

U.S. Student Destroys University Idols

By DEBORAH BEATTIE
MICHIGAN DAILY
If one of my classmates were to tell me now what I was told by President Hatcher at a freshman orientation convocation in the fall of 1961, I would wonder if he and I had really been attending the same university.

In spite of all the positive indoctrination of orientation week, it didn't require many semesters to discover that the University is not ideal - it's not even a Harvard, Midwestern or otherwise; that, though our class, like every class coming after it, was the "most intelligent class ever to enter the University," few of its members would be either intellectually stimulating or intellectually stimulated; that, even if the University is cosmopolitan in appearance, it is seldom so in attitude; that the boastful prediction, meant to be a challenge, that "it is difficult to do well at the University," is not true.

But it takes much longer to discover what makes the University an admirable institution in spite of its failures. This is something that can't be explained in an orientation session, because the value of the undergraduate education at the University can't be blanketed assessed for the student body as a whole; it is a very personal value that must be discovered by each individual in terms of his own hopes, needs, frustrations and fulfillments at the University.

DISCIPLINES
I have spent three years here. I lived in a dormitory and in a sorority. I sampled a variety of literary college disciplines, changing my intended major four times. I worked on The Daily, which gave me contact with a broad spectrum of administrators, faculty and students and their schemes and philosophies - or lack of them.

Some of these confrontations were stimulating and rewarding, some just fun and many disappointing. I spent one of my undergraduate years as a student in Paris, which gave me a chance to test by comparison the value of a University education.

At the end of this, I understand the University only enough to say that it is neither excellent nor bad, I'm not sure that it can ever be excellent, but I know it can be better.

I can't define an ideal University for anyone but myself, because what I sought from the University may be totally unlike

what the other 29,000 students here are seeking. I have wanted different things from the University. Some days I wanted to be inspired by a professor, filled with somebody else's ideas; some days I wanted to do nothing but read The New Republic; some days I was too tired to want anything at all.

FAILINGS
If there is such a thing as an ideal university, perhaps it is one where every student is free to form and pursue his own philosophy of education - and change it. But this isn't possible at the University. There is too much structured education here, too many unnecessary requirements. There isn't enough time to think and explore. Minds stay closed, dreams don't grow, partly because that kind of growth is rarely demanded here except on somebody else's terms.

Many of the University's failings are structural. An undergraduate degree is practically guaranteed to anyone who stays around for at least eight semesters. Consequently, just getting a degree and getting out has become the obvious and encouraged undergraduate goal. The formula for attaining it is a simple one: take 15 credit-hours per semester and get at least a C in every course.

It doesn't matter if the whole course is forgotten the day after the final exam is completed and the final grade is in (unless it is a prerequisite, in which case you are expected to wait a year or so before forgetting it). After that the degree-granters only count points; knowledge isn't questioned again. All one has to do is show a specified (not to be confused with lasting) level of competence eight times in four years and he can pass Go and collect.

GETTING STARTED
The University attempts to make the game meaningful by building in guarantees that undergraduate's "liberal education" will be well chosen and well earned - distribution requirements, counselors, final exams - but they don't assure a good education; in fact, they often make it more difficult to attain one.

Distribution requirements - mandatory insurance of broad academic acquaintances - do more harm than good. Education should be personally defined; the University cannot possibly know what academic approach will be best for each student. There is

more value in discovering for oneself what will be the most meaningful area of intellectual effort, and to what degree, and from what directions the major area or areas of study will be pursued.

If a student comes to the University undecided about his academic interests, then he will sample independently a variety of disciplines. If a student comes determined to bury himself in nothing but mathematics, then he should be able to start out just that way. Sessions with his cohorts in other disciplines probably will induce him to explore other fields. And, if not, he may discover a vital mathematical principle that much sooner.

I can't believe that a semester of watering geraniums in the botanical gardens advanced my education a great deal, but it partially completed my laboratory science requirement. It filled a small hole and left a greater gap. The ideal of the Renaissance man may well be outdated in the 20th Century.

