

# EDITORIAL

## The need to change college constitutions

Vanier College Council's (VCC) disregard for its constitution in the firing of *Vandoo* editor Darryl Wiggers exposes the weakness of all college constitutions.

Wiggers was fired two weeks ago after publishing three controversial *Vandoo* issues. VCC felt it couldn't trust Wiggers after it received numerous threats of legal action due to various items published in the newspaper. In addition, VCC grew tired of Wiggers' consistent negativity and sarcasm. As Vanier College master Mary Sue McCarthy said, "Aside from the threats of legal action, [some of] Wiggers' articles and editorials were extremely hurtful and unnecessarily vicious."

But Wiggers justifiably complained about the manner in which he was fired, saying that VCC violated 14 sections of its constitution. Not only was he not given the opportunity to defend himself before he was fired, Council does not have the right to fire an editor except in the case of "gross or repeated mismanagement of funds." Also, Vanier's Publications Board — the only body with the power to "investigate and review" an editor's conduct — never met.

These violations don't seem to bother VCC very much. At Monday's Council meeting the infractions were discussed, but quickly put aside to deal directly with whether or not Wiggers should be reinstated for a final issue. McCarthy said Council was "a bit embarrassed" about the way the Wiggers issue was handled, but she and several other Council members said that the violations were a mere "technicality" because the decision to fire and then rehire Wiggers would not have changed if Council had strictly adhered to the constitution.

By dealing with Wiggers without consulting its constitution VCC proved how easy it is to ignore the document which outlines the governing structure of Council.

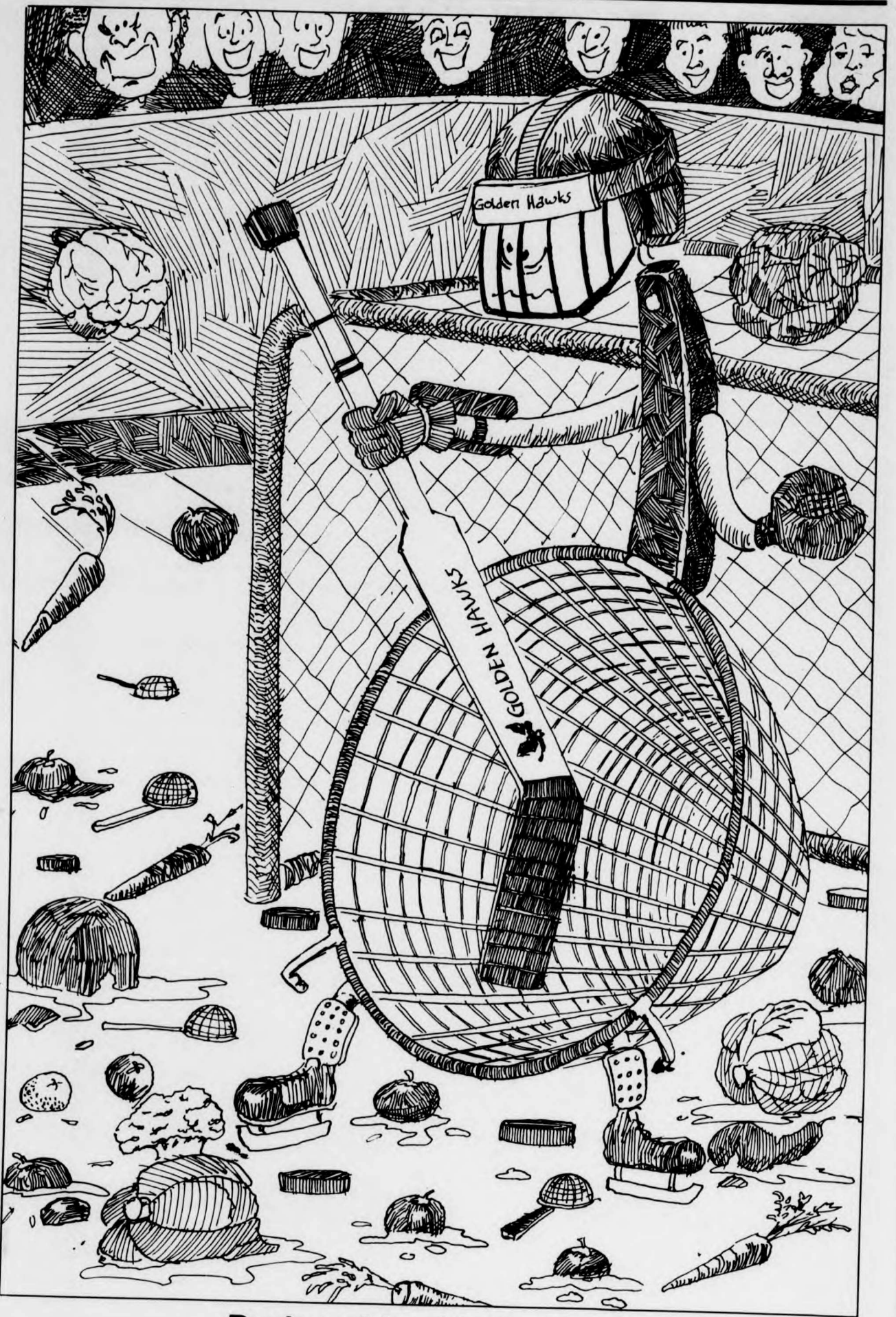
Presently there is no mechanism to bind Vanier, or any college for that matter, to its constitution. There is also no appeal process beyond the college level to deal with constitutional disputes. The Administration will only intervene, and rightly so, in the case of a severe constitutional violation, such as when members of McLaughlin College committed serious financial improprieties a few years ago.

