

Canadian Student Unions Should Pucker-up Says Leaked Document

By Samer Muscati
Ottawa CUP

Kissing butt is the best way to protect postsecondary education in Canada, says a document leaked from a national student organization.

Student unions should "shmooze" media, government, and students as part of the lobbying strategy of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), which represent over 100,000 post-secondary students.

CASA recommends that its members "bump" into politicians by hanging out in government buildings, establish good relationships with newspaper editors and invite university administrators out for dessert and coffee in order to become an "effective lobby organization."

Student groups are also encouraged to send university administrators flowers "at appropriate times" such as during a death in the family.

"[Sending flowers] may sound morbid," said Matthew Hough, executive director of CASA, "but it's not a bad suggestion."

Hough, who compiled the report, says that the document is the basis of how he approaches the lobby scene. He says that the strategies have been sent to CASA's 11 member schools who will

decide for themselves what to do with the suggestions.

But Chris Carter, president of the McGill student society, a member of CASA, says he won't use the strategies anytime soon.

"I have my own ways of doing things, and sending flowers isn't one of them."

Carter says student groups must be vocal and make their demands clear if anything concrete is to be accomplished.

"It's all good and well to attempt to have good relationships, but our priority should be with representing students' opinions."

The document was developed during a campaign and lobby meeting session that CASA held over the summer. One of the participants sent flowers to a university administrator whose wife had died, in order "to build bridges" between the student association and the university, and that's how the idea originated, says Chantal Da Silva, CASA's Quebec regional director.

Hough says the strategies have been well received by CASA's members. He says it's important for student groups to "remember the personal side and try the human approach."

Nicolas Bruneau, an executive member at the University of Ottawa's student union, says that he is following the recommendations even

though his school is not a CASA member.

Bruneau says he never would have thought of inviting a city councillor to his house for some wine and cheese, had he not read the document.

"Establishing relationships opens up doors," said Bruneau "It means getting to know people outside a working atmosphere."

Other recommendations for lobbying include; utilizing cafeterias when addressing students since they are "a captive audience," holding press conferences and media events in classrooms, and establishing liaisons with chambers of commerce and departments of corporate affairs.

Hough says that the strategies in the document obtained by Canadian University Press, will be used when CASA launches their official post-secondary education campaign in early January.

Fraud Charges Laid Against Former Dalhousie Employee

By Dan Clark,
Dalhousie Gazette
Dalhousie University

A former employee of Dalhousie University is facing criminal charges after the university was allegedly defrauded of over \$100,000.

Linda Hill, a financial services clerk, was terminated from her position when an internal audit discovered the alleged fraud, says University vice-president Bryan Mason.

"It all started last summer when a minor discrepancy appeared in

some figures," Mason said. "We started to investigate. Within just one day we had uncovered the full extent of the fraud."

The matter was then turned over to an external team of forensic auditors who, after a two month investigation, confirmed the results of the university's internal audit.

Hill is alleged to have created a phony firm in Saint John, New Brunswick that sent invoices to the University, which Dalhousie paid without question. Among other things, the bogus firm billed the University for

Prof's Future Unclear Amidst Rumours

By Ian Potter, CUP

An education professor at the University of Saskatchewan has been suspended with pay for allegedly writing graffiti on a colleague's office door.

While university administrators won't comment on the case, one source close to the story told the campus newspaper, The Sheaf, that security cameras in the building filmed Michael Murphy in the act.

Neither Campus Security nor Dean of Education, Ken Jacknicke, would confirm or deny the existence of a video surveillance system, but Jacknicke did say there was video security in the Education staff lounge a few years ago due to a theft problem.

Under the Faculty Association's collective bargaining agreement, university president George Ivany must meet with Jacknicke, Murphy, and representatives from the

Association to discuss the circumstances surrounding the matter.

Ivany then has thirty days to decide on a course of action. If he chooses to dismiss Murphy, the faculty association has fourteen days to request an arbitration Committee hearing to make a binding decision on the matter.

In the meantime, Murphy's classes have been taken over by sessional lecturers and his students are angry to say the least.

"This is all a result of infighting among the faculty. It all trickles down and hurts the students," said one of Murphy's students.

"Murphy is the most popular professor with the students, but the faculty hates him. He's so unpopular because he is the only one who tells students the truth," said another student.

"Murphy has always been a critic of the college [of education]. He says he that would rather see it shut down than see it continue under the way it's run."

The students say they are being shortchanged in the interim because Murphy's teaching methods were abstract, without a formal outline or regular assignments. Grades were usually awarded based on constant evaluation during the class.

The students are upset that they now have to start from scratch and familiarize themselves with a brand new class outline, assignment schedule, and lecturer.

This isn't the first time the college of education has had to deal with a misbehaving professor. Last year, an education professor was disciplined for letting his wife teach his course for an entire semester. He got off with a reprimand from the university but is still employed.

travel expenses to Saint John.

"This has never happened before. In anyone's living memory, no one can remember anything like this ever happening," Mason said.

Hill has been charged with "Fraud of over \$5000" by the police, but has not yet been arraigned before a judge.

Mason has made assurances that the University is fully insured against the loss, and that changes have been made so that a similar fraudulence will not occur.