

Confusion over exam policy



The Christmas examination schedule extends beyond the schedule outlined in the University calendar. This discrepancy affects the first and final days of exams.

The date recorded in the calendar for the first day of exams is the sixth of December - exams are not scheduled for the fifth. The final date for examinations according to the calendar is the sixteenth. According to the schedule which appeared in last week's Brunswickan, exams are scheduled for the seventeenth.

The reason for the change is that there are too many exams to fit into the original period as outlined in the calendar.

The process for changing the examination schedule is one of confusion because no one really seems to know what the procedure is. We spoke to three different people about this procedure and received two different answers. According to Dalton London, Chairman of the Senate Examination Committee and Dr. Howard Fritz, the Associate Registrar, it is the responsibility of the Registrar's office to

recognize and examination conflict and then proceed to the Senate Examination Committee where a decision is then made. Brian Ingram, Registrar, stated in a telephone interview regarding this particular change to the exam schedule that, "I just decided to do it. It was impossible to schedule all exams within the period." He said he "didn't receive approval" from Senate for this change. Ingram also added that there were "no requirements" as far as he knows regarding changes in the exam schedule.

When asked if the Senate Examination Committee reported back to Senate regarding its findings (i.e. that the exam period had to be extended), London said the Senate "doesn't want this sort of thing brought to their attention continually." The terms of reference for the Senate Examination Committee state that:

This Committee shall advise the Registrar on the mechanics of regular examinations - the examination timetable, the allocation of space, the provision of neces-

sary materials - and on ways of improving examination procedures. It shall also advise the Registrar on policy concerning, and the administration of, supplemental and special examinations, and on all questions concerning the eligibility of students to sit regular, supplemental or special examinations. This Committee may also make recommendations to Senate designed to modify or improve the examination system.

Now if the committee is not obligated to make formal recommendations to Senate, then how is Senate expected to change the exam period? This would seem to be a requirement as outlined in the first page of the UNB calendar which states "The Senate and the Board of Governors of the University of New Brunswick reserve the right to make changes in this calendar without prior notice."

Both students and professors are affected by examinations. For students, there are pressures of study and commitment. For professors there is an increased

workload coupled with deadlines to be met. The disruption caused by schedule complications is unnecessary. What is to happen next year when exams are expected to go to the twenty first of December? At this time of year, students as well as the rest of the university community are travelling.

We are aware that the university has had to deal with extenuating circumstances during this period. First there has been an increase in the number of half term courses. This has led to a number of conflicts for students as a Senate regulation stipulates that no student is to write more than three exams in a row.

A solution for both parties has to be in the making. Currently there are far too many faults in the system as it now stands. A solution for the administration would be to establish an examinations schedule - that remains within the specified dates as outlined in the calendar. Whatever the University sees fit to arrive at, it must be strictly adhered to.