

# The Gateway

The University of Alberta Students' Newspaper Since 1910

## INSIDE:

Rutherford House — pp 2, 10-11

Citadel's sexy, steamy Dream — p 7

## Engineering workload relaxed

by Dragos Ruiu

Facing unprecedented problems with funding and student workload, the U of A Electrical Engineering department has canceled assignments for all third and fourth year courses they offer.

"We had a long meeting of the entire department, and we came to this decision unanimously," said Dr. Peter Smy, chairman of the Electrical Engineering department. "We were pushed into this decision because of our diminishing resources and increasing student workload. We are under tremendous pressure in terms of numbers... our quotas are increasing due to the greater workplace demand for electrical engineers, and at the same time we lose about one staff member per year. Our staff is under severe stress."

This move is also designed to reduce the stress level for students. Said Smy, "Less than 20 per cent of electrical students finish in four years, and we are overstressing people." Electrical Engineering students have to take six courses per term to finish in their degree schedule. This workload was leading to many students resorting to "group work" to meet assignment deadlines.

"We all know there was a lot of copying going on, but we don't blame the students. They were forced to because there was so

much work, and it was all for marks. Now the students have a bit of flexibility... I've asked all the guys (professors) to keep giving out assignments - but they mustn't mark them for credit.

"We don't consider this move a negative one," said Smy. One of the benefits of this change, Smy stressed, is that the graduate student teaching assistants (T.A.'s) that were working on marking assignments can now take over more of the responsibilities of the laboratories. This should mean that the lab instruction can be taken over from professors, decreasing the load on professors, while increasing the amount of help available in the labs. "We are re-thinking things."

Laboratory instruction has become a larger concern because labs have been particularly hard hit by the funding decreases. "Lab groups are getting larger, and students are getting less out of them," Smy said, adding, "we don't have enough staff or equipment. Our equipment becomes obsolete in five years, while we are only getting funding to replace it every forty years."

The current plan is to use more computer simulated labs instead of working with the actual equipment, and to have the labs be run by a greater number of T.A.'s. The focus of these moves is to improve what

the students get out of the labs.

"We are going to be tougher on the T.A.'s as well... we are not going to be renewing the contract of poorly evaluated T.A.'s," said Smy. Incentives such as prizes for T.A.'s are also being offered in hope of improving the instructional level of the labs.

This shift in the T.A. workload and removal of assignments places the onus on the students to stay caught up in the course - they will no longer be forced to have an assignment for marks on this week's material.

"Of course there will be some people who will leave all the work until the night of the exam, but those people should be much more mature - they shouldn't be engineers if they are going to do that," said Smy.

One concern students have is that since assignments were indicative of the kinds of questions that will be asked on an exam, they will be writing exams that are weighed more heavily with less preparation. But since professors are still being asked to give out some assignments with solutions, Dr. Smy hopes that "the exams should all contain material and problems of a kind they have seen before. In a short time like two hours, you can't expect people to think of solutions to new kinds of problems."

## Degree recipients announced

by Randal Smathers

MEDICINE HAT—The University of Alberta Senate announced their honorary degree recipients for fall convocation. There will be two Doctors of Science and one Doctor of Law degree bestowed.

Robert Blair, the chairman and chief executive officer of NOVA Corporation, will receive one of

the science degrees. It will be presented at the November 16 ceremony by Ernie Pallister, who also holds an honorary degree from the University. Blair's father, Sidney Blair, has also received an honorary degree, in 1975.

Dr. Robert Folinsbee, professor emeritus of the geology department, will be receiving another

doctorate in sciences, from Dr. Henry Charlesworth, also of the geology department.

Monique Begin, former federal cabinet minister, will be honoured with a Doctorate of Laws at the November 18 ceremony. Begin and Blair will deliver the convocation addresses for their respective ceremonies.



Dr. Tevie Miller (right), Chancellor of the University, receives a gift from Bert Hargrave, former M.P. for Medicine Hat. The poster was given during a visit to the Medalta Pottery in Medicine Hat by the U of A Senate. Hargrave also announced an agreement to purchase the pottery as a museum site. See p 3.



Dragos Ruiu

### Eat much?

Shelley Choms, guarded from the rain by a garbage bag, attempts to win the pie-eating contest during half-time at Saturday's football game.

## Canadian program full

by Mitch Panciuk

The small and obscure Canadian Studies department at the University has seen a dramatic increase in student interest this year. For the first time in the history of the department, all classes offered have been filled and students have been turned away.

Dr. Susan Jackel, an associate professor in the Canadian Studies program, confirmed an increase of over 30 per cent in total class enrollments this year. "We've been pleasantly surprised at this large increase," said Jackel when asked about what this increase means to her department.

In real numbers the increase is measured by the number of students enrolled in Canadian studies courses, and those numbers have gone up to 142 from 102 students. Jackel said: "That's a relatively small increase when you compare it to other larger programs, but consid-

ering the size of the Canadian Studies department it will have some serious effects." These effects will range from a "new number of courses being offered, to a need to expand the size of classrooms. For the first time in our history all of our classes are filled and overfilled."

The Canadian Studies program is a multi-disciplinary program which was established at the U of A in 1972. Traditionally, only about 30 have been majoring in the area, but there has been an enrolment increase in this aspect of the department as well. Jackel estimated the increase was about 20 per cent, but said that they can't be sure until the Registrar's office releases the final figures.

While she foresees the department remaining in their temporary trailer facilities, there is definitely going to be the need to increase their levels of full-time professors which currently stands at two.