



Morris/Dal Photo

The Institute of Public Affairs is Dalhousie's link to the business community, what happens if it should be severed?

Cultural Activities: Just when things were looking good

Walk into his office, there's a beaming Eric Perth, Director of Dal's Cultural Activities. "Hey I've got good news for you. I just heard we're getting a \$200,000 grant from the federal government for renovations to the Cohn's backstage."

That is good news. The Arts Centre budget has had a decrease in real terms of 32 per cent in funding from the university over the past two years. Perth says the Centre earns 60 per cent of its operating budget through rentals and production ticket sales. The going has been rough for the Centre, which has had to be "pragmatic"

said Perth, by cutting artist events which lost money while trying to maintain a well rounded program. "We were losing increasing amounts on our classical music series, but we acted, perhaps too quickly, and removed it from our program," he said.

"There's been some criticism, but we simply can't afford it."

He explained the university's reduction in funding over the past two years. "This is 'show business' — that's two words, 'show' and 'business,'" he said. Public taste has changed, he continued, and the Art Centre has had to respond to solicit support and combat the current recession.

Perth says the recession has hit the arts in two ways — grants have been reduced as the first thing to be considered as extras in tough times, and the audiences are smaller as the public has less money to spend on extras such as concerts and theatre.

But Perth says the Arts Centre has not felt it that much, although cash flow is tight. "We sell more tickets at the door on the night of the show. That's an indication of a lack of pocket money." He continued the Centre is flexible and adjusts quickly to change, although it depends on the university's financial picture.

When told of university vice president finance Robb Shaw's "optimistic" projection of a \$75,000 axe to the Centre's budget Perth is momentarily silent. "I can't comment until I talk to Robbie Shaw," he said.

again

ing them to catch potential patrons attending events at the Rebecca Cohn the same evening.

"Dal has an image problem, and we're a positive image-maker for the university," said Milrod. She said the potential connection to Alumni is good because it is one of the few services open to them in the evening, and maintained the Art Gallery is a positive image maker in the community as well.

Milrod added students should not be happy to see programs go by the wayside. "I don't think that's going to happen," she said. "The budget may be cut, but you don't get anywhere if you don't co-operate."

Dal's community link

Budget problems have put the Institute of Public Affairs under financial review. But substantial savings from cutting funds to this community service might cost the university more in the long run, according to IPA Director Kel Antoft.

Little-known by students, the IPA is a more familiar service to the community outside the university. Dalhousie contributed \$400,000 this year to its budget of \$1.7 million. Most of IPA's funds come from contract work for government and private firms in economic, social, labour and man-

agement policy advice. Dalhousie helps fund a number of seminar courses.

"We try to reach a large proportion of the community not normally affected by the university," Antoft said a public relations firm reported some years ago that the two most valuable of Dalhousie's assets for fund-raising campaigns were the personality of its then-President Henry Hicks, and the IPA.

"They got caught this year," Dalhousie President MacKay said. Expected federal funds for the Advanced Management Program did not come through, putting IPA

\$100,000 over budget.

MacKay said a reexamination of the IPA will try to lessen its dependence on university funds. He agreed the IPA is an important link to the business community, a potential source of funds.

John Graham, a student rep on the Board of Governors, said the IPA did not rank high on his priority list, as "IPA does not serve students directly. If Dal is cutting to the bone, this must be the student perspective," he said.

Graham also expressed concern over the fact IPA has gone over budget in the last three years.

Medical programs ailing at Dal

The quality of health care is no longer sacred, as Dalhousie stands ready to cut programs in its medical school if needed funds do not come through.

Prof. J.D. Hatcher, Dean of Medicine, said the quality of health care is seriously threatened by a number of factors, one of them is a fast erosion of financial support.

The medical school has suffered from inadequate support from the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, Hatcher said. "We can make a strong case funding is 25 per cent less than it should be. It's a history of gradual starvation."

