

Plagiarism review follows TA petition

by Gordon Loane
Brunswickan News

A petition signed by fourteen graduate students in Engineering asks UNB registrar Deanne Dennison to look at the whole issue of undergraduate student plagiarism.

"We are not referring to collaboration or mere coincidence but to blatant plagiarism (as defined on page B.9 of the UNB regulations in the undergraduate calendar) when even silly mistakes are copied," the petition said.

"This is not only unethical, but in the long run, it also hurts the student and the reputation of the school," the graduate students said in their petition.

"It may seem that students are no longer questioning the ethics of copying an assignment. Is that daring to be wise?" the petition asks.

The graduate students make it clear that the petition is not meant to criticize but to investigate the possibility for improvement.

Suggestions to the Registrar include enforcing stricter penalties on copying "just an assignment," emphasizing the

ideals of higher learning and the ethics involved, training students to use better study habits and making exams a higher percentage of the mark.

Copies of the petition have been sent to Dean of Engineering Wolfgang Faig, Dean of Students Tom Austin and the Director of UNB's Teaching Centre Reavley Gair.

Registrar Deanne Dennison told *The Brunswickan* this week that when the petition arrived at their office in late February the Senate Student Standings and Promotions Committee had decided to review the regulations that

govern the penalties that can be assessed for any academic penalty.

"The Committee took a look at the graduate students' petition in this light," said Dennison.

A joint meeting of the Senate Student Standings and Promotions Committee from both the Fredericton and Saint John Campuses looked at the regulations, including plagiarism, and decided to recommend changes.

The changes are being forwarded for consideration at the May meeting of Senate, according to Dennison.

"The Curriculum Committee will also

be considering the regulation change when it meets May 1st, prior to the next Senate meeting," Dennison said.

The upshot of it all is that certain academic regulations, including plagiarism will be tightened.

"The current regulations limit the penalties to suggestions of what could be assessed by the Student Standings and Promotions Committee," Dennison said.

"The suggestion going to Senate is that deliberate plagiarism cases be considered in the same manner in which any academic offense is considered."

"Therefore, the range of penalties that can be assessed by the Committee are more extensive and are not confined to the ones illustrated in the calendar," she said.

"So the Committee would have more opportunity to determine what penalty best suits the situation at hand."

Dennison admits that if Senate approves the changes, the Student Standings and Promotions Committee would probably meet more regularly.

"It also certainly means we have to be quite careful in reviewing the cases and making sure that all the materials are on hand and that the Committee is able to make good decisions once these cases are presented."

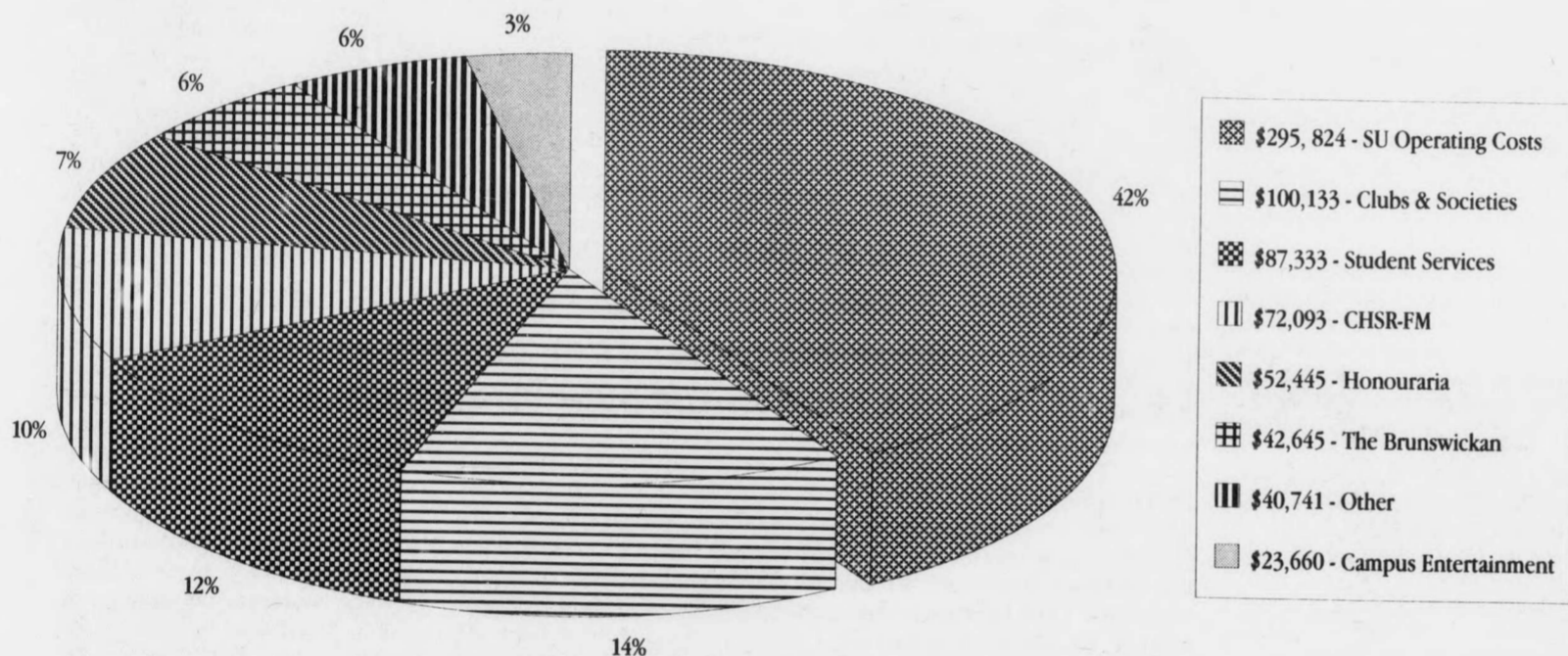
"But we are hoping that once students realize that the penalties can be in fact quite severe that the temptation to plagiarize will lead to it not happening at all," the Registrar said.

