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Tech faculty strike is still tentative but students act

Halifax (CUP) — 700 students from the Technical University of Nova Scotia took to the streets Tuesday in a boycott of classes designed to bring the University's administration together with the Faculty Association, to prevent strike action from being taken.

Student union spokesperson Felicity Boyd said the action was taken by the students, because strike action "places their professional status in jeopardy".

The student union called on students to walk out of classes at 10 a.m. Tuesday morning, and 700 people, the number of students who have registered at TUNS this semester attended.

The staged a walk around the University for three hours, and the number of cars that honked their horns, and the number of people who joined in picketing convinced Boyd that the students had strong public support.

The Faculty Association is threatening to strike over a number of issues. They have been bargaining with the administration for 17 months, with the assistance of a provincial mediator.

According to the Faculty Associations Acting President Alan Penny, the university has acted in bad faith, and are refusing to bargain with the Association.

Yesterday, the university circulated a waiver form to registering students, relieving the school of any responsibility if strike action took place.

The students union took exception to the waiver form, and although all students registered, Boyd says that only 90 paid their tuition. In a statement released Tuesday, the administration made assurances that tuition fees would be refunded if a prolonged strike took place.



Harty/Dal. Photo

"Settle today or we won't pay" chanted the students here picketing the Technical University of Nova Scotia. The students do not want to pay tuition if the Faculty goes ahead with their planned strike.

Boyd says the students will go to classes until the university forces them to pay their tuition. No mention was made as to the actions of the students if the university forces payment.

For the meantime, the university has revoked all late payment of fees penalties, and Boyd says this could mean the students could continue their protest indefinitely.

Conservatives charged with gerrymandering

by Gregory Hamara

The New Democratic Party candidate for Halifax Citadel, Tom Sinclair-Faulkner, has charged the Conservative government of Premier John Buchanan with "stealing the vote from thousands of university students," according to a statement released from his campaign office on Monday.

"By calling the election when they did, the Tories effectively disenfranchised every student in the province who doesn't live at home," said Dr. Sinclair-Faulkner, a professor of religion at Dalhousie.

Under section 27(5) of the Nova Scotia Elections Act, only students who are registered and in attendance at an educational institution on the day in which electoral writs are issued are eligible to vote in their university constituency. Writs for the October 6 provincial election were issued on Friday August 28, eleven days before most

Dalhousie students began to register for classes.

Dalhousie student union President John Logan echoed Dr. Sinclair-Faulkner's anger and estimated that up to 3,500 on-campus resident students from Dalhousie, King's College, Technical University and St. Mary's could be affected in the Halifax Cornwallis riding alone.

"And that figure does not include thousands of other students who are living off-campus, away from their home riding," added Logan.

Logan speculated that the Conservatives may have consciously sought to issue the election writs on August 28 to avoid a possible upset in Halifax Cornwallis, seat of the present Minister of Education, Terrence Donahoe.

"Let's face it," said Logan, "Donahoe won the last election with about 4,000 votes. A minimum of 3,500 new voters could have very well altered the out-

come of this election."

While the present elections act makes it difficult for resident and off-campus students to vote in their university riding, Logan urged affected students to pick up proxy forms from the student union's office so that they may be eligible to have someone cast a ballot for them in their home riding. He added that an effort would be made to hand deliver proxy forms to all resident students in the riding.

In an earlier interview, Arthur Hare, Chief Electoral Officer for Halifax Cornwallis pointed out that nothing could be done to remedy the current situation because the Election Act had not been amended to allow away-from-home students to vote after the writs had been issued.

"My job is only to enforce the Election Act as it presently reads," he said.

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