

Council says NS universities need \$22-M more

BY GINA STACK

To maintain current programs and stabilize tuition fees, Nova Scotia universities need \$22-million dollars more per year from the provincial government, according to a senior advisory council.

The Nova Scotia Council on

Higher Education (NSCHE) was struck two years ago to come up with a funding formula for the province's 11 universities. A draft copy of funding formula recommendations released last week stated that provincial funding to post-secondary institutions should increase from \$175-million to \$197-million annually "as

quickly as [the government's] financial situation will allow".

"This increase in funding is very important," says NSCHE executive director Susan Clark.

"We think that what it costs to deliver the system is really more than the government has allocated. The government is about \$22-million short to pay for what the system actually costs."

In its draft paper, the council noted that basic grants to universities from the province dropped from \$212-million in 1993-94 to \$175-million in the current school year. Funding was projected to decline further to \$171-million under the province's fiscal plan.

Since the 1993-94 school year,

the council states that tuition fees at Nova Scotia universities have increased by 40 per cent and there has been a 2.6 per cent decrease in enrollment.

Clark says the council believes the provincial government must stop reducing funds to post-secondary education, and come up with the additional \$22-million currently needed by universities.

"New money is required now and we need the minister [of education] and the government to understand why increased funding is significant and what the trade off is: higher tuition or cutbacks [to programs]."

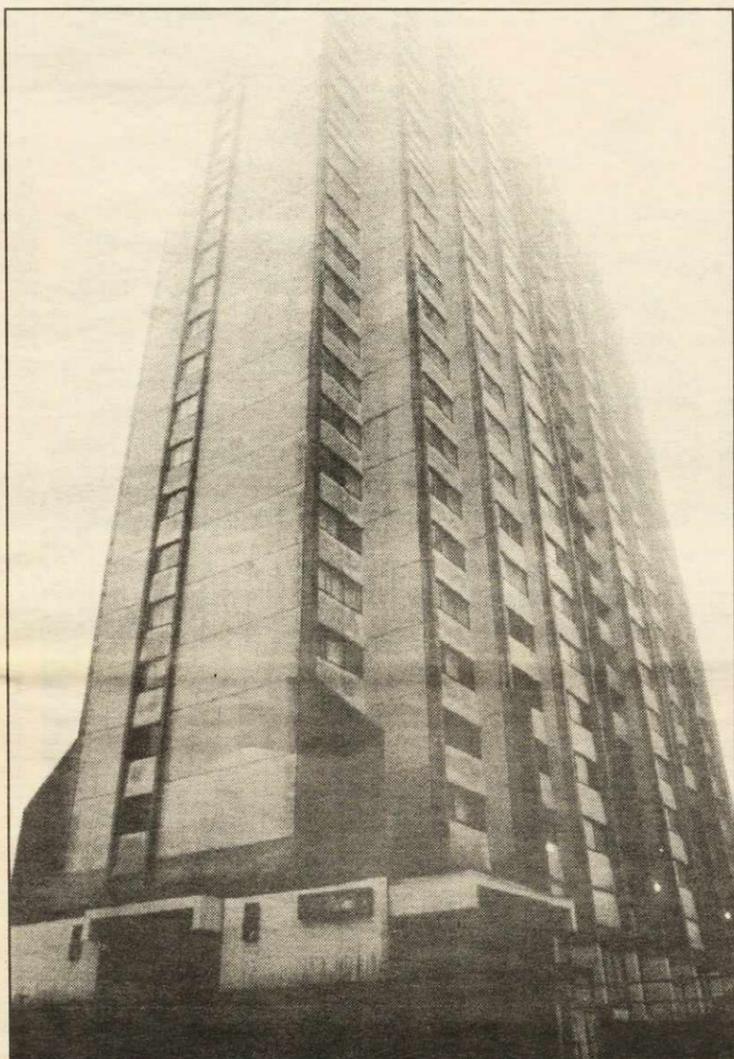
In addition to recommending a funding increase from the provincial government, the council

developed a new funding formula for provincial schools.

