

NEWS

DSU says freeze the fees in campaign

BY LILLI JU

Yes, the Dalhousie Student Union does have a spine. So claims a DSU pamphlet distributed at a "Study-In" held on December 10, 1991 at the same time as a Board of Governors (BoG) meeting. Since the November 20 BoG meeting, the DSU Council has maintained a firm "tuition freeze" position. And with this "new spine," they began an intensive "Freeze the Fees Campaign."

The threatened 10 per cent tuition hike was not on the agenda of the December 10 BoG meeting. The purpose of the Study-In, part of the DSU's campaign, was to let the BoG know that, yes, Dal students are keeping tabs on what the BoG is doing with our university.

With this campaign, the DSU hopes to maintain and mobilize

the energy and determination that came from the November 20 BoG meeting where over 800 students stormed the Board Room in the A&A Building and succeeded in temporarily stopping the tuition hike.

Realizing that such demonstrations will not decidedly convince BoG members to vote down the tuition hike, the DSU formed five committees to serve as the key functional units of its Freeze the Fees Campaign. The Accessibility Assessment Committee, headed by Beth Beattie, is working to identify how access to Dal is inhibited, how the Administration is trying to improve accessibility, and how they have failed at this task (and other "financial horror stories").

The Quality Audit Committee's goals, under Joanne Smythe, are to evaluate the quality of education

at Dal in terms of numbers of classes, profs, resources, and so on. This committee plans to document how the quality of education is not improving even though students are paying more.

The Lobbying Committee, chaired by Lâle Kasebi and Hilary Wells, are attempting to gain public support, contacting alumni, community groups, and other universities. They hope to increase awareness across the country of the dire financial situation of post-secondary institutions. The Actions Committee, headed by Alex Boston, is responsible for planning student activities, demonstrations, and other assorted things such as "Guerrilla Theatre" (which performed in some classes at the end of last term). The committee already has one more major rally in the works right now.

The Student Awareness Committee, under Stavros Vretakos, compiles all the current information on what has happened, is happening, and is going to happen, as well as other pertinent information and shocking statistics and stories. The committee is then responsible for the distribution and dissemination of this information to the students of Dalhousie, so that they are kept informed.

The DSU's Freeze the Fees Campaign is geared towards preparing a collection of data and facts that will demonstrate and convince BoG members that the 10 per cent tuition hike is not best for this university. Last year's 25 per cent tuition increase (as well as the additional fee that science students pay) has not improved the quality of education. Instead, this university is seeing a horrifying decline in

the number of faculty, availability of courses, financial support for students, and accessibility to this university. Students feel they do not deserve any tuition hike until this dire situation is rectified and things are turned around.

The DSU encourages all students to find out how they can get involved (and there are many ways) by calling 494-1106 or dropping by at the Council offices on the second floor of the SUB. On November 20, 1991, students succeeded in grabbing the attention of Governors of Dalhousie with their concerns. On January 21 and 23, when the BoG convenes to decide on the 10 per cent tuition increase, students plan to make BoG members not only acknowledge their concerns, but make them realize them, and convince them to vote down the proposed tuition hike.

Mature students association speaks out

BY NEIL MELLORS AND MARIBEL REYES

Since the controversy over room 314 of the SUB, the Dalhousie Mature Students Association (DMSA) have welcomed the Arts Society and the Women's Group into the room. Including the Mature Students there are now four societies conducting their affairs from the society room.

"Room 314 serves as an area to discuss concerns and ideas of mature students in a relaxed and informal setting."

The DMSA vice-president, Tay Landry said "the association has had a very busy year so far... with many activities going on such as the very successful wine and cheese party held on Oct. 4 at Henson College."

The DMSA is the fastest growing society on campus

On Oct. 5, the mature students participated for the first time in the President's Sports Festival, where they completed only half of the events and still managed to come in thirteenth place out of 20 teams.

Pelvin also mentioned that on Oct. 26 the DMSA held a pool party at Dalplex, in which a number of members and their families participated. Later that evening, after the pool party, members put on costumes for the annual Halifax Mardi Gras.