Dalhousie President MacKay

said the university is making a submission to the MPHEC this spring, to appeal for a larger funding base for medicine.

The school's situation worsened this year with the withdrawal of \$365,000 normally granted by the Department of Health.

While Hatcher said a review of programs by faculty currently underway will locate inefficiencies where money can be saved, he said essential programs will probably be cut without a return of lost sources of revenue.

Hatcher said the state of the medical school's accreditation is on the line when the process of cutting

programs begins. Taking away one department, such as neurosurgery, affects in turn the quality of a string of related areas.

"It's hard to see programs dismantled only because of finances, not because of the quality of medical care," he said.

Solutions are up in the air right now. There's still hope the \$765,000 will be restored, for this year as well as future years. The MPHEC has recommended this. But neither a 'yes' or 'no' has been heard from the government.

More funds from Dalhousie is not an option, Hatcher explained, because of its "debt problem." Like other university sectors, Hatcher is waiting expectantly on the government's funding announcement for post secondary education.

And then there's always that tempting source of funds — students.

Multiplying tuition fees for intern and resident students by two or three times, to make them equal undergraduate fees, is an option President MacKay is seriously considering.

Fees for grads are \$285, which is minimal compared to the \$1500 undergrad tuition, according to MacKay. But Hatcher is not pleased with the idea of interns and residents paying the \$1200 difference.

"I hope we would take a deep breath before we do that," Hatcher said. Dalhousie's fees are the highest in the country, with many universities not charging anything. Interns work in the hospital for two years before being licensed, and receive a small salary.

Hatcher said the struggle to offer the Canadian average salary has been achieved, but a \$1500 fee is enough to make the best students go elsewhere.

"If he goes to a full undergraduate fee, it makes us terribly non-competitive," he said.

"I can't prove it, but there is an obvious concern for the academic effect on the school. The decision is not well-served," Hatcher said.

Another disturbing issue affecting health care is provinces across Canada are reducing the number of internships in hospitals. This year, for the first time, there were more graduates than available intern positions.

"The numbers of internships is well below what's needed to provide manpower requirements for health care," Hatcher said.

Do something about it!

Atul Sharma, a student representative on the Board of Governors, and a second year medical student, is angry at the administration's public silence over the predicted cuts to the med school.

"The administration has made no effort to explain the implications of the cuts. Yet there has been the suggestion that the medical school's accreditation may be affected," he said.

The Chronicle Herald reported on the problems facing Dal's medical school as outlined by Dean

Hatcher, in three lengthy articles two weeks ago. But the administration is not pleased with this kind of publicity, Sharma said.

Both President MacKay and his policy advisor, Dr. David Cameron, expressed disapproval of Hatcher "going public" Sharma said. "MacKay himself acknowledged that medical care in the province is jeopardized — concerns that reach beyond the university community.

"The public has a right to know."

Psych service safe?

In the wake of million-dollar cutbacks in provincial funds to Dalhousie last August, the Psychological and Counselling Services came under fire and were threatened with closure. The big question is - are they still on the administration's shopping list of cutbacks for next year?

Judith Hayashi, Director of the student service on the SUB's fourth floor, said "I hope we aren't under that threat." She feels last fall's controversy was a "trial balloon" and was very happy with the response from students and faculty alike who indicated the importance of the service.

The counsellors at the center were included under the Collective Agreement signed between the university administration and the Dalhousie Faculty Association last

December. This means counsellors may be dismissed only pursuant to the collective agreement.

"Salaries are a problem with us," said Hayashi. "They comprise from 95-98 per cent of our budget." Any further budget reductions would cut into the monies used for office supplies "and that would be a real cutback," she said.

The center employs one secretary and five counsellors, with another secretary and counsellor employed through a special grant to improve the career library and hold career workshops. Hayashi said "at least ten per cent of the campus population uses the service. Before Christmas about 500 students attended the series we held on resumes and interviews," she said. "Since then there have been several hundred more students."