

What Student reps'll tell the president

by C. Ricketts

Student reps on Dalhousie's decision-making bodies met last Tuesday November 9 to put their heads together. The issue: financial constraint at Dalhousie and what to do about it.

The students sitting on the Senate, Board of Governors and faculty councils discussed trends they considered unacceptable in

university policy. These trends include how Dalhousie decides what courses will be cut, the erosion of part-time studies, and how departments are reacting to the terms of financial constraint, imposed last month by university president Andrew MacKay.

"University is supposed to educate the mind, not necessarily create technicians," said student

Senate rep Chris Hartt. He objected to the administration's emphasis on employability as a criterion to measure viability of courses. Hartt is worried about the recent trend to concentrate on computer science and other science courses as opposed to liberal arts courses.

"I think if that's the criterion, we'd set up a program for plumb-

ing," said Student Union Vice-President (Academic) Neil Erskine. He agreed emphasis on the vocational aspect of some courses was becoming the sole criterion for keeping them.

Erskine said the university should expand its part-time and extension studies to increase both contact with the public and awareness of the university's situation. Part-time studies are also increasingly important as more students must support themselves while attending university, Erskine said. He noted part-time courses were cut back this year.

The student reps agreed they would vote against tabling motions of student concern brought up in Senate and the Board, said Erskine. A motion objecting to the implementation of departmental fees was tabled at the last meeting of Senate. Erskine feels time is short and the

frequent tabling of motions defers decisions which must be made immediately. December 20 is the deadline for recommendations to the President's Office.

Hartt said student reps would confer in advance of meetings to take a common stand on issues.

An invitation to be extended to the executive of "A" and departmental "B" societies for a meeting on November 27. "We need their attitudes on the availability of classes, how enrolment is affecting the quality of courses and what the entrance standards are," said Erskine. He noted some department heads are not prioritizing requirements according to advice of MacKay and the Senate because they believe it would be bowing to the financial constraint's directives.

"Some people feel they are being put in an impossible position," said Erskine.

Graduate students face costs

by C. Ricketts

A new Administrative fee has hit Dalhousie's Graduate students where it hurts — right in the thesis.

As a result of restrictions on computer use introduced in October, graduate students will now have to pay to type their thesis on the Computer Centre's text processor.

Prior to the recommendations from the president's Computer Advisory Committee, grads used the facilities at a cost of about \$30 for paper, but no cost for computer time. Hiring a typist to prepare a thesis costs upwards of \$250, and may amount to nearly \$500 when rewrites are taken into account, says Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) president David Jolliffe.

Dal student Vice-President (Academic) Neil Erskine sits on the Computer Advisory Committee, and says grad students not only find the text processor more economical, but it produces better copy than typed pages. "There are nicer results in thesis presentation" he says.

Jolliffe says grads are upset because some departments have been encouraging use of the text processor, noting an instruction manual had been prepared by the computer centre in coordination with faculty. "It's not a cut and dry situation — there's been a turnabout in policy without any notice," he said.

According to university Vice-President (Academic and Research) G.A. Klassen, grad study regulations indicate grads are responsible for the costs of their thesis. He considers it an enormous subsidy if they are able to use text processors without charge. "In essence they're getting their thesis typed for free," he said.

Graduate Studies Dean K.T. Leffek agrees. He said "There is no free use of any equipment or papers, the costs must be paid." He said thesis costs could be included in fees, but this could be an unfair costs distribution, since some theses are longer than others. Leffek admitted individual faculty and students with research time might use the text processor, but thought it contravened the agreement by which time is allotted for research.

Klassen says limits were introduced to create a sense of responsibility. With current university financial difficulties the same unlimited service could not be made available on a limited resource. "The university does not have the resource it

once had" he said.

The argument to restrict grad usage is based on unpaid costs of computer time and slow central computer response time due to a backlog of information to be processed.

Although text processing uses minimal computer memory, material must be entered into memory at frequent intervals, causing a backlog because there are limited "ports" or paths through which information is accepted by the computer. Normal response time is nearly instantaneous, taking less than 0.5 seconds. According to Erskine, response time was up to 5-7 seconds over the summer, but has

1982. He claims they are high estimations, since the statistics were collected during three 6 hour periods during prime usage time and extrapolated to the 16 hour daily operating time.

