



# GFC - Preferring to defer

by Loreen Lennon

General Faculties Council has initiated action on the issue of occupational health hazards at the U of A.

But a proposal from the Equal Opportunities Committee received at Monday's meeting has been described as only "the tip of the iceberg."

The EOC brought forward two proposals regarding protection for females exposed to radiation: that the U of A make women of reproductive age aware of the risks involved in working with radioactivity, and that the university as employer be protected against legal action asserting liability if and when birth defects occur.

There was general agreement with these statements, but many GFC members felt the measures weren't specific enough and therefore ineffective.

Dr. Jean Lauber, associate academic vice president, stressed that the original intent of these



motions had been to protect women's jobs when they become pregnant. In fact, there was a subtle suggestion that such restrictions would prevent women from being hired in the first place.

Dean Van Petten of Pharmacy agreed that employees' rights were part of the issue.

However, he questioned validity of restricting the decision to females.

"These recommendations should be broadened to include all work-related risks for employees, men and women," said.

GFC has referred the problem to appropriate committees for more study. Commerce rep Chanchal Bhattacharya observed that it could be the start of the more comprehensive evaluation of occupational health hazards in Canada.

But it could take a long time. Meanwhile at least the iceberg has been identified.



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### Temp-registration down too

A proposal to exempt certain students in the faculties of Nursing and Dentistry from the privilege of temporary registration was deferred to committee at Monday's GFC meeting.

Temporary registration granted to students whose academic appeals are pending. Such registration is subject to immediate cancellation if an appeal is denied.

The proposed exemption was to affect only those students in Nursing and Dentistry whose temporary registration included courses with a clinical component.

Amy Zelmer, Dean of Nursing, expressed concern about these students who, in dealing with the public, constitute a potential danger to the patients. She stated that the present slow appeals process could conceivably allow a "high risk" student to be temporarily registered for an entire term.

Zelmer called this situation unsatisfactory for both the faculty and the student, and proposed that deans have the authority to decline registration in these cases at their discretion.

SU vp academic M. Ekelund argued that some provision should be made so that "high risk" students awaiting appeals decisions are not forced to lose up to a year of study.

Dean G.W. Thompson of Dentistry concurred with Zelmer's observations, adding that "high risk" students in clinical courses could damage the reputation of these faculties both inside and outside the University.

Arts Dean Baldwin pointed out that deans already have the authority to remove students "contributing risk or danger to the University proper or students or staff at the University."

However, it is not clear whether students with temporary registration, and in clinical studies with the general public, fall into this GFC jurisdiction.

The matter has been deferred until the present situation is clarified.