



For the first time since anyone can remember, York's student population will go down in September — from the current 51,050 students to 49,500. But don't expect smaller classes or shorter lineups.

## Applications soar as York cuts admissions

By Rob Gibson

When Ranjit Marzouk, a grade 13 student at Northern secondary school, sent in his university application last term, he didn't consider it a big deal. He had always done well in the sciences and planned to work toward a BSc.

But like many other grade 13 students experiencing second-term crunch, he is getting worried about his academic future. And he has good reason: just as the number of applicants is soaring, universities like York are slashing their admissions.

"I'm not stupid or anything, but I had to really sweat to keep my average in the 70s," Marzouk says, "and now I'll have to reconsider my choices because it doesn't look like my marks will be good enough for York or U of T."

First-year applicants are up 3.2 per cent this year, according to statistics from the Ontario Universities'

Application Centre. At the same time, enrollment cuts at York are expected to reach 2 per cent this September. This means a lot more students are competing for fewer spaces.

Sheldon Levy, vice president of institutional affairs, said the cuts will occur mostly in Fine Arts, which the administration has identified as the most over-enrolled faculty.

In combination with the elimination of the Winter/Summer session, this will allow York's enrollment to decrease to 49,500 from the current 51,050 by 1994.

The drop in admissions combined with the increase in applications has raised York's cutoff average to 72 per cent.

Asha Bhat, communications director for the Ontario Federation of Students, warned that decreasing enrollment makes universities more exclusive. "When you put limits on the numbers you allow in the system, you are further marginalizing students who are already shut out," she said.

Stephen Feinberg, York's vice president of academic affairs, echoed this view last month when he described enrollment cuts as "squeezing the triangle" of accessibility, quality and funding.

But most members of the administration — including Feinberg and President Harry Arthurs — say York can no longer seek new funding by increasing enrollment.

Between 1971 and 1991, York's student population increased from 15,000 to more than 50,000. This was largely because of cutbacks in provincial government funding to universities, which York attempted to replace with extra tuition dollars.

But Ontario's increase in transfer payments to colleges and universities dropped to a record low of one per cent this year — well below the inflation rate — and some York analysts say extra students no longer equal extra dollars for York.

"An alternative approach in the past was to compensate budget shortfalls with growth in student numbers," Levy explained. "But we are beyond the limits of growth established by the provincial government."

York's situation is by no means unique. The University of Toronto, Waterloo and McMaster are also trimming their first-year enrollments by 12, 10 and 6 per cent respectively this year, according to the *Globe and Mail*.

licly that this isn't the case."

Givens, however, said the board was ignoring the fact that incidents of racism against whites exist.

"It's a vicious circle," he said. "There aren't any reported cases because no one takes it seriously, and nobody takes it seriously because there aren't any reported cases."

He said the column is a "minor incident," but that it is part of a continuum of behaviour.

"It's like how murder is worse than aggravated assault, and aggravated assault is worse than threatening assault, but you have to deal with all of them because they're all illegal."

Givens was originally seeking an apology from *Surface*, but said he will not appeal the decision.

Kim said she was disappointed the incident received so much attention, since it has diverted attention from on-going harassment of minorities on campus.

"There was a woman who was mistaken for [the columnist], and she was harassed for days about it," Kim said. "I thought that showed who really has the power in this situation."

She also cited an incident in which a Pakistani student was attacked in a campus bar by a group of men uttering racial slurs.

## York hires investigators to spy on parking attendants

by Doug Saunders

A union executive says York's practice of hiring investigators to spy on student parking lot attendants is the worst he's ever seen.

"I don't know of any place ever, not in this country, where they do this to this degree," says Walter Gosley, president of local 1962 of the United Plant Guard Workers of America, which represents the students who staff York's parking lots.

Two students and one full-time employee have been fired this year in connection with the undercover investigations. In 1991, three students fired under the program had their jobs reinstated after filing a union grievance.

According to Gosley, the investigators often pose as parking customers and try to talk attendants out of charging them, or watch attendants through binoculars from nearby buildings.

Pam MacDonald, executive director of York Security, said the practice is part of annual auditing procedures done "to make sure cash handling procedures are being followed."

The undercover work is done by community college students enrolled in loss prevention programs, MacDonald said. Although she would not reveal the number of investigators hired or the cost of the investigations, she said the students cost considerably less than professional investigators, who "charge an arm and a leg."

Valerie Connell, an experienced attendant and a union steward, said the surveillance — which is performed randomly throughout the year as well as during the year-end audit — leaves many attendants afraid and distrustful.

"I'm a totally honest worker but I don't like the fact that there may be somebody watching me through binoculars to see when I light up a cigarette," Connell says. "It's really kind of creepy."

Gosley described the practice of investigators posing as customers as "highly unusual" and said it is rarely used in Canada.

"Normally, employers would be watching the amounts of money to see if there's less money than there's supposed to be. Here they're watching all the employees," Gosley said. "I think the employer has a right to protect their income but I don't know

about the way they go about it at York."

Parking lot attendants said the possibility of being watched forces them to follow the rules rigidly, even in emergency situations.

(None of the attendants could give their names because their operating manual forbids them from speaking to the press).

"The operating manual says we should use our own discretion in exceptional cases," one attendant said, "but then these undercover guys come along and tell us it's an emergency and ask to go in and out for free and we get fired for it."

Another attendant said York Security has destroyed morale by firing employees instead of communicating with them.

"They're not using the information that they've acquired [from the surveillance] positively. They haven't sat down and tried to communicate. What they're doing is basically just making accusations. In some ways it's almost entrapment."

One of the fired students received a letter of recommendation from his supervisor only months before his dismissal, Gosley said. His case will be brought up during union negotiations this summer.

Gosley said the attendant in question was fired for being too friendly with customers.

"They're saying he isn't stealing, he's giving people a break, they say. Now there will be no breaks, not even in an emergency. They've taken all the things that say 'be nice and friendly' and thrown them all out the window."

MacDonald said the firings have nothing to do with layoffs in the parking department, which are tied to budget cuts throughout the security department.

Gosley said similar surveillance practices were used in the past by stores and theatres, with undercover 'shoppers' paid to test staff reactions. However, these practices have been abandoned in recent years, Gosley said.

He said he has never heard of undercover surveillance being used on a university campus.

"I can't get rid of the impression of a university — which is supposed to be an open, free environment — doing this sort of thing. I just don't understand the rationale, doing this to students. It's like the secret police."

## Queen's University dismisses 'reverse racism' charges

by Clive Thompson  
Canadian University Press

TORONTO — Queen's University has dismissed a racial harassment complaint against a student newspaper.

Third-year student Mark Givens had argued that an Oct. 24, 1991 column in *Surface* demeaned white people by negatively comparing white bread to brown bread.

But the university's disciplinary board decided last week that because white people are "an historically advantaged majority," the column didn't poison the campus environment for them.

"Harassment isn't just an expression of bias, it's a demonstrable effect on a person," said Denis Magnusson, law professor, and chair of the university's Student Non-Academic Discipline Adjudication Board.

"In this case, we couldn't see a demonstrable effect."

*Surface* editor Suzanne Kim said she's pleased with the decision, and hopes it will set a precedent for quelling "reverse discrimination" charges against minority students.

"There's a lot of accusations that minorities have this tyrannical power," Kim added. "I'm glad an official body came out and said pub-

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