

# York administration increases fee increase

By Murray H. Miskin

With the exception of York University, students at every university across Ontario this year will be paying \$100 more in tuition fees than last year.

At York University, undergraduate fees have been increased \$105 to \$765, while fees at Osgoode Hall Law School have been increased \$112 to \$765. Although the per student additional increase amounts to only \$5 and \$12 respectively, the York administration will net close to \$100,000 in extra fees.

There is a province-wide \$100 fee increase for university students and

a \$75 increase for community college students this year. This is a result of the Ontario cabinet's decision last November to increase the student portion of education costs, while reducing the government portion.

The tuition increase was widely condemned by student and other organizations as a regressive measure which would only reduce the ability of low and middle income persons to afford higher education. Student organizations disturbed by a perceived decline in the quality of education in Ontario over the past few years, campaigned against the fee increase with the slogan "Why

pay more for less?"

Among the groups opposing the fee increase was the York University Senate. Despite their objection the York Board of Governors (BOG) agreed to pass on the \$100 increase plus an additional surcharge.

York University executive vice-president George Bell, denied a charge of deception stating that "the fee structure for 1977-78 was developed during the winter-spring period and placed before the Board of Governors on April 11, 1977. It was approved and communicated to all faculties . . . on April 21, 1977".

Bell is believed to have been referring to the arts and sciences

calendar, released on April 21, as the form of communication of the fee structure. At no time was the fee surcharge of \$5 and \$12 publicly explained by the administration.

## NEAREST TWO-BITS

Student leaders did not discover the surcharge's existence until early July. CYSF President, Paul Hayden, questioned John Becker (a university assistant vice-president) about the increase, and Mr. Becker suggested that it had something to do with rounding off the per course fee to the nearest twenty-five cents.

Pursuing the matter further, Paul Trollope (external affairs vice-president, Osgoode Hall Legal & Literary Society) wrote to university financial vice-president Bill Small on July 14. In addition to demanding an explanation for the extra fee increase, Trollope charged the administration with deception.

"It adds insult to injury," said Trollope, "that after having ignored the wishes of students and the York Senate, the York administration seems to have unilaterally and arbitrarily decided that fees will be even higher than was publicly announced. This latest manoeuvre seems obviously deceptive in that the administration is saying one thing to students when they are on campus and doing another when they have left."

## DIVIDING BY 30

Forty-six days later, on August 31, Bell responded to the Osgoode letter. Bell stated that the BOG is responsible for "the financial management and, indeed, the financial viability of the

university."

He went on to say that government operating grants cover only a portion of the costs faced by the university and that "as a result of inflation in all areas, it has become necessary to adjust the fee income portion of the financial equation to meet such changes."

Bell continued by stating that the government's funding policy for 1977-78 necessitated a general tuition fee increase of "at least \$100 . . . the responsible committee considered it important and desirable that the fees of all full-time undergraduate day faculties should be uniform . . . it was also necessary under the credit system to establish a full-time tuition fee that could be easily divided by 30 so that the various fee collecting points could access fees or make refunds on a per credit or per course basis with a minimum of change-making."

Each full year course is considered to be six credits towards a degree and thus a student taking five courses would be earning 30 credits in a year. With tuition fees at \$760 a \$100 increase) one credit would cost a student \$25 1/3. Rounding upward to the nearest twenty-five cents the fee charge per credit is \$25.50 for a 30 credit total fee of \$765.

## LAW IS FULL-TIME

At its meeting of September 1, the Osgoode Hall Legal & Literary Society executive found Mr. Bell's explanation unsatisfactory. The law students' council believes the administration has acted in a deceptive and unethical manner.

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## Faculties, colleges are effected

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"lack individuality", and "students enter them in a purely mechanical and arbitrary manner".

The commission recommends that related academic departments be moved into the colleges. Thus a so-called "College of Letters" would include the departments of history, philosophy, political science, english, french and foreign literature, for instance. Other colleges would be: general studies, social and environmental studies, and Glendon and Atkinson colleges. The president's commission also suggests cutting the number of faculties from ten to six, and creating new posts for top administrators. These moves would effectively eliminate the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Environmental Studies.

Said Associate Dean of Arts Roddick Byers in his resignation letter dated April 27 (he has since been "prevailed upon" to stay), "It is my firm belief that many of the recommendations of the president's commission for the goals and objectives of the university, particularly the break-up of the Faculty of Arts, are contrary to the best interests of the university . . . the report, if implemented in its present form, would result in very serious damage to the liberal arts program of the university." It would lead to (1) "further proliferation of independent academic units; (2) the splitting of the university into two classes of academic units - colleges and faculties - which would 'compete for the university's resources'; (3) the establishment of two types of

faculty members - teachers and researchers; (4) the 'demise of general education and interdisciplinary studies', and (5) increased cost and complexity of administration."

## REPORT "SHODDY"

These sentiments were echoed in many quarters of the university after the report appeared. At a public meeting in early May, for which more than 500 professors and staff members gathered, Professor David Lumsden said, the report is "shoddy, pernicious, and detrimental to the well-being of York." During that meeting the members of the commission were repeatedly asked to explain the intention of their recommendations.

In a brief to senate the council of the Faculty of Environmental Studies stated, "while supporting the objective to strengthen interdisciplinary work at York, we are in absolute and total disagreement with the proposal to change our status as a faculty to that of a 'graduate programme'" (which would happen if F.E.S. became part of the College of Social and Environmental Studies).

While originally the senate was to debate and pass the report at a special two-day meeting at the end of May, senate decided by a straw vote to study the report over the summer and to prepare a report for a special meeting on October 13. At present, disparate sections of the report are being weighed by the committees of senate.

## HE WANTED DEBATE

Asked whether he was surprised by the vehement reaction to the commission's report, President Macdonald said, "We have ac-

complished what we have set out to do, which was to get a sense of what senate felt about various decisions that have to be made . . . It would have been a pretty sad sign had it (the report) been ignored. One wants a vigorous debate." But, he added, "I do not think the commission report will be implemented in all its aspects."

Said Professor Byers, who has been persuaded to continue as associate dean of the faculty of arts, "Many faculty members feel there is a real need for academic reorganization. There is a great amount of goodwill to bring about change among the faculty, despite the report's original reception. I hope they (the senate committees) will come up with some constructive recommendations."

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