

Eugene Davis – BOG Representative



by Gordon Loane
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Eugene Davis, a fourth-year Arts student, is running against two incumbents for two student seats on the university's Board of Governors.

What do you see as the issues in this campaign and what are your priorities for the next year? First, the Board of Governors sets the finances of the university and has overall responsibility for academic affairs. I think the level of tuition fees and other fees need to be closely examined. It's the major issue as far as students are concerned. Another issue is the quality of teaching. I've received my share of complaints about this at UNB. It has to be addressed. This is something that would make UNB stronger and more attractive to continuing and prospective students. I want a school that has good teaching. I came here to get information and to think for myself, so...

Do you support an 'open book' policy for UNB? What about 'open meetings' of the Board of Governors? An open book policy for UNB needs to be addressed. I wonder about the Right to Information Act here in New Brunswick, of which UNB is not subjected at the moment. This should probably be looked at, too. I'm the type of person who likes to tear down bureaucracy and make things simple. Supposedly they are operating UNB on our behalf, why not let us see the books? On the question of open meetings, the BOG has a job to do. If they open the books up, then they can have their meetings in private. I don't mind that. As long as the books are open. One way or the other, one has to go. I think people have a right to know what is going on and they should be able to see it.

Given the fact that student Governors will be ex-officio members of Council, what communication links do you intend to establish with the Council? Will this include written reports to the Council after every meeting of the BOG? That would be my main way of communicating, talking with Councilors and writing reports of what took place at the BOG meetings. If I am elected to the Board, I would have a better idea of what is going on and could tell Council myself. If I'm not elected, then the person who does is on the Board of Governors should come before Council I would think and let us know what is going on. That is why they are elected.

Do you support entrenching positions on the Joint Nominating Committee for President and Vice-President Search Committees? Any committee or organization on campus that affects the lives of students deserves to have a students' voice represented. It is common courtesy and respect and shows a genuine concern for the life and well being of students on campus. What are they here for? They are here to bridge the gap between teachers and students, to make student life as enjoyable and as enlightening an experience as possible.

A UNB faculty member has suggested that a method by which the university could contain expenditures would be a salary cap for faculty. Do you support this? I think it's something that has to be seriously considered. Everyone has to share in the pain of fiscal restraint, so why not? Students are making \$6,000 per year while professors are making 65 to 100 grand!

Given the recent drop in graduate student enrollment, how tuition-price sensitive do you think UNB should be in this area? We may not be able to do anything about the tuition itself right now, but what we can do is make money more accessible to graduate students. Scholarship money has to be increased. Yes, tuition fees for graduate students have to be price-sensitive but the fact of the matter is university costs are rising, the federal government is slashing transfer payments to the provinces for the Education Sector and we all have to bit the bullet a little bit. Most students know tuition is going up, but is it all the federal and provincial governments' fault or is some of it the function of the university and its administration? But more money has to be made available to students through loans, bursaries and scholarships.

Should the sale of university lands be used, in whole or in part, to increase the number and value of graduate assistantships? A portion of the sale could go to graduate assistantships, yes. A portion of it

could go to full-time undergraduates and part-time students to help with scholarships, loans or to reduce their fees. Perhaps we could use the money to buy better equipment. I've heard complaints about the equipment in the Gym. We need better computer equipment in the Arts library. Some take twenty minutes and you are lucky if you get into Windows. We could use the money to purchase more books at the library. I've read and heard concerns about that. There is a lot of room for improvement at UNB.

Do you support an investigation into the university's resident disciplinary code and the appeals procedure? First, I have to ask myself is there a problem with it? Are they being too heavy-handed? I understand at Neill House the problems arose as a result of a party that has been tradition for a long time. I am sure that the Disciplinary Committee knew that this was a tradition. However, I cannot condone certain activities or those that are going to harm others. Barring that, that's part of UNB tradition. I don't know just exactly what they did. If they did anything that was questionable legally or harmed other people or was degrading to UNB then that has to be addressed. Maybe [the Administration] are being a little heavy-handed here. Maybe they are being scapegoats here, I don't know. Maybe they are just trying to set an example with them. Maybe there is a better way to do these things. It's the end of the year anyway!