BUREAUCRATS
Adequate academic counseling would be the best replacement for distribution requirements, but with the present counseling arrangement, adequacy is out of the question. Counselors, too busy with administrative red tape, rarely have time to be real academic aids. They often blunder, and the student is forced to suffer the consequences of their miscalculations. Once a freshman has been initiated into the intricacies of the University's system of checks and balances, he should not again be forced to check in with a counselor unless he desires his advice. Freed from hours of required checking and signing, counselor-politicians could become counselor-teachers with more nearly sufficient time to give thorough academic advice to those who truly want and need it.

Secretaries, not faculty, should be hired to deal with the unavoidable bureaucratic procedures of pre-classification and registration. They undoubtedly would be more efficient.

EXAM TIME
Final exams, in principle the ultimate check on the quality of academic efforts, have lost their meaning here due to trimester pressure. Finals have become hurried, unstimulating, hardly a means of demonstrating a serious, lasting learning effort. In

stead, the student who has only a superficial grasp of a subject has an advantage because he is better adapted to the once-over-quickly approach.

In two hours such a tiny portion of the course material can be covered that students can't possibly show what they have learned, and teachers can't evaluate what they have been able to teach. But even before the reign of the two-hour final, the University's exam system was inadequate. A week-long reading period is essential if finals are to have any relevance to a learning process. This seems to be coming slowly and will be a big step forward.

What I would like most to have incorporated into the examination structure is a system of comprehensive examinations for seniors. Not only is this the best way to measure the total worth of the hours put into obtaining a degree, but it would encourage students to retain learning and create intellectual correspondences as they pass from course to course.

SURFACE DEEP
My deepest distress with the University, though, has not been with administrative failings but with the students' attitudes, my own certainly included.

The University is extolled as a magnificent and cosmopolitan intellectual body. But this is true only on the surface. The value of a geographic admissions policy and the impressive number of foreign students enrolled is lost. Students seldom make an effort to understand or integrate themselves into groups or ways of life that differ from the ones they knew before coming here.

The fate of the foreign student at the University is a sad testimony to this inability to integrate. Foreign students rarely get beyond the English Language Institute or the International Center. They are something to look at during the annual world's fair at the Union. A few have American "big brothers," but in general they are a group apart - not welcome, just unnoticed.

In a sense it is not surprising that tight University circles don't open up to include foreign students. Even East and Midwest, U.S.A., often seem to mix uneasily here. Long Islanders want to recreate Long Island; Birmingham, Michigan, reproduces itself on a smaller scale. Not until such groups realize that it is

not particularly beneficial to bring their city limits to the University, will it seem worthwhile to make more difficult acquaintances with foreign students.

SMALL TALK
And, speaking of tight little circles, I think first of the group whose circle is made secure with Greek symbols. Having spent a little more than a year in this system, I give whole-hearted approval to Regent Sorenson's proposal to deny University recognition to fraternities and sororities. There is a lot to be said for sorority life. It is gracious, comfortable, easy and fun. And social security besides.

I won't quibble about the membership selection procedure, although I don't think it is particularly admirable. I don't claim that a sorority or fraternity has no worthwhile functions: I value the few close friendships I made in a sorority as highly as those I made outside of it. But I am convinced that the essence of the Greek system is anti-academic, and it doesn't merit the benefits of University recognition.

Particularly in the sorority, but also in the dormitory, I encountered another disappointment with University life: classroom discussions remain just that. Sometimes an interesting idea is kept alive long enough to get from Angel Hall to the Union, but it rarely survives a trip to a housing unit.

Not that there aren't plenty of interesting discussions there; thoughts on sex and religion involve entire corridors for hours at a time. But ideas and questions raised in a classroom are rarely shared by housemates, except when someone makes a desperate attempt to find out about everything that might be asked in the next day's exam. Faculty dinners are approached with anxiety or alarm because academic dinner table discussions in housing units are such unnatural phenomena.

WHAT'S RIGHT
Going from a negative picture of the University to the reasons why I have been pleased to be an undergraduate here, the faculty come to mind first. For they have been both good and bad. Usually good.

In three years I have suffered through what seemed an inordinate number of dull, disorganized,

unoriginal and incoherent lectures and recitations, but these were mostly introductory courses (the kind designed to fulfill distribution requirements). I didn't always mind. In fact, it was delightful to find an occasional professor who was dull or did nothing but lecture from a text, since that meant that I could stay home and read a book.

