

The Alternative Calendar 2002



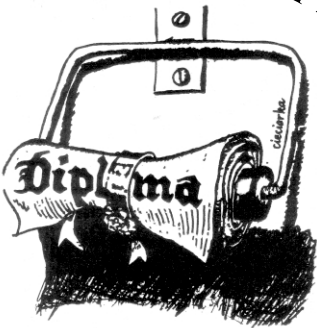
Behind the facade

Thanks to:

George Samuel
Alex Douglas
Kelly Lachman
Shaun Greenfield
Jason Cabappus
Camille Barbagallo
Christine Fleifel
Peter Eccleston
Jan Whitaker
Denise Mowbray
Irene Massey
Katie Poray Nizankowska
Katrina Wilson
Despina Karlsson
Natasha Rusjakovski
and all the students and staff who
submitted their views.



BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR
STUDENT ACTIVITIES FEE



The editor gratefully acknowledges previously published material from:
Previous Alternative Calendars, Arenas and other student publications,
The SMH, Nick Salzberg, Vanessa Berry.

No thanks to:

*Certain other Councillors
and obstructive people
Those wonderful new
MUSC computers that
never get serviced anymore
The Vice Chancellor*

EDITED BY KATE ALWAY

PUBLISHED BY THE 34TH MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY STUDENT' COUNCIL,
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY, NORTH RYDE, N.S.W 2113.

PRINTED BY RURAL PRESSPRINTERS, BELLS LINE OF ROAD,
NORTH RICHMOND NSW 2754.



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Imagine learning in an environment where students support and help each other. I know it sounds like some idealistic; it is outside of any experience for most students. You could just dismiss this as a utopia and go away, to fight it out alone, compete for your grades, to get your degree, to get a job, to pay for the degree... Or you could take a look at what we have here. This book is the end product of a campaign in which over TWO THOUSAND students participated with the purpose of helping other students choose the right course, and applying pressure on the university to improve the standard and social relevance of your courses.

More people responded to my questionnaire than voted in the MUSC elections. From the comments received to the question “do you know anything about Students’ council?” it is evident that, of the few students who have ever even heard of us, many in no way associate us with helping students or being useful. This is a shame because knowing some history of the organisation I understand why people are so disillusioned. I’ll give you a brief rundown of recent circumstances so that hopefully you will be able to see the real and concrete potential of the organisation, and that all we need to revive it is your participation

From 1996 to 2000, Musc was controlled by, shall we just say, people who did not have the interests of students in mind. Nothing good ever happened because they both didn’t bother to do anything themselves (such as write Alternative Calendars, for instance), and often actively obstructed the activists from their work by such means as withholding funding and forever creating diversions of such a serious nature that all the activists’ resources had to be utilised immediately in counteracting the pernicious activities of the majority. This is why the majority of you have never heard of MUSC except in a negative way; there have been many horrendous things to protest and when things are good we get absorbed into the offices, rebuilding and defending the organisation, both from Right-wingers and from the Vice Chancellor.

This is precisely what happened last year. When we won the 2000 elections after successfully taking the Returning Officers to the Supreme Court over a range of prejudicial incidences, we were hindered by University Council, who withheld our Student Fees and even froze our bank account for months. Instead of running all the wonderful campaigns we have been planning throughout the bad times, we had to meet with, respond to and campaign exclusively against the Vice Chancellor and Registrar. In doing this we were fighting for your rights, it is very unfortunate that you were largely not able to see it.

The future is an unknown entity. Activists are not in control of MUSC this year, but that is not to say that every conservative MUSC will be as bad as those we have experienced. Still remember, that if the extra people who contributed to the alternative calendar had instead voted for the people who are writing it, we could be sure of one again next year as well.

This Calendar is a token of what MUSC can do; what it should do, but it is your input we need, even your willingness to come and seek help; we can’t help you if you don’t consult us. I wanted to help people, everyone who contributed an article or some information or wrote up some reviews wanted to help. And every student or lecturer who filled in a form or gave them out in classes wanted to help. I have thanked you all, but it is not my thanks you required. I hope the end result meets your expectations and that you will continue to be involved.

A few notes about using this book:

Every course for which we received even a single response has been reviewed. However, I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the anonymous returns. Obviously, if only one person replied you must give their opinion less weight than if nearly the whole course wrote in unanimously. I think you can handle that.

