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Universities sue CFS over Travel Cuts profits

DSU president Chiasson won't rule out Dalhousie student involvement in the suit

BY KAREN PARKER

The organization that runs Travel Cuts is being sued for millions of dollars by two universities who say it's collecting an unfair share of the company's profits.

The University of Alberta Student Union recently joined the University of Western Ontario Students' Council in a multi-million dollar lawsuit against a division of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS).

The Students' Council at the University of Western Ontario launched the suit last year. They accused the federation of misusing money from the Canadian Universities Travel Service Limited, also known as Travel Cuts.

But the federation says it

acquired ownership of Travel Cuts when the original owner, the Association of Student Councils-Canada (AOSC) disbanded in 1987.

Neither of the universities is a member of the Canadian Federation of Students, but both Western and Alberta were members of the AOSC. And they say that while the association gave the CFS permission to manage Travel Cuts, they did not surrender their ownership shares.

"Student dollars from my campus

are going to support the CFS when the students from my campus do not support the CFS," said University of Alberta student council president Sheamus Murphy.

They insist that it is unfair for the federation to profit from Travel

Cuts branches at non-CFS campuses, and that all schools previously incorporated in the AOSC should be entitled to a portion of money from Travel Cuts.

Dalhousie was also a member of the AOSC, along with Ryerson, York, Carleton, and the University of Toronto. And all of them could potentially join the lawsuit.

But Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) president Ted Chiasson says the DSU currently has no intentions to get involved.

"We haven't got any information from [Western] yet, so currently we have no plans to [join the suit]. Right now the information's a little sketchy,"

Chiasson said.

But he didn't rule out the idea entirely.

"The [DSU] wouldn't do anything that would jeopardize Travel Cuts. But the question is whether or not Travel Cuts is jeopardized the way it is now."

The University of Alberta and Western are working together to come up with a strategy for the case, and to provide more information to other schools that might be interested in joining them.

"We are trying to get our case together so other schools can join [the lawsuit]," said the University of Alberta's Sheamus Murphy during a visit to Western last month,

where he met with members of Western's student council to discuss the matter.

"We wouldn't be here if we didn't have a case."

Elizabeth Carlyle, the national chairperson for the CFS, says she doesn't want to go into detail about the case because it is currently before the courts.

But she did say the claims made by Western and Alberta are unfounded.

"It's a frivolous and vexatious case. It is not of much merit and is clearly an attempt to engage the Canadian Federation of Students in activities that are a distraction from our important work."



Jack wants that *Reservoir Dogs* poster 'cuz it looked so cool at John's, who got it 'cuz his girlfriend Jill had one. But Jill's feeling stale, and is getting that poster of a hunk holding a cute widdle baby. So, what will Jack and John buy when the poster flea market invades the SUB next year? See story on page 5.

From Brecht to Bogart

Minor in Film Studies gets senate approval

BY KARAN SHETTY

Bachelor of Arts students at Dalhousie have the chance to supplement their knowledge of Danté and Shakespeare with a little Scorsese and Bergman.

On Oct. 26 the Dalhousie Senate approved a program for a BA minor in film studies. The idea was originally put forth by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in late September.

The proposed minor will be a collaborative offering from all of Halifax's universities, including the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD).

According to Dalhousie History professor Stephen Brook, one of Dal's representatives on the minor's supervising committee, the idea has been in the works for three years.

"Part of what makes the program so appealing is that it allows staff from different universities to co-operate and collaborate... these days more and more people are taking courses between universities so I don't think that [the multi-institutional aspect] will be a difficulty at all."

Brook credits NSCAD professor Bruce Barber with the idea and says Halifax's burgeoning film industry is the catalyst behind the program's implementation.

As for starting a Film major any time soon, Brook says the idea isn't feasible given the administration's current financial

position.

"Starting a major program would definitely involve hiring new professors and the administration simply doesn't have the commitment to hiring new faculty. [A new Film major] would be very unlikely, I think, in the near future."

The minor's required courses include two half-classes in Film at Mount St. Vincent University and either two half-classes in Film History at NSCAD or one full-class Theatre credit from Dalhousie.

So far, the program is only open to Arts students in Advanced Major or Honours programmes.

The logistical problems associated with running a multi-institutional program include excessive enrollment and course fee discrepancies between schools.

As a result, required courses will have unlimited enrollment, and certain courses will be duplicated if they become really popular. Additionally, the universities have agreed to pay for any fee differences.

The possibility of offering a BSc with a minor in Film Studies was raised during the preliminary meeting and met with enthusiasm by committee members. Elizabeth Edwards, King's College's representative on the Film Minor Committee, told those present she would discuss the idea with fellow proposers.

Brian Christie, executive

continued on page 6

NDP calls for tuition freeze

Liberal premier MacLellan says increased funding puts onus on schools

BY CHRISTINE PRESTON

In the last provincial election both the Liberals and the NDP were flirting with the idea of promising tuition freezes — now the Liberal government says they can't and the opposition NDP says they should.

In response to a student protest on tuition fees two weeks ago, Education minister Robbie Harrison says his government will not be legislating a tuition freeze.

He says the Liberal party promised they would increase funding to post-secondary education and with this would expect universities to refrain from increasing their fees. And he says the government has delivered.

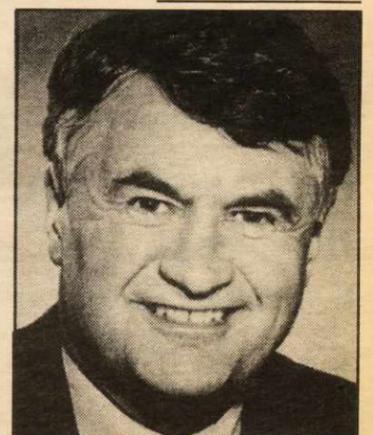
In the provincial legislature Liberal premier Russell MacLellan was quoted as saying "I cannot freeze tuition fees because only universities can freeze tuition fees. Over the next three years, we will be giving \$24-million to universities in Nova Scotia to improve their universities, to improve their technology and keep tuition fees down. That is a commitment we have made."

But New Democratic Party education critic Eileen O'Connell says it isn't enough.

"We think that an increase in funding should be tied to a tuition freeze," she said.

During the election the NDP promised they would institute a

tuition freeze once they were able to review the budget. And *continued on page 4*



Premier Russell MacLellan