



# What is your degree worth?

## University grads earn \$5,000 more than community college grads

by CHERYL CHASE WOODS

The journey from the educational system to the job market has never been easy . . . and probably never will be," says Jean Charest, Minister of State for Youth.

And, let's face it, there's something about the blood, sweat and tears of acquiring a degree — moving one step closer to the sometimes elusive BA, BEd, BSc, MA, PhD — that can challenge even the most eloquent to conjure up solid reasons for its usefulness in today's job market.

Without a doubt, the paranoia is greatest on those nights and days when words refuse to form into semi-sensible sentences, or theorems and formulas unravel us. At times, the average two-year length of community college programs can seem attractive when compared to the average three to five years for undergraduate studies, and

a cumulative average of nine or more years for graduate studies.

Is it worth it? Occasionally the fear of striving to acquire a relatively expensive piece of paper that promises "all rights and privileges which appertain to such a degree" can sometimes threaten even the most avid scholar.

Questions about whether the average salary for university graduates is higher than that for community college graduates, about whether university graduates are as likely to enter careers they feel match their major field of study at university, or whether job satisfaction is higher among community college graduates compared to university grads, are legitimate concerns.

Rest assured. According to the 1988-89 edition of Job Futures, Employment and

Immigration Canada's most recent summary of statistics by the Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS), the pursuit of a degree is still viable and applicable to the 20th century job market.

In a summary of the 1984 National Graduate Survey of 1982 post-secondary graduates, a comparison of graduates from trade/vocational, community college, undergraduate, masters and doctoral programs revealed the following: the average salary in 1984 dollars was \$300 higher for community college graduates than for trade/vocational graduates, nearly \$5,000 higher for university undergrads when compared to community college graduates, and a whopping \$10,000 difference between salaries received by masters and doctoral graduates.

If monetary gain is not your goal, the same survey also found that 90 and 95 per cent of graduates from masters and doctoral programs respectively felt their current job matched their major field of study. In comparison, 84 per cent of community college graduates and 82 per cent of undergraduate graduates felt the same way. Only 64 per cent of graduates from trade and vocational programs felt their current job directly matched their major field of study.

Grads who were satisfied with their current jobs ranged from 85, 88 and 87 per cent of the trade, community college and university undergraduates respectively, and 92 per cent for graduates of doctoral programs.

Is it worth the struggle? "It's all a matter of degree," some say. Others say: "It's all a matter of choice."

# Asbestos: will they wail till it's too late?

Asbestos. A compound that causes asbestosis, mesothelioma and lung cancer was found in Osgoode Hall Law School at the beginning of June. Was the building evacuated? No. Was the area immediately sealed off? No. Were staff, faculty and students at least cautioned of the potential danger? No.

It wasn't until the end of June that anyone was informed of the incident and advised not to enter Osgoode. It wasn't until July 4 that

the building was finally deemed to present "no significant health risk" by Catherine Tracy at the Department of Occupational Health and Safety.

Sure, the Law School may now be "safe"; and yes, everyone has been informed of the deadly carcinogen — but why was there such a delay? Why did it take Catherine Tracy so long to address her memos to Osgoode faculty and staff instead of just the administration?

These questions still haven't been resolved, and until they are no one will be satisfied. Especially not Osgoode staff members who are disgusted by how this issue was handled — if you look at the entire scope of this situation it's just incredible," declared one of Osgoode's fed-up secretaries, "you can even get into a strike situation."

York's administration has again proven that it doesn't care about the welfare of its students — and

in this case, staff as well. They're more concerned with beautifying the university, as can be seen by all the construction around campus, than protecting the lives of its members.

"People did not feel that there was a serious situation," said Peter Struk, assistant vice-president of physical resources. When will the asbestos issue be taken seriously? When will it be given top priority? All it will take is

another earth tremor like we've had in the past, to shake loose the disintegrating asbestos fibres, explained Ruben Hasson, a member of the Asbestos Removal Committee. And then what? Will this issue then be taken seriously? Or is the administration waiting until it gets sued? Or confronted with a strike situation? Or maybe they're waiting until someone really does fall ill from cancer — and then they'll be convinced. But then they'll be too late.

# Abusive Satanic system calls student "bitch"

by VLATT MORIBUND

Two administrators revealed to *Excalibur* that York's new telephone enrolment system has become possessed by the devil.

"It used to be my voice that the computer responded with," tells one of the administrators, "now the deep, mocking voice of SATAN has replaced it!"

The Voice Response Enrolment System (VRES), which became accessible June 26, is supposed to make enrolment and course changes more convenient by allowing students to enrol "from remote locations using a touch tone phone." However, its convenience was dependant upon it remaining

free from any demonic or other malevolent spiritual influences.

