

cross-canada briefs

U of A students don't think Klein deserves honorary degree

BY JULIET WILLIAMS

EDMONTON (CUP) — Students at the University of Alberta are upset with plans to offer Premier Ralph Klein an honorary degree at this year's spring convocation.

University administrators have been flooded with hundreds of calls and letters of protest from students and alumni in response to the Senate's offer of an honorary Doctorate of Laws.

The degree is being offered to reward Klein for his community service and role in reducing the province's deficit.

"It's an insult to anybody who's actually worked for their degree," said English student Jasmine Rault.

"Not only is he such a flop in his own work, but that he would make such a point of cutting back support for our education, and then that he should be rewarded for his own non-education is sick."

Klein, who didn't finish high school, has cut funding to post-secondary education by over \$200 million since he's been in office.

Earlier this year, he referred to university students who interrupted a government function as "jackasses."

Klein has said that he may not accept the degree, "if students are not in favour of it," but he hasn't decided yet.

"I don't think Klein really cares [about the effects of the education cutbacks]. I mean, a guy with a grade ten education, who never had to go to university...he's not suffering right now," said recent zoology graduate Aaron Freed.

Freed added that if Klein were giving the convocation address at his graduation he'd "be bringing along some tomatoes."

His sentiments are not unique. In fact, the threat of a disruption at spring convocation led the U of A's student council to urge Klein to decline the degree, at least for now.

"At no other point in time as a student representative have I faced such extensive protest," student council vice president Matthew Hough wrote in a letter to Klein.

"Based on the input I have received from students, many will be willing to actively protest your presence at the time of Convocation...This would be an embarrassment for yourself, for the University and for students."

Chancellor of the U of A Senate and former Tory MLA Lou Hyndman said that the degree was being offered to commend the premier for his community service in reducing Alberta's deficit, and in promoting the so-called "Alberta Advantage."

Acadia students pay to join information age

BY MICHAEL PLATO

TORONTO (CUP) — The information age is coming to Acadia University — and students are paying for it.

The university has plans to upgrade their computer system by providing each student with an IBM personal laptop computer.

But to pay for the program, Acadia students will see a \$1,000 to \$1,200 jump in their tuition fees in mandatory computer leasing costs. Tuition at Acadia currently costs \$3,495.

Acadia's student union president Kate Jenkins says although the price of the program is a huge concern for students, a bursary is being set up to help offset the cost.

And she says the students like the idea of upgrading the computer system at Acadia.

"Students like a lot of it," she said. "Our present computer system is inadequate."

Jenkins adds she has not heard of any complaints from students about the plan.

Approximately 400 new students in the business, computer science, and physics programs will begin leasing the computers next year, with all new students acquiring laptops by the fall of the following year.

Foreign aid plummets

BY SAMER MUSCATI

OTTAWA (CUP) — The true victims of this year's federal budget cuts will not organize protests, wave placards, or hold press conferences — they will simply continue to die in silence.

They are the anonymous third-world victims of war, poverty, disease, and hunger, and their plight took a turn for the worse with Canada's announcement to slash another \$150 million from its foreign-aid budget in 1998-99.

Finance Minister Paul Martin announced the cuts on March 6 that will see foreign aid slump to its lowest level since the mid-1960's. The Liberals have slashed Canada's aid budget by more than 34 per cent — from \$2.9 billion to \$1.9 billion — since taking office in 1993.

"The cuts show a wholesale abandonment of poor people," said Erika Rosenfeld, spokesperson for the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), an umbrella organization representing over 100 non-profit humanitarian groups.

"The government does not see aid as a priority issue and has targeted it disproportionately. It's especially shocking because it's a such small amount of money to begin with."

The cuts will place Canada, a traditional leader in aid donation, near the bottom of the generosity list for developed countries providing assistance.

Election results

BY PATTI WALLER

The Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) elections came to a close for another year, with only two issues left undecided.

Andy Doyle, Chief Returning Officer, said he is generally pleased with the voter turnout produced during these elections.

"I think it went really well," he said. "We got more voters out than usual for us, somewhere between 20 and 21%."

Doyle attributed the significant turnout to measures taken by the Elections Committee. He also said much of the success was due to the mail-out pamphlets that informed voters of the issues, and individual efforts on the part of members of the DSU executive,

like outgoing president David Cox. Cox had addressed classes and had encouraged students to participate in student politics.

Any problems that were encountered were "very quickly dealt with by the committee...and they were able to get fixed before they interfered with the outcome of the elections," said Doyle.

Vice President-elect Katherine Hannah maintained that although the election process was nerve-racking, she and president-elect Brad MacKay are already working on plans for next year.

"My personal one is the student apathy problem," she said. "Shirreff Hall was the same way, and we managed to turn that around. During our own elections we had almost 90% voter turn-

out, and that's something that on a wider scale I would like to bring to Dalhousie."

The new VP is keen on following through such election promises as implementing a public bus which would shuttle students further away from campus than the current one and which could even hook up with Saint Mary's campus. She also wants to start a student research grant program.

