



# THE BRUNSWICKAN

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## 1,000 students from UNB and St. Thomas sign on Give protesters exam deferral –petition

Gordon Loane

The Brunswickan

UNB and St. Thomas students have gathered over 1,000 names on a petition asking the academic Senates of both universities to defer final exams for a select group of students on Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>.

A group of about 75 UNB and STU students want to attend demonstrations at the alternative "People's Summit" scheduled to take place from April 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> in Quebec City in conjunction with the Summit of the Americas Conference.

The Concordia University Senate recently granted students exam deferrals so they could go to Quebec City and a similar proposal is under consideration at McGill University in Montreal.

Petition organizer Alex Bailey, a third year UNB Arts student, wants UNB and STU to follow suit, granting students who wish to attend the Summit exam

deferrals.

"I support the fact that students should be allowed the opportunity to go if they so wish and that the universities should accommodate them."

"There are a lot of students who signed the petition who don't support what the students intend to protest but still think they should have the opportunity to protest anyway," he said.

Bailey also believes it is no accident that the dates of the Quebec City Summit are set for April in conflict with exam schedules at Canadian and most U.S. universities.

"It has been scheduled to deter and discourage students from coming to protest at Quebec City," he commented.

In order to prevent abuses and allow only those who are genuinely interested in participating in the demonstrations at Quebec City, Bailey is suggesting that both universities establish a deadline where the names of those students who want their exams deferred for two days would be established on a list.

He also pointed out that exam deferrals may apply to a smaller group than those who sign up for Quebec City.

"Some may not have final exams on either April 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> while others may be able to make arrangements for deferrals with particular professors," he said.

To help win approval for the exam deferrals and armed with the petition, Bailey has already visited UNB Student Union President Charles Goguen.

While the issue was discussed at the UNB Student Council meeting last week, Goguen said a motion will be brought to council this week.

"My reading of last week's discussion is that most councilors support the right of the students to go to Quebec City," Goguen said.

"If Council can help them get the ability to go, I think we need to be their advocates with the UNB administration," he said.

If Council gives him a mandate this week, Goguen said he will seek out the

appropriate UNB Administrator, likely the Acting UNB Registrar David Hinton, or the UNB Fredericton Academic Senate or a Senate committee to get the petition and the deferment issue considered.

At STU one of the petition organizers, Jenn Thomas, a first year student, met earlier this week with STU Registrar, Larry Batt, seeking exam deferrals for students who wish to attend the Quebec City summit. Thomas said the issue may be placed on the STU Senate agenda next month depending on what STU Vice-President Academic, Richard Myers decides.

Meanwhile, the Rector of Concordia University in Montreal, Frederick Lowy, has released a prepared statement supporting the decision to support exam deferrals for students at that university who wish to attend the Quebec City Summit demonstrations.

"Academic freedom—the right to pursue knowledge and to challenge in



UNB student Alex Bailey organized the petition.

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## Scourge of sliding slammed

Gordon Loane

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Students have been surprised in recent days by the appearance of UNB Security and Traffic personnel warning them not to slide or snow board on one of UNB's most popular hills.

The Buchanan Hill, located just off Mackay Drive and Garland Court on the UNB Fredericton campus, is now off limits because of several serious accidents in recent years that have resulted in injuries and ambulances being called.

For safety and liability reasons signs have been posted for some time at the top and bottom of Buchanan Hill advising that sliding is not allowed.

"It's a great hill and in the past has been a popular sliding area on campus but there are two large power poles at the bottom of that hill near Buchanan Field that make sliding very dangerous", said Reg Jerrett, UNB's Director of Security and Traffic.

"If those poles weren't there it would be a different situation, but we must advise students not to slide on Buchanan Hill", he said.



Director of UNB Security and Traffic Reg Jerrett stands next to the Danger No Sliding sign at the top of Buchanan Hill, perhaps one of the most infamous sliding hills in town.

## Moncton SU questions need for lobby group

Gordon Loane

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The New Brunswick Student Alliance has set up an internal Ad Hoc Committee to examine its mandate and organization after the student federation at the Universite de Moncton threatened to pull out of the provincial student lobby group.

