UGC supports bid for extra students

The University Grants Committee (UGC) has accepted the University's offer to take an extra 85 Home and EC students in each of 1984-85 and 1985-86.

But in a letter to universities concerning its decisions, in response to an earlier invitation for bids, the UGC said no extra money, other than tuition fees, would be available to cover the costs of the additional students.

The admission of extra students is part of a national bid to meet the exceptionally high demand for entry to higher education expected in those years.

The total offers received by the UGC amounted to over 3,600 additional undergraduate students. Of these over 2,900 are in the Science groups and over 1,000 in the Arts groups.

With a few minor exceptions the UGC agreed that universities should admit the additional students up to the numbers which they had offered.

The UGC expressed the hope that universities which have offered to take fairly large numbers in the biological sciences and social studies will give preference to subjects which have a strong vocational element and which have good employment prospects.

However, in calculating its distribution of grants, the Committee will continue to work on the student number targets already announced and no account will be taken of numbers in excess of these figures.

The letter follows in the wake of an announcement from Education Secretary, Sir Keith Joseph, which outlined plans for expenditure in education for the fiscal year 1985-86 including the level of universities' recurrent grant for the 1984-85 academic year and a revision of grant for the current year.

In a written reply to a question in the House of Commons on November 17, Sir Keith announced reductions in the 1983-84 grant for all universities from £1,213 million to £1,211 million and in the 1984-85 grant from £1,270 million to £1,265 million. It is not clear whether these figures are fully comparable to those given in earlier announcements but it appears that reductions in the overall allocation may amount to £7 million in 1983-84 and £17 million in 1984-85.

In his announcement the Secretary of State said that the level of grant for 1983-85 "assumes a measure of increased economy in expenditure although provision has been made for some unavoidable cost increases".

Sussex's share of these reductions if passed on pro-rata by the University Grants Committee might be of the order of £75,000 in 1983-84 and £175,000 to £200,000 in 1984-85.

The main reasons for the reductions of grant according to the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals appear to be a provision for inflation of three per cent per year for non-pay and five per cent per year for non-pay. If the University were to adjust its assumption accordingly there would be an offsetting 'saving' in 1984-85 of about £100,000 but this may not be realistic.

The Government intends to increase the equipment grant for the academic year 1984-85 to £57.8 million, a cash increase of five per cent compared with 1983-84.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!
Ho! Ho! Ho! Have You Seen This Man?

Safety warning to hitch-hikers & cyclists

The Safety Committee on November 9 expressed grave concern at the risks being taken by students hitch-hiking at the bus stop on the main A23. The Committee also noted with equal concern reports of motorcycles and bicycles being ridden through the underpass and on the footpaths of the campus.

The Committee requested that the attention of the University as a whole should be drawn to the dangers of these practices which could result in serious injury.
AFRC encourages uptake of funds

The Agriculture and Food Research Council (AFRC) has launched a new campaign to boost its direct support for university research by around 50 per cent over the next few years.

The Council is actively encouraging grant applications from the universities. As part of its effort to increase research support, it has published a new booklet "AFRC [sic] Funds for the Universities".

Funds are not restricted for use in agricultural departments or necessarily in the support of sciences obviously directly associated with agriculture and food. Each application will be considered on its merits and on whether it could possibly have relevance at some stage in the future to the wider responsibilities of the Council.

Safety notice

At its meeting on November 9, Safety Committee discussed the problem of employees, students and visitors, working on University property, who suffer from disabilities or chronic illnesses, such as epilepsy or diabetes.

Sudden attacks of loss of consciousness occurring in the Science Area are the greatest risk, as in other parts of the University there is no greater danger than in the general community.

The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) puts a responsibility not only on the employer but also on the worker in this matter.

It was noted that people suffering from chronic illnesses often try to or conceal the fact. Often they do not wish employers or fellow workers to know and may not be willing to carry any information such as a medic-alert bracelet. They may be concerned that disclosure of medical information may affect their jobs or, in the case of students, their job prospects.

