

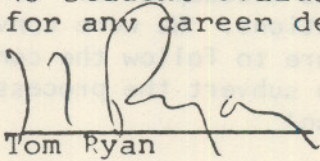
news from CUASA

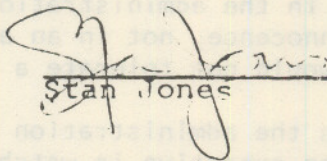
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The Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire in the Winter Term 82/83 may be distributed to classes at an instructor's request. The completed questionnaires of members of the CUASA bargaining unit will be sealed in an envelope and retained unopened in the custody of the appropriate Dean until the final grades are released. Then the sealed envelopes containing the completed questionnaires shall be returned unopened to the instructor. No student evaluation from the Winter Term 82/83 will be used for any career decisions.


Tom Ryan


Stan Jones

1983 March 31

TEACHING EVALUATIONS SPRING 1983

ATTENTION: PROMOTION/TENURE CANDIDATES

*By Stan Jones
President-Elect*

Following the summer school teaching evaluations CUASA informally advised management that we felt that the way the evaluation was conducted in the Faculty of Arts violated the provisions of the Collective Agreement: inadequate instructions were given to individuals who conducted the distribution and collection of questionnaires in the classrooms; and, no separate sealed envelopes were provided to segregate the Arts Faculty questionnaires designated for the exclusive use of the instructor concerned. At that time informed assurances were given that the matter would be rectified in time for the Fall-Winter session 1982-83.

At the December 20, 1982 meeting of the JCAA, CUASA formally notified the management of Carleton University that the teaching evaluation forms used the first term violated the Collective Agreement. As the Minutes of that meeting state:

TEACHING EVALUATION FORMS

The Association advised that the forms that were distributed at the end of the first term had optional information on the reverse side. This information is supposed to be confidential and for the information of only the instructor. It cannot be used by management for making career decisions. The Employer will investigate.

Apparently the Employer never did investigate. When the same forms appeared for use in April, CUASA felt that it had to put its foot down and stop their use. The Administration readily recognized the violation and agreed to the memo reprinted above.

CUASA members are rightfully confused because the Administration has not provided clear-cut directives to the teaching staff. We do not think it is CUASA's business to run the University and it is not our business to tell anyone how the teaching evaluations are to be run, but since the Administration has not done its job, we have found it necessary to provide the following account of the fiasco.

The teaching evaluations that are a regular feature of the end of term at Carleton are not the invention of CUASA. Rather, Senate and the administration want them. The latter apparently finds them useful for the more or (in this case much) less objective information they provide for career decisions. CUASA is involved in the process only to insure that

the evaluations are carried out in a fair and equitable manner and to insure that an employee has the right and the ability to respond to any negative information about him/herself. In order to protect this right, we must insist that no anonymous individual's unsupported comment is used or even available to those making career decisions. (How could I respond to a simple "Stan Jones is a lousy prof!"?)

Nonetheless, we have permitted two faculties (Arts and Science) to collect this kind of anonymous comment for the teacher's use only because they believe such comment will improve teaching performance. CUASA's only stipulation is that such anonymous comment must be seen ONLY by the faculty member concerned, that it not be available to Chairmen, Deans, or other administrators. For several years this presented no problem: the questionnaires for administrative use were on one sheet of paper and put in one envelope; those for the individual's attention only were on another sheet and were put in a second envelope.

This Fall someone in the administration decided that in order to save money, the anonymous comments would be written on the back side of the sheet on which the questionnaire for administrative use was printed. This presented two problems. First, students in Social Sciences and Engineering were filling out forms not meant for them (Arts forms were used in Social Science and Science forms in Engineering). Of greater importance, however, was that the anonymous comments would be available to those making career decisions, something the administration had promised would not happen.

The administration was notified in December 1982 that this was unacceptable. We reluctantly agreed to let the matter stand for the December evaluations. We were convinced that there was nothing malicious in the administration's failure to follow the contract; the error was made in genuine innocence, not in an attempt to subvert the process. However, we made it clear that we would not tolerate a repetition!

Of course, as everyone now knows the administration bungled it again. Surely the chief frustration of being on the union executive is watching this administration make the same fumble over and over and over, not out of wrong-intent, but simply out of the inability to get things right even when the steps are carefully laid out for them. It is incompetence, rather than maliciousness, to which we are objecting.

As soon as CUASA noticed in late March that the forms being used for teaching evaluation were again improper we protested. The simple fact of the matter is that if these evaluations were used, anyone denied a CDI could grieve on technical grounds and would undoubtedly win. Thus rather than destroy the career evaluation system, CUASA's action saved it from administrative bungling. There was no hesitation on the administration's part in deciding that CUASA was right; no student evaluations of teaching were possible this spring.

What happens now? Any evaluation forms collected in your class *must remain in unopened envelopes until FGR's are turned in. The unopened envelope must then be returned to you.* Your Chairman or Dean cannot deny you that envelope on any grounds. Your Chairman and Dean cannot request that you show them your evaluations.

If they ask and you refuse and are later denied a CDI you may have sufficient grounds for a grievance simply on the basis that they asked. Can you show your Chairman and/or Dean your evaluations if you think it will help your cause? Yes, but you then waive any right to grieve on that basis if you are denied a CDI.