Erskine agrees with Edgecombe's figures, but suggests they might be placed a little higher. He said the under-\$5000-users used 0.7% of the full amount of computer time.

As for the amount of money used by grads for text-processing exclusively Erskine thought computer time would cost "no more than \$100 per student." This amount was "ridiculously low" when compared to the "thousands of dollars of computer time allotted for research" he said.



Priest/Dal Photo

Computers in bondage; don't touch!

been reduced significantly since September with modifications to the computer.

DAGS rep on council Ken Edgecombe said 22.9% of computer processing time used by all grad students, including time used for extensive research projects. However, the computer users who used less than \$5000 worth of computer time constituted only 0.5% of total computer processing time. This figure includes grads with no research time who used the computer exclusively for text-processing.

Edgecombe draws these figures from statistics collected in April

Computer Centre Director Intab Ali also thought text-processing costs were "probably not more than \$100." He said a proposal would be taken to the president's Computer Advisory Committee on November 18 to allow grads use of the text-processor for a flat-rate fee of \$75.

A decision must still be reached on the charge to grads who had begun to text-process their thesis before implementation of the committee's regulations in October. Whatever the amount, it will be less than that needed to hire a typist.

Edgecombe and Jolliffe agree.

by Cathy McDonald

Skewed priorities and ignored Atlantic needs are major complaints two members of the Dalhousie student union executive have with the Canadian Federation of Students. Peter Rans and John Russell returned disillusioned after representing Dalhousie at the national CFS conference in Victoria, B.C., last week.

Russell, the Internal Vice President of Dal student council, said the service wing of CFS is more interested in programs for affluent students than in servicing basic everyday needs.

As a political aid, CFS didn't help Nova Scotia students when the province closed the Atlantic Institute of Education and imposed restrictions on student aid last summer, according to Peter Rans, DSU president. CFS staff should have been more efficient in helping students, Rans said.

As a political aid, CFS didn't help Nova Scotia students when the province closed the Atlantic Institute of Education and imposed restrictions on student aid last summer, according to Peter Rans, DSU President. CFS staff should have been more efficient in helping students' opposition, Rans said.

"Where was CFS when the Atlantic Institute of Education was closed? Why are we paying \$21,000 (in CFS fees) if we are fighting our own (political) battles and we can't get needed information in time from the (CFS) national office?" said Rans.

Members of the CFS national executive were not available for comment, as they are still involved in meetings in Victoria.

Nova Scotia institutions brought a number of concerns to the week-long conference, but most motions were "soundly defeated", according to delegates. Some of their attempts were to make the national executive, or "Central Committee", more accountable to the individual CFS members. The Central Committee's decision to hire a researcher instead of a translator, as was approved at the CFS conference last June in

Charlottetown, was "undemocratic", according to Rans. "It means you go to a conference, work for a week, the plenary passes a motion and the Central Committee can ignore it," said Rans. A motion made by Nova Scotia delegates to condemn the Central Committee for this action was defeated.

There is a "central schizophrenia" inherent in CFS's operation of both a political and a student service wing (the Canadian Federation of Students-Services), Rans said. While, as a lobby organization, CFS argues that students are financially disadvantaged and need lower tuition and better aid, its service wing promotes the student as a consumer. CFS-S describes students as "the largest untapped leisure class in the country" to get businesses to participate in the Youthsaver discount program, resulting in a conflicting message, according to Rans. Students who can fly to Europe and have money for stereos can take advantage of CUTS and the Youthsaver discount card, he added. "I could justify it (the profit made by CUTS) if the money was pushed back into other services," Russell said. In the 1981-82 year, CUTS made a gross profit of \$320,000.

Russell suggested having a "food consultant" on retainer to help student associations negotiate contracts with Beaver or Saga food caterers.

Russell is also interested in seeing institutions get help with managing yearbooks, radio stations, bureaucracy and student union staff, what he terms "perennial concerns".

To add sting to the criticism, Rans resents the fact Dalhousie pays a much larger fee per student than institutions which have only a "prospective member" status (the majority), but who have an equal vote. "Prospective members should have as much of a role as full members," he said, but wondered if Dalhousie's concerns were heeded less because it's "already money in the bank".