It was agreed that the University should:
* Ask all workers for a voluntary declaration of illness or disability.
* Make such knowledge available to the person in charge of the area concerned and to building safety officers, medical officers, nurses and first-aiders.
* Ask those with disabilities or chronic illnesses to wear a medic-alert bracelet or something similar.

Dr. R.A. Leake
University Health Service

£400,000 MUSICAL FOR GARDNER CENTRE

A new £400,000 musical is to be staged at the Gardner Centre in the New Year.

The show, Utopia - The Musical, will have its premiere at the theatre on February 6 and play for two weeks before opening later in the West End.

Utopia has been adapted by Sussex playwright James Verner from a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. It will be the biggest, and by far the most expensive, show the Gardner has ever staged, although the theatre will not be financially involved.

Backers of the show are the London-based Curzon Productions, now revealed as the anonymous backers of the Christmas show Pinocchio. This is attracting record advance business and Curzon have confirmed their willingness to continue supporting the Gardner's Christmas shows for at least the next two years.

Curzon Productions act for some of the country's biggest star names, including Spike Milligan who is to appear at the Gardner next week. It was through him that the company's present association with the Centre began.

Ken Pike (top) and Michael Knapman (below) at work in the NGU Glassblowing Workshop last week on some advanced apparatus for research students. Together with colleague Roger Tont they undertake sophisticated glassblowing tasks not only for Chemistry & Molecular Sciences but for other groups on campus, and are happy to undertake work for firms in the local area under the University's Services for Industry scheme.

Winter Graduation

The Gardner Centre can expect a packed house for the Winter Graduation ceremony tomorrow. More than 190 students are expected to receive their degrees in person and they will be joined by family and friends from all parts of the country. Regrettably University Officers have been unable to meet the numerous requests for additional tickets.

In total 450 degrees will be conferred by the Vice Chancellor during the hour long ceremony which starts at 11.30 a.m.

Among those graduating will be the very popular former University Butler, John Smith, who will receive an honorary degree of Master of Arts. John, who will be presented for his degree by Professor A.D. Nuttall, retired from the University in August 1982 after ten years service.

The ceremony will also have an international flavour with the conferral of a degree on the first Nigerian student to graduate under the scholarship scheme, named after Sir Adam Thompson, Chairman of British Caledonian. Musa Maikudi Idris will be flying in from Nigeria to attend the ceremony.

Father Christmas in more familiar guise as EEB porter Jim Austin.

Jim, who has been playing Father Christmas for more than 30 years, will be appearing at many children's and other events in the brighton area over the festive season, and can be heard on BBC Radio Sussex on Christmas morning.
In October Bulletin asked some new students about their first impressions of the University, and published their responses under the title "What do you think of it so far?" Here we report on their more considered judgments at the end of the first term.

There is a well known response to the question "What do you think of it so far?" but when put to first year students who are near to completing their first term the reply was emphatically different - "Overall a great place and I am glad I came" was the typical reply.

David Bozeman, Bgas (CCS was quoted as a particularly good example) worked especially well and it was hoped that this might be developed further in future years. Several of the relationships forged under the sponsor ship scheme are continuing on a social basis.

The one recurring theme of complaint was the poor social life at weekends. Although they were aware of many of the problems as expressed by the President of the Students' Union, Chris Toulouse, and Accommodation and Services Manager, Brian Reynolds, in Bulletin (Nov 19), they still thought more could be done to improve the social environment. The re-opening of Falmer Bar at weekends and the availability of a late night snack or meal service on Saturday evenings were suggestions for immediate improvements.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

PROFESSOR KINGMAN FOR BRISTOL

"Radio Sussex Supercook". The area title brings Jill the prize of a Mediterranean cruise.

JACOBS VICTORIOUS

John Jacobs, Lecturer in Social Administration, and his family, last year's winners of "Ask the Family", beat former Sussex students Bill and Eileen Aldwinckle and their family, this year's winners of the BBC1 TV competition, in a grand finale televised on November 16.

