

## Jeff Clark – BOG Representative



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Interview with Jeff Clark who is seeking re-election to a second year as a student representative on the UNB Board of Governors.

**What do you see as the issues in this campaign and what are your priorities for the next year?** I want to push to get a student appointed to the Budget Committee. This is a very important committee. Nowhere does it say that a student cannot be on the Budget Committee.

A second priority will be to make sure students have a voice on any future Nominating Committees for President and Vice Presidents.

I feel overall, that if re-elected, I'm not going to Board meetings with zero knowledge. I know what's going on and I'll be able to have a stronger voice for students.

A third priority is tuition fees. The Board of Governors sets this and has the final say.

While students have only three votes and are a small minority of the Board, the students' voice should definitely be heard and I want to make sure that everyone there knows how students feel.

It is also of the utmost importance that student representatives attend the May meeting of the Board of Governors above all other meetings in the entire year, because tuition is set for the upcoming year.

**Do you support an 'open book' policy for UNB? What about open meetings of the Board of Governors?**

I support an open book policy. It will take one act by the provincial government to open the books of the University and I think they should be. I feel there are many ways in which spending could be cut without raising tuition and an open book policy would help us identify this. On the issue of open meetings, it sort of happens now in that every Board meeting is half-open and half-closed. I'm not sure that everything that goes on in closed session needs to be going on in closed session, but some of it does. I don't think the situation as it is too bad, it might be over-exaggerated once in awhile. On the whole I don't think open meetings are a terrible idea, though.

**Given the fact that you will be ex-officio members of the Student Council, what communication links do you intend to establish with the Council?** Will this include written reports to the Council after every meeting of the Board of Governors?

I tried to do a good job this year of communicating to Council what we do at the Board, and to the students as well. We only meet every month and a half or so and we can only report on the half of the BOG meeting that is open. Both Kelly Lamrock and I have given a report to Council of what we have done at Board meetings and whether we have succeeded or not on various issues, so this is very important. Once we give a report to Councilors, they should take it further and ask students what they think about things that are going on at the Board level. I'm not sure written reports to Council are really required. Sometimes, not all that goes on at the Board concerns students directly. Some of it is indirect perhaps. For example, the sale of university lands is not directly related to students. I don't know who among students would be that interested. So I think a good oral report to Council on what goes on at the BOG meeting is sufficient.

**Do you support entrenching student positions on the Joint Nominating Committee for President and Vice Presidential Search Committees?** Students should definitely be on these and should have a vote. It is absolutely important. Without students, these people would not be where they are. I'll have a strong voice on this matter when it comes up at a future Board of Governors meeting.

**A UNB faculty member has suggested that a method by which the university could contain expenditures would be a salary cap for faculty. Do you support this?** I don't know. Salaries for professors are a touchy thing to talk about, but people should get paid what they deserve and if they are the best professors in this country, then they should be paid the most. And if they are not, then they should not. I don't know if a salary cap is a good way to go about things.

**Given the recent drop in graduate student enrollment, how tuition price sensitive do you think UNB should be in this area?** It was a very concerning number when I heard it at the

Senate meeting that graduate enrollment is down and even more concerning than that is the fact that the decrease was largest among international students. I feel a graduate program should cost more in fees than an undergraduate program because you are getting more. But we should be concerned as a university about the drop in numbers. I don't know whether an increase in graduate student tuition over the last few years is the major reason for the decline or not, but it could be. I certainly do not want to see a decrease in graduate enrollment when we have been one of the best universities in Canada in attracting International students.

**Should the sale of university lands be used, in whole or in part, to increase the number and value of graduate assistantships?** The sale of lands is a good way to free up some cash. This is a definite area where it could go. I'm not saying that it should all go there but it is a good way to attract graduate students with more and better assistantships. We want [UNB] to attract the best students, like we want to attract the best professors to teach students. Good students look good for the university, just as good professors do. So, if that money could be used to attract good students, I'm all for it definitely.

**Do you support an investigation into the University's Residence Disciplinary Code and the appeals procedure?** I definitely think that should be looked into. I think that there should be one committee that looks after every student at the university, not one that looks after residence students and one that looks after non-residence students. We should also examine why the rules and regulations are different. I think it's an issue that will be looked into if I do get re-elected. Kelly Lamrock and I have been very concerned about why these are two disciplinary boards. I also think the makeup of the Disciplinary Board is very important.

**What efforts do you intend to make, at the BOG level to facilitate and expedited the SUB expansion project?** We have to wait to see how much money we get from the Venture campaign and then that will keep direct the path to SUB Expansion. This is going to tell us where we need to go with the Board of Governors. We need to direct traffic to the Board of Governors, get them on side, and get the ball rolling.

**Will you ask the Board of Governors to set up a special committee to help students finance SUB Expansion?** It is an interesting idea that I would like to look into. I don't know that I have a definite answer but I find it most interesting and intriguing.

**Do you feel that the Board of Governors should actively encourage the participation of CAMPUS and the GSA in SUB Expansion?** This definitely should be supported by the Board of Governors. It's the Student Union Building we are talking about here, not the full-time undergraduate Student Union Building. So, every student organization should be encouraged to take part.

**Will you support a no-cuts policy regarding the University libraries?** Our libraries are essential for research work and it's important that we keep new materials coming. I would really hate to see spending cuts affect the libraries, of which there are five or six, and every one is absolutely vital. I would support this policy.

I want to push to get a student appointed to the Budget Committee... to make sure students have a voice on any future Nominating Committees for President and Vice Presidents.

**Given that the federal government will cut Canada Health and Social Transfer payments to New Brunswick by some 100 million next year, what do you think the University tuition policy should be? Are ancillary fees an option? What about half SU fees for satellite**

**campuses in Moncton and Bathurst?** The majority of the cut for post secondary education from the federal government to New Brunswick will fall on UNB if the McKenna government passes all or some of the action. So, it's a definite area where a tuition policy should be looked into. I don't know if it is possible to get the Board of Governors to adopt one, but one should be looked into. You just cannot keep increasing tuition every year. I'm not saying that tuition shouldn't increase, but if it increases every year at the same pace it's problematic.

I do not support additional ancillary fees. If they are introduced, and I hope not, I would want to see how and where they are going.

I support a half Student Union fee policy for nursing students in Moncton and Bathurst. These students are only getting some of the benefits from the current \$102 student fee that the Fredericton campus students are receiving.

**What do you believe are the top priorities for UNB's new President after July 1st?** I think Dr. Parr-Johnston should see how things go for awhile before making any big decisions. But obviously, the Venture Campaign money has to be put to use as soon as possible and she should be able to get things moving. For example, the construction of the Multi-media Centre on the Fredericton Campus and the Irving Building for Engineering and Science at UNBSJ should be one of her first goals as President.

**To what degree should the university consider partnerships in student services with student groups?** If we developed partnerships between the university and the Student Union on some student services, we could save money. In the Advocacy area for example, or in some other ways, the SU might be able to provide certain services for less cost than the university.

**Do you support a merger between UNB's part-time student association (CAMPUS) and the full-time student association (UNB SU)?** I don't think it would work. Part-time and full-time students have very different concerns. Part-time students have classes at night and have class availability concerns. These are far different concerns than regular, full-time students.

**What is your opinion of the current parking fees on campus?** If parking fees went to build more close parking or to pave more student parking lots then there would be less complaints about the annual \$55 yearly fee. Perhaps a new parking structure could be built but cost is a factor. The faculty have been complaining about student parking in their lots. But overall, the \$55 annual fee is not an unreasonable amount given the prices being demanded at other universities in Canada.