



Academics



Budget Blues

The bottom line was money when it came to discussing academics this year. Concern about the decline in the percentage of state aid to the university has stirred students and faculty alike to become increasingly involved with the administration in the URI budgeting process.

In anticipation of a project for the fall, academic departments have been asked to prepare for possible cutbacks in their programs. The Board of Regents have asked that the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and Rhode Island Junior College study ways to consolidate their programs into one, to eliminate duplications.

The money crunch has left many faculty members irate. They have charged the administration with poor planning and inadequate representation of URI's needs to the Board of Regents. Faculty Senate members have formed a special committee to scrutinize the budget.

The Student Senate has stepped up lobbying efforts in the State House with hopes of channeling more money to the Kingston campus. A Student Interest Organization has been formed and students have been sent regularly to Providence to let their concerns be heard. A voter registration drive was conducted this fall, and in the spring the more powerful members of the General Assembly were given a tour of the library, wine and dined, and escorted to a Rams' basketball game.

Despite the politicking and struggles of a handful of people, despair has hit many who have been closed out of classes or have walked into overcrowded classrooms. Financial problems have hit home and even those who haven't been actively involved with the budgeting process, have directed sharp criticism towards the elevated cost of tuition and the decline in academic quality.

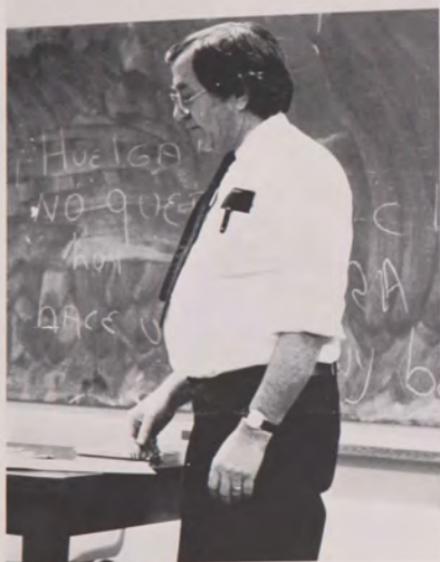
During the 1978-79 academic year,

URI was the sixth most expensive land grant institution in the nation. However, resources have been lacking.

A cutback in the number of books, journals, staff and hours has curtailed services in the library, the heart of the university. The microfilm machines, essential to research projects, have been in constant disrepair. A freeze on hiring has stymied growth in programs, and the impending threat of the loss of accreditation has worried members of various departments.

Although URI's theme song for the year could have been "Budget Blues," the concern here for a quality education has persisted. The bottom line once again has been money as the unpromising outlook on the job market has created a class of hard workers who fiercely compete for the best jobs, or a seat in graduate schools after commencement.

(AnnaMaria Virzi)









Getting Educated . . .

I bumped into Filmore near the quad the other day a week before graduation. I hadn't seen him for four years, since the summer before we came to URI.

"Hey, Filmore, what have you been up to?" I asked.

"Getting educated for the most part," he answered.

Now, Filmore was definitely into the education scene in high school. As a matter of fact, he had spent that summer before coming here reading countless volumes, including a book on the history of URI. So I was interested to find out what he thought of the place after four years.

"Was it worth it Filmore? Did it satisfy you academically?"

"Yes and no. The first thing I learned was that I'm schizophrenic—I found out in my intro psychology book. So, I became a quadruple major in business, engineering, sociology and psychology. It was awful. One minute I'd be poking at mice in Chafee, and the next I'd be poking at my calculator in Wales; I couldn't stand the smell of either of them, though.

"I began to put studying, papers and well . . . everything off until the night before; sometimes I'd be working on

assignments that were weeks overdue."

"Then other times I'd be at the Union pitching a waterfall of quarters into the "Space Invaders" game. Or else I'd be at the Library continuing the flow of money this time into the copy machines."

I could empathize with Filmore on these points. However, I was curious as to how he did gradwise, so I asked the taboo question, "Filmore, what was your cum?"

"Oh, somewhere around a 3.0, 3.2, or 3.5 or . . . Hey, it's not that important. On some exams if you got a 15 it worked out to be a B. Scales saved me," he said.

Filmore looked pretty anemic that day so I asked about his health.

"Well I haven't eaten a solid meal in months. I was convinced that they were trying to poison me in the dining halls. It seemed they were always serving raw hamburger steaks. And I was laid up for a week once after eating the chili in Hope. I'm surviving now on sandwiches from the Pub, but did you ever notice that they're named after disasters?" he said.

"I also stayed away from the infirmary as much as possible. Once I waited there longer than I did for registration period. Anyway, they

think that green chloroseptic is a cure for everything, you know. Mostly I'm just burnt from finals. I had 18 of them, and wasn't through until Saturday. I watched everybody move out," he moaned.

Filmore told me he spent his last two years in a dorm, and before that he lived in a fraternity and down-the-line.

"All of them were interesting. In my suite on campus, half of the guys were constantly loaded while the others sat around and told physics jokes. I could fit in with either group, though. That's one advantage of schizophrenia," he chuckled.

"It was basically the same in the fraternity. But there my brothers were always trying to get me fixed-up at socials for the coming events. Down-the-line was alright, except for the fact that I was constantly out of gasoline. I had to live on macaroni and cheese, and I could never find a parking place on campus," he scoffed.

Filmore started to shuffle his feet, so I knew he wanted to be moving along.

"Filmore, it was great to see you again, but before you go, tell me one last thing—would you do it over again?"

"Yes and no."

(Pat Quinn)



