

The Grad Zone

The UNB Graduate Student Association

A new Canada-wide graduate student forum

The CGS is presently in its formation stage. The intent is to provide an alternative Canada-wide graduate student forum aimed at specifically improving the environment of graduate students. Currently graduate students at UNB are represented automatically on a national graduate student council through their membership with CFS. However, a number of limitations are associated with the existing organization. One being the fact the the National Graduate Council of CFS only represents about half of all grad associations and is severely restricted in terms of their low budget. A number of grad associations have already expressed considerable interest

in a new and independent grad forum which along with UNB, include such schools as McMaster, Queen's Guelph, York, Windsor, and Mun to name a few. Indeed, some are currently holding referendum to join the Canadian Graduate Council. The idea is that once functional, the organization can set up council the way they think it should from the beginning - without the added complications associated with external affiliations. The primary goals will be to conduct national research on grad needs and also to implement a systematic, and effective, procedure(s) for lobbying government, funding agencies, and universities for improvements to the existing situation. A

host of topics require a national graduate student voice - differential fees, accessibility for women/minorities, funding, etc. To a large extent, some of these issues are currently not being dealt with in an in-depth manner as they warrant.

Another beneficial aspect with regards to CGC is the regional/provincial caucuses of graduate associations. This allows for networking and problem-solving of issues that affect graduate students of a regional nature. Ontario is the only province that I am aware of that has such a forum that is currently active and appears to be a model in which to emulate for the Atlantic region.

Having attended the initial

meeting of CGS, I believe that this organization has the potential for rapidly becoming the dominant organization on the national scene for addressing graduate student concerns. The CGC also appears to be the appropriate organization for fostering the development of policies on issues that directly impinge on graduate student lives. Presently, many grad associations do operate without involvement with bodies outside their campuses. However, many issues that affect grad student on one campus also affect grad students nation-wide. An organization such as the CGC is effective in terms of grad associations communicating with one another to arrive at a solution to

some of these problems without wasted efforts or time.

UNB grads have traditionally been a vocal player on the national scene for helping to bring about change to the status quo. I sincerely believe that our involvement with regards to these issues will not be weakened, but rather enhanced, through cooperation and information sharing within a forum such as the CGC.

By Peter Fergusson

**You too can
be a
graduate
student..**

ORIENTATION '92

3rd & Final

General Meeting

Sunday, March 22/92

McLaggan Hall, Room 105, 7:00 p.m.