

RCMP shares student info with Mt Allison

WILLIAM WOLFE-WYLIE
CUP Atlantic Bureau Chief

SACKVILLE, NB (CUP)—The RCMP made their rounds during homecoming weekend in Sackville, NB, visiting off-campus parties attended by students from nearby Mount Allison University.

The next day, some of the students received an e-mail message from David Rowland, the University's Dean of Students, asking for a quick meeting to discuss the town's bylaws and how to be a good neighbour.

The idea of the RCMP giving information about students to a university official has made some uncomfortable, and has others questioning whether the practice is even legal.

According to a New Brunswick privacy lawyer, who asked not to be identified, the practice may violate the Canada Privacy Act.

It's not clear how long the RCMP has been forwarding information to the University. Rowland said he wasn't aware whether this was a new initiative or one from before his time.

Reverend John Perkin, former dean of students, refused to comment on what

occurred between him and the RCMP while he was dean.

Section 3 of the act defines personal information in part as "the name of the individual where it appears with other personal information relating to the individual or where the disclosure of the name itself would reveal information about the individual."

Personal information includes race, ethnicity, address, fingerprints, blood type or other identifying information.

The Act is also clear under what situations such details collected by government institutions can be distributed to third parties. The RCMP need either consent from the individual, an act of parliament, a court order, or a request from the Attorney General.

However, exemptions exist under which personal information may be shared.

"Forwarding [information] onto the dean would fall outside that exemption," the lawyer said. "It just seems a bit far-reaching."

The RCMP's Access to Information and Privacy Branch (ATIP) in Ottawa said that they would need to know all details of this case before offering

an opinion on the situation, but said that it might be allowed under New Brunswick law.

But according to the New Brunswick lawyer, "federal legislation would apply" in this case.

When Rowland first began receiving the e-mails, he said he was under the impression that all the information being provided to him was legitimate.

But some students have reported that the office of the dean of students has been used to intimidate students.

Eileen Mens was stopped last weekend when RCMP saw her dump a plastic cup into a street-side garbage can.

"He said, 'I'm going to report you to the dean,'" Mens said. "The thing that really upset me was the threatening method, which is totally inappropriate."

Rowland said he wasn't aware that was happening.

"My intention was never to be perceived as having this process punitive," he said.

However, student Jason Forsey says he was threatened with possible discipline by the University Judicial Committee if his name continued to be in the e-mails from the police.

York stabbing isolated incident: student reps

SARAH MILLAR
Excalibur

TORONTO (CUP)—Police are still investigating the domestic dispute that erupted between two York University students last week, which resulted in both students being sent to hospital with injuries.

Constable Victor Kwong, media relations officer with 31 Division of the Toronto Police, said charges haven't yet been laid.

"We wanted to give her time to heal up a little bit so she knows what's going on," he said, referring to the 19-year-old female victim who suffered self-inflicted wounds, adding that he believed charges would be laid at some point.

Kwong said it was thought that the

21-year-old male who suffered injuries was treated at hospital and released 12 September.

Michael Markicevic, Assistant Vice-President (Campus Services and Business Operations) for York, said that this incident shouldn't alarm other York students, staff or faculty members.

"This is a completely isolated incident—a very unfortunate incident—involving two community members who had an interpersonal relationship and, unfortunately, what's happened is a result of their inability to peacefully resolve their issues," he said.

When asked how many other stabbing incidences had occurred in the last six months at York, Markicevic said that this is the first such incident that had been reported to York

security and that it's being investigated by the Toronto Police.

A search of the incidence reports on the security website showed that eleven assaults had occurred on campus in the last six months, although none of them appeared to be stabbings.

Markicevic added that York's rate of incidences or occurrences similar to this is far below the City of Toronto's average.

"The York community still remains far safer with respect to such incidences and general characteristics in terms of safety, quality of life [and] the interaction of community members. It is far safer both statistically and in terms of how community members respect each other and work together to create a safe community here at York," he said.



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