

Eliminate tenured profs

Dear Editor,

Since the announcement of the cut in transfer payments to the post secondary system, I have been thinking of new ways the university could save money, at the same time, provide better education.

On Jan. 22, myself and six other delegates were at Guelph representing York at the Ontario Federation of Students General Meeting. On this day, we attended a workshop on Academic Freedoms and it was here when I began to formulate the following plan:

The university should abolish tenure and create a contract system. Individual full time teaching staff could sign a five year contract with raises equal to the rate of inflation. This could be negotiated by a review board. The professor would also have to pass a review at the end of the five year period. This review would be based on certain members of the review board dropping in on classes and assessing a professor. This would

(more than enough room for the barrel of any size gun to fit under) is an ineffective deterrent from a would be robber.

No, I think the real reason why these partitions are in place is just another attempt, on the part of the administration, to alienate the students. I honestly felt insulted that I had to stand on the outside of this barrier. At the same time, it occurred to me that the staff were "imprisoned" on the inside, much like birds in a cage or kittens and puppies at the local pet store. I almost felt sorry for them.

I asked the woman working that day what purpose she thought it served, she just shrugged her shoulders and mumbled something about the money. I asked her, only half jokingly, if it was there to keep us out or to keep her in. I didn't wait for an answer, but could her laughter fade as I stormed off to my next class.

Adrian Reynolds



Profs search for value & quality

Dear Editor,

Much seems to have been made by the *Excalibur* editorial writers of a throw-away comment by a single faculty member to the effect that the faculty club has a "stuffy, pompous" atmosphere. If this person finds the York club stuffy, clearly he or she has not been around very many faculty clubs or Senior Common rooms elsewhere in Canada or abroad.

In fact, the York faculty club has a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere, not to mention tasty food. Its problem is that it is now and has always been grossly overpriced — even relative to the Bersani & Carlevalle branch downtown on Bloor West at the edge of Yorkville. When the faculty club was the only alternative available on campus for better quality food, faculty and staff reluctantly accepted its inflated prices — if not without grumbling. Now that more economical and equally pleasant alternatives are available — guess what? — faculty and staff have voted with their feet, turning away from rip-off prices at the faculty club in favour of other eateries.

Weird as professors may seem to students, they are not so different from normal people. They like to get value for money and they resent being ripped off. If the faculty club management finally figures this out and offers more reasonable prices, undoubtedly faculty and staff will return.

Judith Adler Hellman

Winter/Summer cuts necessary

Dear Editor,

Thank you for taking the time to address the important issue of the impending suspension of the Winter-Summer academic term beginning in 1993. I feel however, that it is important to clarify and comment on some important matters you raised.

Owing to the failure of the Ontario government to live up to its promises

regarding 'corridor' funding, the university does not receive support for approximately 1,000 students currently at York. At present, the only revenue the university takes in for those students is the tuition fees, which pay a mere 20 cents of every dollar it costs for a student's education.

The decision to suspend Winter-Summer is not shortsighted, it is short term. Unfortunately your article suggested that I believe this move is shortsighted; I do not. It is the most prudent course of action when compared with other options. The only thing that is shortsighted is the Ontario government, specifically the Premier, Bob Rae. While the NDP has chosen to run a massive deficit by pouring millions, if not billions, of dollars into social programs, students have been left out in the cold.

The Winter-Summer term is not being cancelled, it is only being suspended. I do not believe that we will see it re-emerge until after the next Ontario election, and the defeat of the NDP regime. The Winter-Summer term was specifically tailored to the Ministry of Education's semester system, it is truly a shame that Premier Bob has forgotten this. The time to express dissatisfaction will however present itself to students; the next election is but a few years away.

While I agree that universities have a moral responsibility to teach those in search of an education, I also believe very strongly that they have a defining responsibility to provide a high quality of academic and non-academic services to the students enrolled. Academic integrity must be maintained and ensured. Currently the libraries are overused and understaffed, there are massive lineups for almost everything at York, and classroom size is out of control — 50 students in a tutorial is absurd. York must act to protect its academic integrity, to lower class sizes, and to serve its students better. Lowering enrolment will relieve pressures on the academic programme and services.

The suspension of Winter-Summer does not mean massive layoffs of part-time faculty. Your article mistakenly stated that 70 part-time faculty from Atkinson College would lose their jobs

as a result of this move — this is untrue. As I originally explained, Dean Meininger reported to the senate that Atkinson has had to cut approximately 70 courses for the next year. This will affect many part-time faculty, 20, 30, perhaps more. This is not related to the currently proposed suspension of Winter-Summer.

