

an end

feels, but hopes that time and energy will be invested in ensuring that the total system in Alberta will be able to handle those students who cannot be accommodated at the U of A.

Quotas are often decried for their perceived effect of making an institution "elitist." Horowitz concedes that this is possible, especially if grades are used as the only criterion for admission. Other indicators are harder to consider, he notes, but "if we knew the people better, we could feel more comfortable about those chosen and less uneasy about accusations that quotas result in a more elitist institution."

On the other hand, says Horowitz, while he is "not arguing that the University of Alberta should be on some kind of institutional pedestal, that we should be super-elitist...I don't think it's necessarily bad if we appear to be more elitist than other institutions," as long as the system as a whole is still open to interested people.

If the university recognizes the danger it faces of becoming elitist, it will be less likely to do so, Horowitz believes.

A decrease in the numbers of first year students in the future as quotas are put in place will be slightly offset by an increase in the number of graduate students. Horowitz is quick to point out that this does not mean the U of A is aiming to "get out of undergraduate education at the early level."

"We will continue to make a strong commitment to first year education. Even as our numbers fall at the undergraduate level, our concern for the quality of what we do must go up. I support strongly our university position with regard to changing the balance between undergraduate and graduate, but I think we're wrong if we conclude that it follows that undergraduate education is less important than it was. We have to claim that it's more important than it was."

Questions of accessibility and size lead naturally to questions of money. Horowitz expresses great disappointment at the level of funding given to the university.

"There are new expectations held for us by society," he points out, "and the funding, especially when one takes into account the increased enrollment and increased inflation, isn't as good as it was ten years ago."

In addition, monetary problems stem from the low limits the provincial government has set on tuition fee increases.

"I see no reason why the fee component of the University of Alberta doesn't represent the same percentage as it does in other parts of the country," he says. "Next to Quebec, a special case, our fees are the lowest in the country."

The province has set the ceiling for next year's tuition increase at 4.5 percent. Says Horowitz, "I think that's too low. I think it would have been more realistic if we had been permitted to increase the fee by something in the neighborhood of ten to fifteen percent."

He notes, however, that some presidents of Canadian universities are in favor of even higher fees, similar to the level of those of American universities where fees make up 40 to 50 percent of operating revenue.

When asked about the issues that he would have handled differently in his term, Horowitz immediately pointed to pay equity.

Parts of the university's pay equity plan had to be delayed past its intended starting date of June 30. Some members of the



non-academic staff protested that the plan would see their wage increases limited in order to allow the wages of underpaid employees to catch up.

"I would make no change whatsoever at the level of principle, but boy, did we goof with regard to implementation — and anybody who isn't willing to admit that is either dishonest or foolish or both," he says ruefully.

"I regret terribly the mistakes we have made. How I wish things had developed differently from the way they did, because the equity concerns were among my highest priority. For us to have erred on the project which was so important to me and others is a real disappointment."

He is optimistic that a new program can be worked out for the employees who were dissatisfied with the original proposal, noting that, "when there's a crisis, you either put your marbles in your bag and you don't play the game anymore, or you face the agony. There's no alternative."

Having had to redraft the pay equity proposal hasn't changed Horowitz's mind about the role of staff association on campus. "A university is stronger when it has strong staff associations and strong student groups," he maintains, pointing as well to the high level of student involvement on university boards and in all aspects of university life.

"I find it very satisfying that deep down students are certainly as concerned as my generation was, no question about it," he says. "I don't go along with what I sometimes hear, that students today are not concerned, that they're apathetic."

Horowitz notes a tendency for student concern to move in cycles. He recalls that, while teaching high school in the 1950s, he asked students why they were so

apathetic. "We all fooled ourselves into believing that the perceived apathy of the late fifties would continue forever...(then), in the sixties, the human reaction of some of us was 'Oh my God, if only we could have the apathy of the fifties'....In the seventies, some of us were wondering what happened to the energy of the sixties."

Concerns about people, funding, and academic interests loom high in Horowitz's mind when he looks at the future of the University of Alberta, but much of it comes down to the part that the university will play in society.

"I hope we don't make the terrible mistake of trying to satisfy every expectation that is held for us," he notes. "On the one hand, we better understand that we are part of the larger community. But if we are really fulfilling our mandate, we have to be apart from the larger community. If we don't carve out a particular territory, then we'll end up being very confused as to what we should be doing."

Feature by
Roberta Franchuk

Photos by
Rob Galbraith

Layout by
Winston Pei