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Trimester System Considered

A president's committee on academic goals at the University of British Columbia has recommended a trimester system for that campus.

Amongst other things it also recommends reducing classroom lectures, narrowing students' course selection and housing all students on campus.

The committee's report has sparked considerable controversy, most of it contrary to the proposed system.

In early October the Canadian Association of University Teachers published results of a study generally unfavorable to the plan. Alberta's General Faculty Council committee investigating divided year systems has also gone on record as opposing the idea.

The CAUT report says universities would find it cheaper to expand than to add an extra term to the present academic year. The major problem according to most authorities is that of boosting summer enrollment beyond 50 per cent of that of winter months.

The CAUT also feels a trimester system would inhibit a professor's opportunity to conduct research, thus making the teacher a "mere conveyor of dead information."

Others suggest Canadian institutions are able to attract top faculty people now because of research opportunities and feel further curtailment would add to what is now a shortage of qualified instructors.

Such criticisms, however, fail to take the spirit of the UBC report into consideration.

The document specifically describes its efforts as an attempt to define some goals for the university and to seek some way of achieving them.

The emphasis in the UBC recommendations is on efficiency of study plans and quality of graduates, exactly where it should be.

The trimester system would allow students faced with financial diffi-

culties to study in short periods as they are able. It would also allow students with adequate financial means to engage in a "crash" program of academic concentration.

The committee wants to reduce lectures to an effective minimum and use such methods as independent research, study discussion, and problem sessions. Its studies indicate lectures would result in increased intensity of study. A definite pattern or course concentration is also designed to achieve the same end.

There are many who would object to the suggestion that all students be housed in residences. However, few can argue with the intent of such a move—to bring students in closer association with one another for purposes of study and intellectual development. Included as sub-points to the latter suggestion are zoning of university-owned land to include good bookstores, art galleries, coffee shops and discussion areas adjacent to academic buildings.

The UBC report has done a good job in establishing the future needs of students and the obligations of universities in Canada. Many of the proposed means to these ends need not be necessary at Alberta or elsewhere. However, others such as the trimester system and fewer classroom lectures do appear desirable.

Nowhere does the report suggest UBC disregard cost or quality in lectures to adopt the proposed system. In fact it emphasized no timetable be set for implementation. The report only recommends a move be made toward adopting this particular system.

Ryerson Polytechnical Institute has already announced plans to operate on a year-round trimester system.

A number of universities, including Alberta, would do well to give the trimester system detailed consideration, as well as a number of other recommendations in the UBC report.

Where Are The Thinkers?

What's wrong with the students on this campus?

This vague question seems to be on the lips of all students who try to organize the student body in any coordinated action.

It's not easy to get students to "blitz", to "share", or to give blood. It's not even easy to get them to go on a football weekend. It's almost impossible to get them to attend Students' Council meetings.

Attempts to organize students usually end in failure or only partial success. In their frustration organ-

izers label students "apathetic." Perhaps students are. But what do they mean? And how do you fight something so abstractly defined as "apathy"?

It is true most students refuse to express their thoughts about confederation, separatism, the high cost of a university education, SUB-expansion, food services, UAB. Let us hope they do at least think about such matters.

There is very little indication, however, of any original student thinking on this campus.



"INCAPABLE OF SKIPPING LECTURES, DELIVERING 5,000 WORDS PER MINUTE, THESE MODELS CAN GO THREE SEMESTERS A YEAR AND 365 DAYS BESIDES"

Wild Extremists

A Bit Of Truth On Both Sides

By Scott Young

The following is reprinted from the editorial page of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

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One of the solaces of the majority of Canadians who live outside of Quebec is that they know themselves to be moderate people, with malice toward no one, especially French-Canadians.

From this base they feel justified in being hurt and upset that some French Canadians are less than happy with their estate in this country.

"We feel nothing but goodwill," complain these English-speaking Canadians, of many racial backgrounds. "We do not feel superior to anyone and we do not understand it when some French Canadians refer to themselves as second-class citizens and act as if we dislike them or distrust them."

These moderates on our side of the Quebec border therefore gape with disbelief when hearing such statements as Pierre Bourgault's a week ago last Friday in Quebec: "We have all the problems of any slaves." M. Bourgault is leader of the avowedly non-violent separatist organization, *Rassemblement pour l'Independance Nationale*.

A vast majority of French Canadians, for their part, do not really feel like slaves. But they are scarcely aware at all of the reservoir of goodwill that exists for them in other parts of Canada—not weak-willed, permissive goodwill; but an honest desire to see if something can be worked out to resolve differences and keep the country together.

Just as some people in Canada tend to lump all United States Southerners together as racists, and to lump all French Canadians together under such labels as separatists provide, the French Canadians tend to identify the rest of the coun-

try with our own English-speaking extremists. Even some quite intelligent Quebecers see the rest of the country as being dominated by a British figure who resembles the late Colonel Blimp: red-faced, white mustached, writing stiff letters from military institutes and other enclaves of the past.

This view of English-speaking Canadians of course is false. So is any view that all French Canadians are hot-eyed Quebec-firsters.

The whole trouble is that there is a little bit of truth on both sides.

I happen to be against violence as a means of settling political arguments—whether the violence is the bombs or shootings, or the unnecessary clubbing of unarmed shouters of separatist slogans.

It was the clubs that bothered me, not the arrests, or the essential and first-rate organization to ensure the Queen's safety.

I did receive a number of moderate letters, but also many violent ones, including these:

"Black Saturday—yes, it was the damn French that made it black." Anonymous.

And: "Too bad the police hadn't given you a few cracks on the backside with their clubs." Anonymous.

This might be a good time to say whose side I'm on.

I'm on the side of one Canada, including Quebec, and with a Queen.

I'm on the side of a Canada where regional designations are given only for purposes of geographical identification, and not to denote a real or fancied state of mind.

I am also convinced that either of our major political parties can achieve this state within two or three decades. But this will be accomplished only if the moderate citizens of all Canada will show enough strength of purpose to choke off the wild and weedy extremists on both sides of the Quebec border.