

More students

OTTAWA (CUP)—More students than ever are crowding into Canada's post-secondary institutions as they flee a student unemployment rate of near 15 per cent.

Early estimates indicate full-time university enrollment will reach 465,000 this year, an increase of about 2.4 per cent over last year. Researchers say another 300,000

full-time students will attend community colleges and 300,000 will study at university part-time.

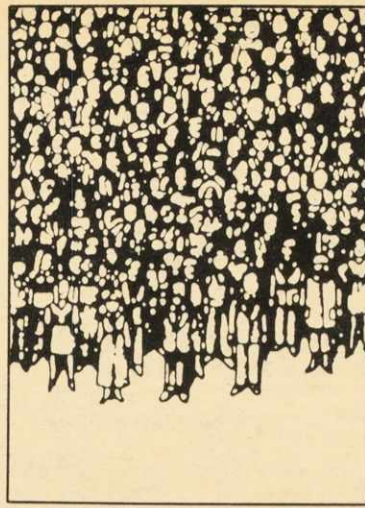
A preliminary phone survey of university enrollment conducted by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has revealed that greater numbers of students who already have some post-secondary education are returning to school.

The numbers of first-year university students, mostly responsible for the dramatic enrollment increases noted in the past two years, have dropped substantially in every province except Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island.

Both Canadian Federation of Students and Statistics Canada researchers say the upsurge in returning student enrollment is likely due to the impact of a long, drawn-out recession and this summer's especially bleak job market for young people.

"People are perceiving that there are benefits to post-secondary education and they will be increasingly marginalized if they don't have any," says CFS researcher Jean Wright. "They know they'll probably be without a job and wouldn't be foregoing any wages by going to school."

Wright says educated people in today's economic climate are more likely to find work. According to Statistics Canada, the September unemployment rate for those between the ages of 20 and 24 with a university degree was 12.6 per cent, compared with 13.8 per cent for those with only some post-secondary education. While high



ple in the age group that makes up most of the university and college enrollment is dropping."

According to Max von Zur-Muehlen, president of the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, the number of people in the 18-to-24 age group is expected to decrease from 3.3 million in the early 80s to 2.6 million in the mid-90s.

The AUCC survey says the most startling decrease in first-year university enrollment appeared in B.C., where all three universities increased tuition fees substantially and the bursary portion of student loans has been eliminated.

The University of B.C. noted an 18 per cent drop in first year, the University of Victoria recorded a 19 per cent decrease and Simon Fraser University about six per cent. All three universities are conducting a survey to determine why so many students failed to show up.

First year enrollment also tumbled by 7.5 per cent in Manitoba, by 7 per cent in Saskatchewan, nearly four per cent in Alberta, by 3 per cent in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and by 2.4 per cent in Ontario.

Overall full-time undergraduate enrollment, however, increased the most dramatically at Québec universities, which have the lowest tuition fees in the country. They recorded a four per cent increase.

Full-time enrollment also jumped by three per cent in Alberta, by one per cent in Saskatchewan and half a per cent in Manitoba. Ontario only noted a 1.6 per cent increase and the Maritimes an average of a little more than two per cent.

At Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland, however, full-time enrollment rose by nearly 16 per cent. A record increase in first-year students, about 135 per cent, has flooded the university because they are only now entering the system after grade 12 was instituted last year.

B.C. universities also noted a four per cent drop in overall undergraduate enrollment. □

