

# the Gazette

Volume 126 Number 14

Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia

January 13, 1994



DALPHOTO: MICHAEL DEVONPORT

## Education students kept in the dark

by Jennifer Peddle and Jacqueline Roberts

Jefferson Rappell wonders where the future of the university lies after proposed cuts to the education program were leaked to the public Monday evening.

"It's [rationalization] a theory and to put it into practice is a hard thing to do," said the president of the Dalhousie Student Union, referring to a provincial government plan to reduce duplication of programs at Nova Scotia Universities.

The proposal, drafted by the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education (NSCHE), advises the Nova Scotia Teachers College, St. Mary's, St. Francis Xavier, and Dalhousie uni-

versities to eliminate their education departments. Mount St. Vincent, Acadia, and Université Ste. Anne would be the only institutions to keep their teacher-training programs.

The current draft of the proposal is the first stage of three, says Students' Union of Nova Scotia chair, Allison Young. The first stage involves broad public discussion, the second involves consultation with affected groups, and the third is more specific recommendations.

"It's a draft report. It needs a lot of consideration and a lot of discussion," Dalhousie President Howard Clark told *The Chronicle Herald* on Tuesday.

He and the presidents of 13 other

universities affected by rationalization had ongoing discussion with the NSCHE. Sources in Dalhousie's Public Relations Department said that before the release of the draft, Clark had no idea of the content in the document.

The final draft is expected sometime in early February.

Keith Sullivan, Director of the School of Education, said he was left in the dark until Sunday. He plans to hold meetings to inform students of the details of the report.

"There will be some reassurance from the document," says Sullivan. "All programs will be honoured so that if we close before the students finish, programs and students will be

transferred to other universities."

Even Clark only received the first draft of the proposal from NSCHE last Friday, according to Sullivan.

The students and professors were in a state of disbelief Tuesday afternoon. By that time, all had heard rumours of what the report entailed, but were unsure of their truth. Many had unanswered questions.

Kim Leonard, a student in the one-year education program, says after rationalization, entrance competition will be stiffer. When she was accepted there was a one-in-seven chance of getting into the program. But now acceptance rates may fall to one-in-fifteen, she says.

The chances of acceptance are worse than your chances of becoming a doctor or a lawyer, says Leonard.

Allison Cooper had hoped to enter education in two years' time. The latest news has forced her to reconsider her career plans.

Cooper is not sure if she wants to attend those universities keeping their programs because she's comfortable with Dalhousie.

"Once you get to know a school and get to know a program it's nice to be able to stay."

Some education students aren't as worried about their future, especially the one-year students and the graduating class.

"It's good for us but bad for Dalhousie!" a graduate student shouted while running to make a class.

The education students weren't the only ones who were not told about NSCHE's proposal.

As of 11 am Tuesday, Rappell still hadn't heard from either Clark or the Council. All of his knowledge had come from the media.

"I haven't had any messages waiting for me and there hasn't been anything in my mailbox," he says. "Maybe I'm not that quick, but I'm going to call the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education and find out what I can find out."

Leaving students out of the rationalization process is a big mistake, says Rappell.

"If this is the way the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education is going to do things I see it as being a very frustrating and disturbing way for students to be a part of the process. It's like this is the way we'll do things and then we can all talk about it and then you can agree with us."

## DSU reps drop the ball

by Robert Drinkwater

For the second meeting in a row, the Dalhousie Student Union could not hold an official meeting because not enough councillors showed up, and the DSU may soon take action against its absentee members.

Only 27 councillors showed up for last Sunday's meeting, the first of the new term. The DSU constitution requires at least two-thirds, or 32, of the 48 councillors be present for a meeting to proceed.

The councillors who did show up decided to hold a meeting anyway, on the condition that any decisions would have to be ratified at the next meeting.

DSU President Jefferson Rappell expressed his frustration with the poor attendance.

"It's absolutely ridiculous and wastes a lot of time," said Rappell. "We need to increase our efforts this term, and that includes showing up at meetings."

After the meeting, Rappell said some student unions print their meeting attendance in the student paper to embarrass councillors into showing up. He said he might suggest *The Gazette* do the same.

Rappell said another option is to have absentee councillors recalled. Under DSU rules, any councillor who misses three meetings in a row without an acceptable excuse can be removed from the council by the chair.

However, DSU chair Gwynedd Morgan told *The Gazette* this may be difficult, as attendance records show that even the councillors who miss most of the meetings do not miss three consecutive meetings in a row. She will meet with DSU executive this week to discuss recalling councillors.

The non-official status of Sunday's meeting left a number of clubs and societies in limbo, as decisions on whether or not they would receive grants from the DSU had to be postponed until next week. How-

ever, the need for a DSU elections returning officer was deemed too urgent to wait until next meeting. While the councillors did choose an ERO, the chair warned the councillors that their decision may need to be ratified next week.

## INSIDE:

Dal's censorship habit pp 3 & 11

Yaqzan saga wraps up p 3

Society sludge p 10