Lecturers cited are the ones who took the course last year. To find out more about this year, you still had better read the University Calendar. If you don't want to shell out for it yourself, come to MUSC and read our copy. It is after all a valuable supplement to the book in your hands...

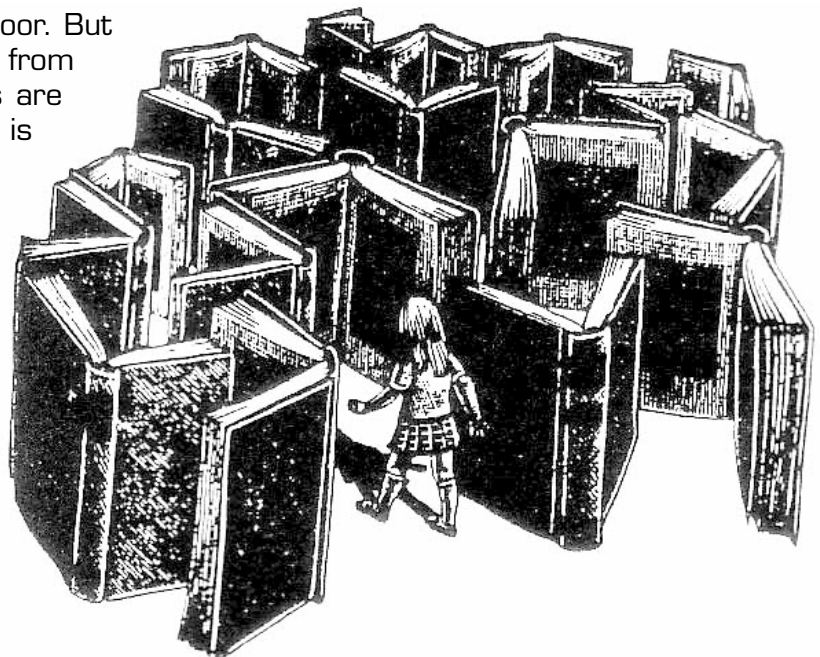
HECS bands: Under each department heading is shown the HECS band of the subjects offered. Unless you're still studying a degree you started before 1997 (if so you pay \$118 per credit point) your band 1 subjects will cost you \$158, band 2 subjects \$225 and band 3 subjects \$263 PER CREDIT POINT. (these figures for Deferred HECS. If you're lucky enough to be able to pay up front, you only have to pay three quarters of the price.) Remember most units are 3 or 4 credit points and a full time student (who therefore can't really work much) 'buys' 3 or 4 of them in every semester, and there you have it as to why so many people answered the question "Do you think you are paying too much for your degree?" in much larger, angrier letters than any other question. "My Tafe course costs less than the books for uni!!!"

In most subjects, few respondents indicated library resources were good, some said adequate, and many said rarely available or poor, which indicates that the principle of competition is alive and well at Mac Library - the early student who has no other commitments gets the prize. Surely a uni library, where we ALL have to find readings essential to our course, could be expected to cater for the total number of students enrolled, not just the first one in the door. But no. Just like everything else, it suffers from course overenrolment. More students are allowed to pay their money than there is room for in lectures, tuts, carparks and housing, or books for in the library.

Please address any questions to alternative_calendar@hotmail.com. I'm happy to reply to all serious email.

In Solidarity,

Kate Alway



WHAT IS MUSC?

MUSC is the peak decision making body of student organising at Macquarie University. It is made up of activist collectives which make recommendations to Council regarding policy and funding. Contrary to popular belief, it is the decisions of Collectives which provide MUSC with its direction, rather than its Executive. The various campus clubs and societies at Macquarie are autonomous and can choose to affiliate to MUSC for financial assistance, legal cover, and help getting started, help staying organised, a connection with progressive student activism and other services.

MUSC exists for the welfare of students, and to defend education. We provide legal assistance, visa and passport information, and can intervene to represent students who are in trouble academically or with university authorities. To facilitate our activist collectives we have a research officer to give support to activists in campaigns, usually in the form of information and statistics for submissions to government, campus, and legal institutions and inquiries. It is the job of the MUSC researcher to be on top of developments in the field of government education policy, the interaction of Heads of universities at the Australian Vice Chancellors Committee, and counselling of students in crisis.

MUSC also has its own publications office, where we produce the Alternative Calendar, the Orientation Handbook, and our newspaper Arena (temporarily known as Muscateer) which comes out 11 times per year.