Clark says that the new funding formula took four main elements into account: weighted enrollment grants, international and national student fees, what portion of the university's budget should be allocated to research versus pedagogical goals and targeted and isolation funding. The latter category took into account special characteristics of schools, the number of part-time students in attendance and their distance from the metro area.

Under the new funding formula, all provincial schools would see their funding increase or remain constant.

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DEATH TRAP: no, it's just Dalhousie's Fenwick tower looming in the mist. (Photo by Luke Dobek)

IBM wants name for itself

BY LILLI JU

The Indigenous Black and Mi'kmaq Programme at the Dalhousie Law School can no longer be referred to as the "IBM" program because the information technologies corporate giant known by the same name wanted to avoid confusion between the two.

International Business Machines Corporation, more commonly known by its registered trademarked name IBM, asked Dalhousie University to not use the acronym for the Indigenous Black and Mi'kmaq law program, which was established in 1989 to increase the number of indigenous Nova Scotia Blacks and Mi'kmaqs in the legal profession.

"IBM was an acronym that was just picked up and used over time," said Patricia Doyle-Bedwell, acting director of the law program. "It wasn't anything planned or intentional."

What started as a short nickname, led to the informal adoption of the acronym to commonly refer to the law program, and eventually ended up on its brochures and stationery. Since its inception, the program has developed a national profile among law schools.

"Aside from changing those pamphlets and some letterhead, [dropping the acronym] has not meant major changes for us," added Doyle-Bedwell.

And as for any bitter feelings between the corporation and the university, there are none. The

university simply agreed to stop using the acronym during the Fall term. In fact, some at the university have been amused and even flattered.

"We got the attention of IBM," said Doyle-Bedwell.

The program was formed by the Dalhousie Law School along with the Province of Nova Scotia in response to recommendations arising from the Royal Commission on the Donald Marshall Jr. Prosecution. This inquiry investigated Marshall's wrongful conviction and subsequent 11-year imprisonment murder that he did not commit. The report cited a number of problems, such as cultural differences in language and behaviour, that were ignored in the handling of Marshall's case.

New building plans for Dalhousie unveiled

BY MARK REYNOLDS

Members of the Dalhousie community got their first look at the proposed new Arts and Social Sciences building last month.

The plans for the new Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) were presented on Dec. 17 at a meeting of 30 faculty members.

Jack Diamond of Diamond and Schmidt, the lead architects for the project, conducted the unveiling. He detailed the features and layout of the new building, scheduled to be completed by Sept. of 2000.

Diamond explained that the designers had to take into account many conflicting needs for the building. In doing so, they spoke with all the planned users: professors, students and departmental secretaries.

"It's not design by fiat," said Diamond, "it's an iterative process."

He said that the purpose of the meeting was "to run through the schematic design" of the FASS building with interested members of the university who had already been consulted on its design.

The building attempts to satisfy both those who wished to maintain the separate identities of the current departmental houses, and those who wish to see more cross-departmental communication.

It will incorporate six modules with internal staircases to mimic a self-contained house, each with department offices and classrooms. There will also be a large lounge and courtyard for general use.

The building will have 155 offices and 26 workstations for staff. There are 24 general use classrooms and six seminar rooms.

There will also be two mega-classrooms of 500 and 300 seats.

The 115 parking spaces lost when construction begins, will be replaced by a 110-space garage under the building.

Though the plans are not set in stone, the design shown last month is very close to what the building will look like when completed.

Bill Lord, director of the Physical Plant and Planning, is satisfied with the plans and the process thus far.

"We went through every department and there was a lot of

cynicism."

But Lord said that most people he has consulted now seem genuinely impressed with both the building, and how they were listened to during the design phase.

Though the building will cost \$4-million more than budgeted, there are no plans to either scale down its size or features.

Lord said that other donors are being talked to at this point. There will also be new revenues from the parking garage, renting the old houses, and renting the auditoriums for public functions.

1997 the year in review

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