

CROSSCANADA

UVic prof suspended over sick leave dispute

by The Martlet

VICTORIA (CUP)—A University of Victoria professor who had co-authored a report saying racism and sexism is prevalent in her department returned to work after a one-week suspension without pay.

The political science professor, Somer Brodribb, was suspended after a dispute with the university over the question of sick leave.

Brodribb had said she could no longer deal with the harassment she'd been facing since the release of the "chilly climate" report in 1993. The report said that a "chilly climate" of sexual harassment was created for female students by male professors.

Brodribb requested a transfer to the women's studies department last semester, which the university is reviewing. In the meantime, Brodribb had asked for stress leave.

She submitted a note from her personal doctor as proof of her need. But the university deemed it insufficient.

"The opinions received from your general practitioner are insufficient to allow the university to assess adequately your condition, prognosis, and treatment plan," reads a letter from vice-president academic Sam Scully.

When the university requested a second opinion, Brodribb refused to submit a list of three psychologists. She also refused to see a psychologist Scully had arranged for her.

Scully sent Brodribb a letter in late February, which said she must return to duties or undergo an examination. Once the examination was done, the letter said, Brodribb would be temporarily relocated to the women's studies department or would be given sick leave if appropriate.

University officials say that since her return, Brodribb has been supervising grad students and doing research.

McGill students cook up co-op cafeteria

by The McGill Daily

MONTREAL (CUP)—In an effort to avoid yet another multi-national food corporation, a group of McGill University students are organizing to provide the campus with an alternative.

Quebec Public Interest Research Group representative Sonja Kleiman presented an ambitious plan for a new student-run co-op cafeteria.

Drawing on the McGill Architecture Undergraduate Society's co-op cafeteria, Kleiman says her long-term goal is to provide affordable food and to promote socially-responsible consumption in a comfortable space with artwork, poetry readings and music.

The McGill student union will be selecting a food and service in the next two weeks. Lisa Grushcow, a student union vice-president, proposed at a recent council meeting that the option for a student-run co-op cafeteria be left open in the new contract.

The motion passed, so now it's up to the co-op organizers to keep the ball rolling.

Kleiman says the group will take its time setting up the cafeteria so that it is successful. If the organizing begins next September, the co-op will be ready for operation by September 1996.

Kleiman says the student co-op would be a non-profit organization. She also proposed the idea of direct fund-raising at the co-op.

Same sex benefits proposed for U of Manitoba staff

by Jeff Oliver, The Manitoban

WINNIPEG (CUP)—A University of Manitoba committee is considering a proposal that would extend employee benefits to same-sex couples.

The Finance and Administration committee considered the matter at a mid-March meeting and says it is in favour of the benefits, provided an accurate estimate of the cost is given.

According to U of M spokesperson Bob Raeburn, the costs involved in extending benefits to include same-sex couples are negligible. "They are deemed to be very minor, like a few thousand as opposed to over 10," said Raeburn. "It's not anticipated that they are going to be large at all."

According to Raeburn, the issue of same-sex benefits was examined for a number of reasons.

The University of Winnipeg is in the process of implementing same-sex benefit packages. Other universities in Canada with this system of benefits include McGill University, Dalhousie University, McMaster University and the University of Toronto.

Co-director of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Students and Staff Paul Jones welcomes the proposed changes. "I have to applaud them for it," says Jones. "It is a very progressive move for the U of M."

Some of the benefits that may be extended to same-sex couples include group life insurance, a dental plan and accidental death and dismemberment life insurance.

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.



Your Dalhousie Student Union council... Who were they? What did they do? Another school year happens and another year goes by where no students know who their student representatives are

PHOTO: MIKE DEVONPORT

Queen's leaves Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance

Out of OUSA

by David Chokroun, The Varsity

TORONTO (CUP)—Queen's university students voted to leave the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) in an annual public meeting of the student body last Tuesday.

OUSA is a provincial lobby group that supports income-contingent loans and tuition increases. "Sitting there watching this happen was unbelievable," said Michael Burns, OUSA's executive director.

Students were to have voted on their membership in OUSA in a referendum scheduled for March 21-22. The referendum was cancelled, though, amid allegations of financial misconduct.