MUSC is affiliated to the National Union of Students, and as such sends elected delegates every year to State and National Conference. Any student at Macquarie can be elected as a delegate, or an Office Bearer of NUS. Similarly, all students at Macquarie have the opportunity to become the chief representative of students on campus; the student member of University Council. Elections for this position occur separately from elections for MUSC, but beware - right wingers have been known to turn up on University Council without elections ever being announced on campus, but rather being advertised in the business section of the Sydney Morning Herald, as happened in 2000!

So this is where MUSC is.



the front office - yes,
the one under the
big SAM signs.
hmmm.



the Union (SAM) building
where so many students
spend their days, between
those who live in the bar,
Marxines or Council



Down to the rest
of the MUSC
offices

Come help us brighten the place up again for 2002. (As you can see, it needs it!)



COURSE READERS - THE BIG RIP-OFF

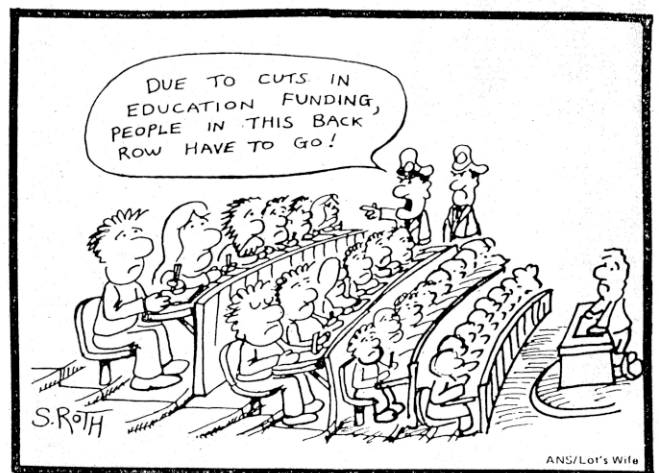
As many of you will be aware, the price of course readers has dramatically increased over the last two years, while their quality has fallen. The days of nicely bound course readers are over, as are the days of fairness in course reader prices. Informed sources in SAM tell us that the Union has approached the Co-op to sell course readers out of the Union Shop, but that the Co-op refused to cooperate on the grounds that it does not want to relinquish its cut of the profits. Both MUSC and SAM are considering the options available to produce course readers and pass them on to students at a fairer price. Making a profit off course readers flouts legislation such as the Higher Education Funding Act 1996 which prohibits the sale of items essential to the completion of university courses at a profit. But the Co-op does not give member discounts on course readers, on the pretense that there is no profit margin. Why don't the Co-op give us member discounts on course readers if they are making money off them? Perhaps you would like the Vice Chancellor to answer this question, as nobody is closer to the answers on this matter than she. You see, a couple of years ago, a triumverate of shame in the form of the Vice Chancellor, the Registrar and former Chair of MUSC Talal Yassine (the first of a series of right-wing Chairs and infamous in MUSC history for his top-down dictatorial chairing style) became part of Co-op management thanks to a carefully orchestrated proxy form scheme which made Di Yerbury and Brian Spencer Co-op Directors. Allegedly in return for the organisation of proxies, Talal Yassine was given the job of General Secretary. This tidy exercise paid off, with Director salaries around \$40,000 pa and the General Secretary's being around \$100,000 pa. So next time you are languishing in the bookshop queue, or having to miss out on groceries for your ridiculously priced books, you know exactly where the buck stops.

THE CLASS DELEGATE SYSTEM

Until a couple of years ago, when Schools became Departments, there was a School Representative system which served to somewhat keep students and staff in communication. This system has now collapsed to the point where it only exists in a few departments and often the only point of contact is by end of semester surveys, which transmits information in one direction only.

The old system was run top-down from the Academic Senate, to which it reported. What we need is a student based system, facilitated by MUSC. Without the backing of a Student body, reps are still dependent on the will of the lecturers to take their recommendations seriously, and can often end up as impotent as a high school SRC.

The nexus of the new proposal is the idea that participatory democracy on campus should be just that - **participatory**. a class delegate system would involve at least one representative elected by you in each department and year to be **in constant contact with MUSC**. The benefit of this is two way communication between council and you. For instance, if say, 300 people show up to Comp 123 and half are **locked out of the lecture** due to fire restrictions (don't laugh -it happened in 2000) council would know about it



immediately and be able to act on your behalf by taking this issue **straight to the top if necessary**.

