

# the gateway

Edmonton, Alberta vol. 63 no. 40

## prof's removal sparks protest

by deena hunter

Students in two political science classes are protesting the decision to relieve a professor of teaching duties for allowing his students to mark themselves.

For the past two weeks the Political Science Department has hosted a conflict that has been an underlying issue for many months.

While appearing to surface only within the confines of a microcosm, the effects of the conflict are being felt beyond this.

On the first level the role of administrator, teacher and student are being questioned; on a different plane professional decisions vs. personal decisions are being debated. Eventually, the conflict will be analysed from an ideological perspective.

The conflict began with the marking method implemented by Conrad Morrow, Assistant Professor of Political Science. It was established by Morrow in September that students in his classes could grade their own term work, ultimately, assess themselves. Morrow teaches three courses: 390, Political Behavior, 492, Psych. of Politics and 695, a graduate level course. Last fall, the department was unaware that this marking system was being used.

Inadvertently, through casual conversation, one of Morrow's students commented on his marking system to an administrator in the department. This was the first knowledge the administrator had of it and an investigation was launched.

J. Meekison, chairman of the Poli Sci Dept, sent several letters to Morrow in efforts to remedy the situation, or rather the ideological dilemma: When a professor decides not to evaluate his students, countless implications arise.

For example, the power structure of the university is questioned: If the students can evaluate themselves, why do the teachers have so much power, both academically and financially?

If one of the unstated aims of the university student is to achieve high grades and be rewarded with a degree, can one group completely deny the existence of these ideals?

And, of course, the logical question, should one group of students be allowed to grade themselves by themselves, and others not?

Conrad Morrow and Meekison did come to terms in December when Morrow agreed to conduct a final examination in his classes. Meekison said in an interview yesterday that he condones student evaluation to a certain degree; however he would like to see experimental control groups established and the results studied before entirely adopting the system.

On February 16 Conrad Morrow approached Meekison again, indicating to him that he could not continue with what he termed 'a sham'. Morrow feels that "students are the best authority regarding themselves" and that the present evaluation system "is a sham that satisfies administrative rules". He said he could not act as a transmitter of marks.

The matter has already been discussed by the dean, the VP academic, and an executive committee.

According to Section 117 in the

University Handbook the Chairman of the Department has the authority to relieve a professor of teaching responsibilities, and this action was used against Conrad Morrow. He does, however, retain all other privileges including research, committee involvement, office use, etc.

Meekison mailed letters to all students concerned on Feb. 19 and Feb. 28. He explained that five teachers would handle Morrow's classes and marks would be assessed with 40% on term work, in effect 4 of a possible stanine 9 would be 'self-assessed', and 60% on the final exam with the option of combining a term paper with the final exam.

Accordingly, some students feel it is unfair to base such a large percentage on the latter part of the

year and to impose a different system with only one month remaining.

To counteract this, the 390 class has taken up a petition asking that Morrow be allowed to continue teaching; the 695 class was to plan action at a meeting this morning.

Conrad Morrow has stated that if the students feel strongly enough to support him, he will appeal the decision.

Morrow added that the administration's action was "no great conspiracy" and that a main factor was the "limited understanding of human relationships" and of course, the system itself.

Morrow had indicated last fall that he intended to resign effective June 30, 1973, and that his plans extended outside of the university.

student reps scold Board as

## student health row boils over

Long-simmering student discontent with the Board of Governors' student health fee boiled over at last Friday's meeting of the Board.

At issue was the board's recent decision to charge the \$10 supplementary fee again next year even though it had not answered student questions and objections raised when the fee was imposed last summer.

In a letter to the board from the Grad Student Association, secretary Peter Flynn said "our understanding was that while the fee would stand for the 1972-73 academic year, it would be seriously re-evaluated and the points and questions raised in our brief would be considered and answered." Flynn, newly seated as the grad rep on the board, asked that the question be re-opened.

A similar letter from SU vp-academic Patrick Delaney said "in view of the concern expressed by the Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association at the time when this fee was first proposed, I find it reprehensible that the Board would take this action without seeking the opinion of these two groups."