Outgoing VP executive, Lilli Ju, said the smoking referendum question was resolved in the most democratic way.

"When the council first passed the smoking policy and it created an uproar, students came to me demanding that every student should have a say in it," she said.

As of May 1st, the whole cafeteria will be non-smoking.

The CASA referendum question was passed by a margin of 1240 to 710.

NSPIRG board member Aaron Poirier contended that this result does not necessarily reflect the opinion of all students.

"I don't think the DSU has told students enough about what CASA is, or what CASA means for this campus," he said. "There were several people in the DSU that were very committed to having the CASA vote pass, and I think they're certainly going to use it as an opportunity to say that students support our membership in CASA."

Outgoing VP Community Affairs, James Dann, was pleased that the football question passed.

Ju said there are now t-shirts for sale toting "Dalhousie Football" on the front and "Undeclared since 1976" on the back.

Two issues remain unresolved at this point in the election process. There is still one space for a Board of Governors (BOG) representative, so a by-election is planned for April 1-3. Also, as the health plan referendum question resulted in an exact tie, a by-election is scheduled for April 1-2.

Final Election & Referenda Results

President/VP Executive	1st ballot	6th ballot
Boudreau/Howe	98	-
Cullen/Simpson	60	-
Killam/Knowles	740	922
MacKay/Hannah	829	979
Pederson/Monroe	40	-
Poirier/Farrant	136	-
Tratnik/Beddington	53	-

VP Academic/External	VP Community Affairs
Lopes 834	Barteaux 898
Lydon 995	Boyd 365
	McNeil 237
	Parsons 368

Board of Governors	Smoking permitted in SUB cafeteria
Cartmill Yes 1654	Yes 981 No 1091
No 246	

Senate	Continue CASA membership
Adams Yes 1600	Yes 1240 No 710
No 209	
Clark Yes 1339	
No 436	

Football team fee	Mandatory health plan
Yes 1131 No 922	Yes 1024 No 1024

CBC radio host visits Dal

BY KRISTIN MCNEILL

"Boring as batshit."

That's how CBC Radio host Ian Brown described Canada's national newspaper to Political Science students last week.

Brown breezed through Dalhousie campus to give the first year class a lecture entitled "Journalism and Communication: from Theory to Reality."

One of Canada's leading journalists, Brown indulges in a reporting style which diverts from mainstream journalism. Sunday Morning, his three hour current affairs program which airs every Sunday morning, is controversial in nature and, as he admitted, bound to raise some eyebrows.

Brown graduated from University of Toronto with an English degree. In 1976, at the age of 22, he became involved in journalism. Most of his career as a journalist has been in print media, working for the Globe and Mail and the Financial Post. He has also been a host on a TV Ontario program, a host for a drive-home CBC Radio show, and was frequently a panelist and guest host on CBC Radio's Morningside.

"I'm gonna talk about how we break the rules," was Brown's way of introducing his lecture.

By rules, Brown was referring to the way most media institutions go about selecting stories and how they present them to the public.

What these programs or articles depict is a kind of information that people think they should know about. He said the content of Sunday Morning is information people don't think they want to know about, but really do.

What he chooses to convey across the airwaves must be quirky enough to satisfy his curiosity. He pursues a story when "some worm of interest starts eating away" at his brain.

Brown became the new host of Sunday Morning in September, 1994. The show became more "host-driven" and assumed a hip, urban appeal. Under previous host Mary-Lou Finlay, Sunday Morning had been dominated by documentaries and issues-based reporting.

The freedom to personalize the content of the show suited Brown's style of commentary. In an interview with the Globe and Mail in December, 1994, Brown shared some letters from critical listeners.

"My actual favourite described me as a 'young windbag,' which I thought was great," he said.

His talent as a communicator was apparent in his speech to the political science class. He kept the audience in stitches for most of the hour with self-deprecating stories about his journalism career and frequent jabs at the boringness of the mainstream media.

He said people who consume daily news coverage such as the kind found in the Globe and Mail,

"do not choose to have [their] asses bored off [their] bodies."

Despite the criticism he has of mainstream media, he maintains that the media represents the most powerful institution in the world.

"Media has all the power and none of the responsibility, and the politicians have all the responsibility and none of the power," he said.

He commented that many people are discontented with the media these days. He said when journalism becomes an "establishment," what he terms as the "big agenda" dominates what people read, hear, and see. The sense of alienation that many feel stems from being force-fed certain information.

Brown claims he tries to remove that sense of alienation by choosing stories that do not conform to typical "political journalism."

"When we find a story that has not been touched by mainstream media, we figure we are onto something," he said.

Some listeners are not used to his reporting style, which is much more personalized and engaging than mainstream reporting.

Critics that call in "cannot liberate themselves from their own points of view," Brown said.

He concluded his lecture with the insistence that people can choose to get away from the top-down approach to journalism and concentrate on stories that are told in a clever and stylish way.