It would connect all students to a network of information and support, giving you effective clout to influence policy and decision making in University Council.

Come to an Education Collective meeting to find out more, or perhaps to help organise. For email, write to educoll-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Queer happenings: another step further the struggle, with couches to boot!

QueerBits is the social and support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and other non-heterosexually identifying students at Macquarie. We meet on Wednesdays at 1pm in the QueerSpace.

Why are we called that?

'Queer' is used as a broad blanket term to cover all types of sexual identities. It embraces all diverse minorities – basically anyone who feels they don't fit into the 'heterosexual norm'. That is, anyone who can't say with certainty: "I am 100% girl, and I'd only ever have a relationship with a boy" OR "I am 100% boy, and I'd only ever have a relationship with a girl". We are open to anyone who has ever questioned, or is questioning this norm. Curiosity in exploring this sexual diversity is considered queer. 'Queer' may sound like a bit of an insult to some, but when looked at in light of the great diversity of human sexual and gender experience, it is a warm and friendly word, demonstrating our acceptance of that diversity.

We go out, we have fun, we talk, we hang, we play, we laugh, and maybe sometimes we cry (though it's usually from laughing so hard ☺). We understand that queers come from all walks of life, and all have different ways of having a good time. The funding we receive from Students' Council enables us to explore a diverse range of activities at an affordable cost to students. In our meetings and communications, we decide on what we want to get up to, set a date for it, then go along and have a fantastic time!

In 2001, events we organised included dinners, roller-skating, and outings to the theatre. We were also a major presence throughout sexuality week, where we effectively took over the campus, commandeering all the week's entertainment and giving it a queer bent. Just to make sure everyone knew we existed ☺.

Sexuality week also saw the opening of the QueerSpace, which we helped to decorate and imbue with personality. This ongoing process has now been taken up by the Queer Department, which comprises largely of QueerBits members.

Why do we do it?

We believe it is important for queers to know they are not alone – there are many other people with similar experiences growing up in this straight-dominated world. By meeting such people, and sharing our experiences, or just offering a bit of company, we can make life that little bit more bearable. And sometimes outrageously fun. When you hang around with

QueerBits people, you need never worry about copping any of that inappropriate discrimination that goes on out there in the nasty big world.

We understand that different people are at different stages of their sexual awakening and development, and may be going through difficult times, with issues at home such as coming out. We offer support and open ears to all such people.

We also realise that even the queer communities in the world can be rife with discrimination and intolerance, and there will not be a place for you in these places. For example, not everyone will be welcome in the Oxford St gay lifestyle, nor will everyone want to fit into that mould. We try to be as

accepting of all sorts of different queers as possible – as long as you have basic human qualities like compassion, you are welcome in QueerBits.

What is this QueerSpace thing?

As the Women's Room is to women, the QueerSpace is to queers. It is a place where we can go to chill out, hang out, study, procrastinate, and access resources and facilities. It is a space free from homophobic vilification, a space created by queers for the use of queers. It is above all a place where you can feel comfortable and be yourself.

The QueerSpace has: lounges for relaxing; a computer for doing technological stuff on (but more frequently used for its ability to play CDs ☺); magazines, papers, brochures and pamphlets relevant to queers; condoms, dams and lubricant; air conditioning for

comfort; great potential for excellent feng shui.

The QueerSpace is situated in the ex-Health and Counselling cottages, behind the National Australia Bank. Come down at any time to use it – we try to keep it open as often as possible.

The Queer Department, which is a department made up of queer Macquarie students, controls the space. Any queer student is welcome to join the department and participate in the decision-making processes which affect the running and organisation of the space. Meetings are held monthly, with notices put up around campus 7 days before a meeting. Many members of QueerBits are also involved with the Queer Department.

To keep abreast of all the queer activities going on around campus, it's a good idea to join the mailing list. Send an email to mu_queers-subscribe@yahoo.com.

There are many ways in which sexuality impacts on a person's right to education. The obvious disadvantage is that of being kicked out of home or being subject to violence or discrimination, all of which are disproportionately prevalent among queer people. This is to do with the other person's view of homosexuality and you. The other major problem is about your own view and how it is forced on you. Queer people can often feel alienated from the rest of society when much of that society doesn't recognise the possibility of that facet of their existence. On campus we try to alleviate and change these situations by providing a community, campaigning for visibility and dealing with problems. The opening of the Queer Space in 2001 has given us a place both a refuge for when it's needed, and a base from which to organise.

