

Taking the lead: Ren College

**Inaugural Ren. College
class to graduate
this Spring**

by Kelly Johnston

It's 4pm on a Thursday afternoon at Renaissance College and two dozen students, along with a handful of professors, are comfortably crammed into a kitchen no bigger than a Rest Stop bathroom, helping themselves to a big pot of soup on the stove. Today's flavour: Cream of Broccoli. And it's going fast.

Ten conversations are going on at once, some academic and some...not so much so. It's a typical day for the students and staff of UNB's new leadership program and a topic that is on a lot of their minds these days is graduation. Of course, that is on the minds of many people at this

time of year.

What makes the crowd at Renaissance College so different is that, on May 29th, 2003, their very first graduating class will walk on stage at the Aitken Centre and receive degrees in philosophy and interdisciplinary leadership studies— the first of its kind in Canada.

However, even after being a UNB faculty for three years, a lot of people still wonder: "What exactly is Renaissance College?"

"Renaissance College," according to one of its senior students, Josie McKinney, "gives you a chance to really explore a lot of different subject areas while using that information and knowledge to better yourself as a leader. It also gives you opportunities to take what you've learned and use it in the community and in both national and international contexts. It's a lot of theory in many different areas, but also an opportunity to put those theories into practice." It is those very

opportunities that make Renaissance College so unique. The four year program, completed over three years and two summers, provides its students with small classes (no more than twenty-five students are accepted into the program each year), two internships (one national and one international), and a student to professor ratio of 4:1, which is unheard of in any Canadian University.

Class work consists of essays, presentations, and many group projects, some of which take the students out into the Fredericton community and beyond. Students are also on a first-name basis with their professors and, as fourth-year student Leah Campbell put it, "Renaissance College is a place where learning takes place for the sake of learning." Both the professors and students at Renaissance College represent a wide variety of backgrounds and interests which, according to student Alex Chernoff, "really enhances the classroom setting."

The program, which includes classes about everything from art and religion to science and economics, teaches students to broaden their educational perspectives and approach problems from many different angles and on numerous levels. For students such as Katelyn Nickerson, this is what made Renaissance College so appealing. After completing one year of Arts and Science at UNB, Nickerson transferred into the Renaissance College program. "I heard about Renaissance College through the grapevine," she said.

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Kelly Johnston/The Brunswickan
Ren. Grad Class - 2003

"I talked to the professors who knew about it and decided to switch because I knew that I had an interest in Biology but I still had an interest in Arts. Renaissance College seemed like the perfect opportunity to mould the two together."

Nickerson plans to attend medical school next year and is currently deciding which one of her acceptance letters to reply to.

Nickerson's fellow classmates are also in the process of planning for the future. Many are going to further their education in various disciplines, including Law, Education, and Political Science, while others hope to test their newly-found knowledge in jobs and internships in Canada and around the world.

The first graduating class realizes that many people still do not understand what Renaissance College is, but it is something they have learned to accept. "Maybe when we get out into the world and start making a difference," predicted one student, "people will look at what we're doing and finally get it."

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tuition for students.

"The service should be up and running for summer session, and definitely for the beginning of next year," commented El-Bayoumi. "We're not anticipating any problems; hopefully it will all be well for September."

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Brunswickan Ad: Circa 1952

Student recounts horror of Gulf War

by Jordan Heath-Rawlings, Ryersonian

TORONTO (CUP) — When Asma Naif sits in her first-year biochemistry classes at Ryerson University she isn't thinking about the lectures, or the upcoming labs and exams. She's thinking about her family, huddled in Baghdad houses, hoping a bomb from the U.S.-led coalition's military bombardment of the Iraqi capital doesn't go astray.

It happened before. She witnessed it.

The 19-year-old student arrived in Canada from Jordan in 1999, after fleeing Iraq with her mother and father in 1992, at the end of the last Gulf War. She was in Baghdad, in 1991, the last time bombs fell on the ancient city.

"It was the worst thing ever," she said. "They usually started to bomb at seven or eight at night. I was eight years old."

(SEE GULF, PAGE 3)

Meet the SU executive for 2003-2004



Brendan Doyle/The Brunswickan
(l-r) Matt Clarke, extending his role as VP Finance; Peter MacDonald, VP Executive-elect; Collen Toner, VP Student Services-elect; Milan Chotai, President-elect; Cassandra Simmons, VP University Affairs-elect.

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