The problem was first discovered when a fourth year arts student contacted *Excalibur* after attempting to verify her courses on July 3. She said, in an interview with this reporter, that the voice told her that she has been condemned to take a third year macroeconomics course and a fourth year handball course for all eternity.

"The voice then laughed and called me a bitch," she said, "but I'm a humanities major!"

Father Tek Pandoras, a visiting lecturer from Harvey Mudd College, California, was called in by the administration to exorcise the devil from the computer. He informed

*Excalibur* that a similar problem plagued the Mudd library computer. The deceased ex-wife of the founder of Mudd College haunted the computer for about seven years, until finally vanquished to the nineteenth level of the outer planes of existence.

"We hope the same could be accomplished for the York system," says one of the administration, "but I expect more difficulty, considering it's SATAN that we're dealing with."

If all goes well, the computer should reopen for enrolment in a few days. If it doesn't, well, you all better start purchasing programmable calculators and building up the calluses on your hands.

# Administration attempts to explain VRES to student

Student Brian Archdekin wrote to York president Harry Arthurs outlining his frustrations with the Voice Response Enrolment System. The following is the response he received.

Dear Mr. Archdekin:

President Arthurs has forwarded to me a copy of the letter you sent him earlier today. As one of the people in the Faculty of Arts responsible for trying to get the voice response enrolment system to work for the benefit of as many people as possible, I am grateful for any positive suggestions for improvement.

I am sorry that you and many other students have had a frustrating time getting access to the computer system and it is clear that something will have to be done to avoid a repeat of this situation in 1990-91. However it must be remembered that a very large number of students have successfully enrolled with a minimum of inconvenience, and more

would have been able to do so if the lines had not been frozen by callers who dialed repetitively (sometimes with the aid of a computer) too frequently for the Bell switching equipment to handle. Even now, with some 60-70 per cent of the Year 3 and Year 4 projected enrolment complete, there are very few closed courses, so that students who took our advice and waited until next week to call again will probably get most, if not all, of the courses they want. It is also worth noting that some courses where spaces have been reserved for particular categories of students (e.g., year 4 majors) will be releasing those spaces for general enrolment, when it appears that those for whom they were reserved have had adequate opportunity to get them — at the latest, by August 16. Students who try again after that date may find that something that was closed is now open again.

Admittedly, some students will not get all of the courses in which they hoped to enrol, but that is inevitable with any system of enrolment, as long as there are

any courses in which spaces are scarce. You observe that "in the past enrolment was preferential to those who were able to request their courses before the deadline." I'm not sure what you mean by this, but I can assure you that when people faithfully submitted their brown envelopes at early enrolment in the past, there was no guarantee whatsoever that they would get all (or indeed any) of the courses they requested. They were not even dealt with on a first-come/first served basis, but simply by year level and major (as voice response does, but with the addition of first-come/first served). I assure you that many were disappointed.

You observe that little has yet been done to improve the system, despite our finding that it has been subject to extraordinarily heavy demand on several days. (Not all days, by the way; the lines were noticeably quiet last Friday.) You should know that inquiries were made about getting another unit that would have added some 16 lines to the system, but delivery could not be arranged in time to

be useful. We were relying initially on the experience of other institutions which had suggested that 31 lines would be more than ample. I should also point out that the freeing up of on-campus phones in the Arts Advising Centre (however imperfect) was a response to the initial heavy demand and necessitated our employing manual enrolment for the first year students coming through the Centre. Probably the worst way in which to react to a series of problems with a new system is to begin restructuring the system fundamentally before the experience is complete. We knew (and told anyone who was listening) that the first time through would be difficult and that we would learn from the experience and improve the system where possible. When we have been "through" the exercise once, we will review in a serious way where we have been and what problems we have encountered. I hope we will also canvass the advantages of this system with a minimum of distress. At that point, and not in mid-stream, we will consider major changes.

I am grateful to have your suggestion regarding an alternative enrolment system, but you will appreciate that we can ill afford to run two entire systems. I think we must consider, however, some way of providing people a human contact who can do something to help them when the system is overloaded. All of those involved with voice response will be looking for a constructive suggestions when we begin to review our experience. I presume we will canvass widely for suggestions, and I hope you will let us know your views at that time.

Yours truly,  
R.J. Drummond,  
Associate Dean

## correction

*Excalibur* apologizes to Student Affairs for the inaccuracies in the article "Students not happy with the phone system" in the July 6 issue. Students having difficulties should call Student Records at 736-5440.