Safety on Campus

In 2001, the Women's Department decided to prioritise running a safety campaign on campus, to revise the current safety conditions on campus. The Women's Collective interest in safety on campus arose due to the increasing number of attacks on campus in 2001 to staff and students, with one robbery involving the theft on over \$20,000.

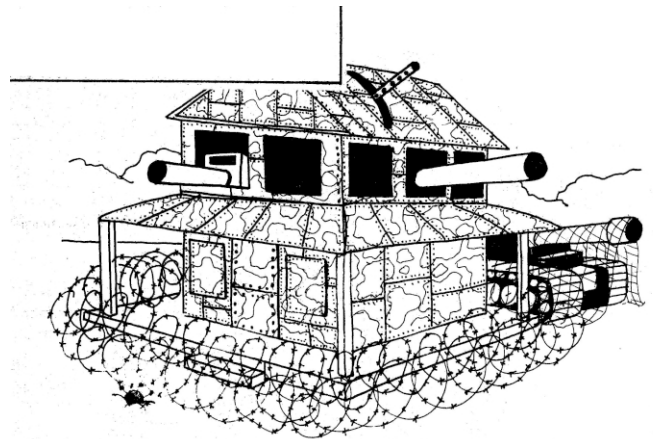
In the US and other NSW campuses, safety has been addressed by the "Blue Light" campaign. This led to the implementation of blue neon lights and a direct intercom system to security every hundred feet or so.

The Women's Collective began to look at measures to enhance safety on campus, with the support of SAM's Women's Room, the Community and Public Sector Union, the National Tertiary Education Union, MUPRA, clubs and societies. We received widespread support from staff and students via our staff/student forums, the numerous surveys students completed, and the thousands of signatures we compiled on our petition. Based on the surveys and several safety audits on the campus, the Women's Collective formulated suggestions on improving lighting, the number of pay phones, the promotion of current security services and staff, and the implementation of new security services, such as the campus shuttle bus and the blue light system.

These suggestions became our proposal that we presented to University Council at the end of 2001. The proposal received widespread support, particularly since students were taking such active measures to improve campus safety.

The next step forward will be to formulate a working party with University Council to try to implement all of these measures. Some have already commenced, such as the launch of the shuttle bus, a timetabled service running via all car parks, bus stops, Macquarie Uni Housing, and the Colleges.

If you would like to get involved in this campaign, please contact Christine on 0403284882 or email Macquarie_women@hotmail.com.



Elections: Ballots not Bullets?

MUSC is a wholly undergraduate student controlled organization. It is the only body on campus whose sole purpose is to promote the welfare and interests of Macquarie students. You can easily get involved in the various MUSC Collectives which recommend policy to it such as Education, Environmental, Queer, International Solidarity and Women's by simply turning up to their advertised meetings. However, even if you never get actively involved, it is important that you at least vote for your choice of people to look after your interests.

Each year you have the opportunity to elect 21 Councillors, seven of whom will be internally elected to paid Executive positions, including the \$18,000 Chairperson's "full time" job. (you also get to vote for 6 delegates to NUS, Women's Department Coordinators and the editors of the newspaper at the same time.) Look out for it during second semester. Currently only about 10% of the undergraduate population takes part each year, so your vote counts. Below are some tips to make sure you are directing your vote where you really want it to go. If you take a little care, you can confidently vote without spending your whole week trying to work out what's happening from seasoned campaigners and electoral material.

MUSC elections use the 'optional proportional preferential representation' system of voting. This means candidates are elected according to a quota of votes. The quota is calculated by dividing the total number of (formal) votes by the number of candidates to be elected, plus one. Each voter is invited to indicate the preferred candidate and then second, third and subsequent preferences. This allows voters to form themselves into groups supporting particular candidates. A candidate is elected if they win the support of a quota or more. If a candidate gains more than a quota, the surplus is transferred to other candidates who the original voter indicated as their second preference. If a voter's first-preference candidate gains little support, the candidate will eventually be excluded, but the votes are also transferred to other candidates according to the preferences indicated by their supporters.

