

'Literary Crisis' a reality today

St. Thomas University's Academic Senate has given unanimous approval to a plan aimed at correcting problems associated with language competency among students attending the four year liberal arts school. The plan was presented to the March 14 meeting of Senate. The target date for implementation is September, 1979.

"Literacy Crisis" is a topic which has drawn considerable public attention recently. Studies conducted across Canada and the United States indicate that large numbers of students enter our universities each year without some very basic skills in the English language. A well known study on the subject cites the example of a highly respected Canadian university where 34 percent of the freshman class is either "semi-literate" or "illiterate". The reasons for the crisis are, to date, at least, poorly defined. The question which has faced many universities, including

St. Thomas, is what can be done about it.

St. Thomas University began to investigate seriously the problem in October, 1976, when the University's Academic Senate created the Language Competence Committee. Earlier this week, after months of research, Committee Chairperson, Dr. Russell Hunt of STU's English Department, presented the Committee's report to Senate. The findings were not surprising; St. Thomas University, like other universities across North America, is faced with a sizeable number of students who exhibit literacy problems. The Committee report did far more than merely identify the problem, however. It recommended a major change in the University's curriculum designed to assist students who have literacy problems and to bring the literacy question to the attention of all members of the St. Thomas community.

Under the plan faculty members from each University department would devote part of their time to teaching an introductory writing course which would be required of freshmen who need to improve their writing skills. It also provides that a full time co-ordinator be hired to co-ordinate the course and oversee remedial programs and testing. The Committee suggested that the University explore the possibility of outside funding for the program and that an ad hoc committee be struck to establish liaison with universities and with the provincial Department of Education on matters of language competence.

Commenting on the sweeping nature of the program, Dr. Hunt noted that, "At all universities in Canada, there is a feeling that we must find ways of making this everybody's concern. What we're doing at St. Thomas is providing a structure in which that can happen."

University financing needs help

By TOM BENJAMIN
(The Sun)

Financing of higher education was the main concern of both administrators and students who addressed a recent meeting of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.

St. Thomas University president Father George Martin said his institution "can tolerate only a very modest degree of further restraint".

The university's problems are complicated by the present economic situation which forces students to seek education in programs with high job preparation levels.

Students, he said, are forced to leave the university to take such courses because of STU's limited curriculum.

UNB president John Anderson called for a review of university

financing.

Much of the financing is now tied to enrollment levels, and projections indicate a major decline in students will hit the universities in the 1980s.

UNB student representative council vice president Susan Shalala questioned the commission members on several points relating to university financing, especially as it affects students.

She said student's tuition and residence fees "have reached a level that can't go any higher" without preventing some students from attending because of financial considerations.

MPHEC chairperson Dr. Catherine Wallace asked Shalala if university financing "can be taken as a package out of the economy."

The proportion that students pay of the cost of education has dropped from 35 to 14 per cent, said Wallace.

Shalala responded that education shouldn't be a privilege, but a right.

"The government is heading toward a state of affairs where the government is paying more, and students less, in percentage figures," she said, "but students are paying as much as they possibly can."

Commission member James O'Sullivan (also UNB's vice president of finance) cited the effect of the baby boom that passed through the educational system and asked if "you put money in (the educational system) to handle more people, should it stay there when they're gone?"

Shalala also said some of the students she represents as chairperson of the New Brunswick Students Coalition felt that francophones were insufficiently represented on the commission.

She also spoke against implementation of differential tuition fees for foreign students, a measure recently taken in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec.

Declining enrollment is not a problem at the Maritime Forest Rangers school, however, and school officials described how the institution is unable to meet industry's demands for trained forest technicians.

School director H.W. Blenis said the school had an inadequate physical plant. The most serious shortfall was in sawmill training, an area of education supported by all sawmill managements the school contacted.

With the very high placement rate for graduates "we don't have a problem with jobs", but with an inadequate student capacity, he said.

He described the importance placed on the role of technicians in a province where a district forester and assistant can be responsible for a million acres.

Reforestation programs point out the need for trained technicians, he said. In 1972, 1.5 million trees were planted; in 1977 the figure was 18 million. Plans are for 23 million trees in 1978, and 30 million in 1979, a level that would be sustained for a decade before review.

