

Two-month term runs till March 31

Grads to elect interim president

by Heather Hueston

The two candidates for interim president of the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) are looking forward to invigorating what they see as a directionless organization — and both admit they're running because no one else seems interested.

As required constitutionally, DAGS will elect a president to complete the term of office left vacant when John Inegbedion resigned last December after DAGS's council cancelled plans to host a national conference of graduate students slated for February.

This upset, and the precarious finances of the DAGS's club, the Grad House, has both DAGS and the DSU "concerned", says returning officer Andrew Craft.

Candidate Ted Brezina, a first-year political science master's student, says he can help DAGS best by concentrating on the future.

"I think everything is back on track. We just need to move for-



Ted Brezina: focus on image

ward," says Brezina.

Brezina, a DAGS council member, stresses the need to improve an image tarnished by last term's conference pull-out. Now, says Brezina, "the Dean of Graduate Studies has extra ammunition every time DAGS goes to ask for something."

One of the things Brezina would ask for is more autonomy for grad students. He says many

grad students tell him they don't get involved with DAGS because "why should they bother if they don't have their own voice?"

"This is the first university I've heard of that doesn't have separate reps for grad students," says the University of Toronto grad.

The Dalhousie Student Union is now the official voice for all students on campus. The Senate recently rejected DAGS's bid to sit on an equal basis with the DSU.

Brezina also sees quick passage of a DAGS/DSU funding contract as the key to steadying the Grad House's finances. Relations between the two bodies are amicable and negotiations, stalled since last summer, should resume soon.

Both Brezina and opponent Peter Westin want more teachers' assistants positions and safeguarding of students' research findings from their advisors.

Westin, an M.Ed. student, says his long connection with the

Grad House, as member and bartender, is what prompted him to run.

"I see the Grad House as an essential part of what DAGS is all about, and there's a threat that we could lose the building," says Westin.



Peter Westin: Save the Grad House

Westin wants to boost the Grad House by reviving the defunct house management committee, asking alumni to aid fundraising,

and recruiting new members.

Quick passage of the funding contract is also crucial for the Grad House as well as funding The DAGGER, DAGS's newsletter.

To Westin, "quality of education" means Dal must continue to hire researchers based on reputation, "since that's why most grads are drawn to Dal".

Westin will also push for DAGS autonomy. There are now two DAGS members on the Graduate Faculty Council, something Westin would like to see in Senate and on the Student Council.

"We'd like to continue that growth of a grad voice independent of undergrads. We feel there is a need for representation on the Senate and the DSU as well," says Westin.

Voting takes place January 23 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Grad House.

Board of Governors gear up for funding reform

by Heather Hueston and Karin Bergen

Last Thursday's Board of Governors' meeting deferred approval of the M.A. in International Development pending the development of financial frameworks for the university and a report from the BoG Financial Strategy

Committee. The meeting also ratified the eleven FSC committee members, including two student reps, who will begin several months of preparation. This project coincides with the completion of a review of the funding formula of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, the funding body for post-secondary education.

The long-awaited report by MPHEC consultant Dr. A.K. Adlington calls for each university to establish a three or five-year plan outlining the university's present and future plans of action. University presidents discussed the report last December but are tight lipped on details. The MPHEC is expected to assist universities in preparing their plan and help them sell it to the provincial government explains Royden Trainor, interim head of the Students Union of Nova Scotia. Trainor adds the review proposes a "budget envelope" system where money will be handed out at the MPHEC's

discretion apart from the sum agreed to between the university and government.

DSU President Juanita Montalvo is also cautious about the new plan about the new formula's results at Dal, she says it may result in "more money and less programs".

The DSU has also struck a committee to study the effects of a five year plan.

The BoG meeting also passed a motion notifying Senate that "except in... compelling circumstances" the Board "will approve

no new program until a strategy has been developed and approved by the Board."

Students' criticisms of the revised MPHEC plan centre on its vagueness, its dependence on the bargaining skills of a university president, and whether universities may cap enrollment once funding is no longer tied to enrollment figures, as the report recommends. Students met yesterday to discuss their concerns with provincial opposition leader Vince McLean.

Program victim of funding freeze

by Karin Bergen

"There's nothing to talk about."

That is the reaction of disappointed International Development Studies (IDS) coordinator Tim Shaw after hearing that his proposed IDS Master's program had been shelved by the Board of Governors last Tuesday pending the Board's comprehensive report on Dalhousie's financial outlook.

After a five year journey through various reviews, the program was one step away from implementation but fell victim to the Board's freeze except in "compelling" circumstances — on all new programs due to Dalhousie's poor financial picture.

The Board has final approval on all new programs.

During last term's twenty-day strike, President Clark's comments that unforecast costs of programs drained the budget led to speculation that the administration planned to review programs now in place as a

cost-cutting measure.

Senate chair William Jones says that is not the case. Programs are constantly reviewed for "quality control" but not for costs, says Jones

Shaw says the funding needed for his department's deferred proposal would have been small, but as philosophy professor and Senate member David Braybrooke explains: "worry is acute" for financing new programs.

Other members of Senate say the harsh scrutiny is a necessary reaction and say Senate must face the real problem of underfunding and must now follow a policy of no more programs until we get our house in order.

President Howard Clark says although the current financial picture doesn't preclude new programs, "resources will be constrained."

The Senate Academic Planning Committee is currently setting up a policy to review more critically costs and needs related to new programs.



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