

Angry students protest crowded classroom

by Paul Clark

The silence of the main floor of the Arts and Administration Building was broken Wednesday morning when over 70 students from a political science class occupied the hallway in front of the registrar's office.

The students, from Canadian Political Science 2200, were protesting overcrowding in their classroom which forced over 30 students to spend each class sitting on

the floor or leaning on a wall.

"It was two weeks into classes and we still didn't have enough room. Nothing was being done," said one student. "People were uncomfortable. Who wants to sit on the floor?"

While the students occupied the hallway, professor Paul Brown went into talk to university registrar Arnold Tingley. He said Tingley explained to him, as others had on earlier occasions, that there are no more classrooms

to allocate to students in the 10:35 to 11:25 time slot. The best he could offer would be at 8:35 a.m. or after 1:30 p.m.

The majority of the students were unavailable for these times.

"The registrar was really sympathetic, but he said they are suffering from a space allocation problem."

"But we're paying 150 dollars per class and we're getting ripped off," said one student. "They're advertising

to get students but they can't

cope with them." Further, students said their bigger classrooms taken at that time were only partly filled. They suggested an exchange of rooms.

Later interviewed by the Gazette, Tingley denied that an exchange would be possible. He went on to compare the registrar's problem to one of squeezing ten cars into four parking lots with no one willing to move to a fourth.

Students said the decision

to protest was made by the whole class after a female student stood up and said she was tired of sitting on the floor and wouldn't take it any more.

They said they blamed the university, not professor Brown, for their problems.

Brown said he would pursue the options suggested to him and hopefully resolve the problem by Friday. Students said if something wasn't done there likely would be further action.

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Financial problems

ISA president forced to leave Canada

By Paul Creelman

Dumasani Gwebu, president of the International Students Association (ISA), was forced to leave the country this month due to the expiry of his visa authorization, and at least partly due to a lack of financial support.

Kissick, director of the Atlantic department of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), says that she was familiar with Dumasoni's case:

"We helped sponsor Gwebu from his previous employment in Swaziland to the masters program in Public Administration. However, last year he didn't do at all well in school. Even though a make-up course was offered to him in the summer, he had no success in that either. Because Gwebu was not accepted in either the diploma or the post-graduate

program in public administration, he would not be able to have his student authorization renewed for this year."

However, an immigration officer at the Canada Immigration Center indicated that financial support is often a more important factor than academic success for a foreign student.

"For most foreign students to enter Canada, they need a visitor's visa. Before they reach the port of call in Canada, they must have a student authorization for this visa. We require two things before we grant a student authorization — a letter of acceptance into university, and proof that they have enough money to life in Canada for a year."

"However, I have known of foreign students, already in Canada, who renewed their

visa and stayed out of school for over a year before we caught them. So in that way, I would say that the financial aspect would have to be more important to a foreign student."

In Gwebu's case, CIDA directly provided him with all the financial support necessary, according to Kissick.

"We certainly provide our foreign students with all the financing required — books, food, clothing, and so forth," said Kissick.

"But, and this applies to the other nine students we have on the Dal campus as well, the sponsored student has to keep his grades up."

CIDA supports international students and workers in various occupations in Canada, especially those required by bilateral agreements that Canada has with various countries.

Apparently Gwebu was unable to find alternative funding for a higher education here in Canada. The Gazette spoke to Director of the Awards Office, G. G. Steedman, concerning possible aid for Gwebu. Says Steedman:

"The university can't give a bursary to every foreign student who has trouble here. For one thing, I think that we'd get into trouble with the immigration people, because foreign students are supposed to have enough money when they come here.

However, I think the university has been helpful in many cases involving foreign students. I do know that when some students from Chile had their scholarships cut some years ago, because of difficulties in their home country, that we didn't just ship them out. The university allowed

them to continue attending even though they didn't have

enough money to pay their fees. Other examples of students that the university has helped out came from such places as Lebanon, Iran and Uganda."

Nevertheless, no direct financial aid is available for foreign students.

With Gwebu gone, the ISA has chosen a new president. Says Dawn Manning, his replacement:

"We held a meeting of the executive regarding Dumasani's departure, and since I have been involved in the ISA for some time, and all the members had worked with me, they decided that I should be the next president."

Manning, a Canadian citizen, was previously the vice-president of the ISA.



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