"Last September, the Moncton student federation started questioning the effectiveness of the NBSA," said Greg Carriere, President of the Alliance.

"It basically asked the question, can we do what the NBSA does?"

Rather than pour money into the NBSA, U de M students wondered whether they could use their own funds to lobby the provincial government directly.

The concerns prompted the NBSA to take a second look at its mandate and organization at weekend meetings held earlier this month in Shippagan, N.B.

"The Ad Hoc committee will look at the NBSA's mandate, structure, budget and internal communication," said Kate Whitfield, UNB Student Union Vice-President External.

"Concerns were expressed, not only by U de M students, at the NBSA meeting so the Ad Hoc committee has been instituted to come back to us with ideas, with nothing set in stone, for our next meeting in Saint John the first week of March," she said.

**The NBSA lobbies the government on behalf of all university students in New Brunswick**

Among the changes under consideration is a change in focus for the NBSA from lobbying to research.

"We might focus more on producing policy papers that would then be used by member schools as they feel is proper," Carriere indicated.

"A balance between lobbying and research is hopefully possible," he said.

But Peter Loewen, a student representative on the Alliance, said a mandate change would involve making "serious changes" to the NBSA's executive.

"There would very likely be a need for a full-time president," he said.

"And this would mean increasing salaries, something that still has to be discussed."

Loewen said membership fees probably wouldn't go up, though the organization would have to carefully redistribute its budget in order to cover the cost of the full-time position.

Whitfield said the NBSA re-organization isn't likely to mean an increase in the UNB Student Union's annual allocation to the NBSA, which currently stands at \$2 per student or approximately \$12,000-\$13,000.

"We are looking at revisions to the NBSA honoraria, the travel budget and how we spend money for certain summer positions," she said.

"We are attempting to see if an internal re-organization of the NBSA's existing budget could take place to find enough funds for other things."

-With files from the Canadian University Press and the Argosy weekly

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## Many groups working together

# Rivers Institute formally established

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UNB has formally announced the establishment of the Canadian Rivers Institute which will undertake basic and applied research on river ecosystems for the purposes of protection, conservation and habitat restoration.

In addition, it will provide training for future professionals and offer educational programs worldwide.

The Institute, with a home base on both the UNB Fredericton and UNB Saint John campuses, will be run by a management board, consisting of personnel from UNB and from other partners.

The Management Board will set research guidelines, oversee budgeting and promote the mandate of the Institute.

Richard Cunjak, who has held a joint appointment in Biology and Forestry and Environmental Management and the Meighen-Molson Chair in Atlantic Salmon Research at UNB Fredericton since 1997, will serve as Director of

the Canadian Rivers Institute.

Cunjak also holds a recent appointment as Canada Research Chair in River Ecosystem Science.

Kelly Munkittrick, an expert on fish under stress, will serve as Associate Director of the Institute based at UNB Saint John.

He recently was appointed to the Canada Research Chair in Ecosystem Health Assessment at UNB.

The third Canada Research Chair holder is biologist Gary Saunders on UNB's Fredericton campus.

His research involves the importance of algae to the health of the Bay of Fundy ecosystem.

UNB President Elizabeth Parr-Johnston marked the occasion by reporting that UNB has been extremely successful in the first round of competition in the Canada Research Chair program.

"UNB has three successful applications, more than any other institution in Atlantic Canada," she said.

Parr-Johnston noted that the allocation of Research

Chairs in this program to Atlantic Canadian institutions was a "hard won victory."

The federal government had originally planned to allocate the Research Chairs to about seven large universities, mostly elsewhere in Canada.

"We must have world class researchers in the Atlantic region so that we have the capacity to innovate and carry out research," she remarked.

Initially, individuals and organizations that reflect varied areas of expertise will be invited to serve as partners with the Canadian Rivers Institute at UNB.

These will include members of UNB's Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management and the Biology departments in Fredericton and Saint John, Environment Canada (Atlantic), the National Waters Research Institute, the New Brunswick Co-operative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Acadia University and the University of Prince Edward Island.

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