On the whole, I haven't been disappointed with the teachers here. Too often they are hurried and busy. Rarely are they disinterested. I have seldom confronted a professor who was unwilling to discuss and explain outside of class. And many of my negative stereotypes were dissolved by their efforts in the teach-in on Viet Nam.

Aside from the obvious things like the teach-in, APA, cheap cough medicine at Health Service, intriguing lectures, crossing a deserted Diag, all-night philosphizing, The Daily, . . . I find it difficult to describe what is "good" at the University. Not because it is so difficult to find, rather because it seems to change as my ideas and dreams change.

CLASSES HINDER
The closest I can come is to say that the good at the University is whatever stimulates personal development. Most of the good that I found was outside the classroom. Not that classes are worthless in principle, but they often were so in fact.

In class I took notes; outside I discovered what I wanted and needed to learn. I made most of my discoveries at The Daily. The contacts and confrontations it gave me made it possible for me to consider what the University ought to be and why it isn't that way.

But I'm afraid that much of the good at the University is being lost. With trimester pressures haunting everyone, there isn't time to experience it anymore. A student here no longer has time to discover that the rest of the world relates to his classes. Time for The Daily had to be stolen. I missed classes, I didn't sleep. One should be free to be a bookworm and work on The Daily or demonstrate in Selma or write a novel or campaign for Goldwater, if he wants to. I am tempted to say that the latter are more important experiences than attending classes because most courses can be learned from books, whereas the essence of student activities is first-hand experience. Others have different answers - equally valuable for them. The University must become flexible enough to embrace and encourage all kinds of learning.

I don't know what the best solution to preserving this flexibility is. Abandoning trimester? Substituting a system of comprehensive exams for the 120-credit-hour degree requirement? Giving credit for certain student activities? Something must be done to relieve the academic pressure so there will be time left for thinking and feeling. If my young brother should come here some day, I want him to be able to learn, but to be something more than a learning machine.



SADISM AND BUREAUCRACY AT DAL - Top: A sadistic sophomore steps on a frightened freshman in keeping with the painful tradition of initiation at Dal. Bottom: "It won't hurt a bit". That's what they always say, and in the case of the tuberculin test it's true, but this freshman looks like he's not quite sure about the whole business.

CUS deficit grows despite per capita levy and other revenues

LENNOXVILLE (CUP) - The Canadian Union of Students is operating at a loss.

Last year, according to its audited statements, CUS spent some \$2,500 in excess of its revenues.

This year the deficit may well be over \$6,000.

The audited statements and this year's budget were presented at the recent CUS congress held at Bishop's University.

During six days of programming and politicking the congress spent about an hour on the budget brought forward by the congress finance committee.

It consisted of three parts: standing resolutions governing the financial structures of CUS; a core program, required for the actual existence of the Union; and an additional program of action.

The standing finance resolutions, revised and presented by the finance committee, were passed with little debate September 2.

At that time the committee indicated that there might be a deficit of about \$11,000 and chastised the delegates, saying it was "appalled" by what it considered to be a lack of financial responsibility.

The following evening before the proposed CUS budget came before the congress plenary session.

On the basis of a per capita levy of 60 cents upon 135,000 students, plus other small revenues, the budget anticipated revenues of about \$82,150.

Of this total, \$81,617 would be necessary for the core program of salaries, communications overhead, and the like, leaving about \$533 for additional programs, and a deficit of \$10,107.

Four alternatives were proposed: an across the board raise in the per capita levy; voluntary raises in levy by individual universities; specific grants for particular projects; or a cut-back in the program.

By this time it was 11:30 p.m. By midnight, all business, including that of an annual general meeting, would have to be completed.

The chair pointed out that despite some voluntary contributions the program would have to be cut back because of a \$6,000 shortage.

King's College then proposed a motion to raise the per capita

levy to 75 cents.

The motion failed. "The Union," said CUS Vice-President Malcolm Scott, "cannot go on living beyond its resources."

He had sharp words for member universities who "play sugar-daddies" to particular programs.

