

Skills no help to college grads with no jobs

OTTAWA (CUP) — If you're a computer programming student in Ontario you're also out of luck if you're thinking about employment after graduation.

The most recent graduate placement report for Ontario colleges

shows a province-wide unemployment rate for one-year programming students is a staggering 68 per cent.

Figures for Ottawa's Algonquin College graduates will not be available until later in March but

placement officer Bob Gilham says they will not be encouraging.

At Algonquin, 156 students are enrolled in the computer program, with two-thirds sponsored by Canada Employment under the National Training Act. The federal

government is 'retraining' students to make them more employable.

"The business programs were the biggest problem last year," said Gilham. The graduates have traditionally found work with the government and the government

has not been hiring, he said.

Figures in the placement report were gathered by the Ontario colleges and universities ministry last November, seven months after students graduated.

Other one-year business courses fared better although the average unemployment rate for graduates from all the one-year business programs was a mere 33 per cent.

The figures are somewhat better for the two and three year business course graduates. The longer courses had better placement rates with unemployment rates for the graduates of the two-year programs at 22 per cent and for the three-year programs, 26 per cent.

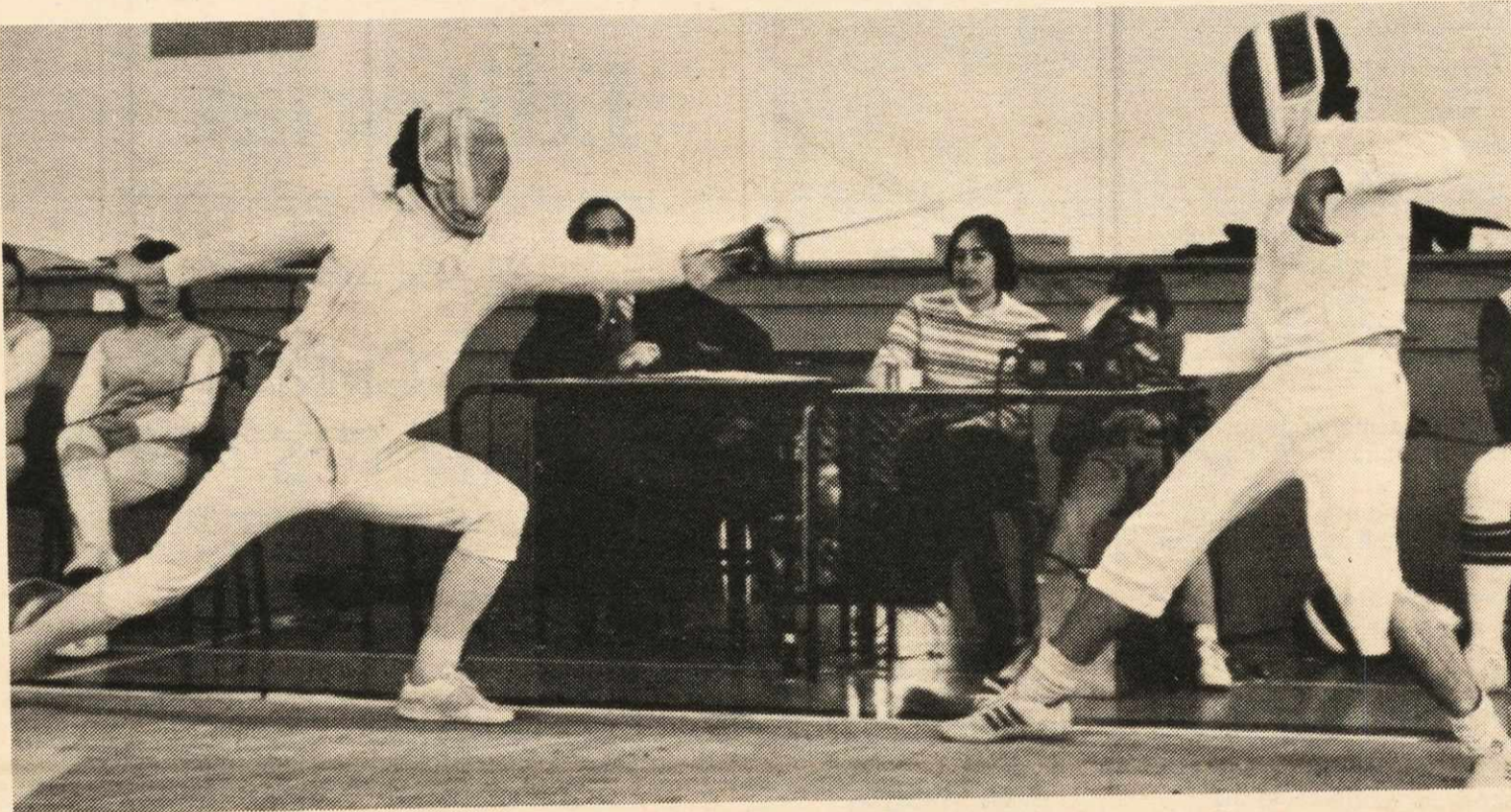
For trades students, the one-year program had a 57 per cent unemployment rate. Again, the rates were lower for graduates of the two and three year programs.

