

Is there a doctor in the house

Council

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of the council would jeopardize the autonomy of the U of A.

Instead, Wyman recommended that representation be proportional to student enrollment, rather than on an equal basis. The U of A, with an enrollment of about 18,400, has more students than Calgary and Lethbridge combined.

It should be made clear to GFC that it can support the concept and still change the make-up of the council, he noted.

Kreisel wasn't sure the other universities would accept this change, nor how the new body would relate to one proposed by the department of advanced education.

"It's going to be difficult to resolve," he admitted.

Alternatives to the present council have been studied for several years. It was decided that something should be done immediately, since proposed programs are in limbo until a new procedure is established.

An example is the doctoral program for the faculty of medicine, which has been shelved by the department since last June.

Stripped of its previous responsibilities, the existing co-ordinating council only has the power to rule on appeals of those denied membership in professional associations such as medicine, law and engineering.

Approval of the new council would require amendments in the Universities Act. As a result, it is unlikely the new body would be in operation within the next 18 months, by which time the government has promised a new Act.

Picture what would happen if the traditional plea 'is there a doctor in the house' is made to a university audience. Would chaos result as half the group stands up?

That's the sort of thing that might happen, according to a columnist for the Toronto Sun. In a CBC viewpoint program aired last Wednesday, he argued that non-medical personnel who hold PhD degrees shouldn't call themselves 'doctor' because it is confusing and potentially dangerous.

Judging from comments of academics at the University of Alberta, he suffers from a deficiency of facts and should submit to an operation to remove two feet from his

mouth.

Contrary to popular usage, academics have as much right to use the term 'doctors' as physicians.

In fact, the term predates medical schools, George Baldwin, dean of Arts, pointed out.

'Doctor' means the final accomplishment in a study of higher learning, according to the Oxford dictionary.

"Historically, medicine's claim is no more, maybe less, secure than scholars in theology," declares Baldwin.

"My own feelings is that off campus, I couldn't care less. I think the professor label is much more important."

Though he admits that the

title can work to advantage, due to the prestigious status of the medical profession in society. Colleagues have told him that when 'doctor' is used, "they get a different reaction," from people.

Anyone can ask that 'doctor' be placed before his name in the telephone directory. An official with Edmonton Telephone residential services said that applications are accepted without question.

Edward Rose, Chairman of the English department, said the matter wasn't worth talking about and besides, would be impossible to legislate.

Meyer Horowitz, dean of education, shared Rose's assessment and noted that respected British physicians are called 'Mr'.

Traditions vary greatly from country to country. Henry Kreisel, academic vice-president points out that in Germany, lawyers are called 'doctor' and 'Herr' often denotes prominence.

No allies to the columnist's scheme were found in the faculty of medicine, either.

"I think that a holder of a PhD degree has every right to call himself 'doctor'," commented Walter MacKenzie, dean of medicine.

MacKenzie has heard no complaints about the use of 'doctor' by non-medical personnel.

The title "Is something to be proud of, but I don't think professors have any more right to use it than we do."



January 15, 1974.

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