

AIDS Policy at UPEI

With all the controversy over AIDS in society today, one would think universities would derive a policy to determine what happens to a student who contracts the disease.

However, UPEI as of yet has not formulated a policy even though almost all Maritime Universities have.

Dean MacMillan, Student Union President, said he brought up the idea of formulating a policy to the President of University, William Eliot, in Sept. However, Eliot felt it was not the time for one:

"He (Eliot) told me (MacMillan) there was no need for one at the time."

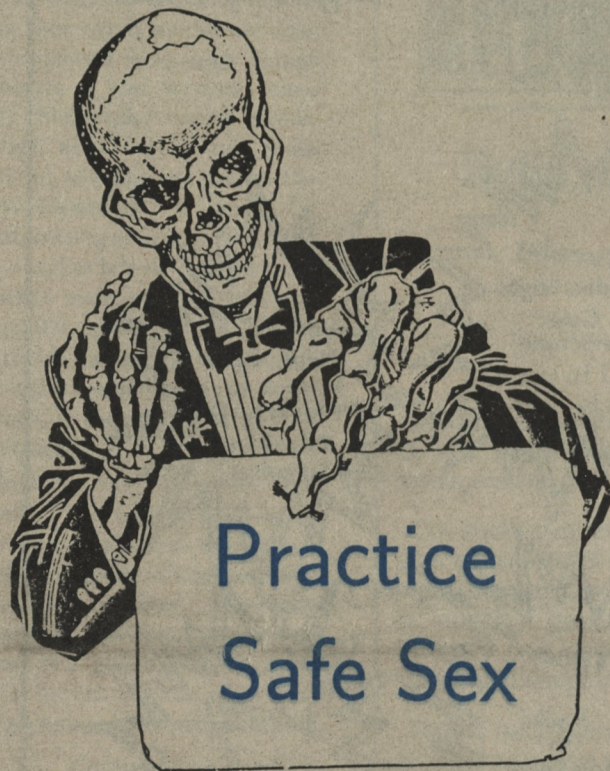
The Student Union then formed a Health Awareness Issues Committee in early

October. The committee consisted of MacMillan, Earl Byrne, Jennifer Bartlett and Laura-Lee Kilfoil. Its main purpose was to look into the idea of an AIDS Policy as well as putting condom machines on campus.

They did come up with a proposal; for putting condom machines in the bathrooms at the barn. MacMillan said the proposal was discussed and approved at a Student Union meeting.

"It was decided that machines would be put in the barn and they are going to be ordered."

Sid Tobias, Atlantic Coordinator for the Canada Youth and AIDS Project was invited to come to UPEI in early January. He came and discussed the idea of an



AIDS Policy with President Eliot. The Student Union and Jim Griffith, Director of Student Services. MacMillan said the presentation was quite interesting:

"It was quite enlightening and he made some good points about AIDS."

MacMillan also said that the UPEI Administration, in particular Jim Griffith, is now studying the policies of other universities and MacMillan feels this is hopeful.

He also said that although his part in formulating a policy is almost over, he assumes that the Student Union next year will continue to work with the Administration to try and formulate an effective AIDS Policy.

HIV Positive Student Barred From Class At York

TORONTO (CUP) - A third-year music major at York University was barred from his singing ensemble course last month for missing five classes because he tests HIV-positive.

"All we have is the student's word that he has AIDS," said David Mott, chair of the music department. "Anybody could say they have AIDS."

Mott said the fine arts faculty committee decided to expel Ron Kelly from class because he had five unexcused absences. Attendance is vital because the class must work as a group, and a policy states that three or more absences result in a failure.

"We offered him a chance to make it up (in private) with the local teacher," said Mott.

A doctor's note stating a student is "medically incapacitated" is the only allowable reason for absence. Mott said Kelly did not furnish this note.

Kelly said he did furnish medical proof. On July 29, 1987 he sent a letter to the fine arts department stating he had tested HIV positive. Kelly included

his doctors' phone number. The administration never called that number.

"I informed the course director, Patricia Wait, each and every time that I was absent from the class," said Kelly, who is also the president of the York Council for the Prevention of AIDS. The student group runs an AIDS information hotline and operates a drop-in centre.

"I made it clear to her that I was willing to make up the work. At no time was I asked by the course director to submit any form of documentation to verify my absence," said Kelly.

Marshal Swadron, Kelly's lawyer, says politics is behind the administration's decision to expel Kelly from class.

"Our fear is that the absences that were previously excused were changed because of pressure by students that he would be given special treatment."

Kelly said he was often ignored and treated coldly by the instructor. On January 3, a letter from the fine arts department

told Kelly he couldn't go to class because it would be too physically demanding.

"I'm not allowed to physically attend my class, but I'm allowed to do a recital which will determine 75 per cent of my mark. I've been asked not to attend the class due to the 'physical strains' which it will put on me."

York University does not have a policy on dealing with HIV-positive students or staff, but William Farr, vice president of finance and administration is writing one which will be released at the end of this academic term.

"Under the new policy, a student ill from AIDS would be considered no different than a student with anything else unless it could be medically proven that the student was a danger to others," said Farr, adding that it is the university's responsibility to prove that the student is a danger to others.

"I'm sorry, I can't be dramatic about this subject," said Farr. "We have so far handled the fear of AIDS in a low-key way fairly successfully," adding that custo-

dial staff at the university were given instruction on the subject of AIDS.

Memorial, Concordia, Carleton and Dalhousie universities and the universities of Toronto, British Columbia, Ottawa, New Brunswick and Calgary have adopted policies which state they will not discriminate against staff and students who test HIV-positive.

"The basis of (the University of Toronto policy) is the human rights code, which prohibits discrimination against, or harassment of, any individual on the basis of handicap or perceived handicap, including that caused by an illness such as AIDS," said David Gorman, director of environmental health and safety at U of T.

"What we're trying to do is prevent what just happened at York."

The HIV virus is believed to cause Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, or AIDS, and can be passed on through semen, vaginal fluids or blood.

Ontario Federation of Students' researcher Duncan Ivison

strongly disapproves of Kelly's expulsion.

"Banning people from class because of AIDS is kind of like reverting back to the 19th century notion of quarantine. AIDS victims shouldn't be quarantined. They need compassion and the ability to conduct their lives like anybody else," he said.

Meanwhile a student kept out of dental school because he tested HIV-positive is suing Washington University for \$3 million.

Dental school dean David Bensing dismissed 'John Doe' - as he is referred to in court documents - in August after finding out the student had tested positive for antibodies to the HIV virus in March or April of 1988.

Norman London, the dismissed student's lawyer, argued in the lawsuit filed in December that his client legally is handicapped, and that the dental school's action amounted to discriminating against a disabled person.

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