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115 St. & 89 Ave., 2nd Floor SUB, U of A



Library loans worldwide

by Howard Gibbins

The Inter-Library Loans (ILL) division of the University library system is a service provided to staff and students for the acquisition of library materials that are not held in the U of A system. It is part of a network that includes almost every library in Canada, the United States, and a good portion of the rest of the world.

Requisitions are made in person at either the Inter-Library Loans office in the basement of Cameron Library or through most library information desks. Once a request is made the staff will first verify that the book is available, and then attempt to get it for you. This is done by contacting various libraries throughout the world, and seeing if they would be willing to loan the book. However, if the owners of the book don't want to lend it, the

ILL staff have to try another library. Approximately one quarter of the 16,664 books requested by students at the U of A in the 1988/89 year came from various libraries in the United States.

Also in the 1988/89 year the 12 person ILL staff was able to fill 42,180 requests from various other libraries. These requests include three special projects which are run in conjunction with the University of Regina, Alberta Culture, and the Universities of Calgary, Lethbridge, and Athabasca. These special projects were started to improve document delivery amongst these various institutions. The staff for the special projects are funded by the various organizations served, and work solely for their specific clients.

In the past requests have been received from other libraries such

as the British Lending Library, Australian National Library, Leningrad State Library, and many others. These requests take longer than the minimum four to six weeks quoted in the department's pamphlet, but they are special cases. In one case an item requested by a U of A student arrived two years after the original request. This is currently a record at the U of A.

The service is currently free of charge, and both the librarian in charge of this department, Tina James, as well as its supervisor Alexis Gibb hope to keep it that way in the future. They both agreed that it is possible that it might be necessary to start charging a nominal fee for rush orders, including telefacsimile, sometime in the future, but at the present these services are free.

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Ron Sears

More women will be taking on science and engineering careers if the WISEST group has its way.

WISEST women on campus

by Greg Pommen

Statistics show that few women have been taking on scientific careers, but there is a group on campus that is trying to change this.

Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science, and Technology (WISEST) is a committee whose mandate is to try to get more women into the fields of science and engineering.

WISEST has 20 members, men and women, that meet twice a year. They consist of professors, university staff, education officers from the Edmonton area, members of the Students' Union, and professional engineers from outside the university.

Over the past few decades the numbers of women in the science and engineering fields has been on the rise. The percentage of female undergraduates in the programs have risen to 40 per cent of the total number of students in science and 10 per cent in engineering. However, the graduate programs continue to fail in attracting more women

with only 5 per cent in science and 2 per cent in engineering.

Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour, a member of WISEST, believes that women are not encouraged to pursue science even before schooling starts. The informal learning of roles starts with the parents, traditionally girls are more apt to help with the dishes than with changing the oil in the car, suggests Armour. The trend tends to continue throughout school where teachers do not tend to involve girls in science oriented roles. When girls reach the age of about 11, peer pressure can mold girls opinions and by the age of 13, parents may find it difficult to help them change their minds. Dr. Armour says, "I believe it's not intrinsic for girls not to choose the fields of science and engineering as a profession."

If the increasing number of women in undergraduate programs is any measure those reasons are changing. Still, graduate programs are lacking in number and in applicants. It is a problem that Dr.

Armour attributes mostly to women underestimating their own abilities. Women often do not try to plan ahead for a career in science or engineering and try to plan for short term possibilities.

WISEST runs a program to bring in grade 11 students over the summer and have them work as part of a research team. Girls are placed in sciences and engineering, boys in nursing and home economics. The students are paid an honorarium for working the six weeks. The program is funded by STEP (provincial), SEED (federal), Winspear Foundation, the Alberta Womens Secretariat, and the U of A's Special Initiatives Funds.

WISEST is also involved with professors, teachers, and parents working to encourage students and daughters to try for science and engineering positions. Armour said this is what is needed for more women to get into higher positions. Armour adds, "We see ourselves as catalysts for other people to do things."

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