

# Well, you really can't win today

Ed. Note: The article below is "scabbed" from the Medium II, Erindale College, of the University of Toronto, we figured it applied to Atlantic Students also. Food for thought. . . .

By BOGRA JAWORSKI

Students entering the working world from secondary schools are over-prepared, while students entering post-secondary schools are under-prepared says a report recently put together by Professor Carlton of the University of Guelph and Professor Oswald Hall of the University of Toronto.

The report differs from the regular ministry pronouncements, because it is not based on what Professor Carlton calls a "paper view of the school system". Most of the information compiled by the education ministries in Canada is of strictly a statistical nature, such as enrollment records. However, this particular study is detailed. It includes interviews with teachers and students along with first hand observation by the researchers.

Initiated by the Ontario Economic Council in response to a private employment sector is

concerned that graduates today are ill prepared for the work force, the study is aimed at getting an inside view of the schools, and is based on the interrelationship of a large number of smaller reports pertinent to the matter.

Carlton and Hall found that students entering the job market today after graduation are over-qualified in the sense that the majority of jobs require only very basic skills that can be taught on the job. For instance the most popular courses at highschool are in the Arts and Science department which offers a wide variety of courses, including Math, Chemistry, Physics and History. This type of training is of little practical use for someone entering the retail industry, where a basic education will suffice.

It is obvious that most graduates in Ontario fall into this category and are over qualified for virtually any job they apply for where they do not have to compete with University graduates.

However this is only where the dilemma begins for highschool graduates. While being overqualified for most jobs the majority of students leaving highschool are

underprepared for University. This is the most significant finding of the report.

### DEFICIENCY IN THREE AREAS

Grade 13 graduates are deficient in three basic areas that are necessary to cope with University work, according to Hall. The greatest of these and of worse hindrance to persons seeking a degree or post secondary diploma is a weakness in writing ability. It stems from too much emphasis placed on the points made in an essay rather than the quality of the writing itself. Poor reading abilities have also been observed in Highschool graduates.

A number of other factors are responsible for this discrepancy in educational 'preparedness'. The main cause could be the shift in emphasis in schools from rigid curriculum to a loosely structured one where the students are given more choice in choosing their courses.

High enrollments and heavy bureaucracy are also responsible. Though the report does not take into account high-priced private schools, it was found that smaller

institutions did a better job in educating the students than did the larger ones. Discrepancies in the educational standards of various high schools are also contributors to the uneven 'preparedness' of students.

The report concluded that a shift to high demand for work rather than quality seemed to promote mediocrity in the public school system. The idea was to get students to work on their own and they would work best this way. The student was to have freedom of expression in his studies so that he could develop to his/her fullest potential without the cramping rules and regulations of the old system.

### SHIFT IN EMPHASIS IN SCHOOLS

Why this shift in emphasis within the schools? Professor Carlton feels that the fault, if it can be placed, lies in the ideological reforms of the 60's. The province gave up the rigid standard curriculum for high schools to give way to more flexibility and freedom students under the auspices of the now famous

Dennie Hall report.

The coming of the 70's saw a reversal and an end brought to this era of idealistic reform, when graduates were not getting any concrete benefits from such attempts at reform. A cry went up for a return to the three R's type of education.

Some concessions have been made this year in the highschool system. Mandatory subjects have been reinstated, mostly basics, such as English and Math. Although it should be noted that all along these subjects remained as requirements for a diploma in the Toronto Highschool area.

Whether the report will have any impact on the future of High school curriculum in the future is uncertain. But it seems that most of the findings have just confirmed what has already become apparent, and that most of them are being acted upon now in one form or another.

## Academic quality - "on the cutting board"

EDITORS NOTE: In an editorial the Bruns questioned the quality of education in today's universities. It seems we're not the only ones. Below is an article from the Lance, a student paper from the University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario.

By ANNA MARIA TREMONTI

The university system is being starved and academic quality is now on the cutting board, according to Dr. Paul Cassano, Chairman of the Ontario Council of University Faculty Associations. Cassano, of the French Department said faculty members across the province feel they cannot provide the level of education the

students deserve because of tight budget restrictions.

The Ontario Government is presently "entertaining the possibility of cutbacks and internal redistributions," said Cassano. He added he feels there is a program assessment taking place that could lead to the scaling down of programs or of their termination.

A committee on academic planning has been assessing Ontario universities, seeking unnecessary duplication of course areas. Cassano said that perhaps duplicate faculties, would be the first to be cut back by the government.

The University of Windsor is in a precarious situation this year because of a sharp drop in

enrollment. Cassano said he questioned Premier William Davis about financial situation for this institution. Davis, he said, answered that there were enough funds for this year, but would say little about coming years. When he asked the premier for specific indications of the situation, Davis would only say that times were tight.

Premier Davis was unavailable for comment.

Cassano said there is a general feeling among Ontario faculty that the post-secondary educational system will be underfunded. Funds for colleges and universities increased by 5.8 per cent this year, but there is speculation that funds will increase only by three

per cent next year. Because of the tight financial situation facing the institutions, morale among faculty is low, said Cassano.

Professor John McAuliffe, Vice-President Academic, said so far, "nothing has happened to interfere with the educational quality" of the university. He did say that if enrollment continues to decline, there will be reason for concern over the future of this university, but added, such speculation is "looking way down the road."

"The best effort of the professor," McAuliffe said, "is far more important than any other academic effort." If a student has a good teacher, he explained, then any other problems which result from cutbacks are only an inconvenience.

Dr. John Allan, Vice-President Administration, and Treasurer, said the University of Windsor will not be treated differently from other universities. Terming it a "difficult proposition", Allan said all universities are going to be under intense financial pressures within the next few years.

## Cottage owners-rejoice!

UNB Fredericton is offering an extension course in "forestry for cottage owners" on Monday

evenings from Jan. 16 through March 27.

The program is designed for the cottage owner who wants to actively appreciate and fit into the natural environment, not merely establish a second home some distance from urban stress and pressures.

Topics covered will include use of wood in cottage construction

and heating, insect and animal life in lakeside woodlands, trees and soils, and forest ecology.

The 10 two-hour sessions will be taught by several members of the UNB forestry faculty, and the fee for the course is \$25. Course hours are 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. Registration is through the UNB extension department, Rm. 125, MacLaggan Hall, 453-4646.

## Females Needed

India's Council of Social Science Research reports that the ratio of women to men in that country has dropped sharply over the last 30 years.

The Council found that for each one thousand men in India, there are now only 930 women.

The report says that this may be partly due to greater life expectancies for today's Indian men. But, the Council goes on to explain that girl children, while not murdered outright, are often neglected until they die.

Women, the report adds, frequently die in childbirth. This, says the study, may explain why India has nearly 45 million fewer women than men. (Newsprint)

### HOCKEY

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FRIDAY JANUARY 13th at 7:00, CHSR,  
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## NASHWAAKSIS TWIN CINEMAS MIDNIGHT TRIPLE BILL SATURDAY-JAN 14

MOVIE 1

THE SEXORCIST

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IF YOU DON'T STOP IT -YOU'LL GO BLIND

DOORS OPEN 11:00 -ALL SEATS \$3.00  
RESTRICTED-BOX OFFICE CLOSSES 1:30