In applied arts, two year commercial arts grads had an unemployment rate of 35 per cent. The best placed students were in advertising with a sever per cent unemployment rate.

But the health science students had the brightest prospects with about 80 per cent of the graduates finding jobs.

Overall, about 24 per cent of community college graduates were out of work in November.

Fewer students were working in jobs related to their training in college. Only 67 per cent of the graduates got jobs related to their field of studies, compared with 85 per cent the previous year.



Angry student foiled in his attempt to gain rightful bursary takes frustration out on Terry "Don't kill me" Donahoe. Think of it kids....

Sharma appointed VP External for next year

by Bob Morrison

Atul Sharma was unanimously appointed Student Union Vice President External by the incoming Council and boy does he have plans!

Sharma, a second year medical student, has been on Student Council for the past three years serving as student Board of Governors rep and also once as Science Rep. As VP (External) he will be responsible for political issues affecting students and maintaining

links with other student political bodies.

Sharma sees various important issues he will immediately begin to deal with:

- Student Aid. "Since 1975 the total aid package has been increasing only 7 per cent a year. Students are falling behind and we must make this clear to government through active lobbying," he said.

- The increase in loans as opposed to bursaries. Sharma said it is good student loans have increased by 80

per cent but he expressed concern that because of this increase, the bursary program is being cut back.

The present student aid system, Sharma said, discourages students of lower and middle income families from going to university.

Sharma said "People are wrongly billing this as a solution to all the problems." He added the 80 per cent amount is just a catch-up for smaller increases in the past and only serves as an excuse for major increases in student fees.

"We see students as political

football between the federal and provincial governments," said Sharma, referring to the recent announcement on EPF (Established Program Financing). The federal government limited the education increment in accordance with its six-and-five restraint program. Because of this, the province will cut back funding to universities, thereby necessitating an increase in student fees

- Underfunding of post-secondary education. Sharma said while on the Board of Governors he has seen the effect of underfunding on the academic quality of the university and students' accessibility to a university education. "It is time for the Dalhousie Student Union, through SUNS (Student Unions of Nova Scotia), to become more aggressive in getting messages to government," he said.

Sharma said the first step in accomplishing change is to inform the public, who "are concerned but are not informed". He feels it is even more important to get the message and concerns out to students, with a campaign beginning in September.

- Summer Employment. Sharma said the federal government is creating 17,000 new jobs for students, but with 216,000 students unemployed last summer, that is only "a drop in the bucket". Although the provincial govern-

ment is also creating 2700 jobs, Sharma feels "numbers are not enough: Minimum wage jobs for six weeks just won't do. Students need summer jobs that will enable them to meet the high cost of education," he said.

- The question of accessibility. "One-half of the students come from 20 per cent of the population (with the highest income) - we are concerned universities are becoming elitist institutes," he said.

He added a small study has already been done but a major one is required. "We need statistics before we can deal with government. If not it is difficult to defend what we are saying," he said.

- The CFS (Canadian Federation of Students) Question. Sharma said he sees a definite need for a national organization to deal with issues such as EPF transfer payments and federal job creation programs.

However, Sharma said, changes are needed. If provincial recommendations from two meetings this year are not implemented at the upcoming CFS conference in May, he is prepared to reconsider Dal's position, and recommend to council a possible pull-out referendum.

It appears Sharma has his objectives clearly in mind, the ambition to achieve them, and has only to wait until May 1 to begin implementing them.

Houlihan is incoming (and outgoing) treasurer

by Bob Morrison

Shawn Houlihan has been appointed to an unprecedented second consecutive term as Student Union Treasurer following a unanimous vote by the incoming Student Council on Sunday.

The third year economics major said he ran again for two reasons. "I enjoyed the job and got a lot out of it, and it will be valuable for Student Council to have some continuity for a change," he said. He feels the experience he has gained over the past year is invaluable for his upcoming term.

"It takes a year for each treasurer

to get orientated, to know most of what goes on, how to work with people and the Student Union and to become familiar with the Constitution. When their term is up they see how much they could do if they were coming back," he said.

Houlihan will get just this opportunity in April and he has definite plans about what he wants to accomplish:

There is a great need to improve the financial reports to students and the Student Union, he said.

Computerization of the Student Union Treasury department will be another major goal. Houlihan said

ne did much of the ground work already this year. "I already put in about 1000 man hours talking with sales people, consultants and experts," he said.

Student Union finances should be more readily available to any student who wants to see them, Houlihan believes, rather than the present cumbersome system. "If students understand the present operation they can use their imagination to come up with ideas of how to expand," he said.

Houlihan concluded saying "If finances are a mystery to students, they can't realize the resources that are available to them."