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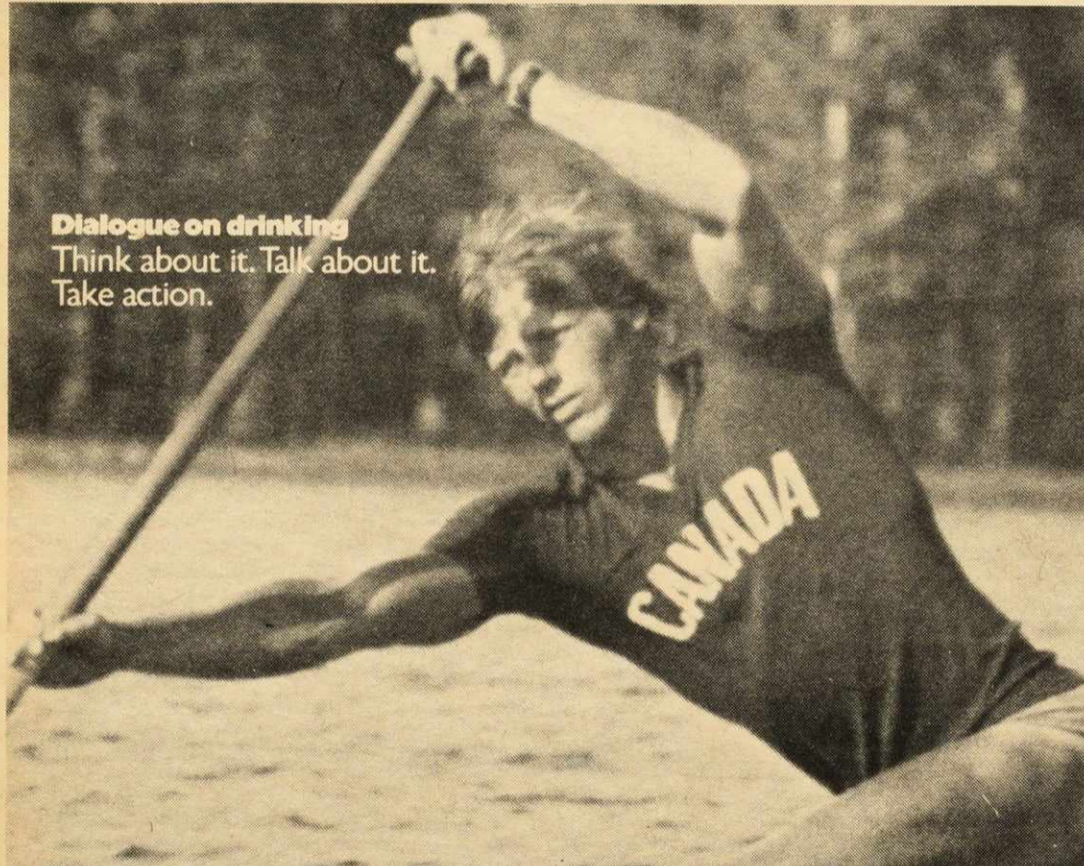
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McMaster students stuck three to a room

HAMILTON (CUP)—The flower children of the sixties didn't mind being cramped at the original Woodstock. They had Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin to entertain them.

But the 21 students stuck three to a room in Woodstock residence at McMaster University don't find their plight amusing, as they must crawl over each other to get to their desks and beds.

One of 21 has already accused the university administration of waiting until the "temporary triples" as they have been dubbed drop out of school to end the problem.

"It's kind of sick, waiting for someone to drop out or fail," said McMaster student Peter Ytsma. "The whole thing is making us feel like losers."

The 21 men, who cannot have a room of their own because there are no more spaces left in residence, are concerned about falling grades, especially as they are frantically trying to study for midterms. Overcrowded in the residence rooms, they find the lack of space and privacy is not conducive to studying.

Scheduling conflicts, the stuffiness of the rooms and the few available pieces of furniture have exacerbated the problem.

Residence chair Dave Gordon, who called the situation "rotten," says the administration should act on the matter soon.

"We're running a really tight ship here but this thing is time bomb. Sooner or later it'll go off and I hope nobody points fingers [at us]," he said.

The administration has set up a committee to investigate the problem and has offered the 21 students financial compensation to the tune of \$1 per day past Sept. 28 that they remain in the triples.

"There isn't any academic compensation, though," said one unidentified student.

All the students expressed anger at the drubbing their education was taking and many felt they had been misled as to the length of time the temporary measure would last.

One student, Glenn Mehuis, says if the students knew how long "temporary" meant, many would have sought accommodation off-campus long ago. □