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Students give mixed reaction to tuition hikes

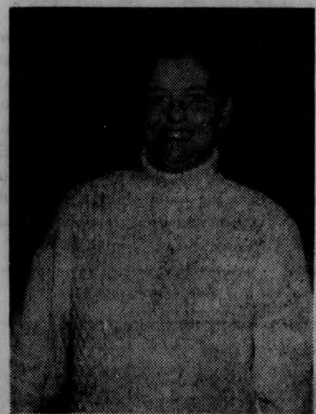
GORDAN LOANE

THE BRUNSWICKAN

A snapshot of student opinions taken by *The Brunswickan* this week clearly shows a mixed reaction to a proposed plan aimed at switching tuition fees to a per course basis.

Opinion varies depending on what faculty a student is registered in and how they perceive the new system affecting them.

Tara MacIntosh represents Business students on the UNB Student Council.



Arts Representative Sarah Mullaly said that an increase in tuition is justified if it means maintaining quality programs. Arts students would not be as hard hit as science or nursing students, if proposed changes go through.

DREW GILBERT PHOTO

She sees Business students as worse off than Arts or Law students and much better off than students in Science, Computer Science and Engineering.

MacIntosh said she could accept the new per course fee system if it could cut down on the general tuition fee increases that UNB students are hit with year after year.

"If the new system would be something constant, it would be better than not knowing from year to year just how much tuition is going to go up."

Rodney Chiasson, Computer Science Representative on Council, said he fears his faculty will start to lose students if fees go up by some \$800-\$1000 per year.

When word of this increase gets around he feels it will automatically promote private computer institutes around the province that can provide

computer training cheaper and in a shorter period of time.

Chiasson finds it interesting that politicians and others promote the computer field as one in which you can gain employment, where you can live in New Brunswick, where you can develop a lifestyle.

"The university is saying just the opposite," he said. "Yes we know all that, now we're going to take full advantage of that and make more money off that."

He feels university officials know that students are going to enroll, perhaps in Computer Science in the future. So he does not see the latest move to a per course fee system where Computer Science Students will pay more as unintentional.

"Most students feel that it is unfair to pay more for what some would see as a marketable degree," said Chiasson.

He also feels that the university will raise work-term fees for Computer Science students as well, a situation which has them wondering how things are going to affect them.

At some point in the game, Chiasson said if the new system is adopted he would want to see more money spent in his faculty for the higher fees.

"I would want to see them give it back to me in the number of computers available, in the number of upgrades, in replacing outdated systems and in the hiring of more professors," he said.

Blair Saulnier, a fifth year Forestry student and a SU Councilor well known for speaking his mind. Saulnier is graduating from UNB in the Spring but said if he were returning to the Forestry faculty next year he would be kind of "pissed" about the new per course fee system.

"Forestry, Engineering and Science students are going to be getting a kick in the ass, that's for sure."

Saulnier feels the whole system of credit hours for courses needs to be changed.

"We need to move to half credits for one semester and one credit for a full year course like St. Mary's and Dalhousie."

"That is the only way I can see them getting around it fairly," said Saulnier. The Forestry representative said a decision not to appoint a student to the Task Force on Tuition was "pretty shitty."

Saulnier is the student representative

on the Dean of Forestry Search Committee and said it has been a positive experience. "I think it is working out really well and students are getting a voice. I know I am voicing a lot of people's opinions in Forestry on the Search Committee," he said.

Sarah Mullaly, Arts Representative on the Student Council, has a decidedly different take on the proposed tuition fee system. She is in agreement with changing to a per course fee system because in some faculties more courses are required.

"It is also more expensive in some programs to maintain labs for example," she said, citing biology students as an

example.

Mullaly said students are saying things like, "Why should people who are taking courses where they don't have labs have the same tuition as people who are using all of this other stuff?"

Mullaly said she agrees with tuition going up from year to year based on the fact that she would rather have to pay more than allow the quality of programs to decrease.

"I am not saying that I am for a jump to \$10,000 a year in tuition or anything like that."

For Cathy Clark, Law representative on Student Council, the new per course

fee system will not have a great effect on her faculty.

"When we have such a set schedule, a set curriculum where we have ten courses a year, five courses a term it is just going to be your basic tuition which looks like it will go up \$100 to a 'base' of \$2940."

"It will not affect us the way it would affect Science and Engineering students," she said.

Clark does not feel that differential fees are fair, however.

"Law students think that tuition fees should be standard across the Board no matter which degree a student decides to take at university," she said.



AARON MACEachern PHOTO

Changing laws could mean rising prices

MARY ROGAL-BLACK

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Students and professors could experience more difficulty getting textbooks next year if the proposed legislation is approved.

Amendments to Bill C-32, the Copyright Act, seek to restrict Canadian booksellers from buying books from American distributors. UNB Bookstore Manager, Doug McConnell, is concerned that this will directly affect students.

"In terms of providing books with timeliness, this is going to be one hell of

a mess," said McConnell, a former Chair of the Canadian Booksellers Association. At present, McConnell said, if he receives poor service from a Canadian distributor, or if the distributor doesn't have the books he needs, he can place an order with an American distributor to get the books faster. The proposed legislation could change all of that.

