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## Dalhousie to absorb TUNS in 1997

BY TIM COVERT

Students in computer science and engineering may soon have to put on their running shoes to get to class on time.

The Technical University of Nova Scotia (TUNS) will become a college of Dalhousie University in 1997 according to a proposed agreement between the two institutions, the details of which were released on Monday.

The new entity will contain the architecture, computer science, and engineering departments headed by a Principal who will also assume the role of Vice President at Dalhousie.

Students from both universities currently enrolled in these programs will complete their degrees according to the old system.

Part of the proposed agreement, which was passed by the TUNS senate and board of governors on Monday, is a pledge from the Nova Scotia government to give the new facility three million dollars, part of which will go towards a larger computer science (CS) department.

Dalhousie President Tom Traves met with the Dalhousie Senate and computer science students yesterday to answer questions about the merger.

"We want very much to build up the strength of the computer science programs that have been offered at the two different institutions, and will now be offered at one amalgamated institution. We will have one unit, one amalgamated faculty of computer science," he said.

Roughly the same number of people are employed by the CS departments at TUNS and Dal, and according to the proposal, staff from both schools will continue their employment with the merger.

Traves described the Dalhousie CS department as being small in comparison to other faculties at Dal, and compared with computer science programs in other universities.

"This creates the possibility in metro to have the largest CS department in the Maritimes, and to take the leadership role we desire and which, obviously, many people outside the university are clamouring for," he said.

The amalgamated department will be three times larger than the current department, with improved access to faculty and resources.

The amalgamated faculty will receive an additional one million dollars towards their operating budget.

Traves also mentioned how the merger will affect the engineering faculty at Dal, which had already been considering merging with TUNS.

"This will take a fair bit of time," he said, "but we would like to reform the engineering program and bring it in line with the

character of engineering programs virtually everywhere else [in Canada]."

This would involve changing the engineering program from its current five year program to four years, which would put it in line with other programs across the country.

Currently, engineering students enroll in a two year general program at Dalhousie, or another

associated university, and then continue with a three year program in a specific discipline at TUNS.

Steve Saunders, a representative of CS students at the meeting, said most students thought the merger would result in a more comprehensive department, one that would combine the theoretical expertise of the Dalhousie faculty with the practical approach

of the TUNS program.

Saunders said the main worry was that the new program would not be adequately thought out and that it would not live up to its potential. CS students, he added, were also worried about the geographic complications of the merger.

The location of part of the new faculty will be in a leased space in the Maritime Mall building.

Some students are concerned about the difficulties of making classes on Barrington Street from the main campus at Dal.

Marni Tuttle, a CS student, commented that the move to the mall "smacks of ACI and ITI and all those other technical institutes." She was worried that new students would not be favourable to the new program because of that image. Another student added that there would be significant psychological barriers for first year students going to school on a separate campus.

Traves noted that the Maritime Mall building is, for the most part, an office building and not a mall. He went on to say that the distance between campus and the new location downtown is comparable to those found between buildings on big-city campuses.

Although Traves admitted that the mall is a "less than desirable location," he said computer science is a discipline that should transcend geography.

The mall location for computer science, dubbed the "East Campus," will be leased on an annual basis and is only intended to be a short term solution.

Traves made it clear that details still need to be worked out.

"We want to think about the undergrad and graduate programs, and what we want to focus on when it comes to our hiring priorities," he said. "These are not matters that are settled at the level of the [current] amalgamation agreement between the two institutions. These are matters which are properly settled by people who work in the field."

Traves promised that a forum will be created for CS decision-making that will allow student and faculty participation in the process.



GAZETTE PHOTO BY DANIELLE BOUTREAU

Taking a break from the rigours of exam preparation, these frat folks settled in with some beers, smokes and liberating footwear.

## Tory leader Charest visits Dal

BY KRISTIN MCNEILL

Progressive Conservative Leader Jean Charest began work to renew the party's policies at the Dalhousie law school this past weekend.

"We have to rebuild our policy platform. There cannot be any shortcuts. That's why we're here this weekend. And we have to be able to put it in front of Canadians — a real platform. To make our platform clear cut is really important at this point," he said.

With the Progressive Conservative (PC) party at a political crossroads, their viability as a national party will be put to the test in the face of burgeoning extremist parties.

It is clear from the CBC's Cross Country Checkup on Sunday night that Charest is recognized by both supporters and opponents as the reason for the party's survival.

The leader's stop in Atlantic

Canada included a weekend in Halifax, where he hosted "Policy Choices for Canada" in the Weldon Law Building. Experts on various issues — among them four members of Dalhousie's academic community — helped moderate the sessions, which included issues ranging from national identity, taxation, the constitution, native policy, and health.

On Friday, Charest paid a visit to the Grad House, where he met with various students and faculty members. Upon discovering that several students around him were political science students, he shook their hands, saying, "You're right up my alley."

The leader repeated several times throughout the day that the Tory party is "the only national alternative to this Liberal government." His remarks were in effort to downplay the Liberals, who he thinks do not have an adequate challenger in the

House of Commons.

In particular, he spoke on the unity issue.

"I think my role is best played at the national politics [level] — rebuilding a national political party. And the answers in regards to Québec are going to have to come from Ottawa and outside of Québec...but if we're going to find the answers, it's important that there be leadership at the federal level," he said.

The party's strength is evident in how the Conservatives deal with the unity issue, said Charest.

His resistance to any notion of forming a coalition with the Reform Party was made clear during Law Hour and again at a press conference downtown.

"There is no battle for the right," he repeated.

At other moments during his noon hour speech, Charest displayed a sense of humour, and an

almost humbleness about his party's situation.

"We weren't really defeated in 1993," he said. "We were restructuring...it's all over the country, in boardrooms. It's everywhere, right? We're not firing anybody! We're downsizing, right?"

Amidst laughter, he continued, "In 1993, we entered this great move [downsizing], way ahead of everybody else!"

He acknowledged the party's present low profile.

"We're two members. Vote another one in, what would that change? That's a good question. But I think that would be helpful," he said in all seriousness. His tone soon changed when his audience, thinking he was joking, erupted into laughter. He said that the party represents nearly 50% of the Canadian population.

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