

### Is corporate funding for degree programs a trend at Dal?

BY KATIE TINKER

The Master's of Engineering in Internetworking is not the first privately funded postgraduate degree program that Dal has seen, and indications are it won't be the last.

And while some say the university has no choice but to pursue these kinds of partnerships, others wonder if private corporations should have any degree of control over education.

Linda Pannozzo, executive director of the Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group, says when a corporate sponsor is involved as directly as they are in the Internetworking program, these sponsors cannot help but influence the course of study.

"It's going to limit the freedom of academic exploration," she said.

"People are influenced by where their money comes from. They're not going to rock the boat — especially when they become dependant on that money."

The trailblazer for privately-funded programs at Dal was the Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Financial Services. Introduced in 1995 it has precisely the same set of justifications that generated the engineering program. It's one of a new breed of "full cost-recovery" programs designed to cost the university nothing to provide. High tuition fees and private funding partners allow the university to break even, or in some cases, make some money.

In the case of Financial Services, it was a matter of banks needing to establish partnerships with a university that would grant MBA's for their future managers.

"External businesses do approach universities," said Senate chair Dr. Colin Stuttard, "they want access to degree programs — so they need to hook up with degree-granting institutions."

Dalhousie president Tom Traves says specialized programs like Financial Services and Internetworking are a trend with only positive results for Dal.

On the day the Internetworking degree was approved, the senate minutes state that Traves "anticipated that the University would see more specialized programs in the future."

Dr. Warwick Kimmins, Dean of Science, confirms that Dalhousie is currently investigating degree partnerships with other private companies.

The Senate's Stuttard wouldn't say if the rise of privately-funded degree programs was a good thing, but did suggest that in the face of government cutbacks, it's likely to continue.

He says the university's only options are to either raise tuition fees for general programs, or put on specialized programs that meet the demands of the people willing to fund them.

"Until the government ups its funding, universities don't have much of a choice."

## Funding questions

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Dorter says corporate funding always comes with strings attached and that corporate sponsors aren't the heroes of education they're made out to be.

She says they want to buy the credibility associated with universities by having their name on the program and want control over course content.

"If the motives of the private companies were truly benevolent, they would have put their money into public funding, where it's most

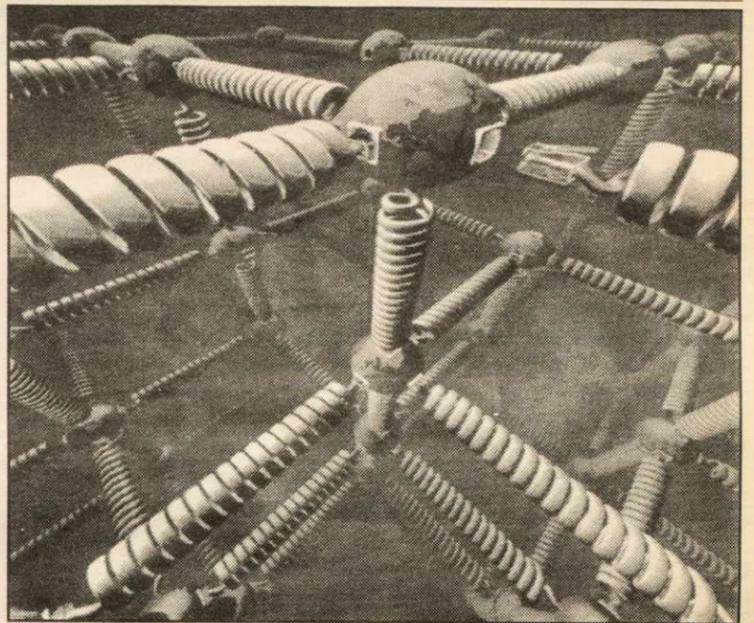
needed," she said. Instead, Dorter says industry is part of the problem.

"If huge corporations were paying the taxes they should be paying, there would be a heck of a lot more government money available to put into improving the quality of our education."

Internetworking director Bill Robertson disagrees.

"That theory relies on the government being responsible with the money they get, and I don't think they would be.

"It's a nice theory, but governments don't actually work like that."



## Would-be playboys face their critics

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a part of an environment where everyone is welcome and that he wanted to recreate that atmosphere here in Halifax to liven up the social scene.

"People have told me that we have the best parties in Halifax. Women were dressed up in shimmering dresses and there's no venue for women to express themselves with what they wear. I have women come up to me and say they want to pose for *Playboy* and I tell them I can point them in the right direction."

But Yip admits he hasn't told Mom and Dad about his *Playboy* involvement.

"When my parents find out they'll flip," he said.

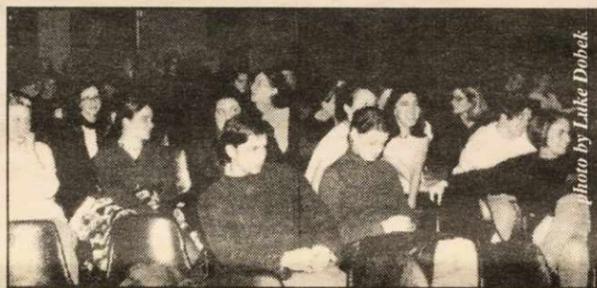
But what started as a forum had distinct tones of inquisition as a parade of people came to the mic challenging what the *Playboy* reps were doing and how they were

doing it.

Early in the question period one woman from the audience stood up and said "I don't feel welcome here." The audience erupted in applause for her statement.

The evening didn't get any better for Yip and Wildsmith.

"The only similarity between my body and those in *Playboy* is that we're both female. Shave my pubic hair, pump up my tits and stamp a bar code on my ass and I'm



Forum with overtones of inquisition, a largely unfriendly audience challenge the *Playboy* reps.

a *Playboy* model, too," said one woman in the audience.

A man from the audience also denounced the magazine billed as 'Entertainment for Men'.

"*Playboy* to me means masturbation and misogyny," he said.

Only one person stood up to

support what Yip, Wildsmith and by extension, *Playboy*, are doing.

"The [Playboy reps] don't condone misogyny," she said. "Men don't read *Playboy* and think



Yip and Wildsmith make a stand.

'hey, I'm suppressing women.'" Before the forum, Yip said he was looking forward to it because he saw it as a chance to get people to do some critical thinking. He wanted people to discuss freedom of speech and expression and "that's what *Playboy* is all about."

This summer, it looks like the commerce student will get his fill of free speech and expression doing his work term at the place where he thinks "everyone is welcome" — the New York offices of *Playboy*.

After the forum, Wildsmith, but call him "B.W." please because

it "goes with the flow", says he hopes discussions like this will get people to open their minds.

"I will continue to promote *Playboy* through positive events," he said. "I want to little by little get people to open up the magazine and their minds to the greater issue of *Playboy* and porn."

But Wildsmith admits he and Yip didn't do as well as they could have.

"I did not articulate well... I was nervous," he said. "I guess it's true when they say when you're speaking in front of an audience you should picture them naked."

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THE GAZETTE rm 312, SUB

### Master's Engineering in Internetworking

tuition: \$17,300  
length of program: 12 months  
started: Sept. 1997  
enrolment 1997: 16  
enrolment 1998: 26  
government funding: \$0

#### corporate sponsors:

Cisco Systems  
computer hardware and software manufacturer:

\$480,000 in equipment  
\$50,000 in student scholarships

Telecom Applications Research Alliance (TARA)  
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