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Tuition jumps \$300 to \$3,140

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

The UNB Board of Governors has raised undergraduate tuition \$300, or 10.6% to \$3,140 in order to balance its \$120 million budget for 1997-98. "No one likes to raise tuition fees," said UNB President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston in a memo addressed to the university community. "Especially not now when students are incurring ever-increasing debt loads." But, the President argues, UNB faced the prospect of a \$5 million deficit next year but through a series of "important and difficult" measures, UNB is now calling for a balanced budget for 1997-98. Parr-Johnston characterizes the decision to raise tuition as "the most difficult" one which the Board of Governors had to make. The amount of the increase was what surprised UNB SU President Joie Hellmeister. "I was estimating [that the new tuition would be] under \$3,000, or maybe \$3,000, but I would have never guessed \$3,140," she said. Hellmeister characterizes the increase as "drastic." "Twenty percent in two years is something I don't think students should

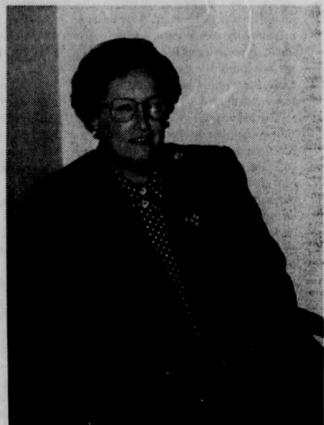
have to take. It's unbelievable, really," she said. She also worries that UNB will lose students to STU, which also has an Arts program (currently UNB's largest faculty) for substantially less in tuition. "If you're going to charge someone \$3,140 to go to Arts, you bet they're going to St. Thomas," claimed Hellmeister. "I've got friends who said they are going to STU." UNB SU vice-president (External) and SU president-elect Anthony Knight was equally surprised at the size of the jump. "When I speculated on the increase," he said, "I thought that with a year of warning that UNB could adjust. I knew there would be an increase but not as high as \$300." Knight did say that in discussions with the President and other members of the Board of Governors, we came to understand that certain unexpected over-expenditures would result in UNB incurring a deficit for the 1996-97 fiscal year of approximately \$1 million. "It exemplifies how tight of a reign there has to be on expenditures," said Knight. Aside from the double-digit increase, it was a sense of betrayal by the Federal and Provincial Governments which colored the reactions of student leaders.

"We've been told numerous times that the cuts will not be passed on to students, but they have, for the second year in a row," claimed Hellmeister. Knight was a bit more philosophical. "It's a sign of the times and the way the government is treating post-secondary education: more broken promises." "I honestly couldn't believe it when I saw it," said Shawn Rouse, President of the New Brunswick Student Alliance. "UNB was cut \$1.67 million by the province and UNB is raising over \$3 million. It doesn't respect accessibility. It's not fair or truthful to point to the province and say they're the problem." Rouse further dismisses the cuts as the reason for a tuition increase. "Everybody's pointing the finger at everyone else, but no one is actually solving the problem." "The University has made an irresponsible tuition hike," he concluded. In a press release, the NBSA went even further, characterizing the hike as "an irresponsible step backwards." In addition to raising all student fees an average of more than 10%, UNB will make nearly \$3 million in cuts to expenditures in 1997-98, including the elimination of a \$1.9 million investment

to offset costs associated with the early retirement package. An additional \$1 million will come from cuts in UNB's operating budget. Cuts add insult to injury, according to student leaders. "If I see a \$300 increase," Hellmeister argues, "Students are thinking 'Where's my \$300 worth of services? Am I going to see an increase in the quality of teaching? Are classes going to be smaller? Where are the extra services going to come from?' Instead, because of provincial government cuts, we're looking at \$2.9 million in cuts. That's scary." Hellmeister adds, "the library needs to be upgraded. We're supposed to have one of the best libraries with tons of literature. However, the literature is outdated. When they say we're cutting \$1 million, everybody's eyes just popped out. Where can you cut? What's left?" To combine cuts with a tuition increase, Knight argues that UNB is going counter to logic of the marketplace model it seems to want to endorse. "The consumers in this business, as our administrators like to call it, expect a good product if they are paying more, and we are paying more, so I don't see why we don't have a better product,"

