

NEWS

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UNBSU to hold Services plebiscite

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK

THE BRUNSWICKAN

When students go to the polls later this month, they will be asked to take the time to evaluate the services of the UNB Student Union.

In a questionnaire which reads, "What services of the UNB Student Union do you use regularly, and who satisfied are you with them?" and "Are you satisfied with the Student Union? Comment," the SU hopes to gauge its current offerings of services.

Beside each of the over 24 items, there will be space for a yes/no and a four-point qualitative scale, running from "very unsatisfied" to "very satisfied."

The plebiscite will be approximately one standard sheet long, and will be treated like a survey, Chief Returning Officer, Matt Tingley told the UNB SU Council this past Tuesday.

Council revisited the notion of a non-binding plebiscite this Tuesday. Last week, Engineering Representative, and UNBSU Student-of-the-month, Darren Thompson Council put forward a simplified version of the current question, which asked "Which services of the UNB Student Union do you use?" and "Are you satisfied with the UNB SU?"

Arts Representative Sarah Mullaly spoke out this Tuesday in favour of a more comprehensive approach.

"If we have a plebiscite, a simple yes/no will tell us nothing," she said bluntly. "We don't learn anything, we just waste paper."

Vice-President (Student Services) Trish Davidson, decried the length of the form and the logistics of compiling the information.

Business Rep Matt Hanrahan concurred with Mullaly, "It is a large undertaking," he conceded, "but we should take the time to do it properly."

Both Mullaly and Hanrahan are reoffering for their respective Council positions.

President Joie Hellmeister weighed in, saying she opposed last week's version of the plebiscite because it would not tell the Union how to improve services, only whether students used them or not.

Darren Thompson, who originated the idea of a plebiscite as part of the General Election, wholeheartedly endorsed Mullaly's suggestions to change the question. Further, he volunteered to help in the compilation of the results.

The new question was approved with only Trish Davidson in opposition, and two abstentions.



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Vice-President (Student Services) Trish Davidson reported on the Paper Trail, a new price list, which re-worked the prices in order to keep the cost of photocopies down to 10 cents was passed. The new prices will go into effect on April 1, 1997.

The Health Plan's loss ratio is 100%. This means that students are claiming as much as they are paying in premiums. The result is a loss for both the Student Union and the Health Plan provider, Morneau and Associates. There are two options: raising premiums or reducing coverage.

Davidson favours keeping the fee the same and reviewing the Health Plan. Some alternatives: reducing the co-payment from 80% to 70%, removing components of the plan, or enrolling in managed care.

Managed Care would mean that a list of certain experimental drugs would not be covered by the SU plan. Many of these drugs, according to Davidson, are treatments for cardiac disease or cancer and are not used by students very often. This would also mean a mandatory substitution of a generic brand, unless explicitly prescribed by the physician.

Davidson told Council she favours an examination of the use of various components of the Health Plan and removing options which are very expensive and/or are under used. One example would be the international travel insurance, which alone contributes to \$12.96 of the \$95 Health Plan fee. According to statistics in Davidson's possession, only 4.8% of the students in the plan have used this option. She also noted that if the \$13 portion was removed from the standard health plan, a student in the SU plan could pay \$15 to receive that additional coverage.

Davidson also suggested that "extras" such as massage therapy could be removed without compromising such benefits such as physical therapy.

Business Representative Matt Hanrahan requested that Davidson prepare a report of the use of each component of the Health Plan, and its associated cost so that Council might give its input on which components of the Plan could be removed.

Davidson replied, "I'll see what I can do, but Morneau's not always able to whip it out as quick as I would like."

Monique Scholten, Vice-President (Finance & Administration) reported that most of the budget meetings with the Finance Committee have been completed. She added that those groups that did not attend their meetings and did not ask for a different time, would not be granted a hearing, and would have their submissions evaluated by the Committee without their input.

Scholten also noted that CHSR-FM radio would be asked to prepare two budgets. One with the current funding arrangements, and one in the eventuality that St. Thomas does not support CHSR in the coming year. Scholten indicated to Council that STU was considering a referendum on its contribution, of approximately \$10,000, and added that she wanted to be prepared for the eventuality.

Scholten also passed out this month's Operating Report of Student Union finances. She noted, with some pride, that the SU Office budget was still under budget. She fully expects to have this line item come in on par, rather than over. She commented that this item has gone over budget the past several years. She also noted that Campus Entertainment, which showed a loss of \$18,000 was, in fact, closer to break-even, but that the deposits for recent concerts had not been made.

Vice-President (External) Anthony Knight told Council that there will be a protest for the Board of Governor's meeting on Thursday, February 13. The Board will receive the report of the Task Force on University Fees. Knight said he was very heartened by the initiative of the many students who had done a lot of the leg work, which "the Student Union doesn't always do as well."

Knight reported that the meeting with the Graduate Students Association went well, and he looks forward to working with this organization in the future.

Knight remarked that he attended a meeting at CHSR over the weekend. He commented that there were indications that there would be "positive, progressive change" at the station and "they've got good people."

