

Budget cuts at UNB Saint John: rumors and myths busted

by Josh O'Kane

Sometimes a number as small as four or five can turn around and disappoint several thousand people.

That appears to be the case at UNB Saint John's campus. Rumors have been flying about over the looming four or five per cent budget cut, claiming to know what expenses will be cut and which courses will be dropped. The most infamous of these rumors was that 15 courses would be cut from the psychology faculty.

Fifteen courses - that's a year and a half to an undergrad, and could prevent some students from graduating. Luckily, this is not the actual case.

Yet, anyway.

Though it has been announced that some \$500,000 will be cut from each UNB Fredericton faculty, Saint John still remains in the budgeting process.

Chris Callbeck is the Assistant Vice-President of Financial & Administrative Services at UNBSJ, and has been overlooking the process from the beginning. Nothing, he promises, has been finalized.

"We're still in the budget process," he explains. The budget will not actually be finalized until the third week of March - and then it has to go through various Board presentations.

Cuts, of course, will be made, but Callbeck is making an effort to make sure students are only minimally affected.

"Last year we didn't have cuts," he says. "This year we're looking at... between four to five per cent to balance the budget... That's across the board - every unit, everything. Now, where we will reduce is a different story."

Callbeck wants to retain no damage to the Student Services portion of the budget. However, the 2006-07 Budget Planning presentation (http://www.unb.ca/vp-fin/documents/fiscal_env_unbsj.pdf) reports that "academic and student support" is expected to have taken up 17 per cent of the campus' budget expenses. That's more than just a little chunk to avoid reducing.

Yes, you guessed it: the other 83 per cent is going to have to be reduced even more.

"Where does that four to five per cent come from?" postulates Callbeck. "What we can then do is turn around and say, look [as an example] at Finance and Admin, I know we asked for four to five, but you're going to be losing more money. So that's the theory."

The problem, he assures, is that "what's happened on the Saint John campus, is that people have taken the math, and assumed that's the budget. And that's not the budget. They've made a bad assumption."

One of the key components used in the budgeting process are impact statements - how much will each sector be affected by the given budget cut? From that analysis, the budget can be adjusted to minimally affect students, both service-wise and course-wise.

To ultimately dispel rumors - at least for now - Callbeck stated that "we don't know the impacts yet. That's what I'm saying. We have not finalized our budget."

Dr. Kathryn Hamer, Vice President of the Saint John campus, issued a memo the first week of March to all members of the campus, including students, faculty, and other staff.

"Students," she writes, "should be assured their needs are at the very centre of all budget discussions and they will continue to have access to the courses they require to complete their degree."

Dan Tanaka is the Communications Manager in the Advancement Office on the campus, and has been addressing concerns from students on the manner since the rumors began.

"The priorities are protecting courses," says Tanaka. "All students should be able to fulfill their graduation requirements." Also, he notes, "scholarships are not going to be touched, [nor are] student services [or] the health services."

Rumors then, such as cutting 15 courses from one faculty, should be ignored. There may still be a chance of cuts somewhere along the line, but as Callbeck points out, nothing has been officially determined yet.

"That's what the issue is for us; it's difficult for us to say to someone, 'no, we haven't made a decision yet.'"

The key issue behind the cut-backs, overall, is a decline in enrollment. With UNBSJ being such



an international school, that can serve a major blow to finances - their tuition is already double that of domestic students. The loss of one international student is therefore twice the blow of a normal one. And it's a given that no one, from anywhere, wants their tuition to be raised any more than it has to be because of this.

"Enrollment is declining," says Callbeck. "And in order to keep tuition down, on the expenditure side, our expenses are growing at a greater rate than our revenue. For example, salaries, fringe benefits: those kind of costs are growing at a greater rate than our revenue..."

Just to heat the buildings, you know, has a major impact on our operations. We need to look at all our costs; it's not just in the classroom."

The bottom line is that nothing is final. Some areas will be cut, but they will ultimately be in the best interests of the students. One approach Callbeck has been working on, for instance, is getting some money as flex-funds, available for whichever department has the highest demand for them.

"They're re-deployment funds. We'll re-deploy [them] in September in areas we think we need to address needs."

Tanaka wants students to realize that rumors at this stage are false, and that it's best to contact the relevant source of information for the truth.

"We're also encouraging anybody who has any kind of questions, concerns or comments about the budget process, to direct their concerns to their Dean or their director," he explains.

"In the case of students, it would be their Deans, simply because they are involved with the budget process. Then they can refer to someone in the VP's office to make sure if the information is current."

Space Quest 4 The destabilization of Haiti

by Bruns Staff

He makes you wish you were weightless.

More than 250 girls between the ages of eight and 11 sat in awe this Sunday at Head Hall, as Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield spoke to them about living and working in space.

The girls are members of the Worlds UNBound Quest 4 Girls Club. Launched in 1999, the club is one of several all-girls groups offered under the national charity Actua, which supports local science and technology outreach to youth.

Jennifer McPhail, Worlds UNBound program director, explained that it is important for young girls to have the opportunity to explore the fields of science, technology, and engineering.

