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Weekend Weather

On Friday expect snow with ice pellets later in the day. Up to 5 cm of snow is expected, with temperature's hovering near 0.

On Saturday, cloudy conditions will coincide with a 70% chance of precipitation. Temperatures ranging from -4 to -1.

On Sunday it will be cloudy with temperatures between -2 and 4.

Monday's extra special long range forecast is: cloudy conditions with temperatures from -2 to 5. Have a great weekend! Goodbye!

Brunsbites

On average, a divorced mother and her children experience more than a one-third decline in family income during the first year after divorce.

Source: 13th GEN, Abort, Retry, Ignore, Fail? by Neil Howe and Bill Strauss, 1993

Students hit hard by budget

by Gordon Loane

New Brunswick Finance Minister Alan Maher predicted a "tough" provincial budget and that's just what he handed down in the Legislature on Wednesday.

It's expected to be at least another month before the budgets' full impact on UNB is known. The universities' Board of Governors will meet April 29th to consider the universities budget and set tuition fees for next year.

What is known is that the provincial budget has hit hard at students who need financial aid the most.

"While I don't have any of the details, it looks like student bursaries have been cut from 18.2 million dollars to just 6.7 million for next academic year," said Eric Burchill, President of the UNB Student Union.

"Instead, the government intends to turn its bursary program into a loan and bursary program. The net effect will be a savings for government, but an increase in the students debt load after university," he added.

The details of a new Student Aid Program are expected to be announced shortly by Advanced Education and Labour Minister Vaughn Blaney.

Burchill sees the government decision to increase university operating grants and put a cap on tuition fee increases as partial appeasement for cuts to student bursaries.

Maher says government will follow the recommendation of the Maritime Province's Higher Education Commission and increase university operating grants by 1.7 per cent next academic year. The government also intends to place a cap on the amount universities can increase tuition fees for the next two years. The amount of the cap has not yet been announced, but there is speculation it is in the five per cent range.

"While I can't say that I'm unhappy with the government's decision to increase operating grants, the reality is more is needed. The increase doesn't reflect the true cost of operating university programs," said Burchill.

"In addition, I'm worried that a cap on tuition fees will mean new fees will be imposed on

students for other services. It's a favorite way for universities to raise extra revenue from students," he added.

Burchill thinks the provincial government is sending UNB a message.

"They expect the university to be more accountable and more efficient. A cap on tuition fees will ensure the university doesn't grab extra revenue on the backs of students as they attempt to set budget priorities."

UNB's Vice-President Finance and Administration, James O'Sullivan, admits that a provincially imposed tuition cap will cut down on the university's flexibility as a new budget is drawn up. He admits the

university still faces a substantial financial problem despite a 1.7 per cent increase in the provincial operating grant.

"It's still up to one and a half per cent less than universities requested from the MPHEC," he said "The university faces a tough series of options as a budget is set. All options are open including staff reduction." O'Sullivan is not publicly speculating about the affect on university departmental budgets.

"Department managers were asked to prepare budgets under several scenarios. It's still too early to say what option will be adopted," he said.

At least two other provisions in the provincial budget will

provide mixed benefits in the university community: "While the elimination of the provincial sales tax on scientific and technical equipment will not have a major impact on the total university budget, it's certainly important for individual scientific projects," O'Sullivan said.

"The elimination of the sales tax in this area is now the same as the situation in Ontario."

On the other hand the provincial sales tax will now apply to the purchase of sporting equipment. O'Sullivan says this is expected to have some impact on budgets in the faculty of Physical Education and Recreation.

Concerns raised over handling of former discrimination complaint

UNB to implement racism policy

by Karen Burgess

UNB Administrators hope to have a racial discrimination policy developed for its students and faculty in the new year, but some students are still concerned over the handling of a case of alleged discrimination earlier this year.

Vice-President Academic Tom Traves said that although consideration of a policy was begun last summer, the university was "overtaken" by a charge laid against a professor on June 24, 1992.

Presently, university employees are governed by professional misconduct codes, which are part of their collective agreements, and include offenses such as racial discrimination.

Traves explained: "Under the terms of our collective agreement, all disciplinary matters concerning faculty come to the Vice-President Academic for resolution."

The case earlier this year, which involved a complaint against a Business Administration professor, was investigated by the Vice-President, who concluded that the charges were "without foundation."

Recently, two concerned students presented Traves and President Robin Armstrong with a document outlining a possible policy for implementation

Traves said that this proposal, and input from anyone concerned will be considered by the committee given the mandate of creating a feasible policy.

He explained that the President will establish a committee, and then will solicit input from the concerned unions on campus, and other interested members of the University community.

Despite the University's initiative in this area, as outlined by Traves, several students belonging to the Graduate Students Association, the Board of International Students, the African Students' Union, the Caribbean Circle and the MBA Society have expressed concerns over the University's handling of the issue of racial harassment.

The students, of whom one was directly involved in presenting Traves with the policy proposal, issued a joint statement outlining their position.

The students stated that they found Traves' judgment on the Business administration case is "unfortunate...in light of the abundant evidence, and the pain and suffering that the international students concerned have experienced over the year."

They said that the University's plan to implement a policy is "laudable," but that "the structure of addressing such issues with the VP Academic as ultimate judge and jury is disturbing."

They stated that the shortcomings of this system are evident in the handling of the earlier complaint. The students said they feel that the complaint was "covered up, despite the overwhelming documented evidence which remains on file for impartial examination."

The students say the new policy's credibility will be undermined unless the committee set up to deal with racial discrimination issues includes "students, minority group representatives, women, and individuals with expertise in racial and human rights issues."

Traves said that the composition of the committee dealing with the policy's implementation has yet to be established. That committee will discuss that format to be adopted for the policy's composition, and in what way it will be administered.

The Vice-President has no date set for the racial discrimination policy's finalization but said it is hoped that committee discussions can begin in the fall.

In the interim, the university will be publishing a pamphlet over the summer to alert the community that a policy exists to deal with students' complaints about racial discrimination directed against them by university faculty and staff, or by fellow students.