In 1997 'above the line' voting was introduced for the MUSC and NUS elections. It's similar to voting for the Senate (see AEC website), in that you EITHER vote in the top section (Part A) by placing the number 1 in one (and only one) of the boxes next to the ticket you prefer, leaving all other boxes blank, OR you vote in Part B, where you place the number '1' in the box next to the candidate who is your first choice, the number '2' in the box next to your second choice and so on, voting for as many candidates as you wish; you don't have to fill in every box.

If you choose to vote in Part A, the ticket you are voting for has registered a 'distribution of preferences' form and your vote will be counted in the way this there isn't a poster distribution of area, just ask the copy of the forms, it's

Group A Blue Stockings	Group B Higher Education Action (HEAT)	Group C Greensoc	Group D Real	Group E Left Alliance	Group F Activate	Group G Racism Sux
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Calhoun Elak <input type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Kimber	<input type="checkbox"/> Nicholas Harrigan <input type="checkbox"/> Emma Dartna <input type="checkbox"/> Thomas Michel <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Chapman <input type="checkbox"/> Michael La Rose	<input type="checkbox"/> Kylie Bonnell <input type="checkbox"/> Ruth Fayers <input type="checkbox"/> Rachel Fisher	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Stirling <input type="checkbox"/> Yasmin Hunter <input type="checkbox"/> Tim Davis <input type="checkbox"/> Zoe Taylor	<input type="checkbox"/> Darren Kime <input type="checkbox"/> Sandra Shrimeld <input type="checkbox"/> Andrew Gibson	<input type="checkbox"/> Chris Heppel <input type="checkbox"/> Nicole Naylor <input type="checkbox"/> Sophie Barne	<input type="checkbox"/> Adrian Nelson <input type="checkbox"/> Alexandra Doughty <input type="checkbox"/> Murray Gardner <input type="checkbox"/> Kate Berry <input type="checkbox"/> Henna Arya <input type="checkbox"/> Nikolai Haddad

ticket has nominated. If displaying the tickets' preferences in the polling Returning Officer to see a your constitutional right.

In 2001 the only left-years assigned to job of to the State Electoral

dominated MUSC in recent running the MUSC elections Commission.

If anyone who is 'not political', be doing running for a not the Debating Society. There's a trend for party-affiliated students (Liberal and Labor) to hide their affiliation. It seems they think people don't want to vote for them...wonder why!

No prizes for guessing which is above the line and which is below the line

running tells you they are suspicious...What are they political organisation? It's

Unfortunately, the 'above the line' voting system helps groups who try to obtain votes from students who wouldn't choose to vote for them. It's unlikely students who voted '1' for the "Fuck Off Howard" ticket in the 1999 elections would be happy knowing their votes went to help elect a Liberal candidate, who didn't even mention he was a Liberal on his own populist election material, therefore it helps to do some research into who's who before you vote, and not just oblige the first nice person who approaches you during election week, (when it seems everyone wants to be your best friend).

An easy way to find a ticket's affiliation is to read their leaflet and see which Women's Department and MUSCateer ticket they recommend you support. As they generally have only a few tickets running for election, it's relatively easy to see which are composed of activist students.

By getting involved in the MUSC Collectives, and coming along to MUSC meetings where you have a right to speak and put motions, you'll know who's who come election week in Second Semester. Also, look out for General Student Meetings in the Quad where you get to decide MUSC policy!

It's all the more important to be in a position to make an informed choice, as it's an unfortunate fact that a great proportion of the 10% of the student body who do vote will simply vote for a friend, neither knowing nor perhaps caring about their political affiliation.

APPEALING AGAINST A GRADE

Because students are at the bottom of the ladder in terms of the university hierarchy, it's often hard for us to question decisions that have been made about our marks or performance. Make sure you know what your academic rights are and don't be afraid to exercise them.

After years of pressure from the Students' Council the university created a grading appeals process for students who are not happy with their final grade. Appeals can be based on the merit of work submitted or on the procedures used in the assessment of the subject. Appeals based on the academic merit of the work may become more difficult once they reach the committee stage, as committee members will be more likely to rely on the academic judgement from the school. For this reason it is important to emphasise any procedural unfairness you think may have occurred.

Consult Students' Council if you need advice on any problems you're having.

REQUIREMENTS

Under university policy you should be given a written statement of the assessment requirements for your subjects by the second week of the course. If you're not happy with the planned method of assessment, raise it with the lecturer early in the semester to see if they're prepared to be flexible.

