University Affairs Board, Vice-Provost Students' Report # 3

Update on Student Services - Over 2,000 first year students have registered with the First Year Initiative - FYI program and are taking advantage of the many workshops and seminars available to them covering topics from note taking, time management, exam preparation, career development, stress management, choosing housing, international and Aboriginal issues and health. Student Services co-sponsored with APUS an extremely successful weeklong conference – Part-time Students are People Too and with SAC, the popular Students First Series. With the Career Centre's recent Summer Job Fair, ISC's International Week, First Nations House's Aboriginal Week and the Health Services Fair, to name just a few, life is not dull in Student Services.

ROSI - We have replaced the IBM 7060-H50 (115 MIPS) with an IBM 2066-0B1 (120 MIPS). In addition, we have moved to the Z/OS.e operating system, replaced the transaction monitor, and the query facility. As a result of this replacement, main memory has increased four-fold from 2 GigaBytes to 8 GB. This has improved performance on the day-to-day tasks of managing the data generated by a larger number of students. In addition, the new IBM-2066 includes another 200-MIP processor which can be turned on to run Linux. We intend to migrate incrementally to this environment those ROSI components that can be demonstrated to work better under Linux. This will free up main processing power for the ROSI components that need it.

We have also replaced the RAMAC disk system that is nearing the end of its lifespan with newer technology. The ESS disk system has significantly increased the speed of data back-ups and now enables us to do back-ups while the Student Web Service is in operation. This will give us the ability to further increase the hours of availability of the Student Web Service.

We expect that a noticeable benefit will be experienced by students who go to the front counter of their registrar's office on critical days. In the past, on such critical days, priority was given to transactions coming in from the Student Web Service at the expense of administrative staff who also needed to use ROSI. For example, staff at the front desk could not resolve students' queries promptly because, for them, the system was extremely slow. During those days, it took an unacceptably long time to print off a single invoice or a single transcript. With this combination of new hardware, software, and revised registrarial business processes, we have improved the ability of students and staff to do their work.

Students at Risk Conference - Increasingly, colleges and universities across Ontario are faced with the challenge of responding effectively and appropriately to students at serious risk of harm to themselves or others. On April 29th, the Student Crisis Response Office is hosting a one-day conference entitled Students at Risk: Responding to Suicidal and Violent Behaviour on Campus - Clinical, Administrative and Legal Issues. The conference will explore the impact on campus life of students with suicidal thoughts or actions, as well as those who exhibit a range of violent or aggressive behaviour. Using a range of presentations, speakers and approaches, the conference will introduce different strategies for providing comprehensive and consistent responses across clinical, educational and administrative domains. Registration will be open to staff from colleges and universities across Ontario, and video-conferencing will be supplied to institutions in more distant locations.

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Summer Mentorship Program - Seven students participated in the first year of the Summer Mentorship Program in 1994 - a partnership between the Toronto School Board and the Faculty of Medicine. Ten years later, for the summer of 2004, the program will include a dozen U of T faculties and departments, five Boards of Education and 120 high school students. Two new Modules this year are Commerce (20 places) and Education (12 places). The Summer Mentorship Program focuses on youth who have the ability but not the advantages that are key to success in the different professions. The University is committed to reaching out to students traditionally underrepresented in our programs and in professional fields. Priority groups are:

- Students of Black and/or Aboriginal ancestry
- Students of diverse backgrounds who may face barriers in accessing post secondary education
- Students whose opportunity and exposure may be limited for any number of reasons (e.g. economic difficulty, lack of role models.)
- Students in senior grades.

The Goal of Summer Mentorship Program is to provide these promising students an opportunity to:

- Experience the University
- Explore the realm of professional education
- Earn credit towards high school graduation
- Obtain hands-on experience
- Find a mentor