

Dawn Lerohl

An editor's guide to SU political double speak

"Briefly, in order to expedite awareness on campus and touch base with the higher academic institution as a whole it is imperative that we establish a pro-active stance and implement a positive campaign which will result in a win-win situation. If prevailing public opinion should prove disproportionate, we will attempt to instigate a referendum in our ongoing effort to simplify Students' Union proceedings."

- any SU representative

Twice monthly the Students' Union holds an open meeting to discuss SU business. The second floor of University Hall provides the training ground for the political leaders of tomorrow. This is the SU executive's opportunity to parry questions and brush up on their rhetoric. Here our future leaders practice political jargon and catch phrases to prepare for the larger political arena.

As a news writer, I've attended these meetings on a regular basis. In addition to keeping in touch with events on campus, I've also picked up a new vocabulary. These pseudo-specific words have become so familiar, I've almost stopped noticing that they are words which have meaning, even though they don't mean a lot to begin with.

Take for example the word 'pro-active'. What is a pro-active stance? What is the difference between a pro-active stance and an active stance? The dictionary definition reads: pro-active - involving modification by a factor which precedes that which is modified. What does that mean?

A relative of this non-word is the word 'retro-active'. What is involved in making a retro-active decision? Does it take place before or after the active decision? According to Webster's it's to make effective as

of a date prior to enactment, promulgation, or imposition. I have no idea what promulgation means, but it sounds painful.

A popular catch phrase around the second floor of SUB is "implementing a positive campaign." Positivity and implementation abound. Once again turning to Webster's, we find that positive can have a number of meanings, and that several different types of implementations could be going on. Is our executive: 1. fully assured or confident. 2. not fictitious, real. 3. real and numerically greater than zero. 4. losing electrons.

My advice to all future political types after a semester of terms and trivia can be best summed up in a misquote of something said by John Sheffield. "Learn to speak well or not to speak at all." In layman's terms, this means that if one cannot elucidate effectively one should elect not to elucidate.

LETTERS continued

SU politician speaks out

Andrew Bizon's letter "SU Is Not Representing Students" reflects what I suspect must be a common sentiment among students after reading the October 31 Gateway article, entitled "Mixed reactions over proposed fee increase."

The Students' Union has not taken the position that tuition fee increases are inevitable.

The Students' Union does not support the \$200 incremental increases proposed by Paul Davenport or John Gogo.

Both the comments attributed to David Tupper and those attributed to myself were taken out of context, and are consequently misleading. The real Students' Union policy on tuition (not the one suggested in *The Gateway*) is quite straightforward. It is based on the following premises: first, that students must have access to a quality University education. Second, that financial barriers should not be a constraint to accessibility. On the basis of these premises, the Students' Council unanimously resolved that four considerations were most important

in determining students' contribution to the costs of an education:

1) *The Relationship Between Government Funding and Student Contribution.* In other words, if the government is putting less in, students shouldn't be expected to put more in. That is, they shouldn't be in a situation in which they are paying more for less. Conversely, in the case that the government is putting more money into education, an increase in the proportional student contribution warrants consideration.

2) *Student Financing.* That is, if it is the case that the government is putting in more money, and thus they ask for a commensurate increase in student contribution, then there must be student financing avenues available through which the additional costs resulting from the increases in tuition might be covered.

3) *Employment Opportunities.* That is, what is a reasonable contribution from students should not be decided arbitrarily, but on the basis of the average earning power that

students have over the summer months during their education and, their average earning power after graduation. In other words, financial resources should not act as a barrier to accessibility.

4) *Inflation.* That is, since increases in the cost of living may act to erect a financial barrier to accessibility, these too, must be considered in determining an appropriate student contribution.

The External Affairs Board, in recommending these terms of reference to the Students' Council, did so with the belief that they encompass what are the crucial factors that must be considered before any decision as to tuition is to be made.

I truly hope that no one will lose faith in the Students' Union because of this position. As both a student and a student representative, it seems to me the only reasonable one to take.

Wade Deisman
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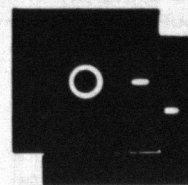
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