The club is made up of individual groups at elementary schools across the province. Each group meets six times, and the entire club gathers for two adventure days each year. The club boasts 400+ members in the province in total.

Hadfield was pleased to speak to the girls. After his hour-long keynote address, he spoke briefly about the space industry's need for qualified men and women. In the field

of space technology, Hadfield said that sex is ignored for the most part. Contributions from both males and females are considered equally important.

He pointed out that the first Canadian to visit and work on board the international station was a woman - Julie Payette. Hadfield also holds a few firsts amongst Canadians himself. He was the first Canadian mission specialist, the first to operate the Canadarm in orbit, and the first to ever leave a spacecraft and float free in space.

Following the address, girls split into their school groups and took part in varying activities, including a paper rocket launch.

The club is organized and run by a large number of volunteers, including many enthusiastic, positive female role models in science-related careers or fields of study. McPhail has completed a Bachelors degree in Science and is currently pursuing her masters here at UNB. Team leader for the club, Rebekah Freymond, is also a science student, and is also the president of the Forest Engineering Students Association.

For more information on the club, please visit www.unb.ca/eng/worlds or contact Jennifer McPhail at worlds@unb.ca or (506)-453-4746.

from Haiti page 1

Elie explains that the Haitian view of Canada has changed: "Canada's resented very much in Haiti. It's seen as the U.S. which was never the case. The hand of Canada was shown during the destabilization campaign that led to Aristide's removal in the operation itself, when Canadian,

French and U.S. troops first came here. And the U.N. mandate was only something to give it a nice cover, but it was a joint operation by three powers hostile to Haiti."

Since the coup, the interim government of Gerald Latortue that Elie calls "illegal" was installed and has allegedly been repressing Lavalas supporters. Despite

all of these accusations, Canada has been steadfast in supporting Latortue's government.

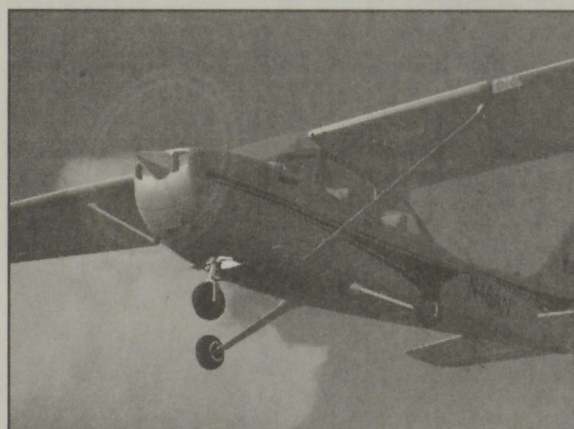
"The first time a Canadian Prime Minister ever set foot on Haiti was under this illegal regime. The first time a Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs set foot in Haiti was under this de-facto regime," explains Elie. "Even after all this evidence came out

about the repression, the killing, the burning of houses in the poor neighbourhoods, and the political prisoners, they had nothing but praise for it."

For more information on Elie's cross-Canada tour, check out www.canadahaitiaction.ca

• with files from Graham Cox

WIN A 1-HOUR FLIGHT IN A CESSNA 172



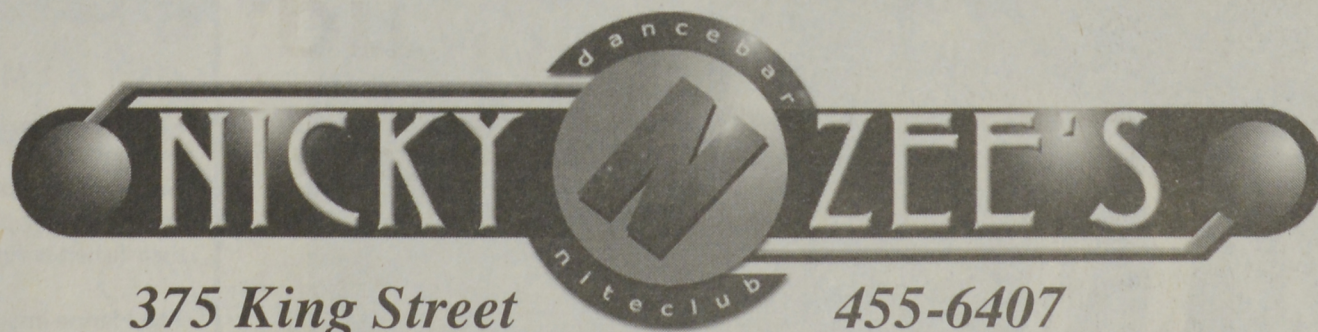
FOR THE YOU AND TWO FRIENDS

ONLY A \$2 PER TICKET

(JUST 500 AVAILABLE)

CONTACT R162N@UNB.CA FOR TICKETS

• Flight donated by The Brunswickan •



375 King Street

455-6407



WHAT A FRIDAY!!

10-Close \$3.25 Canadian & Canadian Light Bottles

& For a Taste of St. Patty's Day

\$3.25 Guinness Bottles, Harp and Smithwicks

Buck a Beer from 10-midnight (8oz Coors Light Draft)



Ladies Nite No Cover For Ladies All Night
Oval Window Live All Weekend