

CYSF-OFS dispute may avoid courts with October referendum

by Daniel Wolgeleenter

The contentious issue of York's standing in the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) may be resolved in a referendum next October, according to CYSF president Peter Donato.

Representatives of the two sides met at York November 3 to discuss their differences. The CYSF, under the 1987-88 president, Drew McCreadie, pulled York out of the OFS in March 1988 after he said it was not living up to its \$30,000 yearly membership fee.

The OFS still considers York to be a part of the organization, saying that under the OFS by-laws, a referendum is required to pull out. In addition, it claims the CYSF owes \$60,000 in membership fees for this year and last year.

Both sides have expressed a desire to avoid legal action.

"What's the point of wasting student money on both sides

when you can work it out," Donato said, referring to the proposed referendum. "We can either say get out of town or we can try to work things out."

Past CYSF president Tammy Hasselfeldt's council set aside \$10,000 in the 1988-89 school year for a possible legal fight with the OFS, and Donato's council has budgeted the same. She said there is no reason to hold a referendum on the issue since the CYSF has a special arrangement with the OFS.

In 1986, York students voted in a referendum to continue York's affiliation with the OFS. York was one of the founding OFS members.

Last year, the CYSF paid the OFS \$30,000 in outstanding fees for McCreadie's year but did not pay for last year, according to Hasselfeldt.

"We had nothing to do with them last year. We didn't accept mail or anything," Hasselfeldt

said. "There's nothing we should pay for."

Donato said this year's fees have also not been paid.

Donato said the arrangement York has is unique, in that the money students pay for the OFS comes from the CYSF which does not get its money by direct levy from students but indirectly through the administration. In the past, the CYSF paid membership fees to the OFS, while at other universities, students fund the OFS through a direct levy.

Students would be asked in a referendum whether they would pay an extra \$3 for the OFS on top of the \$46 that goes to the CYSF, Donato said.

Donato added that the OFS "is in a bit of a mess right now," and that "there are a lot of problems in the organization."

"The rumour mill is not very good for the OFS," he said, adding that he suspects other schools are considering pulling out. A key point of contention is the OFS's policy of zero tuition" which calls for the abolition of tuition fees and total government subsidization of education.

This has created problems, he said, because some student councils have come out in favour of the *Blueprint for Action*, a proposal originated at Queen's University that recommends incremental tuition and government subsidy increases.

The four student councils that support the *Blueprint* are Queen's, Waterloo, Western and McMaster, Donato said. He said despite coming out against it in principle, his council now is "on the fence" with regard to the *Blueprint*.

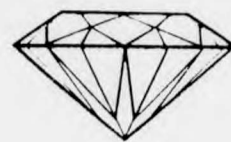
"I'm personally in favour of the *Blueprint* and so are some members of council," Donato said. "We're for action."

A second meeting between the CYSF and the OFS will take place November 29, and an OFS plenary will take place in January. Donato said that after the plenary, the CYSF will take a stand near the end of the year on whether to support the OFS or not.

"I want to get a sense of where the [OFS] is going," he said. Despite the ongoing dispute, Donato said that he is not against the principle of the OFS.

"We agree with the idea of the OFS but right now I don't think it's worth the money," Donato said. "It would be great if York could help the OFS out of its troubles."

OFS officials were unavailable for comment.



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opinion

Depressed?

by Steve Smith

Sometimes I feel depressed. In fact, at times, I don't even want to get out of bed in the morning. Am I alone? Are there other students at York that feel the same way? I think so.

Depression is one of the least talked about subjects in the '80s. We're willing to talk about stress and stress management without even mentioning one of the most silent contributors to stress — depression. I'm concerned with the effect this is having on our students.

The Causes

Numerous factors can contribute to depression including family separation, divorce, poor grades and relationship problems (only to name a few). Often handling and coping with these troubles becomes too much. I've experienced a particularly difficult time, during the past three years, getting over my parents' separation.

The Signs

I truly believe depression is the "silent killer." Difficult warning signs make it practically impossible for the outsider to detect. Inevitably, the only one who can correct this state is the student who feels alone, scared and lost. However, from my experience, the most common sign of depression is *mixed emotions*. One minute I would feel on top of the world and a half hour later like my world was closing in on me.

The Effects

Devastating effects are produced by these mood swings. For me, procrastinating on school projects resulted. A constant feeling of being tired prevented me from reaching classes or appointments on time. Humiliating to me was this overriding feeling of being a "loser."

Not only was I letting other people down but myself as well. My whole outlook on life became dim, to say the least, and the things I enjoyed doing before had become one great big hassle.

Learning to Help Yourself

How do you learn to help yourself? There is no need to tell you that this will be one of, if not the most, difficult tasks you will ever undertake. My strongest suggestion is to take some time out to understand what you are going through. Realize just how common depression is among students and how exhausting it can be. Most importantly, relax and seek help.

Whether the help you seek is from a friend, parent or counsellor shouldn't matter. What's important is that you feel comfortable with whom you are speaking. If friends or family don't make you feel at ease then try to a hospital social worker or, perhaps, the reverend at your nearby church. Whatever you do, MAKE SOMEONE ELSE AWARE of the vicious cycle you're caught up in.

Closing Remarks

Lastly, be concerned but not worried about your feelings. You may be trying your hardest to fight this feeling of depression but still losing ground. It's alright — it's O.K. This effect is very common among students. Remember to talk it out and getting worried or upset will only cause stress — not very healthy!

To this day, depression still haunts me. Entering York as a mature student has been an enormous step for me already with its ups and downs. However, I've noticed York has a mature student advisor and a group that meets regularly. Perhaps there's a group for you that shares your similar interests while you deal with this turbulent time of your life.

Please remember, I am not a doctor or psychologist but simply a concerned student who just believes "life's like that."

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