

# the educational process

**W**ith every popular academic programme, many applicants are upset because they are not accepted. Often their frustration is due to bruised egos or disappointment. But when *accepted* applicants complain about the application process and the treatment of their files, these complaints deserve serious considerations.

Applicants to the Faculty of Education's Consecutive Teacher Education Programme are justifiably questioning its admissions procedure.

The faculty received about 3,000 applications for the 400 offered positions by the December 16 deadline. Each application was accompanied by a \$45 fee. However, 700 to 800 additional applications were accepted by the end of March.

Faculty dean Andrew Effrat said that the deadline was extended "for the openness and responsiveness that York stands for." He added that he wanted to give everyone a chance to apply.

Some students believe that the faculty created unfair competition by extending this deadline. Certainly, by increasing the pool of applicants the faculty decreased the chances for the admission of those who applied before the deadline.

One of the most important lessons universities teach students is adherence to deadlines. They should be extended only in extenuating circumstances. Can the faculty document 700 to 800 extenuating circumstances?

Students also questioned the need for a \$45 application fee. Effrat said the money was needed to process the files. New clerical staff was hired and faculty members — whose academic responsibilities include unpaid academic advising — were paid a \$20 honorarium for each student they interviewed.

Effrat reported that approximately 1,300 applicants were short-listed for interviews. As one student said, "It's free money for the administration" when a student who has spent \$45 on an application is rejected without being granted an interview.

Others complained about an inefficient and unresponsive staff. Transcripts were misplaced, the support staff provided inconsistent information and their phone manner was described as "officious and snippish." One student who was accepted said the application procedure was a highly frustrating and stressful waiting game.

Effrat admits that the last five months have been "a learning process for everybody." Next year he plans to be firm with deadlines and alter the fee structure. He proposes to change the \$45 fee to \$30 and make an additional charge to applicants who are short-listed for an interview.

These changes, however, have come too late for the over 4,000 who applied this year. Unfortunately, the faculty's "learning process" came at the expense of the students.



## letters

### Church of Christ defended

Dear Editor,

In regards to the news feature in the March 16 *Excalibur*, I want to make a reply. Those that call themselves the Central Church of Christ have no scriptural right to use the name of the Church of Christ. As your article has clearly stated, they are a cult and use guilt to hold sincere young people in their grasp. The Church, as revealed in the New Testament, has no earthly headquarters. Their's is in Boston now, but was started in Gainesville, originally known as "Crossroads."

Each congregation of the true Church of Christ is autonomous. These people at Central have leaders who designate authority to certain other people. When those who belong to Christ confess their wrongdoing to God, He

forgives and forgets. The true Christian would never hold such a confession over the head of the confessor to control them. This is not the true Church of Christ and it should be known to all that the congregations of the true Church in Metropolitan Toronto are not in agreement with the unscriptural things they are doing. If any of these young people caught up in this brainwashing need help to understand what is happening it is available by contacting the Church of Christ at: 47 Harding Ave, or 1708 Bayview Ave, or 346 Strathmore Blvd., without any obligations whatever to any of these congregations.

Irene Clint  
(member of Harding Ave. congregation)

### Custom Essay employee defends his service

Recently, dean of arts Tom Traves instructed all professors to hold back all essays while York cooperated with investigators from 31 Division, who had recently raided the downtown headquarters of Custom Essays Service.

At least seven York students have been found to have used the service to purchase essays. As well, eight Ryerson students' names have been found in the files along with a number of U of T students.

Last April, the Council of Ontario Universities said it would support York in its efforts to pressure police to investigate the legality of services that provide essays for students. The Metro Fraud Squad had previously decided that these services were not illegal.

Investigators at 31 Division are currently building a case and will make a decision this week whether to lay charges against Custom Essays and its writers. According to Traves, York students whose names appeared in Custom's files will not be criminally charged but will be subject to academic penalty.

Mark Rudd, a writer at Custom Essay Service, offers his interpretation of the events in the following letter.

Dear Editor,

Last year, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) made a decision to support York University in its bid to press the Metro Police Force to lay charges against a firm which, as far as the Metro Fraud Squad is concerned, has been operating legally in downtown Toronto for the last ten years. A raid by the police on the office of Custom Essay Service uncovered the names of hundreds of Ontario university students, most of whom — it would appear — are from York. Without any charges having yet been laid against Custom, it seems that some universities have gone beyond simply assisting the crown in its investigation and have been using evidence seized in the course of a criminal matter to proceed with their own disciplinary actions against students using Custom for whatever purpose — typing services, tutoring, plain research or the purchase of essays. Rumours reaching the city core speak of McCarthy-style hearings at York, complete with insinuating phone calls late at night, deals being made behind closed doors, threats of expulsion for those who fail to co-operate, and students accusing other students.

Perhaps the modern university

has fallen so far from its traditional ideals that contemporary academics can be entirely sanguine about compromising university autonomy, violating the civil liberties of students, encouraging the police to act in areas possibly outside their jurisdiction, and reaffirming the hegemony of administrative values over educational ones within the university, but at least let us be clear about what issues are involved when the academy and the state collude.

The principle of university autonomy is one for which academics have fought since the middle ages. When the COU declared that it will assist police in their investigation of Custom Essay, this principle was compromised.

When the university takes disciplinary action against students based on evidence seized in the course of a criminal investigation, the civil liberties of students have been violated, as has the unwritten contract of confidentiality between Custom and its clients. If the COU feels comfortable about having academic regulations supersede the laws of the land, will its member individuals also feel comfortable when their medical files are seized in the course of a criminal investigation against a particular doctor or doctors and made public knowledge?

When the university carries on a witch-hunt against the newly-defined *crime* of plagiarism, who is served by this action? Certainly not the uninvolved student body. So many students who have used a typing service, or an outside tutor, or outside research, being threatened with expulsion should leave them intimidated and reluctant to seek information in their discipline from all sources or from any other source or book save those explicitly outlined at the beginning of each course. To do anything else might leave the student open to charges of 'cheating.' Certainly not the professors, since their ability to judge whether a student is competent in the material being taught, or apply such oral and written examinations as will determine the student's competence, is what is being deemed insignificant in comparison to the judgment of administrators. After all, is a mediocre student without the imagination to break the rules more deserving of a degree than an excellent student who is suspected of a violation of academic regulations?

The real beneficiary of such a witch-hunt is the administration,

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