

Student Services pushes for University 101

By Sharon Leighton

Jim Griffith, Director of Student Services, and Professor Robert Campbell are spending four days at the University of South Carolina this week.

They are attending an international conference which meets for the purpose of examining USC's innovative course, University 101.

University 101 is a credit course which teaches students the skills they need for success at university. It includes a reading lab, public speaking exercises, training in study skills and job search techniques.

Griffith wants to see a course like that at UPEI. He says the main objection to implementing such a course comes from Senate, which thinks the course content is not academic.

Griffith intends to develop the idea. He hopes that in a few years he will be able to submit a proposal for such a course that will receive serious consideration.

He thinks that training of this nature is important to the

student's academic success. "Why should we assume students know how to do these things just because they're eighteen?" he asks. "How can they know if no one teaches them?"

At present, Student Services does what it can to teach students these skills on a non-credit basis.

A course in public speaking, called Speak-Easy, is given several times each year. The course runs for six weeks. Its purpose is to help students gain confidence in asking questions in class, giving presentations, talking with other students.

"A lot of students walk around campus thinking that if they say, 'Hi' to someone, they'll be told to get lost. They won't. Most people are pleased to have someone say 'Hi' to them. Students have to learn that it's not dangerous to talk to people," Griffith explains.

All four Speak-Easy classes this year are filled. Griffith would like to run more classes, but he does not have the staff to do it.

The Reading Lab and the classes in Resume Writing and Job Search techniques are in much the same position.

A credit course to wrap everything up together and teach everyone who needs it is his goal.

Another course Griffith is trying to create in a short summer course for professors. "It's part of their job to provide academic counselling," he says "but many of them are not even familiar with the calendar, outside their own disciplines."

Griffith feels professors should be taught how to counsel students. "People assume that professors know how to do these things," he says. "How can they know if no one has ever taught them?"

He feels that too many people make too many assumptions about the skills people have.

Relationship skills, for instance, are expected of everybody. Yet where are they taught?

Student services once offered a course for couples

who were seriously involved with each other — engaged, going steady, or thinking about commitments of any kind. Many of the couples broke up during the course, but they were glad they had taken it. They learned to understand their relationships, their goals in life, why they were involved with each other and where their relationships were heading.

Griffith wishes he could offer this course again, but once more, lack of staff prevents him from doing so.

Counselling is available for people who ask for it. Sometimes group counselling is done, when some interaction takes place.

One program now offered that Griffith would like to see used more often is Choices. This is a vocational guidance program offered jointly by Student Services and the Canada Employment Centre on Campus.

The student can make an appointment to use the Choices computer at Student Services at any convenient time. Through the computer,

which is remarkably easy to use, he can obtain a great deal of accurate information about careers that interests him. A counsellor can then offer further guidance in the light of the information gained.

Another successful program now available can be used by anyone in residence. If there's something you want to know about, from birth-control to legal rights, you can speak to your House Committee. The House Committee can arrange, through Student Services, a discussion group for the

people on your floor. The nurse, a chaplain, or student services counsellor will provide all the information you want.

Griffith feels that students often don't get their money worth out of Student Services

"We're busy all the time," he says. Yet many students who could benefit from programs now in place do not use them.

And many programs that could be of great benefit cannot be implemented, due to lack of staff or of administrative co-operation.

of View Apathy and student politics

By Mike J. Trainor

It has been said that student politics can be an enjoyable and positive experience. As an individual who has been involved in student politics for the past three years, I would tend to agree with such a statement.

Student politics is only as enjoyable as you students make it. One major ingredient needed to make it successful at UPEI is the participation of the student body.

Let's face it — if you don't get actively involved in the process, then you have no grounds for complaining about decisions made by the Student Union Council. Get yourself involved and make your view and ideas part of the system.

Student apathy — the lack of involvement of students — has become a major problem at UPEI. Students seem to show no interest whatsoever in the democratic process, which is sad in any democratic environment.

The greater the student apathy, the more difficult it is to govern students, because Student Council doesn't know what you want.

Students have to get their act together and get involved. You should start showing up at Student Council meetings, get yourself in your class or academic sub-organization, could get yourself on a Student Union committee or University committee.

There are numerous ways of playing an important part in the evolution of a viable student government. It is up to you to get involved.

With Student Union elections being held on March 7, you should have some student involvement. Put your name in, run for candidate for an elected position, or better still, make yourself an acquired right that has been fought for and won.

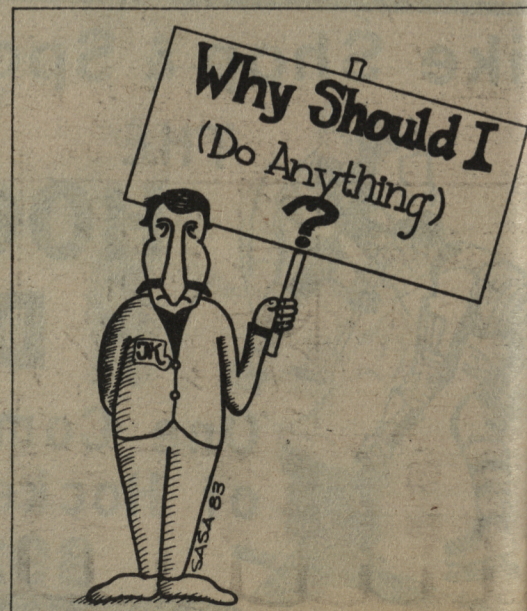
Student politics can be a whole lot of fun if you really get it to be.

I recommend that students become involved in the process that will be making decisions for them. If the Student Council doesn't know what you as students want, how can you expect them to govern you?

So get off the fence and become involved, and see how much fun you can have.

It can and will prove to be an educational, enjoyable and positive experience. It's all up to you to get involved. So just talk about it — do it!!

"And that's my point of view."



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