

Registration from a wheel chair

Editor's note: Many complain about the tiring monotony of going through registration, but what is it like for handicapped people, for example, those confined to wheelchairs? Here is a report on their experiences during registration:

by Eugene Brody

When registration time rolls around every year at the U of A, second, third and fourth year students must go through the long, arduous procedure of a six-part registration system. However, during registration week, there are bound to be tired feet, near exhaustion and a few grumbles about the hassles of registration. But what about the handicapped student, the victim of cerebral palsy who is ambulatory and gets around campus with difficulty or the polio victim in a wheel chair, who has to use ramps and elevators instead of steps and who, for the most part, has to be helped to and from the campus.

One of the biggest problems facing a paraplegic student on campus is when he comes to class and finds that it has been relocated in another building.

Another big problem is faced by those who have classes in the Tory Building. An outside elevator located on the west side of the Henry Marshall Tory Building only goes up to the third floor. To go higher, you have to take the elevator to the third floor, cross over to the main elevators and take one the rest of the way.

The outside elevator is operated by an elevator key. To get a key made, you have to go to the head of your department to fill out a physical plant work form. This form goes to the physical plant maintenance department on campus. Later, the student can pick it up at the General Services Building.

Parking

As for parking, handicapped students are given priority over other applicants.

If a suitable space is not available, one will be created by various means, perhaps by

removing a meter. In some cases where the handicapped person must park in several locations on campus an "All Zone" permit is issued.

Areas on campus marked with a symbol of a person in a wheelchair are set aside for handicapped persons driving hand-controlled vehicles. A special permit is required for persons using these spaces.

Handicapped persons pay the same rate for parking as everyone else. Many students with physical disabilities, however, have their parking fees paid by different organizations. For example, the Workmen's Compensation Board.

Larry Pempet is one who went through registration for the first time this year. Mr. Pempet suffered permanent paralysis from a fractured neck in a car accident in 1966. Prior to the accident Mr. Pempet had worked at Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas Co. at Edson for one year. In 1971, he went to Alberta College to complete his senior matriculation. At present, he is majoring in sociology. The following is Mr. Pempet's procedure during registration:

1) Pempet went to the V-wing of the Physics Building to pick up his registration form and found the entrance to that building excellent for wheelchairs.

2) To get to the Humanities Building, he had to go through CAB, around all the construction. When he arrive at that building, he found many steps and asked a professor to help him. Once inside the building, he was instructed to go to the offices of various department heads. After this

part of registration, Pempet got people to help him down the steps to Saskatchewan Drive. (A ramp is to be installed in the Humanities Building as soon as carpenters are available.)

3) Pempet then proceeded to the Biological Sciences Building where he picked up his cards for his Psychology courses. He found the facilities in the Biological Sciences Building to be excellent. However he found the distance between the Humanities Centre and the Biological Sciences Building too great for a wheelchair. When Pempet arrived there, he found that the ramp was covered with tiles and too slippery for a wheelchair. 4) From the Biological Sciences Building, he went to the Tory Building where he took the outside elevator to the third floor. He then crossed over to the main block of elevators inside the building to get to the Geography and Sociology departments to get his cards. Pempet had to use an elevator key to get to the third floor. When he inserted the key he found that it was too high for him because he was sitting in wheelchair. He also found that there wasn't sufficient time to insert the key.

5) The next stop was to return to the Humanities Centre

to obtain a card for an English course. Once again he had to get help to make it up the steps. After he received the card, Pempet had to get it approved by the English Department. By then it was 4 p.m. and, as is usually the case, all the offices on the campus were closed for the day.

Our first-year student then went to call a taxi but couldn't find a phone in the building. Finally he asked at one of the offices to use a phone. When the taxi arrived at the building, the driver helped Pempet down the stairs.

On the second day of registration, Pempet returned to the main wing of the Physics Building to hand in his registration cards. Next, he went over to the Central Auditorium to have his picture taken for his student identification card and found there was a flight of stairs leading up to the gym. He got three students to help him up the steps. After his picture was taken, he got another group of students to take him down again.

With these experiences still fresh in his mind, Pempet makes

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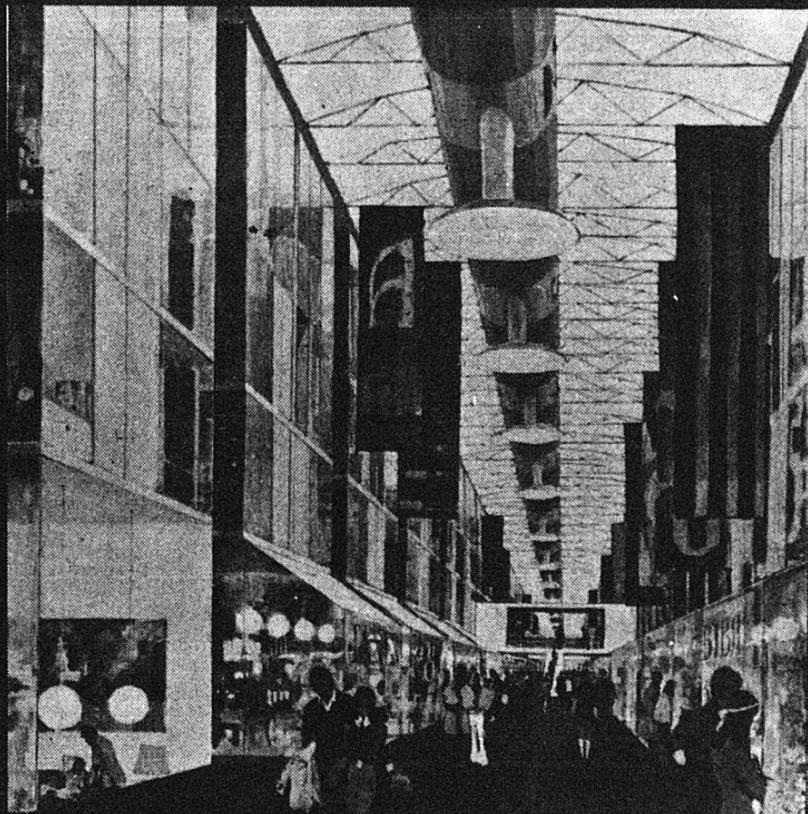
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