



A question of priorities?

By SHEENAGH MURPHY

Priorities of the University of New Brunswick appear to be in the administrative rather than academic areas.

In a report based on annual reports and financial statements prepared by Touche Ross & Co., a 28.6 percent budgetary increase for administration occurred between 1971 and 1976. On the other hand, there was only an 18.7 percent increase in academics. This increase dwindles to an approximate 7.8 percent when the fact is taken into consideration that during those years the inclusion of the Teachers College incurred a great deal of expenditure.

The Brunswickan contacted Vice President (Finance and Administration), James O'Sullivan, concerning the report and O'Sullivan said that it was neither the first nor the last word on the University Expenditure.

It can be deduced that only 7.8 percent was spent on improving on facilitating existing academic matters.

It should be mentioned here that the administrative increase also includes the transfer of item for vice-president administration from general expenditure to administrative expenditure.

The administrative budget includes allocations to the President, Vice-President, the Secretary, Assistant Vice-President, the Comptroller, Registrar, Personal Director, and the associated electric data processing -- in other words, the upper echelon of the University, those concerned with administering to underlings, rather than those directly concerned with teaching or aids to learning.

General expenditures involved a variety of miscellaneous expenses, including some academic items, but also sundries, re-locations expenses, etc.

Tuition fees for the University of New Brunswick rate among the highest in Canada, yet seem to be a high priority of the university. Between '71 to '76, fees increased an approximate 50 percent, whereas overall expenditure was over 80.

The holding of supplementary examinations is shown to be profitable by the report, while extension are shown a pronounced loss. Summer school and interim remain reasonably constant and thus are no cause for concern.

In considering the loss incurred with the continuance of extension, the other major enterprises of the university should be mentioned. They are, the residences, bookstore and the Aitken Centre. To date there is an approximate \$414,427 loss (as of 1976). In 1971 the bookstore was paying its way, the Aitken Centre was non-existent, and the residences were, as usual, suffering losses.



photo — brewer

This infer that not only are expenditures being inflated, but also the losses.

In other to perceive the budgeting increase properly, it is necessary to look at the various sections individually.

Our prime concern here is the expenditure entailed by the academic schools, departments and institutions.

Expenditure of Academic Schools, Departments and Institutes

Percentage increase 1971-1976

Departments with less than 60 percent increase

Bioengineering	47.0%
Graduate Studies	14.5%
Summer School	-22.0%
Surveying Engineering	53.0%

Departments with 60-80 percent increase

Chemistry	62.5%
English	73.0%

Extension Forestry	70.0%
Geology	73.0%
German	75.5%
Law	62.0%
Library	67.0%
Political Science	79.9%
Romance Languages	71.5%

Departments with 80-100 percent increase

Chemical Engineering	96.0%
Civil Engineering	97.0%
Classics and Ancient History	82.5%

Departments with 100-120 percent increase

Economics	86.0%
Forestry	80.0%
History	94.0%
Mathematics	89.0%
Mechanical Engineering	86.0%
Philosophy	82.0%
Physics	92.0%

Biology	116.0%
Electrical Engineering	104.0%
School of Nursing	115.0%

Departments with 120 plus percent increase

Art Centre	123%
Audio Visual Services	424%
Business Administration	203%
Education	672%
Extension services	168%
Intersession	144%
Psychology	146%
Sociology & Anthropology	174%
Physical Education	479%

The incorporation of the Teachers College swells this figure unreasonably.

From the above table several salient features can be deduced. Primarily, those departments with less than a 60% increase should be studied.

As Bioengineering is a research institute which attracts outside funding, the low priority is understandable. Summer school too, has shown itself capable of maintaining a steady if not exorbitant profit. Surveying engineering is close enough to 60% not to warrant much study.

On the other hand, the School of Graduate Studies shows an increase of only 14.5%. This

would indicate that it lies at the bottom of the list of the university's priorities.

It is questionable whether the school should be of less import than that of Audio-Visual Services, a section which boasts increases in the last five years amounting to a 424 percentage.

Those departments whose percentage increase lies between 60-120% need not be closely examined, in that the expenditure seems warranted.

However, a close look must be taken at those departments with increases above 120%. It must be assumed that the university places them in a higher priority bracket.

The large increase in the Education budget can be attributed in part to the inclusion of the Teachers College.

Teachers College was originally an independent institution and with their amalgamation with UNB allowances should be made for the inflated figures.

The Audio-visual, on the other hand, even with the inclusion of the Language Lab Show, shows a high increase, placing it above several other departments. Those other departments would realistically be considered more pertinent to students and student-related matters.

When compared to other items of expenditure of similar size in 1971, then it seems the University considers it more important than Classics, Extension Forestry and Philosophy.

An area which deserves marked attention is the 168% increase in budget for Extension. Extension has consistently lost money, yet the University continues to increase its budget, above and beyond, logically, more deserving departments.

Another point brought up on the report concerned a fund called the Academic Development Fund. In 1975 the item appears under the label of "special travel". It appears under that heading right back to 1973, where it first emerges. The fund was originally designed to accommodate those individuals who deliver more than one paper per annum, in order to encourage their endeavors.

In 1975, the expense allocated to the fund was \$51,864, in 1976 \$19,422. Sometime during that year, the priority for this purely academic matter took a drastic cut.

Several conclusions can be reached from the report. Primarily it appears the University considers administration rather than academic matters of prime importance.

Admittedly, the vast discrepancies in the actual academic expenditure deserves consideration. However, even with the large increases in various departments, whose right to that priority is questionable, the academic expenditure remains considerably below that of the administrative.