

THE GAZETTE

Volume 130, Number 12.

Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Thursday, November 27, 1997

Dalhousie rises in annual Maclean's ranking

BY GINA STACK

Dalhousie moved up four places in this year's annual Maclean's University ranking, but university officials are not getting too excited about it.

In a press release to news media, Maclean's proclaimed this year's study "the definitive primer on these post-secondary institutions, revealing which schools are — or are not — making the grade."

Last year Dal placed eleventh and declared the ranking meaningless, and although Dal's better position in the ranking has made critics less harsh, the school does not place too much merit in the survey.

University president Tom Traves says Maclean's is trying to compare apples and oranges.

"I have problems with grouping a lot of components together that don't naturally sit together," said Traves about the ranking process.

Traves says that he is more interested in examining how Dalhousie does in each individual category.

"I'm very pleased when I look at the individual categories. What stands out is that in Atlantic Canada, Dalhousie has the highest entering grades, the highest graduation [completion] rate, the most scholarships and bursaries, the best record in library acquisitions and the most classes taught by tenured

faculty."

Dalhousie Student Union president Chris Adams was in agreement with Traves. Adams said that the ranking was interesting to look at, but it should "only be used for amusement".

Adams also had a problem with Maclean's methodology.

"It's very difficult because they intermingle qualitative and quantitative data. This makes it an interesting mismatch," he said.

At the same time, Adams said that he was happy to see Dalhousie move up in the rankings.

"I think it's great that Dal moves up, but I think it's better to look at each individual category so we can see areas where we are strong, and where we need to improve."

Adams added that it is interesting to look at different schools across the country, but he questions the ability of a bunch of people sitting in Toronto to do an accurate ranking

of universities.

This year all 42 English language and nine French language schools took part in the survey. Maclean's ranks Canadian universities in three categories: medical/doctoral (Dalhousie's category), comprehensive and primarily undergraduate.

The top three schools in Dal's category were Toronto, Queen's and McGill. In the comprehensive category, Simon Fraser, Guelph and Victoria were the best schools, while Mount Allison, Acadia and Trent were the top three undergraduate schools.

Maclean's took a number of factors into consideration in deciding which schools were the best. The magazine graded each university's student body, classes, faculty, finances and library, as well as its reputation with over 3,500 high school guidance

continued on page 4...



Nicotine, caffeine and books: university life at its finest. (Photo by Ryan Lash)

The shrinking building: new facility may be half the intended size

BY BEN MACLEAN

Plans for the new Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Building are far from set in stone.

After meeting with architects on October 3, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) building steering committee is now facing a difficult prospect — the new building may only be half as large as originally planned, its size dropping from 100,000 to 50,000 square feet.

Anne Higgins, a member of the steering committee, says the situation is a monetary one.

"What we're dealing with is the constraints of budgets."

With original fund-raising goals for the project set as high as \$16-million, commitments to date are stalled in the \$12-million range.

Higgins says there is still hope for more fund-raising, and because architects have yet to deliver the final verdict on design options, people should avoid jumping to conclusions.

"We're exploring different scenarios based on the certainty of \$12-million and the fund-raising that might give us more," she said. "I have no reason to think [the facility] would be cut in half. The steering committee is committed to realizing the whole project."

The building's contributors

include government, which has offered \$6-million, the university's Capital Fund Campaign, and the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) which pledged \$1-million in the fall of last year.

DSU president Chris Adams, when asked whether students were getting their money's worth by contributing to a building which has seemingly shrunk, defended the decision.

"Any way you look at it, one twelfth of the building is still being paid for by the student body. All of the money will be going to facilities that suit the needs of students."

In Adams's view, if the structure

continued on page 4...

Grad House remains open amidst resignations

BY LILLI JU

Two days after graduate students voted to keep the Grad House open, patrons of the popular establishment were surprised to see that its doors were closed on Thursday, November 20.

The day before, seven Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) councillors, including three executive members, resigned as a result of the Tuesday, November 18 general meeting. The Grad House resumed normal operation the next day. The remaining DAGS councillors are maintaining a positive outlook despite these resignations and the temporary closure.

The unexpected closure of the Grad House came about in a turn of events resulting from the general meeting held on Tuesday, November 18. At a DAGS council meeting held the next day, seven members submitted letters of resignation, including president Naomi Andjelic, v-p executive Chris Horvath and secretary Greg Moores.

"In light of the response of graduate students in attendance at the Annual General Meeting of DAGS, I do not feel that I can effectively, or in good conscience, implement the decision to 'Grow the Grad House'," wrote Andjelic

in her letter of resignation.

"I firmly believe that there are numerous difficulties facing this organization that would be ignored...A student political organization pursuing the course of running a business to the detriment of having an effective graduate voice on campus conflicts with my fundamental beliefs regarding the mandate of DAGS."

Upon hearing about the resignations, many graduate students were outraged. Ian Kelso is an MA student who voted to grow the Grad House. At Tuesday's meeting, he voiced concern that the same people who did a "piss-poor job of managing the Grad House" were to be put in charge of expanding it. Despite his doubts, Kelso said that he was shocked to hear the executive had resigned.

"They took the position on and if they don't want to do the job then we should get someone else in to do the job."

"You could tell that they just didn't want to do the work," he added, with regard to Tuesday's meeting.

MA student Steven Gibson was also upset by the actions of the executive. He questioned the purpose of Tuesday night's vote in light of the resignations.

"If [DAGS] are willing to

continued on page 3...

Pre-packaged ponderance

"We are most deeply asleep at the switch when we fancy we control any switches at all."
— Annie Dillard.

NATIONAL NEWS

Roughly a thousand protesters caused general mayhem during an honorary degree presentation at UofT for George Bush, page 5.

An Ontario religion teacher has begun fasting in an attempt to halt the provincial government's education bill, page 7.

FOCUS

After two years in office Dalhousie president Dr. Tom Traves finally finds some time to grant the Gazette an interview, page 11.

SPORTS

Bring it on: there are pros to fighting in CIAU hockey, page 17.

ARTS & CULTURE

The Barstool Prophets failed to convert the small crowd at the Grawood, page 13.

Two internationally famed musicians from Japan wove a tapestry of exotic and traditional tunes at St. Mary's University Art Gallery, page 15.

CD Reviews: Blue Rodeo, Ric Ocasek and more page 14.

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Maritime fishing practices may be threatening coral beds on the continental slope, page 12.

A plan to save the North Atlantic right whale needs to include the interests of fishing associations, or it may be doomed, page 12.