he said. Knight is worried that cuts made now in a pique of financial need, may come back and haunt UNB in the future. "I think we're seeing short term cuts which may, ultimately, affect us in the long term." Despite the inevitable criticism over tuition increases, Parr-Johnston prefers to look at the bigger picture. She argues that UNB is still "very good value" and points out that UNB is still among the bottom third for tuition in the Maritimes. "Dalhousie's current fee is \$3,395 for Arts, more for other programs, and Dal has additional supplementary fees," she claims. "Eleven institutions, many with fewer programs and services, charge more than UNB," while UNB's has increased only 43.8%. she concludes.

She also cited figures which indicate that the average tuition increase in Canada since 1990 has been 81.8%.



UNB President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston

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Residence fees up 2.3-5.2%



JUDSON DELONG PHOTO

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UNB residence students who opt for a single or double room with no meal plan will face the largest increase in residence fees in September. Rates for a single room with no meal plan will rise 5.2 percent from \$3,050 this year to \$3,210 in 1997-98. Those who opt for a double room with no meal plan will see their living accommodation rise 5.1 percent from \$2,350 to \$2,470 next September.

Most of the students who opt for residence rooms with no meal plan currently live in the Maggie Jean Chestnut Residence located off-campus in downtown Fredericton according to Roy Brostowski, UNB's Director of Housing and Food Services. Residence students who opt for a single or double room with either a 14 or 19 meal plan will face more modest increases following a decision by UNB's Board of Governors last week. Students who opt for a single room

on the 19 meal plan will face a 2.8 percent increase in residence fees from \$5,095 to \$5,240 next September. Double room occupants with a 19 meal plan will face a 2.4 percent increase from \$4,395 to \$4,500. Similar increases are projected for single and double room occupants on the 14 meal plan. A single room on the 14 meal plan will cost \$5,100 next September from \$4,960 this year - up 2.8 percent. A double room on the 14 meal plan will increase 2.3 percent to \$4,360 next

September from \$4,260 this year. Room rates will be increased approximately five percent across the board beginning in September, but students on a meal plan will see that increase cut somewhat because of the food services contract signed last July. "The food rate in 1996-97 had to be estimated because we put the food contract out to tender," Brostowski said. "That estimate turned out to be more than what the actual price is this year." "So we have adjusted the food price downward for 1997-98 which is reflected in the fact that students with a meal plan will pay less of an increase in September than those with no meal plan," Brostowski explained. Brostowski pointed out that the Residence Budget Committee looks at a number of factors in deciding to set residence rates for the following year, always with an eye to keeping rates as low as possible. "We looked at things like the price of food, the cost of operating the residence system, and the cost of some major projects that will be undertaken this Summer to upgrade sprinkler, electrical and heating systems and replace windows." "All of these things could not be done without increasing the residence rates," he said. Brostowski also emphasized that the Budget Committee keeps a close eye on residence rates at other universities in the Maritimes as a factor in what to charge at UNB. "We try to be somewhat near the bottom in terms of residence rates at UNB and still have a residence operating budget that allows us to run and upgrade our facilities," Brostowski concluded.