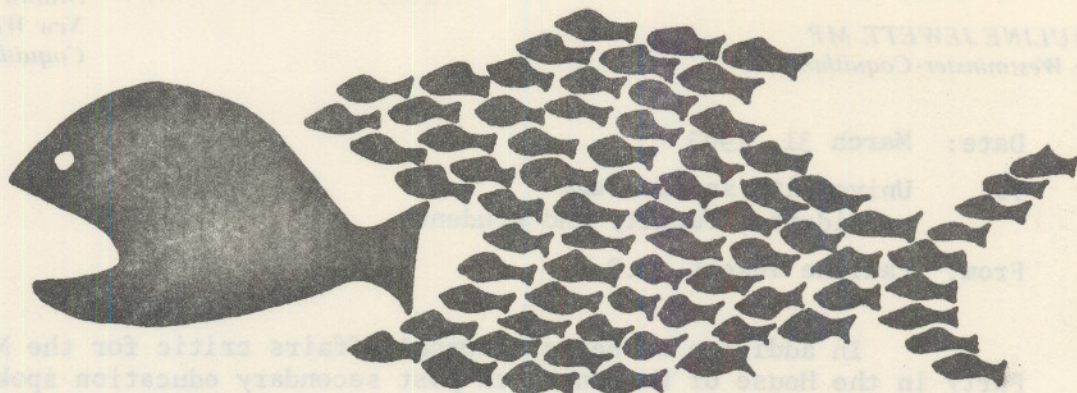
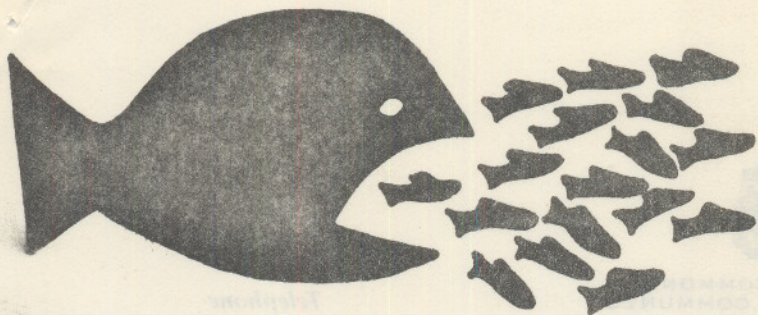
Why did CUASA make such a fuss about all this? Well, why can't the administration get things right for a change? Frankly, we are tired of papering over their mistakes. They had more than sufficient time to do it right this time, but they didn't. We cannot continue to ignore the same error over and over and over, each time with a promise that they will get it right the next time. They get it right the next time only when CUASA makes their mistakes costly to them.

Incidentally, we were particularly upset when we found that the forms would probably be turned over to a key punch company off campus where who know who would have had access to them and to the comments. Do you want just anyone reading students' comments about your teaching?

* * * * *

REMINDER

The Annual General Meeting is at 9:30 A.M. on Friday, April 29th, 1983 in Room 103 in the Steacie Building. Any of your questions about this Spring's teaching evaluations can be answered at that time.



POSTSCRIPT

The following memorandum from T.J. Ryan, Vice-President (Academic), dated April 15th, 1983 has been sent to all Chairmen/Directors of Departments/Schools.

Teaching Evaluations

You have been advised that the teaching evaluations conducted recently could not be used for career decisions and, consequently, would not be scored. Since that time a number of faculty members have made requests to have their evaluations scored and used for career decisions.

This is to advise that the evaluations will be scored and used in arriving at career decisions for individuals who make such a request in writing. In addition, the forms for sessional lecturers will also be scored.

The suggested procedure is as follows:

1. Any forms that are to be scored should be brought to Computing Services by Friday, April 22nd, 5:00 p.m. A list of the names of individuals whose forms are to be scored should be provided to Computing Services.
2. The written requests should be retained by the departments/schools.
3. Computing Services will produce the individual reports for each course, as well as the Size and Level reports. The overall ranking report will not be computed since it would most likely be meaningless due to the small numbers involved.
4. For those individuals who do not wish to have their evaluations scored, the forms will be retained in departmental offices until final grades are released by the Registrar's Offices. Then the sealed envelopes should be returned to each faculty member for their own information.

It is unfortunate that a technical problem has prevented the normal processing of the evaluations. In the future, Computing Services will only assume responsibility for administering the evaluation form approved by the J.C.A.A. If additional information is desired, administrative arrangements will be made by the relevant departments/schools or faculties.

CUASA MUST NOW REMIND ALL OF ITS MEMBERS THAT YOUR REQUEST TO HAVE YOUR OWN TEACHING EVALUATIONS SCORED MUST BE ENTIRELY VOLUNTARY AND NOT THE RESULT OF ANY MORAL SUASION, PERSUASION, THREATS OR PROMISES ON THE PART OF DEANS, DIRECTORS OR CHAIRMEN, OR ANY FORM OF PEER GROUP PRESSURE. YOUR ATTENTION IS PARTICULARLY DRAWN TO THE FACT THAT IN ANY FUTURE CAREER DECISIONS NO INFERENCE WHATEVER MAY BE DRAWN FROM THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE NOT VOLUNTEERED TO HAVE YOUR TEACHING EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES FOR THIS TERM SCORED.

