

Fac. St. Jean: French connection

by Greg Halinda

In the sea of English-speaking academe that constitutes the greater part of the University of Alberta, there floats a French-speaking island. This island is widely known as the Faculte St-Jean.

Almost every U of A student has heard of the Faculte, but how many really know what goes on there? Or where this mystery faculty is located?

The dean of the Faculte, J-A Bour, says, "People probably have a misconception about what Faculte St-Jean does. I'm trying to drum up some interest so people can ask some questions."

Originally founded as College St-Jean, the U of A's French campus is as old as its English one — both started operations in 1908. The Faculte campus is about six km. east of the U of A campus, at 8406 - 91 St.

All courses offered by the Faculte are taught in (surprise!) French, and this language prevails at the Faculte residence as well as at extra-curricular activities sponsored by the Faculte. Dean Bour says, "We set up activities to encourage the use of French . . . we welcome all francophiles."

The Faculte offers degree programs in education, arts, and science. Last year total enrolment was about 150, with a graduating



Faculte St. Jean, the U of A's other campus

photo by Bill St. John

class of about 60.

Students vary from hopeful bilinguals to those who have trouble with English (such as natives of French-speaking provinces or countries). Some take most of their

courses in English at the U of A, and then a couple in French at the Faculte.

"We'd like more traffic from people taking one or two courses," says Bour. He sees greater enrol-

ment as leading to better quality of programs at Faculte St-Jean. "It's hard to set up certain programs without a minimum number — a 'critical mass' — of students and teaching staff. With more students,

you attract more professors, and this is what improves the quality of academic programs, with balanced growth."

"We project an enrolment of 500 for the early 1990's," says Bour.

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