What efforts do you intend to make, at the BOG level, to facilitate and expedite the SUB Expansion project? Students have made a commitment here at UNB. Why can't we use some of the funds from the sale of properties to help fund SUB Expansion, especially if the STU students decide to opt-out? The SUB is a part of university property after all.

Will you ask the bog to set up a special committee to help students finance SUB Expansion? If it would help in expediting the SUB Expansion project. The Committee would need to have clear objectives and a commitment from the bog and from the Student Union. There is certainly a genuine interest by the Student Union for SUB Expansion. As I said before, there are those who don't seem to want it right now and maybe one of those reasons is because of its cost and the time it is going to take to get it built. But any outside financial help we can get for SUB Expansion would be a plus.

Do you feel the bog should actively encourage the participation of CAMPUS and the GSA in SUB Expansion? Absolutely. They have a stake in the SUB Expansion, too. They are going to be able to use the facility in whatever way they need to use it. The SUB Expansion is just not for full-time students. For every single student that comes to UNB, transfer students, international students, part-time and mature students, continuing education students, that's what it will be here for. Once you pay your student fees, you have a right to use these facilities.

Will you support a no-cuts policy regarding the university libraries? I definitely think we need more books. How can Canadian students, particularly UNB students, stay on the cutting edge of knowledge, of knowing what is going on out there, of knowing what is being said, if the university is going to cut back budgets and not make available all the information. Isn't it in UNB's best interests to have well informed students that have the most current, up-to-date information? It makes sense. It's just common sense. We, as students, paid a fee and we expect the best and most current information available to us. There are other areas that can be cut back and increase library funds.

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Given that the federal government will be cutting the Social Transfer payments to New Brunswick by \$100 million next year, what do you think the university tuition policy should be? Are ancillary fees an option? What about half SU fees for satellite campuses in Bathurst and Moncton? Tuition hikes are inevitable. It seems

there is a certain percentage increase each year. The government can make available loans and bursaries to help students cope. There are areas in the university's budget that can be cut or reduced and those funds can be re-allocated to benefit student tuition's or lowering tuition or providing better services for the tuition fees we are presently paying. As far as a half SU fee for the satellite campuses, that's fair given the fact that the students there do not have the same access to some of the services being provided from the student fee on the Fredericton campus. That's common sense and I don't think anyone would have a problem with that.

What do you believe the top priorities of UNB's new President should be after July 1? I think the university needs a strong leader. Someone who can bridge the gap between the university administration, the students, the Student Union and all the other organizations on campus. Our new President has quite a task ahead of her and by her resume seems well prepared to face the challenges at UNB. But I think leadership is one of the key things that needs to be addressed. There are many things that need attention like the quality of teaching. There are also the financial constraints the university is facing. But our new President needs to take UNB to that next level, to face the challenge of bring UNB up to the skill of a McGill or Dalhousie. I would like to see UNB become a better school in a lot of different ways.

To what degree should the university consider partnerships in student services with the student groups? Is there room for a coordination and a cooperation between the university and the Student Union? Absolutely. The Student Union is here to work and help students but we are also here to work with the administration and we should seize every opportunity to work with the administration in bridging the gap between us.

Do you support a merger between UNB's part-time student association (CAMPUS) and the full-time student association (UNB SU)? I don't really see this as essential. If it's a concern, I'm sure it can be addressed and talked about. If it's not a concern, then I don't see why we would have to do anything about that. CAMPUS are paying their fees, or the part-time students are, and they have every right to use our facilities in the SUB, ask the Student Union questions and get access to all the information from us they need. But to merge the two organizations together is not necessary unless there is a desire on both sides to do that.

What is your opinion of the current parking fees on campus? There is definitely room for parking fees to come down, especially with the sale of these properties. Fifty-five dollars is a preposterous amount of money to pay for the extremely limited parking space available on campus. The fee is extreme and there is lots of room to bring it down to even \$20 a year. We are students with a very low income and they are paying at every end for every single service on campus. Lowering the fee on this campus would make student life just a little bit more bearable.