

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

REPORT NUMBER 91 OF THE ACADEMIC APPEALS BOARD

August 27th, 1985

To the Academic Affairs Committee,
University of Toronto.

Your Board reports that it held a hearing on Tuesday, August 27th, 1985 at 3:00 p.m. in the Board Room, Simcoe Hall at which the following were present:

Professor J. B. Dunlop (In the Chair)	Professor J. Mayhall
Professor R. Beck	Mrs. J. Randall
Ms. F. Currey	
Professor W. Francombe	Ms. Irene Macpherson, Secretary

In Attendance:

Ms. *Y.* the Appellant
Professor Christopher Jones, Faculty of Arts and Science

THE FOLLOWING ITEM IS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION

At a meeting on August 27th, 1985 the Academic Appeals Board heard the appeal of *MS Y.* from a decision of the Academic Appeals Board of the Faculty of Arts and Science denying an appeal against her suspension from the University on academic grounds. The decision of the Board is that the appeal should be dismissed.

In her first year in Commerce in 1983-84 the appellant achieved a grade point average of only .94. She had a serious failure in Financial Accounting, a D- in Mathematics, D's in Industry and Trade and in Economics and a C in Psychology. Because her cumulative GPA was less than 1.50 she was placed on academic probation. In her second year, notwithstanding her poor grade in Mathematics, she entered Actuarial Science with disastrous consequences. She had a grade of E in a fall term course and at the end of the year had two F's, two E's and a C- (in Biology). Her sessional GPA was .49 and her cumulative GPA fell to .72. According to the regulations she thus became subject to suspension for one year.

The appellant told the Board that she had been in the wrong programme and that given an opportunity to take a different programme, possibly psychology, she would be able to achieve satisfactory standing. No one could doubt that her chosen programme was beyond her capacity. Had anyone been advising her on the basis of her performance in the first year they would surely have tried to dissuade her from entering Actuarial Science. Advice would have been available to her had she sought it, and she had been given notice of the fact. But her poor judgment unfortunately extended to this decision as well. One would presumably have had to seek her out and press the advice upon her. Whether a faculty should assume such an active role in counselling is not a question for the Board. It is a question for academic policy-making bodies.

When the appellant achieved a mark of only 40 in the fall term of her second year in Mathematical Analysis of Investment and Credit she should certainly have seen it as proof that she was on the wrong track. It might not have been too late to recover the situation. But that did not occur. Unfortunately, the fact that one might have been better off in some other programme does not have any bearing on the consequences of one's actual performance in one's chosen field.

There was evidence that the appellant suffered from headaches which were worse at examination time. Headaches could, of course, have affected the appellant's performance. There was no basis to believe, however, that under more favourable circumstances the appellant would have achieved a satisfactory grade point average. Indeed, the appellant herself seemed to feel that it would be necessary to change programmes.

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The appellant told the Board that, because she was a visa student, and would have to go home during her suspension, it was not at all certain that she would have the resources to return. It is, of course, possible that any student placed on suspension will be unable to return. It is true that in the appellant's case the hurdle is more substantial but as the Academic Appeals Board of the Faculty pointed out, while a very grave hardship might be a matter that would weigh in the appellant's favour in a close case, this was not a close case. The appellant's failure was marked. There could be no justification for ignoring the suspension regulations.

The appeal is dismissed.

Secretary
September 11th, 1985

Chairman