level—not from the level of an

average student," he said: "this means equally well-dressed".

Moghie also said that \$400 per month in the summer was not enough for the executive. Talbot said that the average Alberta student earns only \$1,200 in the summer and saves \$800 or \$900 of it.

Some of the councillors opposed said raising the salaries would not necessarily rise the calibre of the executive.

"It would not cut out the ego-trippers or rich students," said Talbot. "It would not encourage poor students any more than \$3,600 would because compared to what they make at summer jobs, that's enough.... It would only increase the number of opportunists running for office."

YORK CARNIVAL '74

PRESENTED BY YOUR STUDENT COUNCILS

WINTERS

JANUARY 25, 26, 27 - **Cosmicon**

This is the third annual comic art, horror, fantasy, and science fiction convention. The Convention will open at 5:00 p.m. Friday, January 25 and close at 12:00 midnight January 27. The tentative schedule calls for panel discussions, slide shows, and lectures featuring representatives from Marvel Comics, National Periodicals, Quebecomix, National Lamppoon, Mad Magazine and Warren Publications, as well as many artists, writers, and illustrators from all over Canada and the U.S.A.

The centre of activity of the convention is the dealers' room and movie halls. This year over 30 feature films will be shown, run continuously in two different theatres. In the dealers' room hundreds of thousands of old and new comics, horror magazines, books, stills, posters and art work of all kind will be on sale throughout the convention.

Advance weekend passes are \$5.00 each. Passes at the door are \$7.00 for the entire convention or \$3.00 per day. For further information call 667-3888 or 661-9621.

McLAUGHLIN

FRIDAY FEB. 1, 1974

- Ski Trip - Horseshoe Valley
- \$5.00 includes bus and tows - limit 40 people

SUNDAY FEB. 5

- McLaughlin Road Rally
- Entry fee \$3.00
- Trophy - sponsored by Labatts
- Cash prizes

SATURDAY FEB. 9

- Skiddo competition and afternoon outing
- Prizes - Snowmobile suit and helmet
- Trophies and keeper trophies
- sponsored by Molson's Brewery
- ½ mile course around York's lake

— Cash prizes totalling \$100.00

NO ENTRY FEE

Further information and entry forms for all events in McLaughlin Room 102 - 667-3506, Room 109 — 667-3504.

(REGISTER NOW)

FOUNDERS

FEBRUARY 7, 8:00 to 1:00, Founders JCR
Houston Gerard (free admission)

C.Y.S.F.

FEB. 1 Pub and Dance Complex One
FEB. 8 Pub and Dance Stong Dining Hall
(Groups to be announced later)

STONG JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 2

The following is a list of tentatively scheduled events for **Stong College's** Winter Carnival 1974!

The events will take place during the time period:
WED. JAN. 30 - SAT. FEB. 2

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 30, 1974 8:00 p.m. Movie Night
First, the Godfather 10:00 p.m. Vanishing Point

THURSDAY JANUARY 31, 1974 'Michael-Jon' in concert 8:30 p.m.
in Stong Theatre Room 112 Skating Party

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 1, 1974 8:00 p.m. in Room 112, Movies along the following theme 'Spanky and Our Gang', 'The Bowery Boys' 9:30 p.m. Folksingers 'John, Don and Brian' in the Orange Snail Coffee Shop

The Stong College Audio Centre will be open from 6:00 pm-11:00 pm

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 2, 1974 A ski bus to Blue Mountain sponsored by the Social Committee (restricted to members of Stong College only) 8:00 p.m. A dance in Stong Dining Hall featuring 'Blue Window'

BETHUNE

JANUARY 28 - FEBRUARY 1 - **China Week**

Bethune College was housed in its new building in 1972 after students had named it in honour of Dr. Norman Bethune. We are now honoured to have the Embassy of the People's Republic of China associated with its Official Opening. The ceremony will take place on January 28, immediately after the Chinese Spring Festival, to be followed by a week of activities celebrating several aspects of Chinese life.

The first day will include the unveiling of a plaque in honour of Dr. Bethune, the opening of the Lewis Walmsley Collection of Contemporary Chinese Art, a lecture on the life of Norman Bethune by historian Roderick Stewart, who will introduce the N.F.B. film on Bethune.

The programme for the rest of the week, which includes films, lectures, debates, demonstrations and performances, will be printed in full next week.