President Joie Hellmeister told Council the Festival of Cultural Diversity went really well. The closing ceremonies, last weekend, were very spectacular.

On a more austere note, Hellmeister informed Council that the SUB Advisory Board was considering whether or not the CHSC could rent the SUB Ballroom every Thursday, Friday and Saturday throughout the school year. A motion opposing "the commercialization of the SUB Ballroom" was passed unanimously.

The Forestry and Forest Engineering Societies were granted a total of \$500 towards their Ring Ceremonies. The event, which will cost \$15 for ring recipients and \$50 for each guest, is held annually by the two societies because of the number of their graduates who are already gainfully employed by the time the Graduation Ceremony happens in May. This year, due to the increased enrollment in these two programs across the country, there was a reduction in funding available from the National Foresters Association.

Darren Thompson reported that 20 students attended the Atlantic Engineering Competition, and did very well.

Graduate School Review Unfair - GSA

JOSEPH FITZPATRICK

THE BRUNSWICKAN

The UNB Graduate Students Association believes that unless changes are made, the review of the UNB Graduate School "would be extremely unfair to the graduate school and the graduate students registered within."

GSA President Michael Lamoureux feels that the Administration has a lot of questions to answer before a review can proceed.

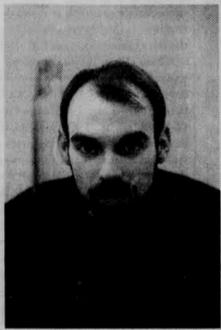
"I think the question to ask is why do they want a review so quickly?" he asks, "I don't understand why."

"I think it's just a problem of money," commented Franck Girardeau, VP Administration dryly.

"I think government cutbacks have something to do with it," agreed Lamoureux tacitly.

According to Lamoureux, the real sticking point is the composition of the review committee. A document provided to *The Brunswickan* claims the Graduate School had approved the composition of a committee of "3 external members with experience in the administration of graduate education in Canadian universities."

Yet, the same document alleges that this has been changed, after two proposed members could not meet UNB's schedule of February 18 and



BAS VON E. PHOTO

19, and that a current member of the UNB faculty and a newly-appointed Dean of Graduate Studies had been named to the committee, without consulting the Acting Dean of Graduate Studies, Merrill Edwards, who is away this week. The review was also moved to February 26, 27, and 28.

"We're not saying these people aren't competent to do a review, but our idea of an external review was to have people not associated with UNB in any way," argued Lamoureux.

One of the members, according to a memo circulated by Dean of Graduate Studies Merrill Edwards, is Dr. Ann Cameron, a current member of the UNB(F) Department of Psychology and former Dean of Graduate Studies at UNB.

"This person is a qualified reviewer for another university, but we think this person would bring insight and knowledge [to the review] that the other reviewers will not have," stated Lamoureux. "We want the most objective review we can have. This has to come from outside the University."

As to whether there should even be a review, the GSA is still undecided.

"We haven't come to a decision, as an organization, about whether the Grad School needs a review, but if it did, we would want it to be completely external."

Lamoureux notes that the GSA, like the Grad School and the University Administration does have an interest in an external review.

"If we don't have the best Grad School we can, we need to know how we can make it the best one," he says. There are three questions he feels need to be answered by any external review "What can the graduate students do to make it better, what can the Grad school do to make it

better, and what can the administration do to make things better?"

"Our understanding that a review [would examine] the overall implementation of the graduate program. I would hope that would include a review of the level of graduate assistantships and a review of graduate fees," he added.

As for the procedure of any review, the GSA wants to emphasize the involvement of the Grad School itself.

"The GSA has full confidence in [Acting Dean] Merrill Edwards and [Acting Associate Dean] Jim Sexsmith," said Lamoureux.

Lamoureux notes that the appointments of the Acting Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice-President Research and International Cooperation both end in June.

"There is a big opening for convergence," he observed. "There is a relationship [between the VP Research and the Grad School], but I personally hope that they wouldn't converge."

Lamoureux concedes that he feels a university-wide "probably desire for change" but tempers that with the following "Rapid change, from the experience of other universities, can be destructive."

UNB's Placement Centre helps students surf their way to future employment

KURT PEACOCK

THE BRUNSWICKAN

As graduation ceremonies and ominous loan payments are both a few short months away, more and more graduating students are looking towards cyberspace for employment prospects.

This was evident on January 30 when a room packed with graduating students was the site for a "Surfing the Net to Work" seminar, hosted by UNB's Student Placement Service.

The Student Placement Service, which has been located at Neville Homestead since the Canada Employment Center on Campus closed down in the 1992-93

academic year, encourages students to use the internet employment services to search for career prospects. "I encourage students to use all of these tools," says Kevin Bonner, Manager of the Service, "there is an awful lot of potential."

UNB has tapped that potential for some time now, listing its job prospects on its gopher site since 1992. Since then, the federal government has caught up, and now offers a National Graduate Register and Electronic Labour Exchange on the World Wide Web.

