

gateway

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In any organization, there will always be one person who knows what is going on...

...This person must be fired.
Conway's Law

Post-secondary education facing problems



photo Bill Imleee

From left to right FAS President Don Millar, CFS Chairperson Brenda Cote, and U of A VP External Teresa Gonzalez.

by Richard Watts

As part of National Student Week (Mar. 21-25) Brenda Cote, the chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students, is touring campuses in Alberta.

In a press conference yesterday Cote, Federation of Alberta Students President Don Millar, and U of A VP External Teresa Gonzalez outlined some of the problems facing post-secondary education both in Alberta and in the whole of Canada.

Cote began by explaining that the federal government plans to limit the funding increase to universities to 6 & 5 per cent.

Cote explained that considering inflation, this represents a significant cut in the funding of post-secondary education.

Coupled with the recession which will make it more difficult for students to find summer jobs, Cote charged that the accessibility of higher education is "seriously threatened."

"All this represents a clear reduction in the quality and the access to education right across the country," she said.

Speaking on this summer's job market, Cote said the federal government has announced plans to spend \$170 million creating summer jobs for students this summer.

Cote not only charged that this amount was insufficient, she also claimed that much of the money was destined to fund summer jobs within the military which she disagreed with.

Cote said the Canadian Federation is calling for a national conference to discuss the role and funding of post-secondary education in Canada.

She hoped that the federal and provincial governments will participate along with students, academics, and administrators.

"We're calling for a rational, well-planned, long-term approach to post-secondary education. A conference such as this would allow everyone concerned a chance to have input," said Cote.

Cote was followed by FAS President Don Millar who outlined the ramifications of the federal cuts for Alberta students.

"The Federal Funding cuts will affect Albertans as profoundly as they affect everyone in the country," said Millar.

Millar elaborated on the importance of students ensuring the provincial government makes up for "devastating federal cuts."

The Federation of Alberta Students calls for a lowering of the savings requirements of the Student Aid system, in light of the fact that the job market is so minimal.

However, Millar is not hopeful, explaining that responses from Advanced Education Minister Dick Johnston have not been very encouraging.

"I'm particularly disappointed that Mr. Johnston has not seen fit to participate in a forum tomorrow at 12 noon in Rutherford Concourse which will be attended by people from all levels of the university to discuss post-secondary education."

Millar concluded by pointing out the irony that post-secondary education receives less funding during a recession, since this is the time when it can do the most good.

He explained that not only does higher education provide a large source of jobs but during a recession students can up-grade their skills and ready themselves for technological changes that will herald the end of the recession.

U of A VP External Teresa Gonzalez also spoke at the conference outlining the affects of the funding cuts on this University.

Gonzales claimed the U of A is relying on Grad students and sessional lecturers rather than hiring full-time professors in order to save money.

"The U of A can't get quality professors any more," she said.

In addition to the overall declining quality of the academics at this university Gonzalez also mentioned the cutting back in Library acquisitions.

Women hot over porno

OTTAWA (CUP) — There were people everywhere.

Thousands of them, scurrying into Ottawa's new \$250-million shopping complex, the Rideau Centre, on its opening day March 16.

But amid the throng, a cluster started to form outside one of the entrances shortly after noon.

Up went the sign, "Pornography perpetuates lies against humanity," in front of the entrance.

The cluster grew to about 35 women who marched outside in protest of pornography and Eaton's financial connection.

"Use your consumer influence," was the message these women were trying to get across to potential shoppers.

"People can use their economic influence to stop pornography," said Dianne Kinnon, head of Ottawa Women Fight Pornography. The three month-old group organized the one-hour protest against Eaton's and pornography.

The large department store chain owns 80 per cent of a company that owns Baton Broadcasting Inc. Baton's subsidiary, Glenn Warren Productions Ltd., is producing Playboy material for First Choice Pay-T.V.