Student council president-elect Keith McArthur spoke in favour of pulling out of OUSA on Tuesday evening.

"The bottom line is that [OUSA] just hasn't provided the financial accountability they should have," McArthur said.

However, McArthur said that he still supports OUSA in principle. "My hope is that this will force OUSA to clean up its house," he said.

University of Toronto student council president Gareth Spanglett said he was pleased by the Queen's vote.

"This has been a long time coming," said Spanglett. "Any group that advocates any form of tuition increases cannot provide a legitimate

voice for students.

Spanglett added, "Releasing fraudulent figures is reprehensible and if that really is the case, then they're getting everything they deserve."

The referendum campaign became embroiled in controversy when members of the Out of OUSA campaign asked the Alma Mater Society (AMS), Queen's student council, to release OUSA's budget and quarterly reports.

The AMS released an operating budget that members of the Out of OUSA campaign said was fraudulent, and it was reported that quarterly reports had not been kept, as required by OUSA's constitution.

The leaders of Queen's pro-OUSA lobby, including McArthur, dissolved the campaign, citing concerns with the management of OUSA's finances.

Members of OUSA maintain that the outcome of Tuesday's vote did not reflect the views of Queen's students.

"My impression is that the meeting was stacked—it wasn't representative of Queen's students," said Barry McCartan, executive director of U of T's Association of Part Time Undergraduate Students, who are OUSA members.

"Something bizarre has happened at Queen's—it seems a host of non-issues, together with a pack of crap from the No side, have led to this negative result," said McCartan.

Burns agreed. "Students have been deprived of their membership in OUSA by a few extremists," said

Burns. "[McArthur] has fallen into a trap, he's become a pawn in their political games."

Andy Bratu Lehrer, chair of the Out of OUSA campaign, dismissed OUSA's claims.

Bratu Lehrer said that Tuesday's meeting reached its quorum of 100 for the first time in several years.

"The fact that for the first time in years, there was quorum at an [annual general meeting] says something," Bratu Lehrer said.

The motion to leave OUSA was supported by 69 students and opposed by 24, with nine abstentions and one spoiled ballot.

Burns said although Queen's joined OUSA through a similar general meeting in 1992, the \$0.95-per-student membership fee for the organization was approved by a student referendum the following year.

OUSA representatives said Queen's' withdrawal will hurt the group, but they are optimistic about the future.

"It's going to hurt. In terms of revenue, it's a loss of about \$21,000," said Burns.

However, he said the universities of Western Ontario and Waterloo recently passed referendums to remain in OUSA and increase the membership fee from \$0.95 per student to \$1.95.

Brock University, another OUSA member, will be holding a similar referendum in September.

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"Ideally we would like to have it in the next two weeks," says Simpson. "But because the writ wasn't dropped at the last council meeting [March 14], it probably won't be."

But Tom Golem, a student council vice-president, dismisses the complaints and the board's decision as "a stupid waste of money," and says there is still a chance for the council to overrule the constitutional board.

If five-ninths of the council members vote against the board's ruling at a future meeting, then the CFS referendum will stand. But Golem says, "There are enough No committee members on council. It is probably

not going to be overturned."

Whenever the new referendum is held, Mancinelli and the CFS say they are confident of another victory.

"We won a clear majority of over 300 votes last time, and we're sure it'll happen again."

While the CFS is going back to the polls, next year's finance commissioner says the real problem lies with a council that is trying to impose its own mandate against the wishes of the electorate.

"Council really wants to be a member of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations [CASA]," says finance commissioner-elect Jamey Heath, therefore the council is trying to drop its obligation to the CFS.

CASA is a new and smaller student lobby group that has been trying to sell itself in opposition to the CFS. The Carleton student council voted to become a member of CASA on March 14. There are no plans to hold a referendum on membership in the organization.

Some councillors, including Kivimaki, openly endorse the new organization. "I'm against Carleton being a member of the CFS," he says.

But Heath says students voted to stay in the CFS, and never gave council a mandate to enter into the CASA. Because the two organizations' policies generally oppose each other, Heath says, "It is absurd that they're joining."