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Admin reacts to NB budget Tuition hikes this Fall

Gordon Loane
The Brunswickan

UNB students can expect another hike in tuition fees next Fall when the university's Board of Governors meets April 19th to consider the operating budget for the 2001-2002 fiscal year.

Daniel Murray, UNB's Vice-President Finance and Administration said the provincial budget released earlier this week which hiked the operating grant to N.B. universities by two percent came as no surprise.

"We're pleased to see that the provincial government has chosen to invest additional funds in higher education," he said.

"But the two percent increase will not help bridge the funding gap between New Brunswick universities and other universities in Canada."

New Brunswick universities still operate with the lowest level of per student funding of all universities in Canada, Murray emphasized.

"We are 10 percent lower than the average," he said.

Since the provincial government provides UNB with about two-thirds of its operating funds, Murray expects to take the same budget approach again this year as last year when the provincial operating grant increased a similar two percent.

"Last year a combination of things were done such as raising tuition fees and holding the line on expenditures," Murray noted.

"We will try to do that again by closely looking at all of our expenditures and all of our priorities and hold the line as best we can on expenditures."

"There will obviously have to be adjustments made in tuition fees which cover about one-third of UNB's operating budget," he continued.

"That should come as no surprise



Kevin Forneris/ The Brunswickan
Student Union President,
Charles Goguen.

to anybody given the funding situation that we have."

UNB increased tuition fees by six percent to \$3,635 for undergraduate students this academic year, but Murray could not get into specifics of what might be decided in about three weeks, pending a meeting of the Board of Governor's Finance Committee next week.

"A number of options and

models will be considered by the Finance Committee and the Board of Governors before a final decision is arrived at next month," Murray said.

Murray also indicated that four contracts which expire at the end of June with professors and librarians and support staff at UNB Fredericton and UNB Saint John place the university in a difficult situation when drawing up operating budget estimates for 2001-2002.

"We need to make assumptions in our budget for ten-twelfths of our 2001-2002 fiscal year when we prepare the budget," he said.

Salaries and Benefits for UNB employee represent between seventy-five and eighty percent of the university's total operating budget.

The university has also taken a look at a number of options with regard to academic programs, Murray confirmed.

"We really want to focus on the quality of our existing programs," he said.

"We want to maintain UNB as a national calibre university and part of that is offering a diverse array of programs at the graduate and undergraduate levels."

UNB Student Union President Charles Goguen said earlier this week that he would be very surprised if the university did not increase tuition fees next Fall following the release of the provincial budget this week.

Candidates disqualified

Gordon Loane
The Brunswickan

Two candidates who had filed nomination papers to run in this week's UNB Student Union general election have been disqualified by Chief Returning Officer Jonathan Webster.

David McNairn, a first year law student, had properly filled out nomination papers to run for Student Union Vice-President University Affairs but had neglected to fill out nomination papers to also run for the UNB Fredericton Academic Senate as required by SU-by-laws.

His opponent Clinton Fitzpatrick, a third year Business student, filled out nomination papers for both positions by the March 20th, 4:00 p.m. deadline.

"When McNairn did not get in the nomination form for Senate by the deadline as required of any candidate also running for VP University Affairs under the SU by-laws, I had to disqualify him by the letter of the By-law," Webster said.

"It is a shame because now there is no two-way contest for the position and I believe nearly everyone would have preferred that," he said.

"I talked to McNairn by telephone last Friday night to inform him and he seemed fine with the decision," Webster said. "He knew it was his mistake."

"Every candidate had the same By-law regulation booklet given to them and they were responsible for reading it and knowing what they had to do to be nominated," he said.

As a result of the disqualification, Clinton Fitzpatrick still needs to win approval in a yes/no ballot to be officially elected as SUVP University Affairs.

Meanwhile, Jeff Flanagan, who was one of two candidates running for a position on Student Council as Student-at-Large, has also been disqualified.

"Flanagan withdrew from his courses earlier this term and is ineligible to run at this time because he lacks student status," Webster indicated.



Mike Cormier / The Brunswickan

Student Union elections - cast your vote today!

Webster informed Flanagan of the disqualification late Wednesday after the Advance Polls had already been open for the day but before regular campus-wide polls opened yesterday.

As a result, possibly only one Student-at-Large position will be filled in this week's SU General Election as Brian Crothers faces a yes/no vote.