"We want to draw attention to our work against pornography and convince as many shoppers as possible not to shop at Eaton's, and use their economic power," explained Kinnon. The March 16 demonstration is just the first in a series of protests against pornography.

"The ultimate immediate goal (of the protest) is to force Eaton's to make a public statement against pornography and get out of funding," said Kinnon, who was sporting two bright yellow buttons, "Real men don't need porn," and "Porn sells, women pay."

Form letters addressed to Eaton's president Frederick Eaton were handed out, with pledge forms in support of an Eaton's boycott.

"I've really been upset about pornography since I saw the film 'Not a Love Story,'" said Tunde Nemeth, a federal government employee, who drafted the letter. "It really makes me upset and angry because it is not erotic, it is violent, and it is just another money-making scheme that perpetuates the myth women like to be abused, and that hurts."

"We have people coming off the streets who want to join us but we don't have enough papers," one woman told Kinnon.

"Porn is a \$550,000 business in Canada. Who profits?" was one sign a woman picked up after seeing the protest. "Pornography is degrading to women," she said, and continued marching.

"I've been offended by pornography since I was 10," said one woman, who didn't want her name used. "I've always hated it, I still do and if I have to devote the rest of my life to get rid of it, I will."

One young girl in the protest sported the sign "Porn is a \$5 billion industry in North America, \$1 billion is derived from child porn."

Three men in their twenties stopped to look at the signs. "God I love porn," remarked one man as the other two snickered.

While the women protested outside and talked to passersby about the issue, inside, many Eaton's employees were unaware of the demonstration.

"What protest?" asked a male sales clerk in Eaton's financial centre. When asked if anyone in the store could respond to the event, he replied: "We don't sell porn. But look, if you are going to take up some of my time, I'm going to take up some of your time," whereupon he shoved a flyer in front of this reporter and asked: "Do you have life insurance?"

When told this was no joke, the clerk departed then returned, motioning towards the administration office. No one there was available for comment.

"It's really revealing to me to

see that type of response," said Nemeth of men who snicker at women fighting pornography. She wore a button that says "Nous refusons porn (we refuse porn)," and said when she wore it on the bus many men giggled at her while women smiled and nodded in silent agreement.

In the spring the group plans to do a survey of city stores that sell pornographic material, Kinnon said. A list of these outlets will be distributed, along with an advocacy of a boycott of these places. The list will not only

No jobs for programmers

OTTAWA (CUP) — If you're a computer programming student in Ontario you're also out of luck if you're thinking about employment after graduation.

The most recent graduate placement report for Ontario colleges shows a province-wide unemployment rate for one-year programming students is a staggering 68 per cent.

Figures for Ottawa's Algonquin College graduates will not be available until later in March but placement officer Bob Gilham says they will not be encouraging.

At Algonquin, 156 students are enrolled in the computer program with two-thirds sponsored by Canada Employment under the National Training Act. The federal government is 'retraining' students to make them more employable.

"The business programs were the biggest problem last year," said Gilham. The graduates have traditionally found work with the government and the government has not been hiring, he said.

Figures in the placement report were gathered by the Ontario colleges and universities ministry last November, seven months after students graduated.

Other one-year business

courses fared better although the average unemployment rate for graduates from all the one-year business programs was a mere 33 per cent.

The figures are somewhat better for the two and three year business course graduates. The longer courses had better placement rates with unemployment rates for the graduates of the two-year programs at 22 per cent and for the three-year programs, 26 per cent.

For trades students, the one-year program had a 57 per cent unemployment rate. Again the rates were lower for graduates of the two and three year programs.

In applied arts, two year commercial arts grads had an unemployment rate of 35 per cent. The best placed students were in advertising with a seven per cent unemployment rate.

But the health science students had the brightest prospects with about 80 per cent of the graduates finding jobs.

Overall, about 24 per cent of community college graduates were out of work in November.

Fewer students were working in jobs related to their training in college. Only 67 per cent of the graduates got jobs related to their field of studies, compared with 85 per cent the previous year.

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