

English prof's suspension continues

by Bruce Rolston

TORONTO (CUP) — Controversial English professor Robert O'Driscoll may not return to teaching this fall, say University of Toronto administrators.

O'Driscoll will remain suspended until he satisfies the university that he does not pose a threat to students and staff, said vice-provost Carolyn Tuohy.

O'Driscoll was suspended in early July from teaching at St. Michael's College. He cannot return to teaching unless he satisfies certain conditions, which have not been made public.

In a confidential letter sent to the professor, Tuohy said the tenured professor failed to meet the conditions in full and would remain on suspension.

O'Driscoll said he has every intention of complying with the university's wishes, but needs more time to gather psychiatric and medical assessments the university has requested. He said he wants to resume teaching at U of T.

The July suspension followed a university-commissioned investigation last year, led by St. Michael's principal Joe Boyle. Boyle was to determine whether the professor created a "hostile and intimidating" atmosphere at the college. The results of that inquiry have not been made public.

Most recently, the professor was charged by Ontario Provincial Police near his home in Arthur, Ontario, with one count each of uttering death threats and making harassing phone calls to spouse Elizabeth Elliott.

O'Driscoll is well-known for his belief that a Jewish-Mormon-Catholic conspiracy is out to rule the world. His two recent books outlining that belief have been condemned by the League of Human Rights of the B'nai Brith as anti-Semitic hate literature.

O'Driscoll rejects the charge of anti-Semitism, yet says that the Jewish-led conspiracy is responsible for the arms race, national debt, and the Waco massacre.

U of Vic bans Red Cross

by Alan Hari-Singh

TORONTO (CUP) — Canadian Red Cross Society blood drives have been banned from the University of Victoria, pending an investigation into charges they discriminate against gay men.

The charge was filed against the organization after it refused to allow two University of Victoria students to donate blood because of their sexual orientation.

As a part of its screening process, the Red Cross has potential donors complete a questionnaire on one's sexual activities. One question asks male applicants if they have had one or more homosexual encounters since 1976. If the answer is "yes," then that indicates the individual should be placed in the high-risk category.

Robb Stewart, one of the complainants, said the questionnaire is discriminatory because it only takes into account the person's sexual orientation and not her or his sexual practices.

The Red Cross says the questions are necessary to find high risk donors, or those who may have come in contact with HIV.

"What we are doing with this questionnaire is not just something that is done in British Columbia or Toronto," said David Pi, medical director of the Red Cross' Vancouver blood centre. "We are following an international set of guidelines. If that's the case, then it's discrimination by everybody."

But university officials have come out in support of the students, charging that the Red Cross has violated their harassment policy.

As a result, there will be no blood donor clinics on campus until the matter has been investigated by the B.C. Council of Human Rights.

"Many people have told us that you should not have banned the Red Cross due to political correctness," Faris said. "People have told us that you made the wrong decision, and that you should have allowed the Red Cross to continue to come onto campus until the matter is resolved."

Faris also added that the Red Cross has not been banned from U of Vic, but voluntarily withdrew after the university asked them to.

This is not the first time the Red Cross has had to defend its donor questionnaire. Similar complaints have also been lodged at both McGill and Concordia universities.

The questionnaire was also deemed discriminatory by the University of Toronto's Lesbian, Gay and Bisexuals for targeting sexual orientation and not safe-sex practices.

Canadian University Press (CUP) is a national organization made up of over 40 student papers from St. John's to Victoria. CUP enables student papers to exchange stories and ideas through the wire service, regional and national conferences. As a founding member of CUP, the Dalhousie Gazette makes sure that our university news becomes national news.

Dal stays in survey

by Alan Hari-Singh, Andre Bellefeuille and Kelly Morrissey

TORONTO (CUP) — One by one, universities are pulling out of Maclean's fourth annual ranking of Canadian universities.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the universities' national lobby group, has recommended that its 87 members not take part in the ranking.

To date, Carleton University, Memorial University, L'Université de Sherbrooke and the University of Manitoba have refused to participate in this year's survey. McGill University, which consistently ranks at or near the top, has not decided if it will participate this year.

According to Brian Christie, the Executive Director of Institutional Affairs at Dalhousie, Dalhousie will be participating in this year's issue of Maclean's. However, Christie said that Maclean's does not adequately represent Dalhousie, and suggested that an alternative be established.

The Maclean's survey hits the racks each November, with the last three years' issue among the magazine's best sellers ever.

The association says the 50-page survey is flawed because it attempts to explain universities with a single-number ranking.

"As long as they give numbers and continue to rank, we have a problem," said Bob Best, the AUCC's public affairs director.

Other criticisms include that:

- the survey assigns different weights to the indicators it finds important, rather than letting the reader decide.

- universities that don't participate are unfairly penalized by having points automatically taken off different ranking categories.

The three major complaints Dalhousie has with the annual ranking

include inaccurate data with library acquisitions, student assistance programs, and the combination of research councils. Christie said that it is frustrating to see the data misinterpreted by Maclean's, which then gives a false impression of the university.