Dennison points out that the calendar distinguishes between deliberate plagiarism and plagiarism that might be considered to be a genuine misunderstanding.

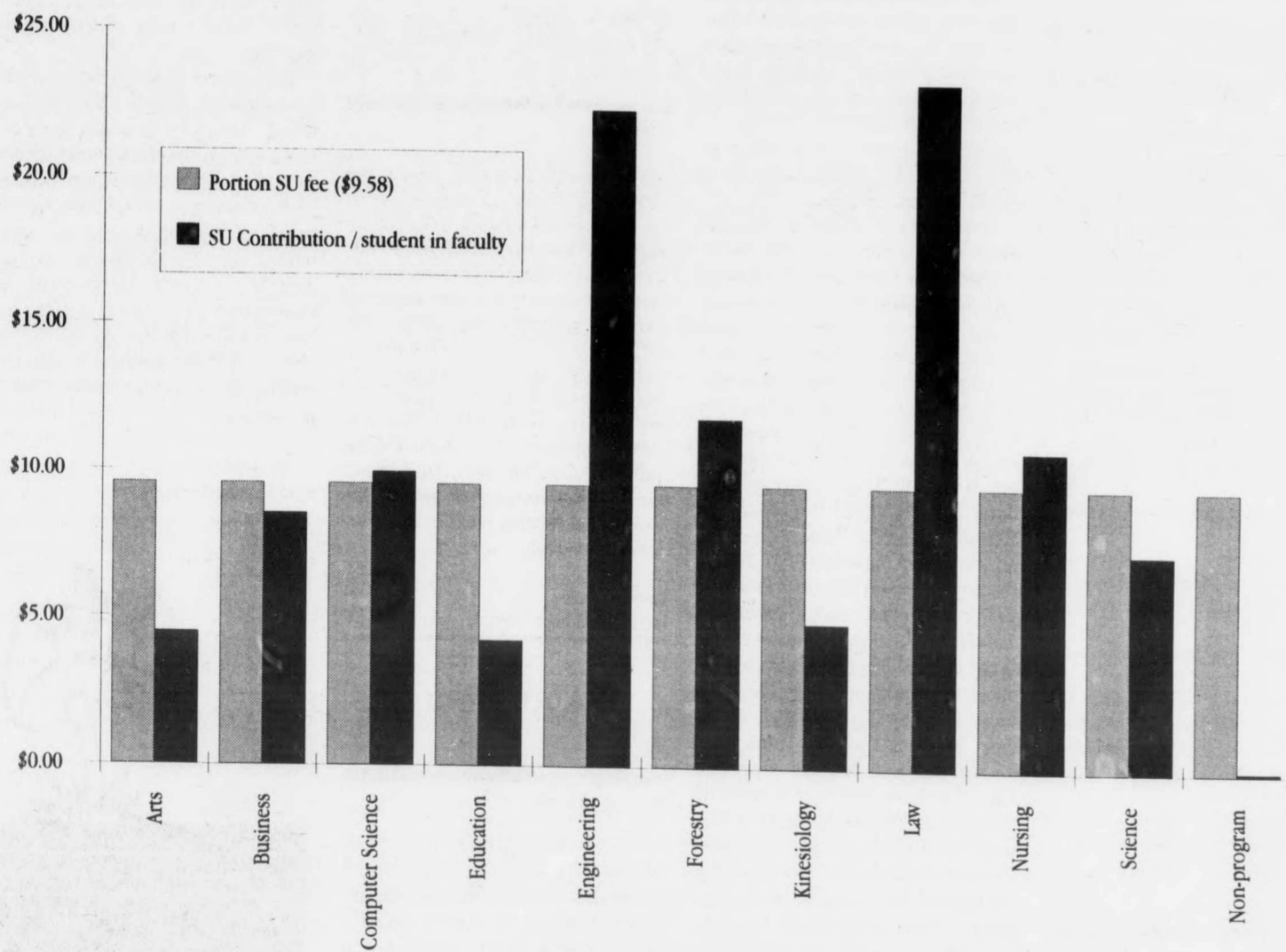
"A professor has the responsibility to make that distinction once plagiarism has become evident," she said.

"It is also very important that the instructors report it," Dennison concluded.

SU Budget 1996-97



Faculty Club Funding



SU MATH

1995-96	\$109,256
General Administrator	
Account Coordinator	
Asst. Coordinator	
Part-time Receptionist	
\$11,500 Health Plan subsidy	
\$10,000 SUB Expansion subsidy	
1996-97	\$108,525
General Administrator	
Account Coordinator	
Asst. Coordinator	
Full-time Receptionist	
No subsidies	
2% raise Term 1	
4% raise Term 2	

Brunswickan News

The Student Union may find itself a little short, next year, in the area of salaries.

There appears to be a discrepancy between what the Union is offering its employees, and the amount in the 1996-97 Budget (passed at 3rd reading). The Union allotted \$731 less yet according to Acting Vice-President (Finance & Administration) Duncan Fulton.

"We used to off-load some of the salaries onto the Health Plan and SUB Expansion," he explained. "But I decided not to do that this year."

"I'll double check the numbers, but trust me, it adds up," he said adamantly.