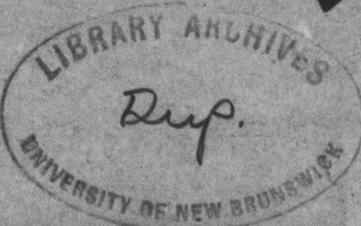


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Professor forgets final exam

By Richard Renaud

Every student's fantasy turned into thirty-one students' nightmare last December 18th, when Prof. Barry Davies of the English Department failed to show up for the final exam of English 2803, Literature of Atlantic Canada. Claiming he forgot that the exam was scheduled for that day, Davies was apparently otherwise occupied. The students waited for about an hour before leaving to officially register a complaint with the department. Once the complaint was in, Prof. Ploude (chair. of the dept.) and Dean of Arts Peter Kent were then involved. As it was time for Christmas vacation, the students were left to wonder their fate for several weeks.

In their complaint, the students mentioned that Davies had been absent from class seven and a half times and therefore they had missed about twenty-five percent of the class material. Also worth noting is that he had a graduate student correct their essays. His comments seemed to have been unreasonably sarcastic. Finally, Davies had not given out a syllabus for the course at the start of the term.

When they returned to classes on January 8th, the students learned that they were to sit the exam the following Saturday. The students felt that this was totally unfair as they had now been away from the course for a full month, and now they were expected to prepare for a final while preparing for the start of a new term. Feeling they had no alternative they approached Prof. Ploude, Dean Kent and Tom Austin (Dean of Students). A meeting was then called for with the entire class and these three administrators. The main concern at this meeting would be to decide how to assign marks for the course, the students were also concerned with the disciplinary action that should be taken against Prof. Davies.

Dean Kent was prepared to offer the class a few options in the determining of the final mark:

a) the final examination will be administered as planned on Saturday, January 13. Prof. Davies will set and mark the exam.

b) Students have the choice (i) of writing the final exam and of having their final mark determined by both their term work and the examination or (ii) of not writing the final exam and of having their final mark determined by their term work alone.

c) The term essays were originally marked by a graduate student marker and by Davies. Prof. Davies has offered to remark the second essay of any student who wishes. He considers it to be of much greater complexity, significance and importance in the weight assigned to it than the first.

d) Once he has remarked the essays, they will be given a random check by another member of the Department of English who will select five or six and review the marking. Should this faculty member concur with the marking standards employed, the marks will stand. Should they disagree, this faculty member and Davies will remark all the essays.

e) The grades assigned to the remarked essays will be used, along with the exam grades for those who wrote the exam, in the calculation of the student's final mark for the course.

These options were not agreeable to the students, who felt cheated by the administration. For a time it seemed that these would be the only options available. As the meeting progressed, there was much talk about what would happen to Davies and less talk about the final mark. A new option was then presented, to reevaluate the essay marks and then scale those marks so that no student would get lower than a C and no student could

get higher than an A. This seemed to be the only fair alternative to the class. Dean Kent, Prof. Ploude and Dean Austin were also very agreeable to this. Dean Kent then telephoned Prof. Davies who was easily convinced to adopt this option. The class was then informed that they would all pass.

The students in this class also had the chance to evaluate Prof. Davies and this evaluation will go into his permanent record, as will the

official complaint. This is the first time in Davies' twenty-plus year career that a complaint has been registered; however, last year an unofficial complaint was made that he had missed fifty percent of the classes for a course. Had that complaint been made official, the students of this current class would have been in a better bargaining position. Then again, if Prof. Davies had shown up for the exam there would have been no complaint. Dean Kent assures us that this

matter will be dealt with and will not be swept under the carpet.

The administration hopes that this is an isolated incident that will not be repeated by Davies or any other professor, but if it should happen they hope that students will not be afraid to approach them with their concerns. They welcome negative as well as positive feedback regarding all professors and courses.

Vice-President Activities to resign

By Pierre St. Amand

Stephane Comeau has announced that he will be resigning from the post of Vice President Activities. It is Comeau's leadership that has brought a very interesting and complete set of campus activities and events this year.

Gary Clarke, Vice President External, says that the Student Union is "upset that Stephane is resigning" and that the "resignation will undoubtedly hurt Campus Entertainment to some degree".

Clarke also added that the problem with student administration positions is that they are very time consuming and they prohibit the members from taking on any part-time job or gaining access to any other form of income. Clarke believes the lack of honorariums or recognition is a great "disincentive to taking on positions".

He also states that UNB has one of the lowest honorarium schedules in the country. He believes that if this continues we will start seeing only an elite group of students in the presidential positions. He adds that the idea of a student government is to represent a cross section of all students and not just those who can afford to take up the posts. Clarke believes that Comeau's success stems from a "very strong

commitment", an "eye for the right deals", and his creativity.

When asked why he was resigning, Comeau said that he had "personal reasons" for the action. To the success of this year's activities schedule, he says that we "tried to do our best" and that a number of people were very helpful on a regular basis. Comeau mentions Jamie Petrie for the movie series; Keith Dunphy for live entertainment; and Richard Renaud who handled the speaker series among many other contributors.

Comeau feels that Campus Entertainment will be able to keep up its pace in the future as

long as it is "well managed" and the need for a full time coordinator is imminent. He also mentioned that Campus Entertainment was significantly under budget this term. Comeau claims that he will make sure that the Winter Carnival goes on and that the movie series continues. There also are many other guest speakers planned for the rest of the term.

Comeau will be assisting the Board of Proctors for a Charity Ball in early February. He also adds that being VP Activities was a good experience and that he enjoyed his post.



Stephane Comeau

Photo by Al Johnstone

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