After a pilot project in Atlantic Canada, the National Graduate Register has been online across the country since January. Graduating

students can type in their "virtual" resumes, and these will be placed in a database used by employers like Canadian Tire and the big Banks. The Register can be found at <http://schoolnet2.carleton.ca/NGR/>. The Electronic Labour Exchange is similar in scope, but it isn't designed primarily for graduating students like the NGR is. It's web page is <http://ele.ingenia.com>.

UNB posts most job offers coming through its Student Placement Service on its own employment page, www.unb.ca/UNB/units/Student_Services/place.html. Kevin Bonner is also finding another advantage of the internet - the ease with which Employer Annual Reports

can be found. Before the age of the information highway, students who wanted to research their potential employer before an interview would have to search through annual corporate reports found in the Neville Homestead library. "Now, if XYZ Corporation has a web site all their Corporate information is there," Bonner points out, "students can now get the information they need fresh off the Net."

Whether or not new technologies will ensure UNB students of sure results remains to be seen, but with an apparently limited job market, one thing is certain - as Bonner notes, "our website has become very popular."

Did you know?

A conventional water sprinkler sprays water droplets 1,000 microns in diameter

Every 400 years, the molten core of the Earth completes a full revolution more than the outer crust. The movement of this 7,000°F mass gradually affects the magnetic field of the Earth.

There are approximately 28,000 species of snail and slugs. However, there are very few true snails in Canada because the acidity from decomposing conifer needles inhibit the formation of the calcium shells which distinguish a slug from a snail.

UNB puts aside \$20,000 in a contingency fund in case a UNB Varsity team goes to the Nationals. This is just under the five-year average for such trips.

Last year, \$2.1 billion was spent on bottled water. However, 25% of bottled water is the same lake or river water that comes out of the typical tap.

5.4 trillion liters of raw sewage are released by US water treatment plants annually.

The total cost of providing water & sewage removal from UNB is \$433,200.

A tattoo implanted into the dermal (second) layer of skin is more or less permanent because the size of the particles of pigment which make up the design is greater than the body is able to absorb. Laser tattoo removal does not "burn off" the tattoo. Rather, the laser breaks the pigment into particles small enough to be broken up by the body's natural garbage collectors, the macrophages.

90% of Chinese airspace is reserved for military use.

A geostationary satellite, one which remains fixed over a point on the Earth, orbits 22,240 miles above the Equator.

After 1,000 years and the efforts of 16,000 lives, the world's heaviest book was created. Housed in China, the 14,300



Holy Sewage Batman! The total cost of providing water & sewage removal from UNB is \$433,200.

stone tablets inscribed on both sides with 35 million characters were completed in the 17th century. The purpose of the endeavor was to preserve sacred Buddhist scriptures from looters and fire.

King's Landing Historical Settlement employs 65.8 full-time equivalents at a cost to New Brunswick coffers of \$1,300,000. The Village Acadien costs \$1,200,000.

UNB spent \$117,700 during its Search for President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston. This cost included an executive search firm, advertising, travel and interview costs.

According to the US Trade Representative's Office, 90 million pirated CDs were produced in China in 1995.

The province of New Brunswick spends \$8.7 million to fund the cost of providing public libraries throughout

the province. In the York region, which includes Fredericton, there are 24 branches. UNB spends \$6.125 million to maintain the libraries on the Fredericton campus.

Modern rice yields 10 tons of grain per hectare. Each plant is composed of approximately 15 tillers (stems) whose panicles (pods) bear 100 grains of rice.

The 1996-97 Budget for the Campus Bookstore is \$5,312,700. UNB expects to make just under \$100,000 in excess revenue.

The budget for the City of Fredericton is only \$51,000,000, compared to UNB's \$108,000,000 annual budget.

The New York subway system is 656 miles long and carries 3.6 million passengers daily.

Compiled by Joseph FitzPatrick

Atlantic Engineering Competition

UNB invaded the port city of Halifax with 20 students competing in various categories of this year's Atlantic Engineering Competition, February 7-9 at TUNS (Technical University of Nova Scotia).

The competition provides students with an opportunity to showcase their skills and to promote contacts between industry, academia and students.

Out of the 17 possible awards up for grabs, UNB walked away with 9. We proved that UNB is one of the top engineering schools in Canada.

In the category of explanatory communications, Stephanie Brennan claimed second place.

Editorial communications had Sajeev Kappukatt placing second and the team of Stephan Meyer and Darren Thompson, third. The entrepreneurial category gave UNB a first and third place finish. The team of Jennifer Hubert, Dawn Lundrigan, Shawn Poitras and Peter Sroyid claimed first and the Social Awareness Award while Darren Thompson and Trevor Nichol capped third prize.

The most prestigious category of debating had UNB's Sarah Sosiak and Rajan Verma placing second.

Third honours went to two teams: Sajeev Kappukatt and Darren Thompson; Mark Mosry and Alok Moindra.

Congratulations to all competitors for a very successful weekend for UNB Engineering. Good luck to those who placed first or second because they will be going on to compete at the Canadian Engineering Competition in Moncton, NB, from March 6-9!

UNB will be hosting next year's competition and there will be an organizing committee meeting for those interested in helping out this Friday, February 14 at 12:30 in the EUS office. For further questions please contact the EUS office at 453-3534.