

Mediocre teaching a problem

# Committee ineffective

by Pat Sytnick

The university's Committee for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning (CITL) plays a useful role, but doesn't adequately answer the problem of mediocre teaching, says the U of A's Dr. Leon Craig.

If we really want to improve the quality of education in the university we must direct our efforts at the "deeper structural problem," he said.

Craig was referring to the reward system — including salary incentives and promotions in modern universities which encourages professors to be more concerned with publication than teaching.

CITL was established more than 16 years ago to assist professors interested in improving their teaching. According to committee coordinator Bente Road Cochrane, the committee provides professional development opportunities for academic staff and operates three programs.

Each fall it runs an "orientation to teaching" workshop for graduate teaching assistants, and throughout the year it offers special sessions on various aspects of teaching.

As well, it runs a peer consultation service where professors are paired with a colleague so they can evaluate and improve their teaching.

Craig said CITL is needed because "we should offer every possible resource to people who are interested in improving their teaching." But he stresses the committee is not directed at and cannot counteract the stronger structural pressures that contribute to the deterioration of teaching.

The quality of teaching and consequently education has declined because academic staff quickly realize the kind of scholarship that goes into teaching doesn't pay off as well as the kind directed at pub-

lishing, said Craig. The problem is not that professors don't want to be good teachers, but rather that most can't afford the time.

Craig believes the modern university structure favors publication over teaching because, "if you want to become an internationally recognized authority it's always got to be through publication. Good teaching can only enhance your local reputation."

Dr. Amie Zelmer, associate VP Academic at the U of A, does not agree this necessarily discourages good teaching. According to her, it's important to note there are a number of academics who choose to concentrate on teaching rather than publication since "for them a good local reputation is just fine."

But she did acknowledge the difficult situation professors are in when they are expected to achieve at high levels in both areas.

Craig was careful not to single out the U of A and said instead, the problem affects the entire modern university system. Because we are part of this system "to a considerable extent we alone cannot solve the problem" he said.

However, he did think there were several ways we could improve the situation and mentioned two:

"We should begin by making a commitment to qualitatively assess both research and teaching," he said, "and we must continually ensure that teaching and research are given equal support."

## ASA elections stand

by Suzette C. Chan

A woman who was active in an attempt to impeach members of the student union executive earlier this year made a failed bid to overturn the Arts Students Association elections at a meeting on Wednesday.

Lorraine Mitchell said she was shocked to learn that some individuals who ran and lost in the council race ran concurrently for executive positions and won by acclamation.

Although running in both races is constitutional under ASA rules, Mitchell finds the practice "hypocritical".

She feels that since "Arts students rejected those people as candidates," they should resign as executive members.

ASA executives that would be affected by such action are services co-ordinator Scott Day, social convener Rod Boyle and secretary

Brenda McDonald. McDonald is the only one of the three who ran successfully for students' council.

Mitchell suggested the ASA call another election or have a yes/no ratification vote, but the approximately 40 people at the ASA meeting agreed it was too late and would take too much time to do so.

"We agreed it was too late in the year and that we should start talking about the issues (facing arts students)."

Some points on the ASA agenda are plans for next year are how to increase student participation. There was also a suggestion to establish an Arts Action Committee to look into ways to raise funds for the association.

The next ASA meeting is scheduled for 12 noon, Apr. 1 in room 219 of the Humanities Centre. All arts students are welcome.



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# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## Clubs Commissioner

- Represents the interests of Students' Union registered clubs on Students' Council
- Assists the Vice-President Internal Affairs in maintaining an ongoing relationship with Students' Union registered clubs.
- Promotes cooperation and coordination among student clubs and organizations, and assists them in the preparation of budgets for requests of financial assistance to the Students' Union.
- Approves the chartering and registration of clubs with the Students' Union in accordance with Bylaw 1100.
- Serves as a member of the Administration Board, the Building Services Board, Students' Council.
- Acts as co-chairperson of the Clubs Council.

## External Commissioner

- Assists the Vice-President External Affairs in the investigation of problems relating to the funding of the University and its effects on students; and accessibility of post-secondary education, and specifically the effects on tuition fees, student aid, and differential fees on accessibility.
- Assists the Vice-President External Affairs in the organization and implementation of programmes designed to combat these problems, as well as promotes a high level of student awareness of these problems and programmes.
- Serves as a member of the External Affairs Board, and Students' Council.

## Housing and Transport Commissioner

- Assists the Vice-President External Affairs with programmes relating to housing and transportation concerns of students.
- Serves as chairperson of the Housing and Transport Commission
- Investigates Government and University programmes of housing and transportation of concern to students.
- Serves as a member of the External Affairs Board and Students' Council.

## Academic Commissioner

- Assists the Vice-President Academic in the investigation of current academic issues and development.
- Promotes cooperation and coordination among faculty associations and departmental clubs, and assists them in the preparation of budgets for submission to the Academic Affairs Board.
- Serves as a member of the Academic Affairs Board, the Council of Faculty Association, Students' Council, and the General Faculties Council Student Caucus.

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## Chief Returning Officer

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**  
—Performs the duties normally required by a Chief Returning Officer (staff recruitment and hiring, organization of polls, oversees counting procedures, etc).

- Conducts elections in accordance with Bylaw 300 and 350 for such election or referenda as designated by Students' Council.
- Act as arbitrator in any dispute arising during the course of an election/referendum.
- QUALIFICATIONS:**  
—Must possess excellent organizational and administrative skills.
- Familiarity with previous Students' Union elections a definite asset.

## Housing Registry Director

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**  
—Recruits and hires the support staff for the Housing Registry  
—Oversees the proper functioning of the Housing Registry and the fulfillment of its purpose  
—coordinates and publicizes the Housing Registry

- In conjunction with the Vice-President Finance and Administration, prepares the preliminary and final budgets for the Housing Registry.
- Ensures the Housing Registry operates within those budgetary limits
- Remuneration:**  
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**TERM OF OFFICE:** 1 May 1985 to 30 April 1986 (unless otherwise stated)  
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FOR APPLICATIONS AND INFORMATION, CONTACT THE SU EXECUTIVE OFFICES, Room 259 SUB, Phone 432-4236