The decision to suspend the Winter-Summer term is and continues to be a painful dilemma. The university has been forced to decide between its moral obligation to teach all those in search of an education, and its practical ability to provide an acceptable level of quality in its academic programme. It is a painful tradeoff, we all continue to agonize over this choice. The blame however does not rest on the shoulders of the university, it lies squarely upon Queen's Park. It is the Ontario government that has the power to control university funding. Remember one thing: when it comes to post-secondary school education, Premier Bob doesn't make the grade.

Sincerely,
Senator Justin S. Linden,
Chair, Student Senator Caucus,
York University Senate.

Excal helping expose the truth

Dear Editor,

May I comment on Alexandre Sevigny's letter criticizing *Excalibur* for being "black-centric" (whatever that means!).

First of all, I would like to inform Sevigny that it is grammatically wrong (to say the least) to begin nouns with lower case-letters of the alphabet. If one is in any way referring to African people by the colour of their skin, then why don't you say "black people", but if you think it is not necessary to say "people" then why not at least say "Blacks", for God's sake. To show the discrepancy in Sevigny's mind, there is a sentence in the article which reads "Nor can the black community expect the 'White' community to ..." (I rest my case!).

Now to return to the substance of the

letter. *Excalibur's* mistake in the last three or so issues has been, according to Sevigny, the "concentration and importance given to the concerns and complaints of York's (African) community." This is based on the erroneous conception that certain issues that have been addressed in the paper are Black people's issues ('or concerns and complaints' for that matter). Sevigny must agree that all the pertinent issues that are worth discussing are society's issues. Whether it is racism, sexism, poverty, exploitation, slavery, high parking fees, recession or free trade, the ramifications affect the smooth functioning of the society. Let us take racism for example. Racism as an issue concerns the white community more than any other. They are the ones who manufacture and practise and preach racism like a religion. They are the ones who hurt, discriminate, and kill on the basis of race. They are the ones who enslaved others, colonized others, and continue to oppress others till this day.

Sevigny wants us to believe that racism is a thing dug from the obscure past to play on the guilt of the white person? Racism is alive today and it thrives in York University. There is frustration with *Excalibur* this year because it has refused to be an outlet to racist sentiments as it was last year when we were the butt of all the puns, tasteless cartoons, and gibberish. We had to skip classes to attend protests at the bearpit to force remorseless racist editors to resign. It was an ugly racial conflict. This year, *Excalibur* stands for truth (even if it pains), openness, objectivity and respect for the dignity of all. The result has been that the racists have now resorted to toilet walls as their underground newspaper. They cannot have their racist and sexist garbage published in the respectable *Excal* of this year so they are now operating in the men and women's toilets unabated with no censorship or shame. Lastly, I disagree with Sevigny that the excellent article "Forty acres and a mule ain't enough, Jack" was intended to isolate the African community. The bottom line was to educate people like Sevigny of the fact that African people have

Continued on page 7

Letters

eliminate professors who have tenure now and have debateable teaching practices (teachers who are sexist, racist, homophobic, etc.). If the professor marginally passed the review, he/she would be on a two year probation where he/she would be checked on periodically and class evaluations would be taken as a checking system. It would also bring the professors back to earth with reference to issues like job security (issues that everyone else in the working world have to deal with), and maybe professors might care for the student again, instead of letting the part time and teaching assistants do all the work (there are some professors who work hard and don't deserve this comment but it's true for the general population). This would also bring down the ridiculously high salaries and even out the differences between all of the teaching staff.

Another argument for abolishing tenure is that the only other job that is guaranteed for life in Canada is the Canadian Senate and as we all know, nothing of importance ever comes out of there.

Christopher Waghorn,
President of Creative Arts
Students' Association,
and Senator of Fine Arts.

Glass barriers alienate student

To the editor,

As students at York University, we should all feel privileged to walk its teeming hallways, in pursuit of our various scholarly objectives - or the nearest washroom. but what we should be aware of (many, though not enough of us are) is the self-serving bureaucracy that treats us as an afterthought.

Take for instance, the plexiglass partitions at both the student accounts and financial aid offices. Like the thousands of students that pass by everyday I never gave them any thought. But as I was standing in line one day, I realized that it is a physical barrier between the students and the staff on the other side.

Now while this may seem to be a precautionary measure due to the large amounts of money involved, it struck me that both the Bank of Montreal branch and the bookstore, both of which handle comparative amounts of money on a daily basis, have not taken such measures.

It is ludicrous to think that a partition with a four-inch opening at the bottom

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