Aitken ARP will not return; two fined \$50

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Derrick Lord, an Academic Resource Person in the Aitken Residence on the UNB Fredericton Campus will not have his contract renewed according to Dean of Residence, John Craighead. This action follows several complaints which were made to the Dean of Residence in the wake of an e-mail message which Lord and another Aitken student broadcast to the residents of Aitken House. Craighead went on to say that in meeting out discipline in this matter, he made separate determinations based on Lord as an ARP and Lord as a member of the UNB Residence Community. "The actions he had taken in forwarding the message were not appropriate given his role as an ARP and [his] responsibility to support the Living to Learn program and the objectives of the residence community," said Craighead in an interview with *The Brunswickan*. In addition to the employment action, Lord and the Aitken resident who gave it to Lord were fined \$50. "Their actions were not in accordance with the residence community's objective of respecting diversity, for that reason we fined them \$50," Craighead stated. The Dean has forwarded the matter to the Director of Computing Services, Dave MacNeil. It will be up to MacNeil to decide if the actions of the two residents violated UNB's "Acceptable Use" Policy and what impact, in any, this may have on their access to their e-mail accounts. Although acknowledging that his actions may be perceived as aggressive, Dean Craighead doesn't feel that his decision to discipline the ARP is without support from the Residence Community. "I would expect that the majority of the Dons, ARPs, Proctors and House Committees would support the action [to discipline the ARP]," he said. "I think that, like in all cases, there are some people who feel that we were too harsh and some who feel we were too lenient." "[But] I think that the majority would support the action, and that the majority would recognize that to encourage the dissemination of that

type of information is contrary to the role of an ARP," he concluded. Although this is the first situation of this type Craighead has dealt with, he indicated that it is the "medium and not the message" which was unique in this situation. "I don't think it's something particularly unique to the all-male lifestyle or Aitken House," he said. "In fact, in the first term we had a situation in an all-female residence relating to the criticism of the lesbian lifestyle. Certainly we can find both narrow and liberal attitude in all lifestyles [all-male, all-female, and co-ed]." "Every lifestyle has its benefits and its drawbacks," he commented. "Certainly, some of the negative attitudes reflected in the message can be encouraged in all male residences. I think." "On the other hand," he argued, "we had several members of the House object to it. It is not a uniform opinion." Craighead is clear that despite what seems to be popular opinion within Aitken, more than one complaint was lodged with his office. "There does appear to be a perception in Aitken that there was only one person who complained," he said. "That is not the case." "It was several [students]," he continued, adding "there were groups of residents who came to my office, and to the Dean of Students' [Tom Austin] in addition to *The Brunswickan*." Craighead told *The Brunswickan* that he will not tolerate any harassment of people suspected of having complained. "Our office would deal with quite severely with any harassment of someone who freely expressed their opinion [by lodging a complaint]," he said. "We would be quite firm in dealing with such cases." However, Craighead is quick to point out that this doesn't mean that members of the Residence Community will be punished for expressing their opinions. "We would not discipline an ARP or a Proctor for questioning the judgment of the Dean of Residence or even the University President," he said. "Everybody has a right to their own opinion." But Craighead warns that "if an ARP

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Parking fees: \$5-\$40 hike

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Faculty and staff on the UNB Fredericton campus are the most likely to feel the sting of a whopping 73 percent increase in the price of a twelve month parking sticker. Effective September 1st, the price of a twelve month parking sticker will increase from \$55.00 to \$95.00 HST included. Graduate students and undergraduates taking courses over the summer months will also be required to pay the 12 month fee if they require parking. The university is introducing a new 8 month parking fee. Sales are expected to be brisk among students. The price will be \$60.00 HST included, effective September 1st. Students currently pay \$55.00 for a parking sticker which lasts twelve months. A four month parking sticker will also be available. Effective September 1st the cost will be \$40.00 HST included from \$37.00 this year.



Harriet Irving parking lot in front of Singer Hall. DEW GILBERT PHOTO

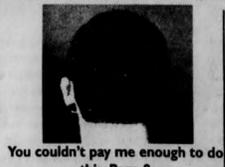
UNB Director of Security Rick Peacock said parking fees have not increased for at least the last three years. The increase is necessary to help recoup some of the costs of snowplowing, painting lines, lighting and salaries associated with parking administration," Peacock stated. Despite the increase, Peacock said

UNB parking fees are among the lowest at universities in the Maritimes. Meanwhile, Saint Thomas University has not yet indicated whether it plans to increase its parking fees in September similar to those at UNB, according to Peacock. Saint Thomas and UNB currently have identical \$55 yearly parking fees.



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