

Report deals with problem of sexual harassment

by Charlene Sadler

A professor falls in love with one of his graduate students, repeatedly invites her out, calls her and writes love letters. While the student admires him as a scholar, she is uninterested in reciprocating and becomes disturbed by his unwanted attention. Her work in other courses starts to suffer. Although she has considered complaining to the departmental chair, she realizes the chair and the faculty member are colleagues and friend. In addition she does not wish to endanger the reputation of her professor.

This is one of the many scenarios the recent ratified *Report on Sexual Harassment* is intended to deal with.

The report defines sexual harassment as any sexually-oriented behaviour of a deliberate or negligent nature which adversely affects the working or learning environment. This can range from openly repeated sex-

ual solicitation to sexually-oriented remarks that degrade a person.

All too often this type of harassment goes unreported.

In a 1982 survey conducted by the Dalhousie Student Union, the vast majority of the 100 respondents reported having experienced sexual harassment by fellow students, faculty members or other members of the university community. The ombuds office on the other hand only receives less than three complaints per year.

"All you have to get is a few cases to see there exists a problem," says Peter Rogers, assistant ombud. When cases were reported it was hard to handle them because of the absence of guidelines.

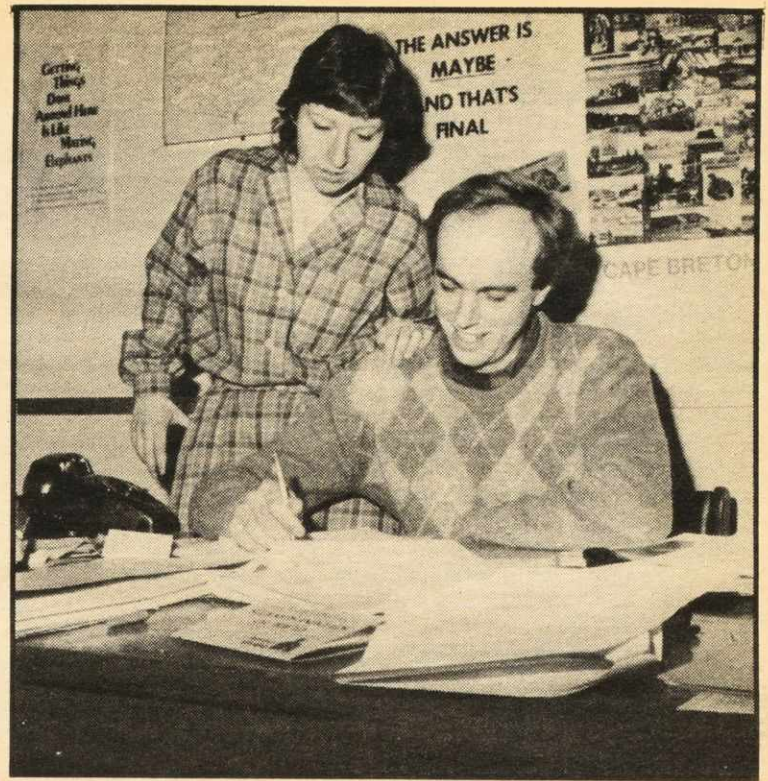
To remedy this, the ombuds recommended an annual report on the subject. The Presidential Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment came up with *A Plan for Positive Action*.

The advisory committee, chaired by education professor Toni Laidlaw, was given the mandate to define sexual harassment, devise procedures for dealing with cases of sexual harassment on campus, and propose measures for education on the issue. Its membership was composed of both women and men drawn from a cross-section of interested parties and groups—faculty, staff, undergraduates, administrators, graduate students and counsellors. Each of these groups regularly reported to the whole committee where progress and proposals were further analysed, discussed and refined. After three drafts and much discussion, a final document was completed.

With the two types of standard procedures, one formal and the other informal, the committee is hoping to be able to deal more easily with complaints.

Before the procedures were developed, sexual harassment victims were not sure how to submit a complaint. There were three major reasons that inhibited people from complaining: they did not know what constituted sexual harassment; they did not know what could be done about a complaint; and they did not realize there was an equitable way to handle the procedures.

"We're not trying to impede the course of true love," says Laidlaw. Often, she says, harassors do not understand and do not intentionally mean to intimidate.



Kim Turner and Peter Rogers of the Ombuds office. Rogers says that when cases of sexual harassment come their way they had trouble handling it because of the lack of guidelines. This has been remedied with the ratification of the Report on Sexual Harassment.

International students elect new executive

The Executive of the International Students' Association (ISA) under the leadership of Dora Maria Carbonu, President, wrapped up its term of office over the weekend at a hand-over ceremony at the Association's annual farewell party held on March 30th at the SUB Garden.

The new Executive comprises Majid K. Addo, President; Fye Wong, Vice-President; Sunil Sharma, Rep on Council; Benawara Hanwant, P.R.O.; Kwame Siriboe, Treasurer; and Manohar Suppiah as the Acting Secretary. These officers were elected at the Association's annual general meeting held on March 22nd, 1984.

The out-going Executive members are Dora Maria Carbonu, President; Ruth Dorsett, Vice-President; Yorgo Berdos, Rep on Council. The others are Fye Wong, Secretary; Brinda Juttun, Treasurer; Reza Rizvi, Student Affairs, and Pradeep Pachai, P.R.O., who all resigned before the end of term due to "personal reasons".

As a tribute to Dora and Ruth, who are graduating this year, for their relentless and dedicated service to the Association, the I.S.A. presented them with a parting award and thanked all the Executive and individuals who contributed in one way or the other to the splendid success of I.S.A. this year.

For the first time in the history of I.S.A., the Student Union presented the Association with a merit certificate for its excellent contribution to the extra-curricular life of the University. The Student Union also awarded a certificate of merit to Dora for her able leadership, Fiona for her dedicated service to the Association even though she was not in an Executive position, and to Reza for his tremendous contribution to student life at Dal. I.S.A. congratulates these individuals and appreciates this recognition by the Student Union.

The out-going Executive takes this opportunity to wish the new Executive under the leadership of Majid, more successes.

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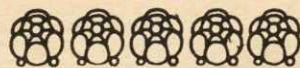


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