

Advisory council OK's Consumer Guide

by Mary Rogal-Black
Brunswickan News

A committee of faculty and students will be supporting the student union's Consumer Guide.

The Enrolment Management Advisory Council is made up of students, faculty and staff at UNB. It makes recommendations to the VP Academic on a number of issues affecting enrolment at the university, and it is backing the Consumer Guide, the section of The Guide that publishes the results of course surveys.

"We said that a properly constructed guide was worthwhile and that the Advisory Council would act as a liaison body, acting with the producers of the guide and faculty," says Council chairman David Daugherty. "The object of a liaison exercise would be to produce a better and more complete guide."

Looking at the Consumer Guide is one of several initiatives the com-

mittee has taken. Pat FitzPatrick, Vice President University Affairs, is also on the advisory council.

"The Guide is a good idea from the point of view that it helps students make important choices about courses," says FitzPatrick. "The whole role of the committee with respect to the course guide is to help recruit profs and funnel comments and criticisms."

Shona Bertrand is the editor of the Consumer Guide. She says that the guide increases accountability on the part of teachers, and this translates into an improved quality of education.

"The committee's endorsement will help to a certain extent," says Bertrand. "It will help with awareness."

So far, the guide has enjoyed only about 30 per cent participation from profs, and Bertrand would like to see that increase.

"You'll never get 100 per cent participation, but we hope to have

enough response that students can make judgements based on who's not in," she says. "They'll be conspicuous by their absence."

While Bertrand understands the reluctance on the part of some profs to participate in the Consumer Guide, she says that she is trying to make the experience positive for everyone.

"Profs have the opportunity to screen comments," she says. "The most rewarding part of it is having profs get feedback that they wouldn't normally know about."

David Daugherty is enthusiastic about participation in the surveys. "Personally, I see no reason why all of them shouldn't be in there."

Jacob Vanderlinde, President of the Association of UNB Teachers, says that the AUNBT is not endorsing or objecting to the Consumer Guide. "Not being a validated survey of any kind, I object to it being used as an evaluating tool. It has the most value as an informal feedback

mechanism."

Vanderlinde goes on to say that he has no problem with the way that the guide has been used so far.

The surveys in the Consumer Guide are sent out by the student union to professors, who then chose whether to circulate them in their classes. The SU surveys are designed to be more course-specific than senate surveys, with the purpose of gathering information that will be useful to students.

While FitzPatrick says that the committee is enthusiastic about the course guide, he does not anticipate legislation to make participation mandatory.

"'95-'96 participation will be strictly voluntary. Legislation is not the direction the committee is taking right now."

Instead, the committee will be supporting higher disclosure of surveys by acting as a mediator between faculty and the student union.

Citizens voice concerns:

Scott holds public forum at high school

by Gordon Loane
Brunswickan News

Education cut backs, corporate taxes, jobs and government motives for reform.

These were some of the issues raised by over 100 constituents of Fredericton-York-Sunbury MP Andy Scott who gathered at Fredericton High School for a Sunday afternoon public policy forum on the federal government's plan to reform social programs.

Ten working groups focused their attention throughout the afternoon on aspects of social security reform.

"There is a suspicion that this social policy review is driven by cost-cutting, not by people," said Stephen Patterson, a spokesperson for one group at the final plenary session.

"There is waste and inefficiency in the education system and because people are unemployed maybe the system has failed," Patterson said.

Patterson's group questioned the need for retraining programs.

"Perhaps the education system should get it right the first time," he said.

The group stressed the need for more federal-provincial cooperation if the education system is to work properly.

"Industry has a responsibility to help pay for the education system," he said.

Patterson said not one person in his working group supported proposed income contingent student loans.

"It will all lead to higher debt loads and higher tuition. Universities would become the home of the privileged elite," he said.

Patterson said his working group felt the system of federal funding to the provinces for post-secondary education through Established Programs Financing needs to be redesigned.

"Transfers to the provinces need

to be provided so that there is equality of educational opportunity throughout Canada," he said. "We also need to continue to set national standards for education through standardized testing."

A second working group on learning felt that society should continue to bear responsibility for funding universities.

"We need to set up a system whereby cash transfers to the provinces will be stabilized, perhaps at 50 per cent," said Paul Estabrooks, spokesperson for the working group.

"Continuing high tuitions may force some Canadians to go to other countries to seek higher education," he said.

"The current system in which federal funding for post-secondary education is uncertain prevents long term planning at universities," Estabrooks stressed.

"We also need to define our educational goals," he said. "For instance if universities stress science over humanities costs will be much higher."

The group felt the federal government needs to study the economic impact of high student debt loads after graduation. "Greater scholarships and bursaries for learning are needed," Estabrooks said.

Group after group felt that corporations were not carrying a fair share of the tax burden. Many feared that the need for training programs was being over emphasized.

"We might be shifting those on welfare onto the training program treadmill," one group spokesperson suggested.

The results of the public forum will be presented to Parliament's Standing Committee on Human Resources Development which begins national hearings on Social Program Reform this month. The hearings wind up in Fredericton on December 16.

United Way success story

by Gordon Loane
Brunswickan News

The United Way Campaign on the UNB campus has raised \$29,250 as of last Friday, 69 per cent of the \$45,000 campaign goal. About 165 donors from UNB have supported the campaign to date.

"We're very optimistic about reaching the goal by the end of November," said Maureen Sparks, co-chair of the United Way campaign on campus.

"Well over 100 donations have been made through payroll deductions so far," said Sparks. "Faculty and staff should be receiving reminder letters very shortly."

"UNB employees have until December 15 to indicate whether they wish to donate to the United Way through payroll deductions," Sparks said.

In the Fredericton area, just over \$414,000 has been raised to fund 75 programs offered by the United Way's 24-member agencies.

Last year's campaign raised a total of \$670,000 - one of the best per capita showings in Canada.

Ann Passmore and her family have been helped immensely by Jobs Unlimited, one of the many agencies funded by donations to the United Way.

Ann, her husband Jack, a chemistry professor at UNB, and their daughter have persevered to

keep their mentally challenged sons, John and David, in the community and to give them meaningful and purposeful lives.

The Passmore's sons were the surviving twins of triplets born two days after Christmas in 1968.

Ann was soon told there were no services for her sons and their lives would be spent in institutions, but John and David had a lot of support and help as they grew up.

At various times they lived with foster parents and in special care homes while attending school like other children.

In 1991, when they were 21, the twins graduated from Fredericton High School to Jobs Unlimited, where they enrolled in the United Way-funded vocational training program.

John began delivering mail at the Maritime Forestry Complex and did some contract jobs for Jobs Unlimited. David started delivering ad mail and found time to work at The Royal Canadian Legion, the Indian Friendship Centre and local stables.

The brothers also keep physically active by swimming, walking and jogging.

Since the twins have become involved with Jobs Unlimited, Ann and her family have noticed a change in them both.

"Their self esteem has improved and they're aware that people are treating them with respect," she said.

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This issue is dedicated to early-rising, beans-for-breakfast eating, elevator-riding, subtly wind-breaking, shaved-headed, black-eyed photo editors. Thanks for the memories, pal.

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The opinions contained in this newspaper are those of the individual writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Brunswickan.

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