DR. MULVEY ELECTED SECRETARY OF LEARNED SOCIETY

Joana Renze, CCS

Perhaps, surprisingly, only one of the students who responded to the survey had been away for a weekend which tended to highlight the lack of Saturday/Sunday facilities. One major reason was "too many Londoners and students from the South-East who find it too easy to get away". It was recognised that some well thought out long-term proposals would be needed to change this pattern.

The Library ("computer is excellent and staff very helpful"), the shops, sports facilities and the "good student support services" were singled out for praise, as were the Garden Centre ("perhaps slightly cheaper prices for students") and Radio Falmer, which kept students informed with good programmes and an up to date news service.

There was a will for students to get more involved in the affairs and activities of the Students' Union and several expressed the view that the procedures at meetings should be changed to encourage a wider spectrum of student views and opinions.

The inadequate number of telephones and the lack of privacy the few in service offered was a criticism as was the possible failure of some of the Students' Union Societies to advertise themselves.

But the students kept coming back to the initial theme of the excellent campus and how very pleased they were to be here.

Joanna Renze, CCS

In general the students had also found it very easy to make friends which was in marked contrast to the experiences of several friends and contemporaries who had contacted them from other institutions.

More contact with 2nd and 3rd year students, especially during the early part of the term would have been helpful. One student commented that "contact with someone who knew the ropes in those first few weeks would have been useful." The sponsorship scheme organised by some of the Schools of Studies

Loulie Wilson, Ears

Without exception those questioned found the environment stimulating and exciting but several were surprised by the amount of work (some students were already in to double figures with their essays with more to come before the end of term) and the firmness of tutors in applying deadlines.

The majority were adjusting well to the level of work and higher expectations of academic life, although one or two were itching to get to grips with their Major subjects.

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MEETING HOUSE CHRISTMAS APPEAL FOR REFUGEES

The 1983 Meeting House Christmas Appeal will contribute to the World University Service (UK) campaign, "Don't Write Off Refugees". The campaign is aimed at alerting the British academic community to the struggle of refugee communities to build for themselves the basis of a new life and to make a new contribution to the development of their societies.

Money raised will be channelled directly into three schemes of the Ugandan Refugee Education Project, the Salvadoran Refugee Resource Centre and SWAPO Women's Literacy Packs. Further details of the projects are on display in the Meeting House. If you are able to help, please give your donation to Barbara Barber in Room 3 of the Meeting House. Cheques should be made payable to "The University of Sussex".

WHAT'S ON AT THE GARDNER

An ex-music student of the University returns this Friday to play a Mozart Piano Concerto with the University Orchestra. During his time here as a student, MALCOLM MILLER gave lunchtime concerts, played concerts and conducted the Madrigal Group. Since leaving, he has continued his piano studies in New York and Jerusalem and currently in London. He will perform the Concerto in C major K467, the slow movement of which will be familiar from its use in the film Elvira Madigan.

Several performances of this year's Christmas show, PINOCCHIO, are already sold out, so if you want to see it, book soon. It's on from December 23 to January 14; details from the Box Office.

To whet your appetite for next term - in January there will be two contrasting but equally popular concerts. On January 25 the ENGLISH CONCERT, directed by Trevor Pinnock, will play a programme of Bach and Handel, including 'The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba'. On January 26, the BLUE RHYTHM KINGS will play jazz dance-band music of the 20s and 30s, including such exotic items as 'Never Swat a Fly' and 'Me and Jane in a Plane!'

TEXT PROCESSING RESTRICTION

The Computing Committee has introduced restrictions on the use of Computing Centre terminals for text processing.

The move results from the current heavy demand for Computing Centre resources.

In future, no text processing can be carried out between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5.30 p.m., Monday to Friday, during term-time. This ban includes the use of the RUNOFF package.

The only exception to this ruling is in cases where the Computing Centre's Acting Director has given his written permission.

ACADEMIC FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

A list of publications by academic faculty, covering the period Summer 1982 to the present, is being prepared. Its availability will be referred to in the Annual Report.