At 11:45 a motion was carried urging, but not committing member universities to raise their per capita levies to 65 cents.

University of Alberta (Edmonton) served notice that the matter of the 65 cent levy would be brought up at next year's congress.

Birth control advocated on campus

LENNOXVILLE (CUP) - Birth control information should only be given to married couples who are "in trouble" according to a delegate to the recent CUS congress at Bishop's University.

Miss Lee Johnstone, a University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon) delegate, also said birth control information should not be disseminated by student councils or discussed at the congress because "there are other more important topics."

The congress later passed a resolution urging an amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada which would permit the distribution of birth control material.

The distribution of such material is illegal at the present time.

The motion also stated "we must press for advances on our own campuses by encouraging our health services to distribute birth control information to students who require it."

STUDENTS -

(Continued from page 2)

Fredericton, N.B., a week later will deal with democracy in the university community, a subject likely to produce some harsh comment on the administration and the nature of universities.

Students demanding rights, seeking assistance and pronouncing judgments are hardly peculiar to this generation. But it would be folly not to acknowledge that students today are better organized and better armed with facts than their predecessors. They are a political force - and they know it.

Parliament or Punch? Kelly hedges bets

Red Kelly refuses to say whether it will be hockey or politics - or both - this coming National Hockey League season.

Asked if he intended to run for parliament in the coming election or stick strictly to hockey, the veteran Maple Leaf centre said: "I haven't made up my mind about hockey yet."

Well how about parliament? "I won't say anything until after the nomination meeting," replied the Liberal member for York West.

Punch Imlach says you look in better shape than you did at the end of last hockey season, he was told. "I feel great," said Kelly. "I had a fine, relaxing summer. Last summer I was in Ottawa most of the time with a banged-up leg from hockey and I was overweight and in poor shape when camp opened. I played a lot of golf, did a lot of swimming and chores at the cottage and I'm really in the pink this year."

Imlach, continued his questioner, says he still regards you as a member of his hockey team.

"Could be," replied Kelly. He says, Red was told, that if you run for parliament he will treat you like any other employee in any other business in Canada who is running for parliament. That you will be allowed time off to campaign, naturally without pay.

"Shucks, we never get paid until the season starts anyway," said Red. "We play a few exhibition games to make money for the club but we're not on salary."

Imlach has ordered Kelly's equipment sent to Peterborough and he expects Red to show when camp opens Sept. 16.

"Kelly has at least two good seasons left," said Punch. "And, we need him."

An estimated 170,000 visitors have toured the GM of Canada passenger car assembly lines at Oshawa in the past 10 years.

Psych club sets plans for 1966

The Dalhousie Psychology club founded last year recently announced its program for the 1965-66 term.

The club was founded to give interested students a better idea of what the Psychology department does, here at the university, and more generally to provide some knowledge about psychology as a discipline.

Last year several speakers were brought in to speak generally about a number of topics throughout the term. This program proved to be a success

and is being repeated this year.

Some of the lectures already arranged for are: Dr. Aldrey of the Pharmacology dept, on Nov. 4th - Dr. A. Rowood a Social Psychologist from the University of Toronto will address the club on Jan 21st. As an initial program there will be a tour of the Nova Scotia Training School in Truro on October 7th at a time and place to be announced. If any student desires further information they should call Betty Levy at 423-9746.

New cards for students

The Library asks all students to obtain their library cards for 1965-66.

The Library will be open from nine to 12 in the morning and from one to five in the afternoon for the issuing of new cards. The dates for this are from Sept. 13 to 17 and Sept. 20 to 24.

Students are warned that it is necessary to have library cards in order to take out books during the term.

Meet Bernie Hutchinson



He can provide you with

- PERSONAL LIFE INSURANCE
- ESTATE PLANNING
- LOAN REDEMPTION INSURANCE

A consultation may prove invaluable in protecting your personal and business interests - you are under no obligation.

C. BURNELL HUTCHINSON B.A.

London Life Insurance Co.
5516 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, N.S.
Phone 422-1631

SHANE'S MEN'S SHOP

"All that's new in Campus Clothing"

5494 Spring Garden Road Halifax: Phone 432-6565