Webster said Flanagan still has a second chance to run for the other Student-at-Large seat, if he regains student status by the Fall 2001 SU By-election.

Federal NDP Leader

Gordon Loane
The Brunswickan

The entire 13-member federal NDP caucus will be heading to Quebec City next month to join masses of protesters, including UNB and St. Thomas students, as heads of governments gather for a Summit of the Americas meeting.

Speaking to a large crowd of students, faculty members, and interested citizens at UNB on Monday about issues surrounding the hemispheric Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA), NDP leader Alexa McDonough said if the federal government signs the trade agreement as currently envisioned, a massive transformation of Canadian society will occur.

"This trade deal will put the rights and powers of multinational corporations ahead of the rights and interests of citizens. It will result in the further erosion of the ability of government to act on behalf of its citizens," she said.

Furthermore, McDonough believes the organization of the upcoming free-trade summit in Quebec City is a threat to democracy itself. "One of the fundamental rights of a democratic society is the right to peaceful, meaningful protest, the right to be heard by one's government."

"Yet what we see happening in preparation for

the Quebec Summit is any semblance of meaningful protest being essentially tossed out of the window," she said.

McDonough said security preparations include a 3.5 kilometer chain link fence which will cordon off the area where the negotiations are taking place.

In addition, a three meter high chain link fence will also be used. "The fences will make sure the world leaders gathering there are not going to have to put up with or see any signs of protest from the citizens who will assemble in Quebec City," she said.

"It is dangerous for us to allow that to happen without drawing attention to what that does to the right of people to protest and be heard by their government."

McDonough said if the FTAA deal goes through it will be even more far reaching than the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which gives unprecedented power to multinational corporations to sue elected governments.

"Under NAFTA multinational corporations can sue elected governments and seek compensation if they consider that those elected governments have dared to interfere with their commercial interests and their ability to gain profits."

She said the Free Trade of the Americas Agreement

Continued on Page 4



Kevin Forneris / The Brunswickan

NDP leader, Alexa McDonough, spoke to students on issues surrounding the FTAA on Monday.

Duguay: UNBSU needs greater control over SUB

Gordon Loane
The Brunswickan

UNB Student Union officials have restarted talks with the university administration aimed at seeking possible changes to the structure and mandate of the Student Union Building Advisory Board of Directors.

The SUB Advisory Board, which has not held a single meeting this academic year, is charged with providing advice to Building Director Kim Norris on policy matters and the general direction of SUB Administration.

Ongoing issues in the SUB this year have included matters relating to SUB expansion, the rooftop patio, a proposed plan to revamp the floor space at the College Hill Social Club to accommodate fire regulations, renovations to the Cellar Pub and Grill, a possible proposal for a Cellar ground level patio, revamping offices for the St. Thomas student newspaper, *The Aquinian*, a possible new games area in SUB Room 26, leases for SUB tenants, and a summer project installing a new sprinkler system in various areas of the building.

"I think it is a huge problem

that the SUB Advisory Board has not met once this academic year," said Scott Duguay, UNBSU Vice-President of Finance and Administration, who is seeking election for SU President for 2001-2002. "Whose fault is it? It's maybe no one's fault," he said.

Nonetheless Duguay, and

final policy?" Duguay commented. "[SUB Director] Kim Norris is very busy with the day-to-day operation of the building but when it comes to goal orientation where do we want to take the SUB?" Duguay asked. "Students could have a better input on how we could make this building even better and more accessible," he said.

Duguay also feels the UNB Student Union should definitely have more say in the management of the SUB because the SU is a huge tenant with offices and two associated operations - The Paper Trail near the first floor main lobby, and the Cellar Pub and Grill located in the basement of the SUB.

"We have also invested a lot of money into the recent expansion of the SUB and it would only be right that we have even more say in management," he emphasized.

The UNB Student Union is currently engaged in ongoing research surrounding the previous structure of the SUB Board of Directors pre-1985. Because of student-related concerns at that time, the SUB Board of Directors which set policy, drew up leases

Continued on Page 3



Sharon Wilbur / The Brunswickan

Scott Duguay, UNBSU Vice-President of Finance and Administration.

current SU President Charles Goguen, have begun preliminary talks with UNB Associate Vice-President Campus Services and Planning Michael Ryan and others to sound out whether changes to the mandate of the SUB Advisory Board are warranted. "Should it continue to be an Advisory Board or should there be a Board of Directors of the SUB which sets



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