Most members of faculty will already know about this because a notice has been circulated to Deans with a deadline of December 9. If you have not yet responded, please get your list to Geoff Ivey in Sussex House, as soon as possible.

999 to the rescue

A 999 signal has come to the rescue of Radio Falmer. The station, together with all other student stations nationally, was recently off the air because its waveband was being used by the reconstituted Radio Caroline.

Radio Caroline refused to change frequency even when it was pointed out to them that they would put the student radio service off the air. It has been suggested that the choice of frequency by Radio Caroline was deliberate in order to capture the student audience.

Following representations from the National Union of Students and local student groups the Home Office agreed to a change of frequency from 963 kHz to 999 kHz.

This move will improve the quality of reception, although this frequency is not really as quiet as the old one before Radio Caroline returned.

As a result student radio stations will have to monitor the reception of the new waveband.

Stanley Deason

Stanley Deason, a leading figure in the foundation of the University, and former Major of Brighton, died on November 28.

In 1953 he moved that local authorities throughout Sussex should unite to explore the possibility of founding a University of Sussex.

He was a loyal and close friend of the University in other ways, particularly as a member of the original steering committee which planned and set up the University and later as a member of the Council and of many of its sub-committees. His fund-raising efforts were instrumental in establishing what has now become the Centre for Medical Research.

He was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by the University in 1976.

Stanley Deason on the day he received his honorary degree.
HELP FOR...

...the hard of hearing

Research which is essential to the protection and understanding of the delicate mechanisms of the human ear is being pioneered at Sussex by Dr. Ian Russell and Dr. Alan Cody with the support of a grant of £221,000 from the Medical Research Council.

The human ear is so intricate and finely balanced that it cannot be restored or replaced if damaged. The Sussex team's vital work will result in a much greater understanding of the workings of the inner ear by identifying ways which might serve to protect it and the factors which herald disease or partial loss of hearing.

The key to the team's work is based on how the ear converts sound energy into a form which can be handled by the brain. To do this it is necessary to record the responses by tones of the sensory hair cells in the cochlea of the inner ear.

The original technique for doing this was pioneered at Sussex about six years ago by Dr. Ian Russell and Dr. Peter Sellick. It involves inserting microelectrodes into the hair cells and recording the small electrical changes generated by these cells when the ear is stimulated by sound.

The current research has developed from this initial approach to look into the frequency tuning in the cochlea, the way the brain exerts its control over them, and why it is that outer hair cells are more vulnerable to intensive noise and ototoxic drugs which cause hearing loss.

In the course of the present studies there is already evidence of a division of labour among the hair cells of the cochlea where the inner row of hair cells keep a predominantly sensory role, while the three outer rows are probably the location of the frequency selective feedback mechanism and are under direct central nervous control.

The team already has an idea about the location and nature of the transduction process in the inner hair cells. However, in the course of the next five years the outer hair cells will largely claim their attention, hopefully to the benefit of those who risk a loss of hearing.

...and crop yields

Compounds which produce serious disease in rice, the staple food of Third World countries, have given Sussex scientists a lead to help control plant growth and germination.

Dr. Jim Hanson and his team, with support from the Agricultural and Food Research Council, are studying the gibberellin plant hormones.

These compounds, which were originally discovered as the products of a fungus, Gibberella fujikuroi, are responsible for the characteristic jointed growth of many plants. They have now been found in small amounts in many plants where they are involved in various aspects of plant development including germination, stem elongation and the development of fruit.

Gibberelic acid is now used commercially in, for example, the malting step in beer manufacture, the formation of seedless grapes and in the production of citrus fruits. Dr. Hanson's team has been studying the chemistry and biosynthesis of these compounds for over 20 years and has discovered a number of them. This Sussex research group have defined many of the stages in the sequence of biosynthetic events leading to the formation of these compounds in nature.

A number of commercial plant growth regulators discovered by conventional screening methods, function by inhibiting gibberellin biosynthesis.