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by Brenda Johnston

SUMMER IS COMING; SPRING IS HERE

believe me. Having just purchased new white puddle boots, I am quite distraught to find little white fluffies racing down to cover the welcome, though perhaps not colourful, patches of grey sidewalk. In an effort to dispose of my fit of depression I shall attempt to ignore the weather and pretend that I am leaving for Fort Lauderdale tomorrow. Actually I am not leaving until April 29 but that is irrelevant. By the way there are approximately ten seats remaining so it is not too late to book. (Two weeks Fort Lauderdale from Fredericton \$339.00)

SUMMER JOBS is a topic on most people's minds at this time of year and though it might be a little late I do have two books supplied to me by the SRC which have some helpful information on jobs overseas. These are "The Directory of Jobs and Careers Abroad" and "The Directory of Overseas Summer Jobs". I can loan them to you on a 24 hour basis so if you would like to know more about jobs overseas just drop in. There is information on waitress work, hotel jobs, Club Med hosts, and Red Cross as well as several other opportunities. It is not too early to start planning for next year.

Last week I discussed the CHARTER CLASS FARES to London so this week I will tell you of the CHARTER CLASS FARES that exist in Canada. Due to the devaluation of the Canadian dollar some travellers are considering a Canadian holiday this summer. If you plan on travelling out west and will be staying at least seven days and no more than thirty and if you book at least 45 days in advance you can save a substantial amount of money. Example Regular Return Fares Special Charter Class Fare Fredericton to

Calgary \$402.00	\$232.00
Edmonton \$402.00	232.00
Vancouver \$464.00	263.00
Victoria \$470.00	266.00

Please note that each of these fares go up April 1 but you do not have to pay the increase if you purchase your ticket before April 1. This is a new rule that was NOT in effect before. To avoid disappointment always book these special fares at least two months in advance; only a certain number of seats are allotted on each flight for special fare paying passengers and sometimes that means only ten, so book early.

A special reminder to all you lucky people booked to go to Fort Lauderdale April 29. Final payment is due by April 1, which really means March 31 due to the fact that April 1 is Saturday. Due to the increase in airfares you would have to pay the increase if you do not pay until after April 1. See me if you have any questions.

Anderson comments

Continued from page 3

Despite this fact, Anderson said that he felt that "the tap for '77-'78 is just about shut off, and it's nearly time to start fighting for '78-'79." He also pointed out that the increase given to UNB was larger than that given to most provincial government departments and larger than other universities in central and western Canada. This is one of the reasons he feels that UNB prices will be competitive.

Also, UNB Saint John will not be able to offer anything cheaper, as tuition fees are the same between the two campuses of the university. There is a formula which has been in existence for two years, that was recommended by the Deutsch committee. This formula is used to divide the income between the two campuses. How the formula does this, and in what quantities, Dr. Anderson did not say.

Dr. Anderson claimed that the staff/faculty ratio was at 11:1 at present. Dr. Anderson elaborated on this, saying that there were now 11 faculty members for every one support staff (administrators) personnel. He also explained that using the new zero based budgeting system, priorities had been assigned to all areas of the support services (all the non-academic functions i.e. counselling administration itself, etc.) and when the size of the non space and A.N.R. grant is known, it will be decided what support services will be cut back on.

President Anderson also explained why he felt it was impossible to have another meeting of the Board of Governors before May 17th. He explained that the Governors are not paid, and some would have to travel a considerable distance at their own expense.

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By ROGGER DO
The Argon
Mt. Allison

The New Brunswick Students (N.B.C.S.) is March 30 as an information for students. On the most Nova Scotian in be holding a day of p campuses will be l ings with the student them what the Council means to them. At the recent N.B.

It's not like the 19 but some of the tacti

Several universiti ponded to student r some cases student administrative office Thursday a day people can attend tion in Toronto.

At last count thre — Trent, Carleton, cancelled classes of that students would the rally against fu and inequities in th aid plan.

Occupations of offices had been s Carleton and McMe last week. The d were all peaceful a Carleton have resul decision to cancel day.

A McMaster stu Ontario last w thought there w students involved

Continued from p

Each million tre 1,000 acres of ref costs \$100,000.

If the planting is properly, there is loss of the \$100,000 the second part of the 40,000 cords would have be harvest in 40 year

But at present school is only ass crisis alleviation" for trained forest

When questione of francophones, h for the establi "parallel program Bathurst.

Universite de Jean Cadieux com special nature campuses of his in the extra costs in not taken into c university's upon

The universi for professors v outside the Mari and should be al candidates more

Tuition fees fac students should said, and the education costs students should decrease.

He also questio of francophone re the commission, legislation perm to be represente

Two francopho representatives co establishment of