

Create your own individualized programme

by J.A. Stephan

Looking for greater control over your education? Considering an original area of study that does not fit into any one particular programme at York? Take your idea to Tom Cohen, co-ordinator of Individualized Studies, and you could be soon exploring uncharted territory.

Appealing most to self-motivated, independent students, this option offers students an opportunity to pursue a distinct sphere of interest or investigate a specific problem. It could be as futuristic as Lori Boyd's examination of medical ethics in the age of reproductive technology or as classic as David Hughes' probe into the history of science and its ideas. Jeannine Amber is researching Canadian culture for a career in mass media, whereas Ruth Moffat is motivated by personal interest to investigate women's studies and creative writing. These are examples of fields so new or so unique that no curriculum currently exists to meet the student's demands. Individualized Studies offers a solution.

With the assistance of Cohen and a personally selected faculty advisor, the student's major is defined and approved. Amber found this counsel invaluable during the design of her programme. She said that consulting together, they were able to cover all the bases while keeping her future intentions in mind. The scope of Canadian culture is too broad to be encapsulated within one discipline, so it was essential not to be restricted to the confines of a conventional major.

Hughes was challenged to find a means to "study science in an unscientific way." He is now able to cross the borders of various disciplines to pick from a wide range of courses which will constitute the equivalent of a major subject. At the same time, he will

be considering the honours thesis or project due in the fourth year. All this is done under the tutelage of an advisor who guides one's passage to a specialized honours degree.

Cohen said that the 13 students now seeking degrees have both "gumption and smarts." As a group, they earn the best grade point average compared to other arts programmes. The small enrolment is not due to tough eligibility demands. Consideration is given to those completing a minimum of four or a maximum of 10 university courses by the begin-

ning of the fall session.

As a participant in Individualized Studies, one is encouraged to learn how the university works. Commuting to campus and visiting large lectures discourages a sense of belonging. A self-made major promotes building a network of professors and fellow students for guidance and support.

Moffat, a mature student, credits her academic advisor/professor for simplifying the passage back into academic life. Cohen encourages improved communication with one's mentors for course selection and career

planning.

The programme deserves special attention by those considering graduate school. The breadth of learning and the close personal contact with faculty help to bridge undergraduate with graduate studies. Boyd is counting on a recommendation from her advisor to assist her bid for a place at UofT's Institute for Medical Ethics.

York benefits from students' successes in Individualized Studies. One student's brainchild may give birth to an established field of study at York. Canadian studies and women's studies

originated within the programme and grew into independent majors. This testing ground for potential disciplines operates on what Cohen calls "a shoestring." The allotted budget of \$500 and a secretary who must divide her time among six programmes gives independent studies a minimalistic existence.

It does not dampen his enthusiasm, however, for an idea which could blossom with increased exposure. This alternative remains an untapped resource for students desiring more freedom and supervision over their education.

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condition as possible; just as the popular N.F.L. has several distinct teams ("49ers," "Redskins," etc.), our society apparently has several distinct races ("white," "native," "black," etc.).

Groups (or "associations," "clans" (Klans!)) which are centred around a pretense of internal racial purity may involve themselves in competition-like, win-lose activities. A government or police force comprised of people who seem to be of one race may exert a control over those in the society it governs or polices who seem to be of a different race. With the realization that racial distinctions may not always be made (does a "half-breed" commit a "half-racist" act?), the racial battles of our time may be neutralized.

History has shown us that these battles have had the characteristics of sport-like competitions (such that one team is winner, one loser). It is hoped that the severe manifestations of racial conflict (for example, segregation and death) will be tempered by a sensitivity to the spectrum of racial mixture.

Lawrence Mollon

Drink milk, vote COW

Dear Editor:

I am writing with regards to the upcoming Excalibur mascot elections, featuring candidates from the Bear, Chipmunk, Fish, Mouse, Pelican and Perezosa families, but none from the family that has ruled the pages for the past 12 months, my family, the Cow.

I would like to think that our representative has done an admirable job in ensuring that the students of your university have been 'moo-ved' to action, and this can be proven by the recent upswing in voter turnout for the CYSF elections. Thus, it would seem that having a member of the Cow family as the official mascot of York's newspaper has had a 'moo-ving' effect on the student

population.

Your recent quadrupeditorial stated that the current mascot did not fulfil his duties as in that he only attended one staff meeting and was busy currying favour with visiting heads of state rather than with the people of York. Let me state one thing: the student population feels the influence of my family every time they drink the milk which we so amply provide to keep our constituents happy and healthy. Our representative did not have to be at every meeting; he was there every time a student enjoyed a glass of the cool, refreshing drink that we labour hard to provide for the dairies of York. Therefore, while visiting others, the Cow was busy encouraging others to 'moo-ve' their business to York, in the hope that the university would continue to prosper in the future.

I am very disappointed that the 1990-91 election does not feature a member of the Cow family in the running. After all we have done in the past year, it would seem appropriate to have a candidate standing for re-election. Therefore, I would encourage the student population to be 'moo-

ved' enough to write in their vote for the Cow by April 1. This issue is important and York students must get moo-ving before it is too late. VOTE NOW FOR THE COW!!!!!!

D'Abruzzi

A cousin of Galati Cow

Editor's note:

Excalibur's retiring mascot would like to point out that although she is not a declared candidate in the mascot elections, too many people are calling her a he. The Cow is deeply offended by this blatant display of sexism and ignorance. Her brother, the bull, is equally disturbed, as he has never been able, and will never have the ability, to produce milk. We trust this confusion will never happen again.

Healthy student using medical parking space

Dear Editor:

We, as students, are concerned with the evaluation method used to determine who gets medical parking and who does not. To our knowledge, people who are physically handicapped or have some kind of chronic physical ailment only deserve this privilege.

There is a white Chevrolet Beretta with a personalized licence plate presently using medical parking, who we are aware has none of the elements mentioned above due to close observation of the driver. This person has frequently boasted about her ability to deceive the university, leading us and others to further realize that the person's only handicap is lying. It unnerves us that someone like this can be so inconsiderate, self-serving and lacking in intelligence. One is led to believe that this person has some lack of mental capacity or would not be using this space for solely selfish reasons.

One hopes that someday soon she will awaken to realize the injustice that has been done over the year to her fellow students.

Love

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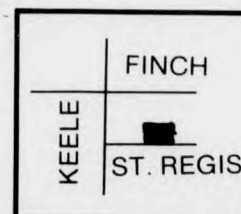
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