University president Max Wyman said that his memory of last summer's discussions differed from the students'

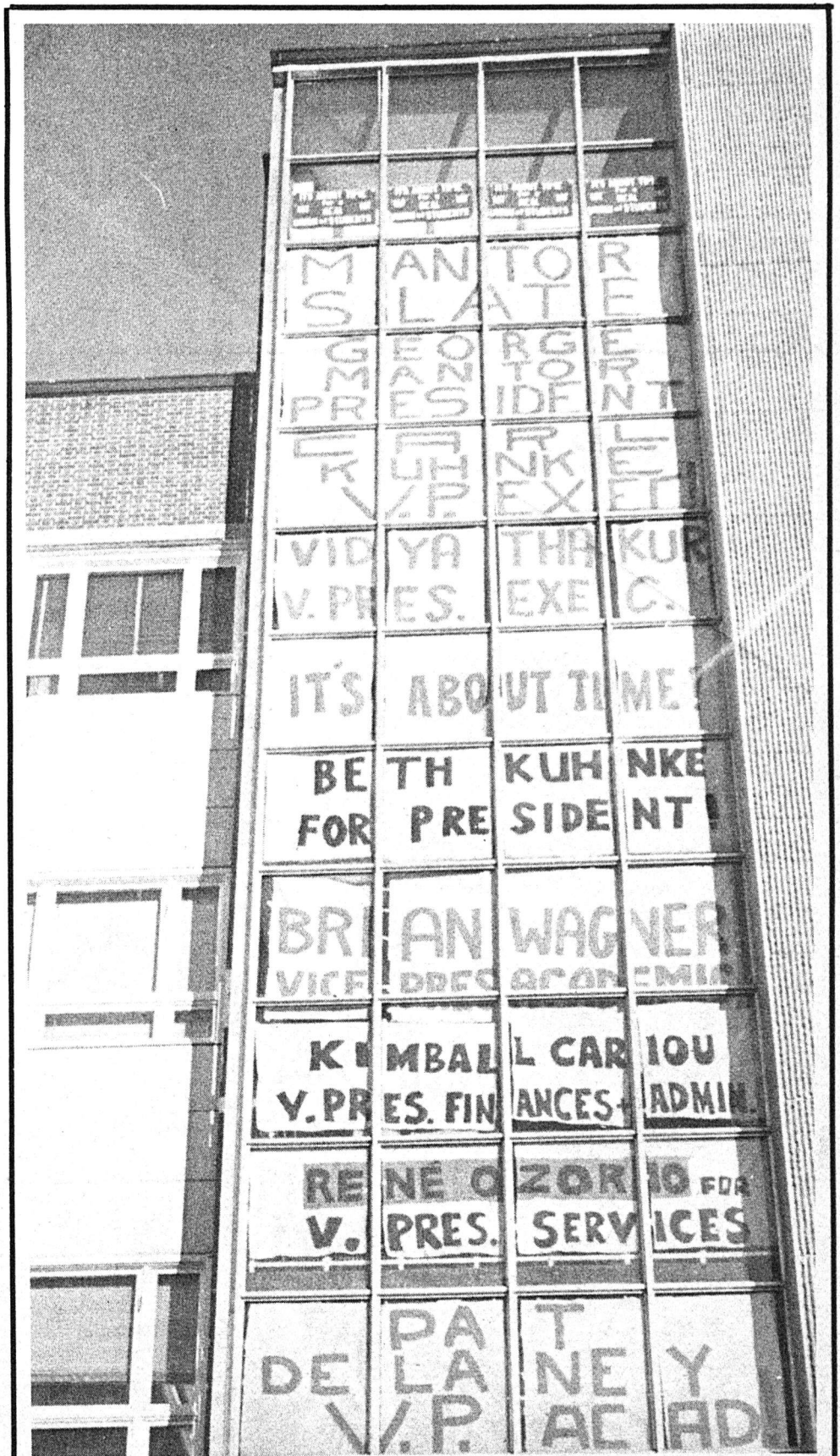
He said that he could remember no promise to the students that the board would consult them when the fee came up for renewal.

Flynn replied that even if there was no formal promise to confer with students, he was concerned that student objections were never answered by the board. "When a person takes substantial time to ask the board to explain its policies," Flynn said at the meeting, "I would be surprised that the board would not answer."

Wyman failed to prove his point with a review of the board's minutes to determine whether a promise had been made to students. Board secretary John Nicol said that while he found "no promise to the GSA," there was "every evidence that students would be consulted."

University vp-finance Lorne Leitch pointed out that the two undergrad representatives on the board, SU president Gerry Riskin and Frans Slatter had both voted in favour of the renewal of the fee. Neither was at the Friday meeting.

The finance committee of the board agreed to meet with student representatives to review objections made in the briefs submitted last summer.



Campaign posters for Friday's Students' Council executive elections replace the ads for Engineering Queen candidates which climbed the windows of the old Engineering building just a few weeks ago. Special election supplement inside.