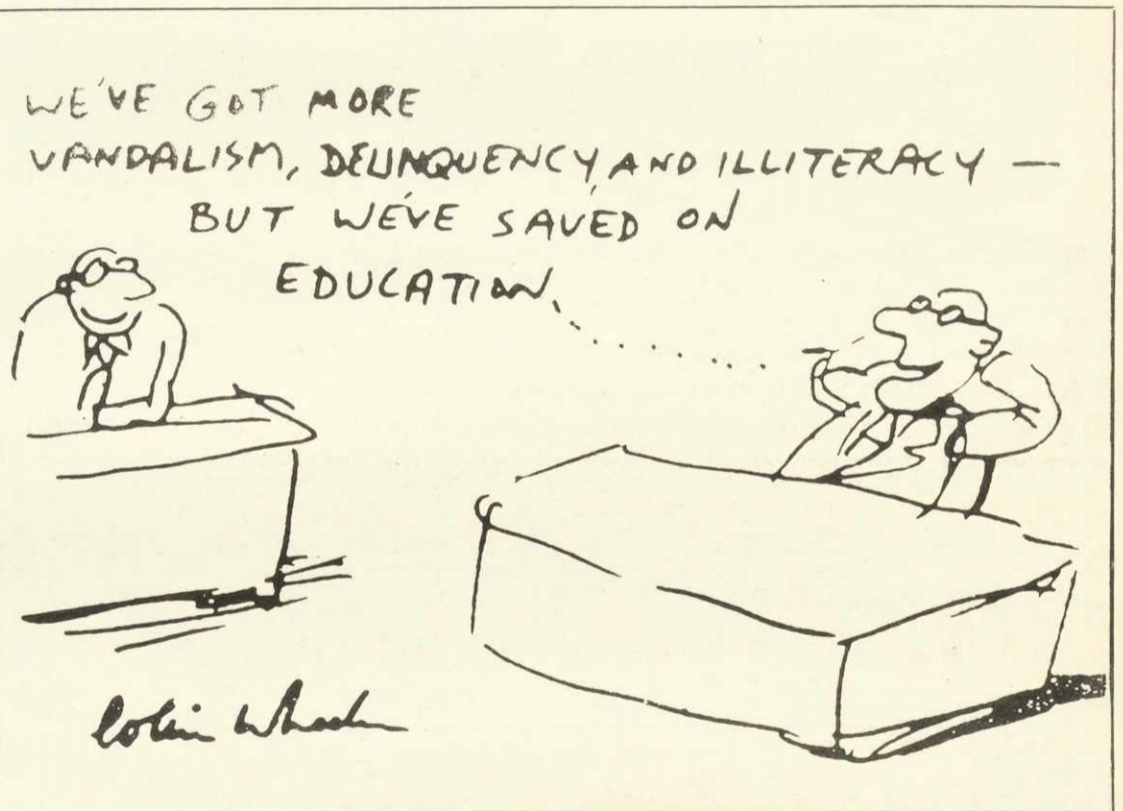
The mature students participated in the society challenge for the Parapalegic Association to facilitate public awareness. This entailed having an association member navigate the campus grounds to raise funds, while in a wheelchair.

The mature students would like to make people aware that for ongoing activities the DMSA meets every second Friday at Dalplex for a recreation program, involving things such as coed volleyball and a weight training clinic.

Details on Dalplex activities are posted in room 314. The DMSA has a general meeting the second Wednesday of every month to discuss activities and policies. Landry went on to say "the mature students meet at the Grad House every Friday at 2:30 p.m., using their associate memberships compliments of DMSA. Members find this a good time to wind down after a stressful week."

There is a mature student handbook, *Returning to Learning*, available in the office, free to all mature students.

"The DMSA has been called 'the fastest growing society on campus' due to the large number of new members joining each week," said Pelvin. Over one hundred new members have joined this year. But Pelvin stressed, "this is a very small percentage of the total of 5700 mature students on campus." The DMSA president said "though the year has been successful for the mature students, we are looking for more involvement and participation of members in association activities in the new year."



Students can't afford 10% tuition hike

BY GAYLE HEINRICH

"The level of tuition fees has little if any direct effect on accessibility," wrote the President of Dalhousie University, Howard Clarke, in a letter to the Board of Governors.

Dalhousie students disagree with him. After an unprecedented turnout at the November 19 BOG meeting, over 60 people once again demonstrated their frustrations over the proposed 10 per cent tuition hike during a "study in" on December 10, 1991.

"Considering the time of the year, I'm really pleased with the turnout," said its organizer Alex Boston. "I only hope that BOG members are listening."

Students are not alone in their concern over the issue. A letter from John Holm, NDP Education critic, to Clark states with particular concern "your statement seems to say that Dalhousie will shift an even greater share of its costs onto students in the form of tuition and other fees."

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Committee also disagrees with the tuition hike. The MPHEC recommended to government a three per cent increase in provincial funding for Nova Scotia's universities.

Tories have hinted at a zero per cent increase, believing instead that tuition fees must rise. But this year has seen increases in rent and food, a three per cent tax on stu-

dent loans, GST charged to texts. With recent cuts to the Nova Scotia bursary program, summer employment programs, and educational research, an increase in tuition threatens to push many students over the post-secondary edge.

The Dalhousie Finance and Budget Committee, as well as the Financial Strategy Committee, and the Student Relations and Residence Committee are meeting next week to discuss strategy. The meetings are open to all students.

The 10 per cent tuition hike proposal will be voted on January 23, 1992. Prior to this the BOG will hold an open meeting on January 21 in the McInnes Room where all students are invited to express their concerns.