These compounds have a variety of uses which range from producing ornamental dwarf plants to reducing the stem length of wheat and thus diminishing the effect of storm damage and increasing the value of fertiliser in improving the yield of grain. Over the last few years the group in Molecular Sciences have synthesized a number of compounds that are very similar to the key biosynthetic intermediates that had been discovered earlier.

These mimics fooled the enzyme systems responsible for gibberellin biosynthesis into accepting them as substrates but since they lacked chemical features essential for further metabolism, they then blocked the pathway. The wrong key that jams the lock. The compounds were then shown in preliminary tests carried out by Dr. Hanson's group to act as plant growth regulators. Some of these inhibitors can be prepared in one or two steps from compounds that are currently industrial waste products. The present grant from the AFRC is for a graduate research assistant to continue these studies on novel plant growth regulators.

Eight-year-old Isobel Mont tries out the computer system used in the reading studies, watched by Nicola Yuill.

SUSSEX researchers will be able to help parents, teachers and educationalists understand some of the problems children have in acquiring reading skills as a result of a project which is being supported by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC).

Whilst most children develop good comprehension skills, research by Dr. Jane Oakhill (now attached to the MRC Perceptual and Cognitive Performance Unit) has identified a substantial group of poor readers who can recognise individual words but fail to understand connected prose.

A good deal is known about how to teach children to read individual words and, typically, it is this skill that is measured in classroom reading tests. However, testing of this kind will not detect a child who has acquired basic reading skills but is unable to properly understand the meaning of what he or she reads.

Now, as a result of a grant of £36,900 from the SSRC to the Experimental Psychology Subject Group, the researchers will be able to investigate the reasons for this type of reading problem.

Alan Parkin, Nicola Yuill and Jane Oakhill are undertaking a three-year project in local schools which will identify children with comprehension problems, specify the difficulties they encounter and suggest ways in which they can be helped. An innovative feature of the research is its use of a computer-based experimental system for teaching the children in school.

Text will be displayed on a screen and various measurements will be made to establish how easily the child can read. By manipulating the type of material shown to the child it will be possible to establish which particular aspects of text cause comprehension problems in the poor readers.

From the outcome of these experiments possible techniques for improving comprehension should emerge and it is hoped that some of these will be tried out in the classroom.
NON-ACADEMIC VACANCIES

The Personnel Office has issued the following summary of non-academic posts to be filled. Advertisements for these vacancies have been sent to Sussex staff and circulation to staff, and to union representatives. Copies of the advertisements (and further information available) and application forms are available from the Personnel Office, Room 206, Sussex House. The list was compiled on November 23.

All posts are full-time, full-year, permanent, for male/female, unless otherwise stated.

Clerical and Related

Secretary, grade 3, temporary for two years, School of Education.
Secretaries, 1/2, temporary for two years, Sports Pavilion.
Secretary, 1/2, part-time, Astronomy Centre.
Secretary, 1/2, part-time, MOLS.
Typist/VDU Operator, 2, temporary for one year, EAM.

Manual and Ancillary

Caretaker, UCNS D, two years, Sports Pavilion.
Chargehand Cleaner, UCNS C, Kent House.
Cleaner, UCNS A, part-time, East Slope Social Centre.
Cleaners, UCNS A, part-time, Refectory.
Teamaker, UCNS A, part-time, temporary, 3/1/84 to 16/3/84, SOCSCI.
Senior Catering Assistant, UCNS B, part-time, Refectory.

Technical

Electronics Technician, 6, five years, from as soon as possible, MRC Neurophysiology Research Group, BIOLS.
Research Technicians, 2, from as soon as possible to 30/9/84, Biochemistry, BIOLS.

THE EMPLOYMENT ACT & THE NGA

A meeting has been organised by the TULC for campus trade unionists to discuss recent events, with speakers from the National Graphical Association and Brighton Traders' Council, on Thursday, December 8, from 1 to 2 p.m. in Lecture Theatre P81A6, Physics Building.

ON READING A FILM...

