

**Major overhaul possible**

**must report by Christmas**

# Task force ponders future of York colleges

By DEBBIE PEKILIS

The Task Force on the Future of the College System, set up by President Macdonald's Committee on the Goals and Objectives of the University to study the college system and make recommendations on its future, held an open meeting in the Senate Chamber on Monday to listen to suggestions on the future of the college system from the York Community.

"This meeting," said Task Force Chairman, Don Rickerd, the initial master of Winters College when it opened 10 years ago, "is for soliciting information from the rest of the university," on what is to be done with the colleges.

The meeting was attended by between 30 and 40 students, faculty, and members of administration.

**UNDER STUDY**

The task force is currently studying the following criterion with regards to the college system:

- i) The possibility of creating a new or refined academic and/or faculty orientation for some or all colleges;
- ii) the appropriate administrative and academic support required for any future development or orientation of the colleges;
- iii) the future relationships among the colleges, the faculties, and the central administration;
- iv) the appointment and future role of College Fellows and Masters.

The question of creating an academic orientation for the colleges provoked an interesting discussion among the participants.

One student from Glendon College said, "I've heard this for three years. I think its all right for day students but it would have a stagnating affect on people living in residence."

"If the colleges were restricted to one stream of study, it would be boring for the residence students who live there. I would like to see a mixture of students from different disciplines because it would

be more educational for students in residence."

A Winters student said he felt "the colleges are not providing an identity for day students. By structuring the colleges on academic lines, maybe we would have more participation by the day students." He said that a questionnaire sent by his college council to former students revealed that 80 per cent of them had been apathetic to their college.

**WHO CARES?**

Chairman Rickerd said that the questionnaire was not really representative of the day students at York because it reflected the opinions of about "1,500 people out of a community of about 15,000."

Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF) president, Barry Edson said there is a great deal of apathy on campus to the college system. "Students are not involved in the colleges because the colleges have nothing to offer them." Something of an academic nature, such as locating the course unions in the colleges, would give more students an incentive to participate in the system, because they are primarily concerned about their courses.

"CYSF supports the college system because without it there would be more centralization at York. Through centralization, there is alienation, confrontation. There would be no communication between students and faculty that the colleges provide."

Cindy Park, a Vanier representative on CYSF, asked if it was felt by the task force that residences should remain connected with the college. "You have to resolve that question before deciding on any academic emphasis for the colleges." She added that she felt to restrict the colleges to one academic discipline would be "very boring and would not bring about an improvement in the situation."

**UPPER COURSES**

A member of the task force suggested that the colleges run upper level courses for their students which would be taught by the



Graham Beattie photo

CYSF President, Barry Edson; council speaker, George Manios; and assistant to the vice-president of student affairs, John Becker, listen to discussion of the task force on the future of York's college system.

fellows but passed by the curriculum department.

John Becker, vice-president in charge of student services, said restricting entry to college courses for students of that college was "doomed to failure" because of the problem of differentiating between the colleges by the students. He said it would be impossible to tell a student from one college that "she can't take a course that interests her because it is given in another college."

Calumet College Master Eric Winter said he would like to see "more differentiations between the colleges." If Vanier College had a choir, for example, "students would have a greater incentive to choose Vanier College." Unless there are differences between the colleges which appeal to the students, "colleges will be justifying themselves when there is a major part of work that could be done in a faculty or department as part of the college."

Task force member Douglas Fowle, the first master of Vanier College, said if the colleges are differentiated, they would have the problem of acquainting first

year students during orientation week (at the beginning of the academic year) with what they have to offer.

**DECENTRALIZATION**

Other topics discussed in the meeting included the possibility of decentralizing services now provided by the university to be provided by each college. Both students and faculty members saw this as impractical.

Park said, "The college was intended to provide decentralization in the university, but did not eliminate the fact that you are going to a university. There are services that need to be provided for the people who go here. It is impractical for the colleges to provide these services. We have different priorities."

Don Jackson, a Winters college professor of French Literature, said, "The college affords the opportunity to come in contact with people whom one would not ordinarily meet with during course time or teaching time."

He suggested that the big

disciplines should be diverted away from the Ross Building and should instead be taught in the colleges. "If the courses such as Psychology and History are taught in the college complexes instead of the Ross Building, the students would have an incentive to go the colleges instead of the Ross Building."

A Bethune College Council member said that students at Bethune have no sense of belonging to a college community. "The majority of students in residence are in first and second year. In third year, when they have been here for a long time and know the ropes, they move out of residence." To solve the problem, the college council, in conjunction with NASCO, the international student union, is studying the possibility of a student co-operative. They have drawn up a preliminary report and will have a more detailed report January 10, he said.

The Task Force has met every Monday since October 12 and has until Christmas to make recommendations to the Committee.



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