

# Soc. students battle chairman, Dean

by Glenn Wanamaker

Students in the sociology department have charged a professor with general incompetence, forcing the matter before a commission.

Assistant professor Nick Poushinsky, is the target of the charges from students in two classes — 301 and 450A, a graduate level class. The students say he didn't give a clear statement of what was expected from them in the classes, had no convenient office hours and made oral commitments he did not keep.

They also say he missed 37 per cent of the classes in one course and 64 per cent in the other.

A grievance committee, including the affected students, was set up and formalized charges were made known to the Dean of Arts and Science, Guy MacLean. Dalhousie Ombudsman Ian Chambers was also informed of the dispute and it was suggested that a commission of inquiry be set up.

One committee suggested by the students was to comprise two students, two faculty and Chambers as an impartial observer. Sociology Department Chairman Don Clairmont vetoed the idea.

An existing committee, made up of Chambers and Guy MacLean, has met with the students a number of times.

Another committee, established by Clairmont, is called the pro tem undergraduate advisory committee.

After reaching their conclusions they are to report to the faculty executive committee. The two faculty on the pro tem also sit on the executive committee.

The actual role of the Chambers/MacLean committee is not clear. Chambers says that the office of the ombudsman, "is only involved in the role of making sure that the two parties are satisfied that the proceedings were fairly conducted."

"We are not here", he stated, "to look into departmental problems, but to see that the mechanisms are properly used."

Dean MacLean, on the other hand, admitted that he is now involved. This would seem to make it more than just a departmental matter.

The pro tem committee is comprised of two students: Janet Webster and Simon Rasmussen, and two faculty: D. Q. Brodie and Bill Stephens. The grievance committee, whose existence neither Chambers nor MacLean acknowledge, is not satisfied with the value of this committee.

They say that when the pro tem group makes their recommendation on Poushinsky's case, it almost has to agree

with MacLean's personal decision or else he will overrule it. They believe this because Brodie and Stephens are sitting on the two committees.

According to MacLean, the pro tem committee is supposed to make recommendations by March 1. He has already come to some conclusions on the case, though he would not say what they were.

"If they agree with me", said MacLean, "it will be hunky-dory." Asked what he would do if they did not agree, he said he didn't know.

Another interesting point is that no one seems to recognize the existence of the grievance committee. Chambers says there are two groups from sociology that apparently brought charges — the grievance committee and the sociology course union. MacLean admitted to the GAZETTE that he did not recognize the grievance committee because "students should come to me instead of throwing memos around." However, he also admitted that it did exist because it had met with Don Clairmont.

The center of the conflict, Poushinsky, refuses to make any comment at this time as it "might prejudice the inquiry". He feels that both the course union and individuals in his courses are equally

responsible for bringing the charges against him.

Students have pointed out that part of his absence has been due to his second job as a lobster fisherman. They stated that he has a Class A lobster license which deprives a full-time fisherman of a license and sells his catch whenever possible.

The case of Poushinsky, however, seems to have fallen into the background, at least as far as MacLean and Clairmont are concerned. Their struggle seems to be with the sociology students and their course union.

Clairmont set up the pro tem undergraduate advisory committee — without Ian Chambers. The students wanted him as an impartial chairman but Clairmont refused.

MacLean told the GAZETTE that "students seem to want a confrontation which they won't get through me."

Needless to say, the students feel they are being shafted by the department and the Dean. One half of the students that registered at the beginning of the year left the classes taught by Poushinsky by Christmas time and another half dozen left at the end of the first term. This surely indicates some sort of problems in the class.

## Trying to defeat Soc. course union

The Sociology dispute involving Professor Poushinsky reeks. It is no longer an attempt by students to get a professor to improve his classes.

Chairman of the Department, Don Clairmont, Dean of Arts and Science Guy MacLean and all their committees are doing their best to confuse the whole issue. Their struggle is with the Sociology Course Union.

While they refuse to recognize the grievance committee for what seems to be purely strategic and political reasons, they believe that this union is behind it. Thus they are trying to defeat the union rather than properly investigating the charges made against Poushinsky.

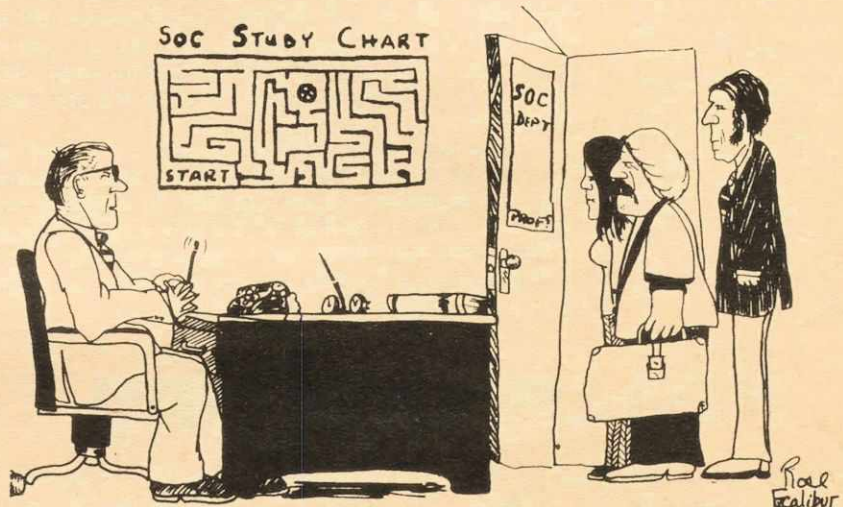
The students have told the GAZETTE, Ian Chambers and Guy

MacLean that they are not trying to get Poushinsky fired. MacLean says he does not believe the grievance committee. He says they are looking for a confrontation which they will not get from him. It sounds much more like he is the one looking for a confrontation with the course union.

Course unions do not help Guy MacLean. The fewer the university has, the easier it makes his job. The same can be said for department chairmen like Don Clairmont.

The students have little hope with the present set-up of commissions. The first student suggestion, which included Chambers as an impartial observer, was unacceptable to Clairmont.

So the committee as it stands has two students



"I'm glad you young people have seen fit to protest non-violently. It shows you're civilized. Now get out."

and two faculty. The important point in this is that the two faculty members on the pro tem committee also sit on the faculty executive committee. The pro tem is supposed to report to the executive group. Thus there seems little chance that the decision will be anything other than a decision of the faculty and MacLean, the people who do not sit in Poushinsky's classes.

It is extremely doubtful that a fair solution will be found in the Poushinsky case because no one but the students are at all concerned with his teaching. Faculty and administration reason that the course union is the problem. Ignore it and maybe it will go away. But poor teaching will stay and we will continue to be screwed.

### The Dalhousie Gazette

CANADA'S OLDEST  
COLLEGE NEWSPAPER

The Dalhousie GAZETTE, a member of Canadian University Press, is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union. The views expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of the Student Union or the university administration. We reserve the right to edit or delete copy for space or legal reasons. Deadline date is the Friday preceding publication.

Co-Editors: Bruce M. Lantz  
Glenn Wanamaker 424-2507  
Advertising and Business Manager:  
Jim Tesoriere 424-2507  
General Calls: 424-2350  
Room 334 — Student Union Building