An exhibition in the University Library illustrating various aspects of the study and enjoyment of film, with particular reference to the facilities available on campus. Open until mid-January, during the normal Library opening hours.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY BOOKSHOP

Recent publications by Sussex authors include:
- FUNDAMENTALS OF MOLECULAR SPECTROSCOPY, 3rd edition, by C.N.Banwell, Macmillan, £15.75.
- A DICTIONARY OF MARXIST THOUGHT, edited by Tom Bottomore, Laurence Harris, V.G. Kerman and Ralph Miliband, Blackwell, £27.50.
- CHOUANERIE AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION, Puisaye, the Princes and the British Government in the 1790s by Maurice Hutt, Cambridge U.P. In 2 vols., the set £60.00.
- CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS ... THEIR HIDDEN MEANING by David Lewis and James Greene. Hutchinson. Paper, £5.00.

LUNCHEON EVENTS

Tomorrow and Thursday, December 7 and 8: Chil-


UNIVERSITY CLOSURES

The University will be closed on Christmas and New Year holiday from Friday, December 23 to Monday, January 2, inclusive.

FELLOWSHIPS AND OTHER AWARDS

The Research Grants Office has received the following details:

Smithsonian Fellowships: Applications are invited for the 1984-85 Fellowships in Biological Sciences; History of Art; History of Science & Technology; Earth Sciences; Social & Cultural History; and Anthropology. The awards are for a period of 6 - 12 months to be held in the U.S.A. For postdoctoral scholars undertaking further research training, an annual stipend of $18000 plus allowances is payable, and for doctoral candidates to conduct dissertation research an annual stipend of $11000 plus allowances. Closing date for applications is January 15, 1984.

Commission of the European Communities: Tenders are invited to analyse scientific and technological changes in order to highlight their long term implications and consequences for the Communities' R & D and other policies. Proposals are requested for a sub-programme on medicine, health and nutrition in the Tropics. Closing date for applications is February 15, 1984.

Further details of the above are available from the Research Grants Office, Sussex House.

SMALL ADS


MEMBERSHIP OF THE SENIOR COMMON ROOM

Applications are invited from staff and visitors for membership of the SCR, which should be looked upon as the staff club of the University. The name dates from the early days when the University established Junior (for students) and Senior Common Rooms.

Application forms are obtainable from the display racks in the SCR Lounge in the Refectory or from Mr. L. Rickatts, Room 222, Sussex House (int. tel. 05-143).

THE FIVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

The University Carol Service by candlelight will be on Sunday, December 9 at 6 p.m. in the Meeting House. Mulled wine and mince pies will be on sale afterwards, with profits going to the Christmas Appeal for refugees.

CHRISTMAS PARTY FOOD

The Refectory is able to offer such items as mince pies, sausage rolls, Christmas puddings, savoury flans and other fare at reasonable prices. Four days' notice is needed for large orders and all Christmas orders must be placed by December 16. All enquiries should be made to Wendy Leigh on 08-115.

CRECHE & NURSERY

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

In aid of toy funds. Thursday, December 8, 12 noon 2 p.m. Refectory Lobby.

TERM DATES

Spring Term 1984
Monday, January 9 - Friday, March 16
Summer Term 1984
Wednesday, April 25 - Friday, June 29
Autumn Term 1984
Monday, October 8 - Friday, December 14

BULLETIN

This is the last Bulletin of the Autumn Term. The Information Office would like to thank all those who have contributed items, and in particular Peter Morris, Keith Wilson and Keith Hunt of MSU for the photographs.

Please remember to keep us informed of events. The first edition of the Spring Term will be published on Tuesday, January 10. Copies must be received in the Information Office, Room 329, Sussex House (int. tel. 05-155) by no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, December 19.

Other publication dates are: January 31 (copy date January 27), February 21 (February 13) and March 13 (March 5).

The Bulletin is for the information of staff and students of the University of Sussex. Published by the Information Office and printed by the University of Sussex Printing Unit.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR