

Students question the need for deferral payment

By Peter Marval

In a recent informal survey conducted at Conestoga, seven students unanimously agreed that having to pay an administration fee on top of the deferral payment was unfair.

This past summer, students received their tuition bill giving them a choice of paying full tuition by around the middle of July (depending on the program), or deferring the payment until September for a fee of \$100.

Half of the \$100 went towards a down payment on tuition, while the other \$50 went to the college for administrative costs.

"If you don't pay your tuition in full and defer your fee, then there is a \$50 charge added on," said college registrar Fred Harris. "It's the price of not paying your tuition when it's due."

Harris added that this was nothing new and that this procedure has been going on since the board of governors implemented it three years ago.

"They ask for the money too soon, forcing some students, especially those who have to wait for their student loans, to defer their payments," said Jason McDougall, a first-year electronic engineering technology student.



Jason
McDougall



Sandra
Buckley



Nadine
Usher



Christa
Bistretzan



John
Kuzma



Alice Kerr

"Once again, it's the student who loses out."

McDougall, who attended Fanshawe College last year, said Fanshawe gave students various payment options and any deferral installments went directly to payment of tuition.

Of the two area universities, none has a deferral program. Depending on the university, tuition payments are due between the end of August and the middle of September.

In cases where students can't meet payment deadlines, the universities try to work something out.

"Around 98 per cent of the students have their tuition paid by the deadline of Sept. 6," said Judy Thanders, of student

accounts at the University of Waterloo.

Sandra Buckley, a second-year accounting student, said the \$50 administrative fee was unfair considering some students did not have enough time to save money for tuition from their summer jobs.

"People are working in the summer to pay for their tuition. If they have to pay halfway through the summer, it makes it tougher for them," she said. "Plus, with more activity happening in the summer — which all costs money — it's harder to save."

"Why does the college need \$50? What does it do with it?" asked Nadine Usher, a dental administration student.

She said the college should explain why it charges the fee and what it's used for.

Christa Bistretzan, a third-year nursing

student, said she wouldn't mind paying it, but only if it were lower.

"If they charged \$10, I don't think students would care as much," she said.

Business materials management student John Kuzma said it wasn't right have to pay the fee, even though he did not have to.

"There's nothing you can really do about it, you just have to grin and bear it."

Alice Kerr, a receptionist at the student client services building, has a different perspective working behind the counter helping students.

"I can see the students point of view. I realize it's hard for them to accept having to pay the administrative fee. But I can also see the college's point of view of having to pay people to keep the paperwork in order."