

Changes to school year proposed

By DAVID MOGILEVSKY

A report that proposes major changes to the academic year has been issued by a sub-committee, of the Joint Committee of the Board of Governors and Senate on residences. What should be stressed below is that these major changes, outlined below are only proposals and are a long way from being implemented. Before the various proposals are dealt with it is important to understand a bit of the background behind this report being issued.

About four years ago, the Senate at UNB, which deals mostly with academic policies, decided to make the number of teaching days in the first term equal to the number of teaching days in the second term.

At this time the second term had more teaching days than the first term, so the Senate decided to add some additional days to the first term. The Senate managed to increase the number of teaching days by shortening the reading period before Christmas exams and by moving the exam period to a later time.

The different proposals by the sub-committee are being made to improve the structure of the academic year while still keeping the number of teaching days in each term the same.

One area that the sub-committee looked at was the exam schedule that UNB has during December and April. The committee decided that when the timetable for all the courses is printed up, at the beginning of the school year, that the exam schedule also be printed at the same time.

By doing this two major problems would be solved. Firstly, the length of the exam period could be shortened because the students would have to individually adjust their timetable of classes during the week, with the exam schedule at the end of the term, to avoid conflicts.

Secondly, students would know when they would finish their exams after registration. Since students would know the day of their

last exam they would be able to make travel arrangements earlier to return home. They would also be able to take advantage of any special travel savings since they would know the date of their departure.

The other area that the committee looked at was the Christmas holiday period.

The committee decided that the Christmas holiday period should be extended to last four weeks.

There are two reasons why the committee felt that the Christmas vacation should be extended.

Firstly, under the present system the Christmas holiday is quite short. Students

do not have much time to return home, to do some Christmas shopping, to celebrate Christmas and then return to UNB. By extending the Christmas holiday period students would have a better opportunity to get fully rested before the beginning of the second term.

The second reason why the committee suggested extending the Christmas holiday period is because of the money that would be saved by University and therefore by the students.

If the students were not here for four weeks during the winter the University would be able to get some significant savings. During the period of four weeks the

heating costs for UNB would be lower than if students were present.

During this period of four weeks snow clearing operations would cost less. Instead of having to quickly clear the snow during the night of a snow storm, at great expense, the University would only have to clear a few important roads at night and save the rest for during the next day. There would be no urgency to get all the roads cleared because there would not be many people on campus.

These were the reasons why the committee is proposing an extended Christmas break. The committee intends to create this extended Christmas holiday

period by doing three things.

Firstly, by printing the exam schedule with the class timetable, as mentioned previously, the Christmas exam schedule would be shortened and a few extra days of Christmas holidays would be gained.

Secondly, the committee is proposing that classes start earlier in the first term in order that they will end earlier in the first term. By starting classes on the first Thursday after Labour Day a few more days would be added to the Christmas period. If classes are to start on Thursday, then registration would have to be earlier.

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Greenham Common nuke protest

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On November 14, amid the protests of parliamentary opposition, the British Minister of Defence announced the arrival of the first of the cruise missiles scheduled for deployment in Great Britain. For the women of Greenham Common it was not seen as the demise of their struggle, rather this action taken by the government lead to further unified action on the part of the movement.

Aggie Jakubska and Monica Grunberg, both of whom have camped outside the chain link and barbed wire fence surrounding the U.S. Air Force Base at Greenham Common, England, are presently on a Canada-wide speaking tour sponsored by VOW (Voice of Women) of Vancouver, B.C. Jakubska has also assisted in setting up a women's peace camp at Comiso, Italy, where U.S. missiles are scheduled for deployment later this year.

Their aim on this tour is to make Canadians aware of the dangers inherent in the nuclear arms race; to seek

support for their cause at Greenham Common; and to demonstrate that individuals united in a common cause can take effective action. They hope that other peace camps can be organized in Canada. In August of this year a sister camp to Greenham Common was formed in Cole Bay, Sask., which is on the eastern border of the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Testing Range and is the site of the cruise testing.

I spoke with Jakubska and Grunberg, November 16 upon their arrival in Fredericton.

When Jakubska was asked when and why she became actively involved in the disarmament movement, she replied that prior to her involvement she led a rather isolated existence, but after reading the facts concerning the nuclear arms race and the horror of it, she decided in 1982 to become actively involved. She moved to the Greenham Common Peace camp and has lived there since; when she is not on speaking tours or starting other peace camps in other parts of Europe.

The number of people actually living at Greenham Common is difficult to judge

as people are continually coming and going. It averages out at about fifty; however, there are times when the number has swelled to 30,000 when a call goes out for a particular demonstration. On November 14 seventy women were arrested for obstruction when the first of the missiles arrived to be set in place at the air base.

The women knew they were going to be arrested, but did they actually accomplish anything? Jakubska felt that by physically putting yourself on the line, facing riot police that it is empowering; one gets a sense of individual and group strength...the strength multiplies in that it is larger than the whole. It also shows those in authority that you are not intimidated by them.

I asked why people are finally taking a stand on the arms issue, why not five, ten, or even fifteen years ago? Jakubska feels that the warnings just weren't believed...but now that it's a crisis situation people realize the threat and are frightened. It is only recently that the movement began in England, now that we have the cruise missile in our backyard. She sees that

as the difference between the Canadian and English disarmament movement...the English feel a strong sense of urgency, whereas the Canadians don't, though Canada is greatly involved in the nuclear arms race. In Sask., more people are waking up to that fact, and eventually more Canadians will.

The argument most difficult to counter as far as Jakubska is concerned is the "we can't be unarmed" one...ideally we shouldn't need arms...realistically, well it's going to take time, the distrust cannot be changed over night.

Grunberg pointed out that we must work in groups; that we must come to the realization that "you're not the only one who's scared...things can be changed...work cooperatively in groups. Women play a very important role in this...we are products of that type of socialization."

Both women felt that university students should become more aware of the facts if they are to have a future at all...each individual must stand up and say they want a future...an absence of nuclear weapons will ensure just that.