THE GATEWAY, Tuesday, January 11, 1977. 

Wendy Stringer majors in zoology and likes art. She does well at both, holding an honors average in science. And last year, when she took Art 23I, her work was considered good enough that the instructor retained it all to use as examples for this year's class.

Art 231 is a junior studio course given by the department of art and design, which is technically part of the Faculty of Arts but, actually, an almost autonomous group in what the University calls the "Fine Arts" program. These are departments which give courses leading to the degree of "Bachelor of Fine Arts" art and design, drama, and music. All three are tight departments with a heavy emphasis on narrow specialization: most courses are given almost exclusively for their own students, and they tend to limit their students to their courses. For a BFA degree in art and design, for example, you must (or are allowed to) take English 200 plus one "approved" Arts or Science option per year for four years. All151/2 remaining courses must be in the department of art and design.

Similarly, this department lists 48 studio courses in the current calendar. Only one of these does not carry a note to the effect that it is limited to BFA students or requires "consent of the Department" meaning in effect that you must be a BFA student to take it.

Technically, then, the only drawing course that Wendy could take as an outsider, was Art 231. But she likes drawing, she's good at it, and knows she can learn more. So this year she wanted to audit Art 340, a threehour studio course, one step up from Art 231. However, it carries a note identifying it as "restricted toBFA students."

Auditors are different from students, though; so Wendy thought she'd ask. The secretaries told her "no way" and wouldn't even listen to her ask if there was

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somebody else she could talk to. She managed to find out who the instructor was to be and tried to talk to him. He's only part-time at the university, and couldn't be found. She tried, on and off, from September to

If you have problems you want the "Ombudsman" to help with, or if you're someone who wants to help solve others' problems, contact Dirk Schaeffer at 439-6486 (in person at 1010 Newton Place, 8515-112 St.) or Kevin Gillese in Gateway 432-5178 (Room 282, SUB) or at home, 433-2136.

December, but he just wasn't to be found. The secretaries scowled every time she came near. In December, she came to see me.

Between the two of us, then, we managed to run down the instructor, who agreed that there was room in his class for her, and agreed to let her audit the course, provided she could get permission from the departmental committee responsible for these matters. We also learned from a former Chairman of the Department that there was no way she could get that permission. Wendy's Dean, finally, was sympathetic, but there was little he could do. Early in January, permission was formally denied. In her attempts to talk to the chairman of the department prior to that decision Wendy could, again, not get past the secretaries.

There are several nasty aspects to this story, other than those already implied. For one thing, biological scientists repeatedly lament the fact that there are so few good artists in the sciences, since so much of what they teach requires good drawing skills to communicate. Thus, aside from the larger questions of what

an education is for, anyway, which Wendy's case poin to, there is the much more practical issue of the university's having discouraged very effectively those talents and abilities many of its members see to need very badly

Further, there is the matter of Wendy's desire audit the course, rather than take it for credit. The arose solely because, despite her good work last year she received only an average-lowering 7 for the cours Apparently, the instructor informed her (and everyon else) at the outset that non-BFA students do not anything higher than 7 in that department. She did feel she could afford that mistake again.

Third, there is the question of why, given restrictions, the department of fine arts is still a part the Faculty of Arts, and not a separate trade school Granted, they do give several art history and appreciation courses, but these passive courses col probably be better handled within Arts, while the activity studio courses would seem to make more sense if in separate faculty, analogous to Law and Medicin Indeed, two Deans in the Faculty of Arts could come with no good reasons as to why that arrangem should not be instituted here; it now exists in Calga

Finally, there is the less obvious aspect of Wendy treatment by the administrative members (primar secretaries) at the department of fine arts. As st describes it, it was simply inhuman: the only answer any question is "no"; and much indignation occurred she tried to push beyond that, in any way. In a speci sense, this is trivial: there's no law to prevent secretar from being bitches and God knows many have amn cause for it. More generally, however, this appears tob an instrinsic part of the "closed shop" atmospherea contempt for "outsiders" that prevails in this depart ment. It seems thoroughly objectionable within the university framework.

What all this leads me to is the impression that the department of fine arts is acting, in several way contrary to the best interests of students, educational ideals, and of the image of this university a place where students may pursue learning. present course structures and limitations within t department of fine arts were all approved, at one time another, by the Faculty of Arts and General Faculti Council. They can be re-opened for examination either of those bodies at any time; student membersd request that such examination be undertaken. Rig now. I'd like to urge the Students' Union, through members on GFC and Arts committees, to ask that examination of the pre-requisite and gradi procedures within the department of fine arts undertaken, and that the possibility of separatingth department from the Faculty of Arts be explored. Int way, at least, we could put an end to the prese hypocrisy of allowing students to believe they a participate in anything that Department has to offer without selling their souls first.

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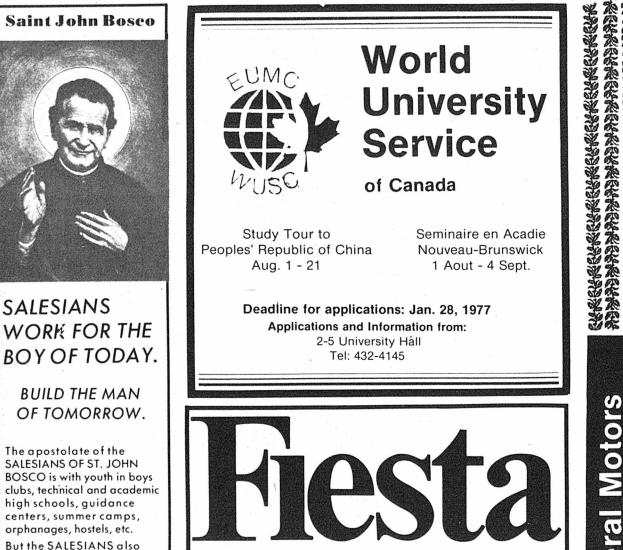
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