

NEWS

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Funding Formula Free For all

By NATALIE FOLSTER

Students and faculty in Saint John are voicing their anger over the method used to divide government funds between the two campuses of the University of New Brunswick.

Their target is a new report prepared by the ad hoc committee of the Board of Governors on the Inter-Campus Allocation of Provincial Government Operating Grants. The committee is comprised of UNB President, Dr. James Downey; Ed Graham, President of Brunco Inc. of Saint John; and A. J. O'Connor, General Manager of the NB Electric Power Commission. It has recommended the continuation of a policy of allocation, adopted by the Board in 1985, which will cut a total of 3.2 million dollars from UNBSJ's operating budget by 1991.

Under this system, 25 percent of the available funds are allotted on the basis of enrolment figures. The remaining 75 percent is a base grant, determined chiefly by historical funding patterns. Previous to 1985, money was awarded strictly on

the basis of enrolment. This scheme allowed the rapidly expanding Saint John campus to receive corresponding increases in funding. Now, according to student union president Tony Logan, UNBSJ is "being penalized for growing".

He foresees the university ultimately having to take one or more of the following steps as a consequence of the continued use of this formula:

- cut back academic programmes
- limit enrolment
- reduce non-academic services.

"\$3 Million is nothing to UNBF"

Gogan fears that the final result will be that fewer people will have an opportunity to get an education. Most UNBSJ students are from the Saint John area. Over half are part-time, and many work full-time and/or support a family. They cannot afford to go elsewhere.

Dr. Downey admits that it is possible that programs and enrolment may have to be

limited in Saint John in the future, but notes that this has already happened in Fredericton. Enrolment in Engineering, Law, Education, and Nursing has been restricted due to insufficient funding. He defends the committee's position as the only fair means to distribute severely

Separate Grants

limited resources between the two campuses. He claims that for seven years (previous to 1985), the method used by the Board of Governors favoured Saint John. It amounted to a transfer of funds from Fredericton to Saint John - a subsidy.

Dr. Downey says that the consequences of reinstating the enrolment based formula that the students desire would provide the university with no protection against predicted decline in enrolments (and subsequent drops in funding). In addition, the report cites intense inter-university competition for students and a drop in educational standards in the region as a likely result of such a move.

"The real problem is not with

the way of allocation, but with the amount we have to allocate." Until such time as the Maritime Higher Education Commission agrees to UNB's request for separate grants for its two campuses, the committee recommends that the MHEC formula be employed by the Board of Governors in divvying up their money.

In the meantime, students and faculty at UNBSJ must

come to terms with a substantial budget cut. Gogan sums up the situation by saying, "The 3.2 million that we are losing will go to Fredericton. We have an annual grant of 6 million from the government. Fredericton gets 48 million. 3 million is nothing to UNB Fredericton. Losing it will be catastrophic to UNBSJ."

The Board of Governors will reach a decision on the matter when they meet January 18.

What a Pain

Route 11S Southwood Park (via Windsor, Prospect & Skyline Acres)
Carleton Place > Sunset Drive > Main St > Kings Place > Windsor > Malls > Skyline Acres > Southwood Park

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