

Lack of classes makes registration process chaotic

by Geoff Stone

"Dalhousie will never be like it was five years ago."

If Gudrun Curri, the Registrar for Dalhousie, is correct, students should cross their fingers before registering for 1989-90.

Curri, who introduced the new mail-in registration process last year, says she is satisfied with the new process for registering.

But Curri is slow to comment on what has created problems for students studying English, Psychology, and other high-demand courses. Students have found classes they had wished to sign up for already filled by the time their registration material was mailed.

"We are not able to meet the demand," says Alan Kennedy, chair of the English department. Kennedy says students in every undergraduate year were affected by the faculty cuts in the department.

"The last couple of years, we have turned away 200 students

from our first-year class, but this is the first time we've turned away upper-level students," says Kennedy. He says it has been shown that students are moving toward humanities courses, yet there have been repeated cuts to the English department. Kennedy

says there were 27 English 1000 sections last year. Seven sections were to be cut, but the department was able to keep 26 sections for the coming year.

The underfunding and understaffing have made things worse this year. "The new registration

What did you think of the new process?

You don't have to go very far to find students who are confused and angry about the new registration procedure.

The Student Union is handing out comment forms to undergraduate students. Students can fill out the forms with problems they had registering, or positive feedback on improvements.

Students have so far faced everything from inconvenience to serious problems. Ben Maycock, a journalism student, found he had disappeared from the Dalhousie

computers. He had to register all over again.

Another student registered, but the Registrar's office did not return the form telling him what classes he was not able to get into. He later found out 20 to 30 other students had the same problem, and was told there were boxes of registration material that had never been mailed out still sitting in the registration offices. He preferred not to be named, saying "what do you think they could do to someone they really didn't like?"

system has proved to be chaotic," Kennedy says. He says students outside Halifax were disadvantaged by the registration procedure because they were not able to register in person.

But Curri has no answers for limited class spaces, faculty and staff at Dalhousie. "What I've seen here, I can't believe it," she says, referring to the cutbacks to the university.

Curri says students are going to continue facing problems getting the education they want. "There's no way the government will come back and give us the money."

Whether or not this means enrollment at Dalhousie will drop, Curri says the administration should be telling students about the problems before they come to Dalhousie. But she says it will be Dalhousie students telling their high school classmates, which will drive down enrollment.

"If a student tells classmates it (Dalhousie) was terrible, that's all," Curri says.

Kim Vance, vice-president academic for the student union, agrees. Vance says students had to mail two or three times to the registrar's office before they picked a section or class that wasn't full. Vance also says the registration information was unclear. Arts students who needed a science credit signed into Biology 1000, not knowing Biology 1984 was the class they should have taken.

Curri says the registration system will be changed next year to make it easier for students wanting a writing or science requirement.



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At the Killam Library access limited by hours

by Lorna Irons

The Killam Library administration's decision to cut back ten hours a week of services has made the library far less accessible to students, says Student Union President Juanita Montalvo.

Budget cuts have forced a reduction of services throughout the libraries, says University Librarian Dr. William Birdsall. He says the cut in hours was necessary to keep the circulation department running smoothly as there has also been a reduction in staff.

Montalvo acknowledges the lack of funds but is outraged at

the decision to deprive students of a fundamental part of their education. She says 11:00 p.m. closing is "the earliest acceptable time for the library to close", and says many night classes finish at 9:30 p.m., leaving students only a half hour to use the library under the new hours.

Montalvo says lack of access to the library will seriously affect the quality of education that students are receiving. She thinks money should have been cut elsewhere.

"How can you put a dollar value on one hour of library access? The quantified amount would be much greater than the

monetary savings in terms of the learning being done," says Montalvo.

Birdsall acknowledges that the hours are insufficient but says the cutbacks are necessary. "There is no doubt that the library hours are less than they should be. They are the most limited hours in the city compared to other universities, but there have been cutbacks all along the line."

Both Montalvo and Birdsall have said they are discussing the problem with university administration and trying to find an acceptable solution, but as yet nothing has been resolved.



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