

# Quest growing pains Maclean's survey: UNB versus STU

by Joe FitzPatrick  
Co-News Editor



Quest system is not without problems. photo by Mark Landry

by Gordon Loane  
Brunswickan News

Officials at UNB's Harriet Irving Library have taken steps to speed up the response time of the new Quest computer system.

"A survey was conducted about a month ago to test the response at various times of the day," said Allan Burk, Associate Director of UNB Libraries.

The survey reported response times of "from two seconds to well over forty seconds," said Burk.

Following some adjustments over two weeks, a second survey was conducted using similar methods, according to Burk.

"The second series of tests reported response rates averaging about two seconds," said Burk.

Burk admits that the new Quest system, implemented in May and June, has been undergoing growing pains.

"It was implemented very quickly, and with major systems there will be some problems," he said.

Library officials moved to the new Quest system because of a need to get off the larger UNB computer mainframe. Burk said that the cost and the heavy load of carrying the library system on the mainframe were some of the factors for the switch. He admits that there are still some adjustments needed to the system.

Users will notice some problems with ERL and access to the University of Alberta System, but these are being worked on, according to Burk.

Andrew Pope, Hill-Library Systems, has been working full-time for over a year to get the Quest system up and running, said Burk.

Burk is urging users who are having problems with the system to please let him know. Both Burk and Pope can be contacted at the Harriet Irving Library by phone or e-mail.

The close proximity of UNB and St. Thomas makes comparisons likely and frequent. The two institutions are closely related fiscally and administratively. They share such things as Physical Plant, Campus Security, Libraries, the SUB and the athletic facilities.

Both Universities were evaluated by Maclean's magazine in the '95 Ranking of the Universities issue. While they are classified in different categories, there are some interesting comparisons to be made. For example, the average entering grade is not very different between the universities, UNB: 76.7%, STU: 79%.

One of the most common assumptions made about St. Thomas is that it has smaller classes. According to the Maclean's results UNB has 42.8% of first and second year with 1-25 students, while STU has only 36% of its classes in this size range.

It is common knowledge that the St. Thomas scholarship program is superior to UNB's. Maclean's elucidates the extent of the disparity: UNB puts only 1.5% of its budget towards scholarships and bursaries, while St. Thomas spends 5.42%.

This is true even at the level of Student Union's. While St. Thomas Student Union doles out \$6,000 annually, the UNB Student Union invests \$7,000 (\$1 per student) and awards \$1,000 annually from that investment.

Perhaps the most surprising disparity is the Student Services item. Maclean's ranks UNB dead last, at a mere 2.93% of its budget going towards student services. St. Thomas ranks number one, with 8.43%.

There are some things for UNB to be proud of: notably the 22.2% of alumni who made gifts in the last five years. This shows that despite the fact that Queen's ranked "highest quality" in the "National Reputation" category, it had less alumni support than UNB. Waterloo, rated "most

innovative," "leader of tomorrow" and "best overall" also received less alumni support than UNB.

One of the most misleading numbers in the Maclean's ratings system is the "graduation rate." This rate, defined as "percentage of full-time second-year undergraduates who completed their degree within one year of the expected graduation date" is indicative of little.

The rate for St. Thomas was 57.2%, putting it 17th out of 19. Allan Price, VP Finance of the STU Student Union says, "this doesn't take into account the number of mature and part-time students at STU—all it measures is the number of students who graduate from a four-year program in five years."

Drop-out rates before second year are dramatic compared subsequent years. The "graduate rate" at UNB and other Universities would be much lower if the drop-outs of first year students was included in this number. This would be a more accurate reflection of what occurs.

## CD-ROM to aid UNB recruitment



found, the player gains access to an entertaining Treasure Room.

Mikey and Allison's Excellent Future is another component. Two potential students and their mysterious guide present a view of life at UNB in a nine minute movie format. The remaining section, The Book of Knowledge, provides information on anything anybody might want to know about UNB. Its 800 pages contain calendar information, undergraduate and graduate student handbooks, faculty information, phone numbers, and residence information. Anyone with an Internet connection can sample UNBNU on UNB's Home Page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.unb.ca/UNB.html>.

Audio Visual Services on UNB's Fredericton campus produced the CD-ROM, which incorporates music, narration, computer animation, photography and video clips in an interactive format. The Canadian Association of University Business Officers awarded it third prize in the 1994 CAUBO Quality and Productivity Awards Program.

Copies of UNBNU for educational and recruiting purposes are available from Mr. Shanks by mail at the Office of the Registrar, University of New Brunswick, PO Box 4400, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 5A3, by telephone at (506) 453-4864, by fax at (506) 453-5016, or by e-mail at [shanks@unb.ca](mailto:shanks@unb.ca).

Individuals wishing to own a personal copy may purchase one from the bookstores on both UNB campuses.

## Orientation - continued from page 1



Jeff Melanson

Melanson emphasized, "These expenses are in line. We run an award-winning Orientation programme at UNB, and compared to other universities, we are modestly funded."

Concern was raised that Orientation had not used an agreement the Student Union has with Wood Motors to rent cars during Orientation. Melanson replied that the vehicles needed, namely non-passenger vehicles such as cargo vans, and a fifteen-passenger van would not have been covered by the agreement.

The Committee was puzzled by some of the allocations within the operating report, and thought some of the breakdowns difficult to correlate with the budget. Melanson explained that the Treasurer had misallocated some expenses under the wrong line items.

Blair Larson could not be reached for comment.

"There are no extravagant expenses,"

### UNB press release

High school students anywhere in Canada or around the globe who are interested in taking an interactive tour of either of the University of New Brunswick's campuses can do it right in their own home towns.

How can they do that? Easy—and it's fun for the students too. They do it via a computer game on the award-winning CD-ROM UNBNU or "UNB and you" for anyone who didn't say the title aloud.

"We take copies of the CD-ROMs to each of the nearly 200 places we visit annually and leave them there for subsequent visitors to take the tours," says Mike Shanks, associate registrar (admissions and enrolment) at UNB in Fredericton. Students who are getting ready to make a decision about universities they might want to attend

after high school also get a whimsical view of life at UNB and extensive information about the university on the disk.

Requests for the interactive CD-ROM, which works on either a Macintosh or a computer that runs Windows, have come from every continent. "No other tool is getting the reaction that this is," says Mr. Shanks. "Schools want to equip their computer labs with the CD-ROM. I recently demonstrated the CDROM in Toronto schools before high school counsellors, teachers and students to universal acclaim."

The game, Charter Quest, is one of three components on the disk. Moving the cursor over buildings and locations displays information on that area. Clicking on a location zooms a player in to obtain additional information. Clicking on special sites also gives a player a piece of a stained glass window. When all 15 pieces are

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