According to amendments read in Parliament, new laws would restrict the importation of books when a Canadian distributor has the Canadian rights to the title. Distributors would be regulated in terms of performance and quality of service, but McConnell said this will

just slow down the process. With new legislation, if he is dissatisfied with the service of a Canadian distributor, McConnell would have to plead his case before a committee and request permission to order from an American distributor. He said this ignores the rights of the consumer.

"What I feel is being left to the wayside is good service to the end user and that's my beef," he said. "If they can't give me books, then I should be entitled to go where I can get them because you, as a student, are demanding them from me."

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Lamrock urges concerned students to protest changes to tuition

GORDAN LOANE

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If UNB students are genuinely worried about the possibility of tuition fee increases that could reach thirty-five percent then they are going to have to mobilize, says Kelly Lamrock, a third year Law student and Vice President Policy of the New Brunswick Student Alliance.

"We should be talking about getting a letter writing campaign going to the President Dr. Elizabeth Parr-Johnston and the Chair of the University's Board of Governors Richard Tingley," said Lamrock in an interview with the Brunswickan this week.

"We should be talking about

collecting stories from students. I notice *The Brunswickan* has invited people to write in on this and that is a good idea," he said.

Lamrock thinks Board of Governors student representatives Jeff Clark and Eugene Davis should be prepared to read these stories about how real student lives will be affected and present them at an upcoming meeting of the Board.

Lamrock also said Clark and Davis should prepare an immediate motion calling for the Board of Governors to distance itself from the Task Force Report on Tuition and Other Student Fee Policies.

"All of these things can happen and if they do, this cash grab can be stopped," said Lamrock.

"If people don't get involved it is pretty clear that the recommendations of the Task Force will go ahead."

Lamrock points to the example of how Nursing students got the Board of Governors to back down last Spring on \$500 in extra tuition fees.

"The Nursing students were extremely vocal, they organized, they met with university officials and got the media on their side."

"At the same time the student representatives on the Board of Governors had a motion prepared to force this issue," said Lamrock.

"As often happens when the student representatives on the Board are active and student representatives in general are active the Board will back down."

Lamrock calls the Task Force report nothing more than a lofty rationale for what is really just a cash grab from students, despite denials from university officials.

"It's the biggest tuition hike in terms of dollars that has been proposed in a number of years at UNB," he emphasized.

"It is really hard to believe that there is some loftier principle than that."

Lamrock also thinks the university needs to address another issue as well and reiterated a call made last week by UNB Student Union Vice-President Anthony Knight asking for a little more light to be cast on finances.

"The university time and time again

has resisted letting anybody but a few people behind a closed door take an honest look at the financial situation and talk about who should be sharing in it."

Lamrock believes it is high time to put all the stakeholders, including students, at one table and talk about how budget cuts and finances are going to be dealt with.

Lamrock has a further concern about the question of accessibility and a students ability to pay if tuition fees rise substantially next year.

He notes that only one paragraph in the 75 page Task Force Report on Tuition and Other Student Fee Policies seems to be devoted to the issue.

"If the members of the Task Force had read the last report of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) they would have seen that there has been a decrease in the proportion of students from working class and middle class families going to university," he said. Lamrock also said the report is silent on debt load projections as well.

"The Task Force report does not even look at that," Lamrock said. He does praise the Task Force for looking at the whole issue of work-study grants.

While he believes the university should look at them in the future, he cautions work-study grants should not be seen as a replacement for a good student aid program.

Admin broke promise to students

GORDAN LOANE

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Former UNB Student Union President and Board of Governors representative Kelly Lamrock has ripped a strip off university officials for not appointing a student to the Task Force on Tuition and Other Student Fee Policies.

"When the Task Force was originally discussed, a promise was made to the Board of Governors by the administration that students would be included," said Lamrock.

He also said that comments made last week by Task Force Chair Dr. John Morris are particularly galling. "He has the approach that well there was not a student on the Task Force because the Task Force met and decided there would not be one."

"Who struck the Task Force without a student in the first place?" asked Lamrock. "Why is it that we appoint the adult members of a Task Force and then they decide if, in their wisdom and generosity, they are going to appoint a student?"

"Apparently that is how things get done at UNB," Lamrock said. "That is not in keeping with the approach that the UNB administration has made in the past with the glare of media lights upon them about keeping students informed and included," Lamrock continued.

"Apparently, the promises from the UNB administration have a shelf life of a few months or a shelf life of as long as the TV camera lights are on!" he said.

Lamrock recalled last year how administration officials later apologized for not appointing a student to UNB's Presidential Search Committee. "Administrators were saying it was a mistake and it would not happen again," Lamrock recalled.

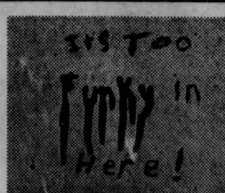
"Richard Tingley now Chair of the Board of Governors was talking about motions to entrench these kinds of student participation," Lamrock said. "Now a Task Force on Tuition is struck and the same thing happens again."

Lamrock said that not having a student on a committee such as the Task Force on Tuition can have consequences. "I think when you talk about student fees without students in the room you are going to forget certain perspectives like the issue of accessibility which shrinks down to one paragraph in a 75 page report," he concluded.



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Let's Make A Deal

Win Fabulous Prizes and Junk

The Drawing for the Molson Beer Can Stereo will take place
Saturday, Feb. 8.
Must be present to win

Thursday Nights
Friday Afternoons are Back!!!

For members and guests only