

EDITORIAL

Indexing inane

Recent rumblings from across the river are ominous portents of a new and dangerous shift in Tory education policy.

Tuition fees, which have risen 50 percent in the past five years, are the next likely victims of the step by step restructuring of post-secondary education in this province under Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower Jim Horsman.

The idea of indexing tuition fees, either to the Consumer Price Index or to university operating grants, has been floating around for a long time. It's a dangerous and damaging move, but one the Tories now appear ready to take, especially after the \$100 million scholarship palliative presented recently.

Indexing tuition fees to the Consumer Price Index, while convenient, is ludicrous. The CPI is a cross-sectional measure used by economists and businessmen, but its relation to reality is tenuous at best.

More importantly, the increase in students' earning power has been nowhere near the rate of inflation during the past few years. Alberta students are lucky enough to live in a province where they can feel confident of obtaining a summer job, but the low rate of unemployment says little about the wages students are paid. "Slave labor" is an apt description for many student summer jobs.

The most likely alternative, and the one the government is seriously considering, is indexing tuition fees to university operating grants, making them a fixed percentage of university costs.

On the surface this is a great idea: students pay a fixed portion so they can no longer complain about rising fees and declining services and the burden of rising educational costs is shared equally.

But this analysis is unbelievably simplistic. It assumes first that all the university's resources are directed towards students and second that university costs are rising at roughly the rate of inflation for society as a whole.

Only a small portion of the university is devoted exclusively to teaching; professors are not, and never were, hired just to teach. A major expense of the university is research, and it is unfair to force students to shoulder the burden for rising costs in this area. The provincial government has a responsibility to maintain this research funding at an adequate level with or without tuition fee increases.

As well, university costs are rising much faster than other areas. Two well known examples are the cost of energy and library facilities: if libraries had maintained their level of book purchases over the past decade they would have to spend 470 percent more than they did in 1977/78.

To index tuition fees to university operating grants in an effort to maintain only the present level of services is no guarantee students will not have to "pay more for less." The result will be a university accessible only to the wealthy few. Surely this is unacceptable to the taxpayers who pay the bills for a supposedly universal education system.

Keith Krause

the Gateway

If it happens on campus...it's news to us.

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It started out as a small and intimate gathering. Then Bobby Kilgannon and Garnet DuGray broke out the bottle. Hey, Moose Jaw Red said Michael Skeet, my favourite. Mine too, piped up Alison Thomson. Crack that crock, chimed Jens Andersen. It's time for some serious drinking said Ray Giguere. Janice Michaud went for glasses and Peter West raided the fridge for growlers. After a few rounds Bill Inglee and Cathy Emberley started dancing on a table. Tom Freeland was under the table. As the sun started to rise everyone stumbled home to start another day.

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Got the goods on Wood's

Being somewhat angered at Stephen Crumpton's (Canadian Director of Instruction of Evelyn Wood) rebuttal to criticism against his company, I felt it necessary to inform him, as well as those who are considering registering for the Evelyn Wood Speed Reading program, about what I consider to be total misrepresentations.

Taking into consideration the total incompetence of many instructors, the numerous contracts that must be signed by each student (stipulating that no refunds would be made available unless all lessons are attended, for better or for worse), I question the ethics that are used by Evelyn Wood towards financially vulnerable students in obtaining the required \$395 for the course.

Responding to Mr. Crumpton's statement of "If we're such a rip-off, how come we've been in business for 30 years?", I've been asking myself that very same question for the past year and a half. Yes, I too had taken my share of lessons (three, to be exact), but unfortunately was not a graduate of the program. But then, neither were 46 out of the 55 students (83%). Many were so disgusted by the program, that there was no justification for continuing and completing the course. Perhaps an explanation is due.

But first, one should be familiar with the typical hard-sell techniques used by their occasional seminar leaders:

1. They claim that approximately 10% of students drop the course. False: In my particular case, it was closer to 83%.
2. "All Evelyn Wood teachers must take a very demanding training program." False: My instructor indicated he himself was a graduate of the course only two weeks prior to teaching the course.
3. "Join Now — costs will rise dramatically for the next few sections." False: Prices have remained the same for the past three years.
4. "Sign up quick. We guarantee a

maximum number of twenty-five student members per class. There are only a few vacant spots left." False: In my particular case, there were fifty-five members in the class (only 120% above the stated norm).

5. "Evelyn Wood guarantees that students will read three times faster after taking the course." True: However, they fail to inform students as to how such a task is accomplished. Before the first class commences, members are given a comprehension exam that is of such technical nature that one was assured of receiving a low score. Through the duration of the course, post-secondary reading material such as: *The Red Pony* or *I like Einstein* are read repeatedly over. The final exam consists on these very same books. Not being tested on new material, it is inevitable that one's reading-speed score would increase three-fold.

A related point that should perhaps be brought forth is that although the reading material was "mildly" entertaining, I found it to be of great inconvenience having to "double-up" on books with others, because of a shortage. That's correct — a shortage of books for a speed reading course.

Having had the Consumer and Corporate Affairs office investigate the Evelyn Wood 'mode of operation', and claiming it quite misdirecting and misleading, but all quite legal, should make those aware, who are intending on registering for the course, of the problems one could be faced with. I would further like to point out that it is

"physiologically impossible" to read faster than 800 words/minute without losing full comprehension, as proven by Don Ebert of U of M Student Learning Centre and over 2000 words/minute as claimed by Evelyn Wood.

Let me make my point clear. I am not questioning the techniques of Evelyn Wood. I am, however, questioning the quality of instructor(s) who are supposedly experts in their field of teaching the course, only to find that this is not the case in many instances.

Therefore, I urge students to consider the arguments in same before committing themselves to full tuition (\$395), or be sued!

Ron Snyder
Commerce IV

Rape fight

I know not everyone has access to a typewriter but if anyone would like to send a letter to the Hon. Svend Robinson as suggested in the article by Jancis Andrews entitled "Court Rules Rape Justifiable" they can pick up a typed copy of the letter as dictated by Andrews at Mark 9 in the HUB Mall.

All you need to do is sign your name, include your address, stamp an envelope and throw it in the mailbox to add your support to Robinson's private member's bill that the law can be changed so that rape is reclassified as a crime of violent, physical assault. There is no charge for this letter.

Terry Wintringham

STAFF
MEETING
Thursday, October 23
4:00 p.m.
The Gateway
Room 282 SUB

Don't twist God's Word

In reference to October 15th Gateway caption, "It's not the earth the meek inherit...it's the dirt," the Word of God is not to be twisted, even in jest.

Alex Fraser
Geology IV