ACCESS TO EXAM PAPERS

The university is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, and it isn't quite hypocritical enough to make you pay for information about your own work. Specifically, you cannot be denied the right to know your exam mark, major components of your final mark and to have access to your exam paper, exam question sheet and assignments when marked. The only exception is when exam questions are to be used again the following year - you can still discuss your results with a lecturer, but not see the actual script. **You need to request to see your exam paper within three months of the release of results.**

STANDARDISED NUMERICAL GRADES

There certainly is cause for concern over procedural unfairness. In most units, the standardised numerical grades (SNG's) which appear on your results, bear no relation to the marks on your work which you add up to estimate your progress. They are scaled marks and the method of scaling can differ across units. Within a unit, the method of scaling can even differ between (alphabetic) grades.

The major purpose of standardised numerical grades is to ensure that students are aware of their ranking in a unit, and to ensure that such 'rankings' are comparable across units at Macquarie University and at other institutions.

"Standardised numerical grades may be constructed to ensure that students are not aware that their raw mark may only be one or two marks below the relevant cutoff for a higher (alphabetic) grade."

THE GRADING APPEALS PROCESS

If you feel your final grade, or any other mark doesn't reflect your actual performance, it's good to start by speaking to your lecturer. Of course this isn't always possible, but if you can find someone in the course or the department who you feel you can talk to, you may save yourself much trouble. You should be entitled to feedback on your performance, and sometimes there has even been a mistake, lost work or overlooked marks which can be cleared up without any more hassle, or you can get another academic to re-mark your work. If this brings you no joy, you can use the grading appeals process (see below) to contest your final grade for the unit. Don't try to appeal just to avoid speaking to your lecturer, though. At the very least, you should look over and discuss your papers to prepare for your appeal and even if they really are uncooperative, your conversation is on record. They don't like it if you haven't tried.



Under procedures set up by Macquarie University Senate, students may lodge a formal appeal against their grade. The procedures for lodging an appeal are set out thus:

- Academic staff are required to discuss with any student problems arising from the final grade awarded; such discussion would be undertaken within the context of the requirements of the unit as set out in the unit outline. The member of staff is obliged to inform the student of the right to lodge a written appeal with the head of school (or director of program) and should place on record that a discussion occurred.
- If difficulties or differences continue, or there appears to be undue delay initiating the required discussion between student and staff, you have the right to lodge with the head of school a written request for a review of the grade awarded. Any such request must specify, and make explicit, the grounds for concern.
- On receipt of a formal request for review the head of school shall notify the responsible staff member that an appeal has been lodged and provide the details of the appeal, satisfy themselves that discussion has taken place (unless this proves physically impossible) between student and staff member, consider a report on the matter from the staff member, and take any such additional measures as are necessary to establish the facts of the situation and to arrive at a determination of the grade to be recommended.
- Prior to recommending the grade the head of school shall discuss the matter with the student in private if the student requests it. After this discussion the staff member may be present for any further discussion.
- The Head shall then notify the Examinations Section of the existence of the appeal and the nature of and reasons for the recommendation which will be either that the original grade is sustained, or is to be raised, lowered or be subject to a re-examination. This information is also provided in writing to the student.
- Students and staff have long felt it unjust that students may be scared off lodging an appeal because their marks may be lowered. The provision for the Head of School to recommend your mark be lowered must be removed to achieve fairness and openness in the process. For this to occur there must be student input into the running of the university. The Admin has consistently blocked moves to gain student input into the decision-making processes of the University. If you are not satisfied you can lodge an appeal against the decision of the head of school with the Examinations Section. This appeal must be lodged within seven days of the Head of School decision. The appeal must be in writing and make explicit the grounds for thinking that the Head of School's recommendation is unfair or unjust and explain why the grading process should be reconsidered by the Grading Appeals Committee.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, as most courses take pains to explain, is basically using someone else's work or ideas without acknowledgement.

