

# School gives warranty on their students

## Failure to pass muster could land you back in school

BY TODD PETRIE

GRADUATES OF THE FUTURE HAD better be prepared to perform well at their jobs or else they could find themselves back in school. This scenario could be the new way of the world as potential employers are depending on the school system to produce more knowledgeable students.

Starting in 1994, students in Los Angeles' High School District will be graduating not only with a diploma, but with a warranty. The

warranty, similar to that of a new car, states that the student will perform well and up to the employer's expectations. The student must not only be fluent in the basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills, but also knowledgeable and capable in skills such as basic reasoning skills, sound judgement, and have the ability to work as part of a team. Should an employer consider a graduate to be lacking in any of these abilities, the school from which the student has graduated must take the student

back for re-training -- at the school's cost.

These measures are in response to many complaints from employers that schools are not educating their students properly. Therefore students are entering the work force unprepared and poorly educated forcing the employer to deal with mistakes, and put up with extended on-the-job training for the student.

This "warranty", although still limited in use, (only Los Angeles County Schools are

using it this year) is getting increasing support from the business world in other American states and Canada as well. In fact, Holland College in Charlottetown does use this "warranty" system on a limited basis in their computer science program. It is anticipated by some people in the business world that this "grad guarantee" program will become more widespread throughout all colleges and high schools in the years to come.

# Grads find work on auto assembly line

(CUP)

JOHN SCOTT GRADUATED LAST JUNE with a B.A. in sociology. He was hoping to go on to law school. Instead, he's working on the assembly line at Chrysler Canada's Windsor Assembly Plant.

When the company created a third shift assembling its popular minivan this year, it hired 960 new employees-- many of whom are university grads. This follows a growing trend of manufacturers hiring educated workers for what used to be unskilled jobs.

"I don't see doing this as a career," says Scott, who earns about \$700 dollars a week on the line. "I guess the majority of guys I work with are doing it on an interim basis."

"But if you would have asked me when I started university if I thought I would be working on the line, I would have said 'Yeah, right.'"

Walt McCall, Chrysler's manager of

corporate and public relations, says the "new" industrial workplace will need many more university graduates to do the jobs that were formerly for unskilled workers. "These people have to be capable of being trained to a higher level of technology," he says.

Scott says he likes the work at the factory. "It's not bad--it's something different. It's not physically hard, though it is monotonous and you don't get a lot of satisfaction." The monotony is about the only aspect of working on the line that hasn't changed.

According to Norm Solomon, a business professor at the University of Windsor, "Working on the line is not the same as it was

**"I don't see doing this as a career," says Scott, who earns about \$700 dollars a week on the line. "I guess the majority of guys I work with are doing it on an interim basis."**

30 or 40 years ago. There is technical knowledge you can absorb and you have to understand how technology works-- it's much more demanding to the intelligence."

Solomon says most manufacturers these days are looking for people who can suck up more technical knowledge, and a university education is a

good sign that you can learn.

"There are fewer middle management jobs out there, and this is the outgrowth of that," says Solomon. He doesn't see workers in industry staying with their employers all their lives-- they will more likely move around to other jobs.

Although Scott considers himself a member

of the working class, he does aspire to something different when his stint at Chrysler is through. "Most definitely I've settled for something less than I've wanted," he says. "And it's sort of depressing to go in there, I mean I work there with teachers who can't find work in their fields."

The union local doesn't particularly care that more and more members of its rank-and-file have letters after their names. "The labour movement has [its] mandates and systems in place and I don't see that changing a lot," says Larry Bauer, president of Canadian Auto Workers local 444.

Where will John be in a couple of years? It's hard to say, he says. And as Chrysler's McCall puts it, "Who really has job security anyway?" John is happy to have a job at all, especially one that pays well. "I'm leading the good life financially," he says. But for how long is anybody's guess.

# Manitoba report recommends "user-pay" system for graduate school

(CUP)

MANITOBA'S TUITION FEES SHOULD increase for some students in a user-pay scheme, a provincial government report suggests.

In its report released January 21, the province's education review commission suggests that international students and graduate students in expensive-to-run programs dig deeper into their pockets for a university education.

"In the face of continuing fiscal constraint and the rising cost of post-secondary education, the commission believes that students will be called upon to assume an increasing share of its costs," the report says.

While it recommends that tuition fees be frozen for the time being, the report suggests that all students should eventually pay the

same proportion of the cost of their programs.

Fulltime undergraduates in Manitoba currently pay around \$2,000 per year.

Figures for 1991-92 show that Manitoba arts students paid 34.6 per cent of the cost of their education and those in dentistry only 5.6 per cent. The report suggests that, over time, that gap be closed.

International students would also pay more-- in fact twice as much as Canadian citizens. "Foreign students have a claim in our resources but it is a limited one," the report

**"In the face of continuing fiscal constraint and the rising cost of post-secondary education, the commission believes that students will be called upon to assume an increasing share of its costs."**

says.

Blessing Rugara, a visa student and a University of Manitoba student councillor, says the commission failed to analyze the full impact international students have on universities and on the economy in general.

Rugara says many graduate programs rely heavily on international student participation for

their survival.

Manitoba already increased tuition for international students by 75 per cent above the standard level last year.

The report also recommends that graduate students pay 15 percent of the cost of their programs. According to the report, most graduate students currently pay less than 10 percent.

The commission says studies have shown the tuition fee levels play only a minor role in determining the accessibility of universities. Since benefits accrue to both the student and society, the report says it only makes sense that students pay their share of the cost.

The commission also urges the federal government to implement an income-contingent loan repayment plan. Such a plan would require those with higher incomes to repay a greater percentage of their student loans after university than those with lower incomes.