Every college on campus faces the same problem — their constitutions are outdated and therefore not useful, let alone powerful, guides for council actions.

It is precisely for this reason that CYSF president-elect Peter Donato placed the college constitution issue at the top of next year's CYSF priorities list. Hopefully Donato will encourage all college councils to update their constitutions in light of the college and student government reforms. Perhaps the CYSF could establish some type of tribunal to arbitrate constitutional disputes.

This year's Vanier Council has proven to be an effective and responsible student government, which in the end made the right decision about Wiggers. However, by ignoring the constitutional process, VCC demonstrated the necessity of reforms to college constitutions. As it stands now these documents do not provide enough control over the actions of college governments.

York students deserve more protection than the goodwill of council members.



Puck and food fanfare

We will publish, space permitting, letters under 250 words. They must be typed, triple-spaced, accompanied by writer's name and phone number. We may edit for length. Libellous material will be rejected. Deliver to 111 Central Square during business hours.

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## LETTERS

### "A's aren't everything"

Dear Editor:

Your thesis is correct — straight "A's" don't guarantee a satisfying career. Many graduating students don't have a clue what to do with their liberal arts education. In my view, your potentially excellent editorial [Striving towards the proverbial "A," March 16] gets a C+. You ignored practical solutions to the problems. York is developing one of the finest career planning facilities in the country. It opened last September; just down the hall from your office (N 108 Ross Bldg.). Students can now clarify their career path with computerized vocational testing and occupational research software. Five hours of careerwork in the computer lab for \$10.00 — it's the best deal on campus! Many York professors discuss workplace issues in class. Some courses include career assessment

components. Student Organizations, Faculties and Colleges sponsor career events. A College course in career development has just been approved by the University. How about a first-class feature article on these developments? Why not go for straight "A's," plus effective career and life planning? That combination is true excellence!

John T. Harries

Director  
 Career & Placement Centre

### Questions about BEd

Dear *Excalibur*,  
 York University has been reputable for the quality and standard of its students that have graduated from the concurrent Bachelor of Education programme in the past. They have built their reputation on good, qualified instructors, coupled with a strong and rigorous programme.

Last year, York University implemented a new consecutive Bachelor of Education programme which allows students the possibility of obtaining a Bachelor of Education degree in one year.

This year, the Faculty of Education has been overwhelmed by the number of applicants causing a delay in the assessment of student files. However, letters of acceptance have already been issued to a large number of applicants.

On March 10, 1989, Louise Lewin, Associate Dean of the Faculty of Education, mailed out letters to all the applicants informing them that "Due to the large number of applications which we are currently processing there will be a delay in making a decision on your file. The admission process will be ongoing until all files have been assessed by the admissions committee."

The issue at hand is the premature selection of candidates. The questions posed by such actions are:

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