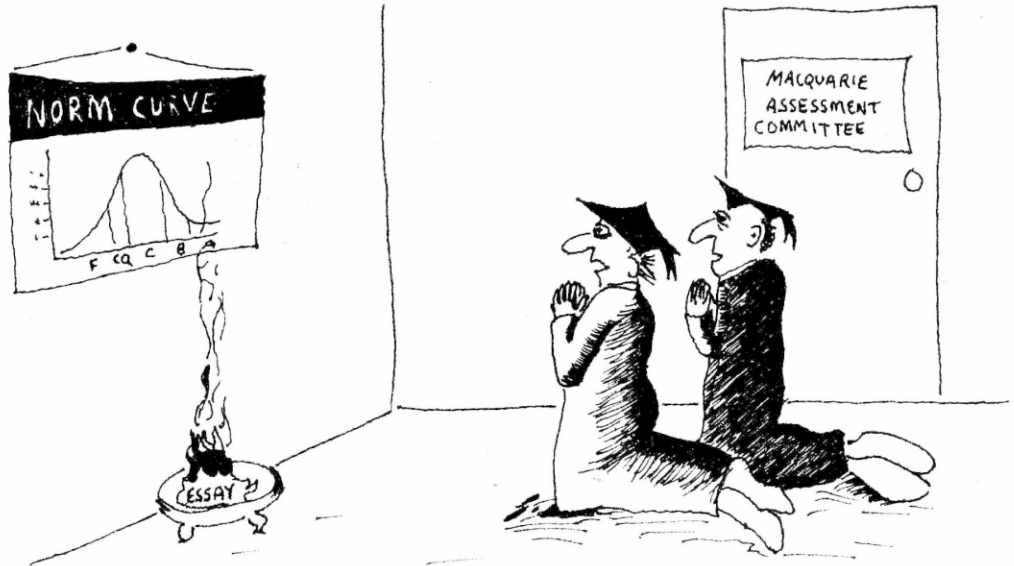
To avoid it, make sure you acknowledge all of your sources, even if you're not using direct quotes. If you're doing a group assignment check to see if you're expected to hand in substantially different work from the other group members.

If you are accused of plagiarism in an assignment or cheating in an exam, you should immediately consult the Students' Council as there are penalties for students found to have plagiarised or cheated. Some schools can be very heavy handed with allegations of plagiarism or other forms of misconduct so you should ALWAYS seek advice and representation about how to deal with the situation.

Depending on the individual circumstances, penalties can range from a warning to suspension from the university. However under the Student Misconduct and Discipline By-law most penalties can usually only be imposed by the University Discipline Committee, where you have some chance to state your case. If you did not intend to plagiarise and did so due to extreme pressure or personal circumstances, this may lessen the penalty.

- The Grading Appeals Committee has been established by the Academic Senate and has the power to review all aspects of cases referred to it in both academic and procedural terms (and to these ends may seek outside advice) and is to forward such recommendations to Senate. It is chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, with four academics, none being from the department under examination, and one student member, from the Academic Senate. There are postal elections early each year for two student members of Academic Senate and one of University Council. (If you are interested in these positions, come see MUSC)

- As well as allowing or disallowing your appeal, the Grading Appeals Committee can recommend modifications to the Department's grading procedures. It can also recommend that the Head of Department reconsider the grades of all students in a similar situation to yours.



Use of SNGs mean you cannot be certain of your marks.

If you suspect they were close to the next grade up, you have a right to appeal on procedural unfairness.

- Write in your submission that your SNG did not show your real mark.
- Write in your submission that you think your marks were close to a higher grade.
- Write in your submission that it would be grossly improper for you to be given a lower mark on appeal.
- Simultaneously be ready to appeal the recommendation of the Head of School to the Grading Appeals Committee saying that due to the effort you put into the course your SNG was unfair, your scaling was inappropriate, that you deserve a higher grade, and that the power to recommend a lower grade on appeal should be taken away from the Head of School, as it intimidates students and makes the university less collegial.

Whilst the university continues with these practices to hide the marks of students and discourage them from appealing we must make the job harder! All students should appeal all grades as a matter of course.

WHAT AND WHEN

- see your lecturer if that's not good enough:
- lodge appeal with Head of Division before
 - 1st semester: 5 August 2002
 - 2nd semester: 17 January 2003
- request to speak to the Head of Division privately if the reply is not good enough, or you don't receive a reply by
 - 1st semester: 19 August 2002
 - 2nd semester: 31 January 2003
- lodge appeal with Registrar within a week.

NOTE

If the grade you are appealing is the prerequisite for a unit you are enrolling in, you risk having to withdraw or get a waiver if the appeal is unsuccessful.

credits

"Facts Macquarie University students are entitled To Know" from the School of ECFS
 "Assessment and how to appeal against a grade" Sally Haydon, MUSC Education Research and Welfare Officer 1997 in the 1997 Alternative Calendar
 "Macquarie University Handbook of Undergraduate Studies 2002"