

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

REPORT NUMBER 86 OF THE ACADEMIC APPEALS BOARD

March 21st, 1985

To the Academic Affairs Committee,
University of Toronto.

Your Board reports that it held a hearing on Thursday, March 21st, 1985 at 2:00 p.m. in Room 05, Simcoe Hall, at which the following were present:

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| Professor J. B. Dunlop (In the Chair) | Professor K. G. McNeill |
| Mr. Allan Chan | Professor D. W. Smith |
| Professor W. H. Francombe | |
| Professor R. Manzer | Ms. I. Macpherson, Secretary |

In Attendance

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| Mr. V. | Mrs. G. Curri, Registrar,
Scarborough College |
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At a meeting on March 21st, 1985 the Academic Appeals Board heard and considered the appeal of *MR. V.* from a decision of the Sub-committee on Academic Appeals of Scarborough College refusing his petition to be granted an extension of the completion date for CHMC45Y, a library thesis course on a selected current topic in chemistry, based on literature research and carried out under the direction of an instructor in chemistry. The course required an estimated 260 hours of work. The result of the refusal was that the appellant failed the course. The decision of the Board is that the appeal should be dismissed.

The appellant took the course as a special student in the winter session of 1982-83 under the supervision of Professor R. A. McClelland. According to a letter from the supervisor he met the appellant a half a dozen times in the fall term "and his progress seemed to be good". The pattern in the spring term was similar. By early April the appellant had produced a ten-page summary of what was expected to be a 40-60 page thesis. According to the supervisor this "was a little late but he appeared to be on the right track and I suggested that he now prepare the thesis on the basis of this summary". However, the appellant did not complete the work on time and asked for an extension until June 21st. This was granted, but in June the thesis still had not been completed and the appellant sought a further extension until August 21st. The second extension was refused and this decision is the one which has reached the Board by way of appeal.

The appellant's reason for non-completion within the normal time and for seeking the extension was that the topic, which he himself had selected, was extremely complex and demanding and that justice could not be done to it within the normal time limits. In his view it was arbitrary and unfair to confine him to the normal limits in the circumstances. It was clear to the Board, however, that the appellant could have met the requirements of the course without going to the lengths he felt necessary to do justice to the topic. It was the appellant who was setting the higher standards, not the instructor or the College. The College argued that the appellant was seeking the kind of freedom of inquiry that was appropriate to a graduate student and that it was not unfair in an undergraduate course to be more firm about the necessity for meeting a deadline. The instructor did not support the second extension because it was the instructor's view that it was not necessary in order to accomplish satisfactorily what the course required.

In the circumstances what the appellant was asking the Board to do was ignore the applicable rule. Since the Board saw nothing unfair in the rule or in its application to the facts of the case, it could not do so.

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There was evidence of many personal and family difficulties experienced by the appellant but these were offered to explain why his thesis, even in March of 1985, would require a further two or three months. They were not relevant to the original decision not to grant an extension because they did not arise until later. Consequently they cannot be considered as relevant on this appeal although they certainly justify the extension of sympathy to the appellant.

The appeal is dismissed.

Secretary
April 9th, 1985

Chairman