"What Maclean's is trying to do is produce something that is commercially attractive, not analytically correct," said Dan Lang, University of Toronto's assistant vice-president.

But Maclean education editor Victor Dwyer said not all universities think the survey is flawed.

"...it's not Macleans on one side and the universities on the other."

"The majority of schools are taking part, so it's not Maclean's on one side and the universities on the other. They may have some problems with it, but they do feel that overall it's fair," Dwyer said.

According to Jeanne Thibault, AUCC chief of media and public relations, how Maclean's collects the points used to rank universities is a mystery.

The AUCC says Maclean's arbitrarily assigns weight to the data provided to the magazine from the universities. This data includes entrance requirements, class sizes and library acquisitions.

For example, Maclean's will take the average entering grade of a university and will give a higher score to a school with a higher average. The greater the point total, the higher the standing in the survey.

"Composite ranking leaves the

impression that in Canada, some universities offer a higher quality of undergraduate education and some do not," Thibault said. "[This] misleads students into thinking that if they don't get into the best-ranked school, then they're not getting a good education."

However, Dwyer defends the magazine's methods. He said that the Maclean's survey exposes the fact that some undergraduate programs are better than others, and that's what angers the AUCC.

"We're not creating differences; we're just showing them. We've looked at 22 things that we think indicate the quality of the school, and all we're saying is here they are, take a look at it and decide for yourself," Dwyer said.

It is an odd time for the AUCC to pull out this year, as Maclean's will be showing the raw data in the issue, Dwyer said.

The AUCC decided instead to endorse Saturday Night magazine's University Planner.

The supplement includes information on areas such as courses, tuition fees, housing, campuses, and a planning chart that compares grade requirements for various programs at different schools.

None of the information has a grade or a rank attached to it.

Although Christie supports the idea of endorsing an alternative to Maclean's, he says that Saturday Night magazine's University Planner is not designed with the same agenda in mind. Thus, until a better survey is created, Dalhousie will continue to participate in the Maclean's ranking.

"I understand why the others have refused to participate," said Christie when asked what he thought of the other universities withdrawing from Maclean's survey. "I wish every university could have the courage to do so."

Phone found

by Milton Howe

For those of us who were fraught with panic, and for the faint of heart among us who were prepared to take up arms, our worries are over. The 'phone booth in front of the SUB is back! It was never actually gone, it merely went into hiding. Crafty investigative reporting by Gazette staff on Friday led us to the proverbial end of the trail — the offices of the great Maritime Telephone & Telegraph Company. A spokesperson there assuaged our fears regarding the seemingly ill-fated structure, reassuring us that our fine fibre-optic friend was "being upgraded." We all breathed a collective sigh of relief.

And Monday morning, like the Phoenix from the ashes, it rose again; better, stronger and faster than it was before. To all the reactionaries and other enemies of progress who saw no need for change I say: Bah! It has been reborn with a snazzy lawn and swinging doors! Like the crafty caterpillar, the old phone booth wooed us with its simple beauty, but before long it was gone. At first we mourned, but soon enough it emerged as a magnificent butterfly, and we can't believe we ever fell for that facile caterpillar charm.

DSU Notes

by Jen Horsey

Every full-time student of Dalhousie pays \$144 to the Dalhousie Student Union. But how many students actually know where the money goes? Judging from the voter turnout of last year's DSU elections, few people even seem to care; but with that much money on the line, perhaps they should.

Sunday night, members of Dalhousie's Student Council had their first official Council meeting of the regular session — basically, their first meeting since the start of the fall term. There were a lot of new faces in amongst the 'hacks' and their inaugural meeting lasted nearly four hours before the presentation of a motion to adjourn.

At the end of the meeting there were a lot of comments about its extended length and "Will they all be like this?" was a common concern among the newer members of the council.

The meeting consisted of a report from the Women's Centre and a brief summary of the summer's accomplishments. The actual business of the meeting began with the commencement of appointments to various committees, but due to the lack of publicity for these available positions only one interested student showed up. So, the majority of the student positions available have been left vacant until the next council meeting.

Points of interest:

- The Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) does not have their correct constitution registered with the DSU and thus their voting privileges have been suspended. (All societies are required register with the DSU annually.)

- Our student union estimates that they will be spending \$6,000 on furniture to refurbish the executive offices this year.

- A motion was passed which approved the implementation of the Tiger Patrol Shuttle Bus. The Executive Vice President, Tiffany Jay, estimates that the bus could be a reality soon after Thanksgiving.

- Over the summer a motion was brought up in council that recommended that the Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) pay rent for its office space in the SUB. Due to intense objection by SUNS and various other students, this motion was tabled until the second council meeting of the regular session.

- All members of the executive have e-mail accounts on the VAX. Search for their usernames in the 'find' directory under "DSU". (By the way, the DSU executive should really learn how to put their own names in the 'find' directory.)