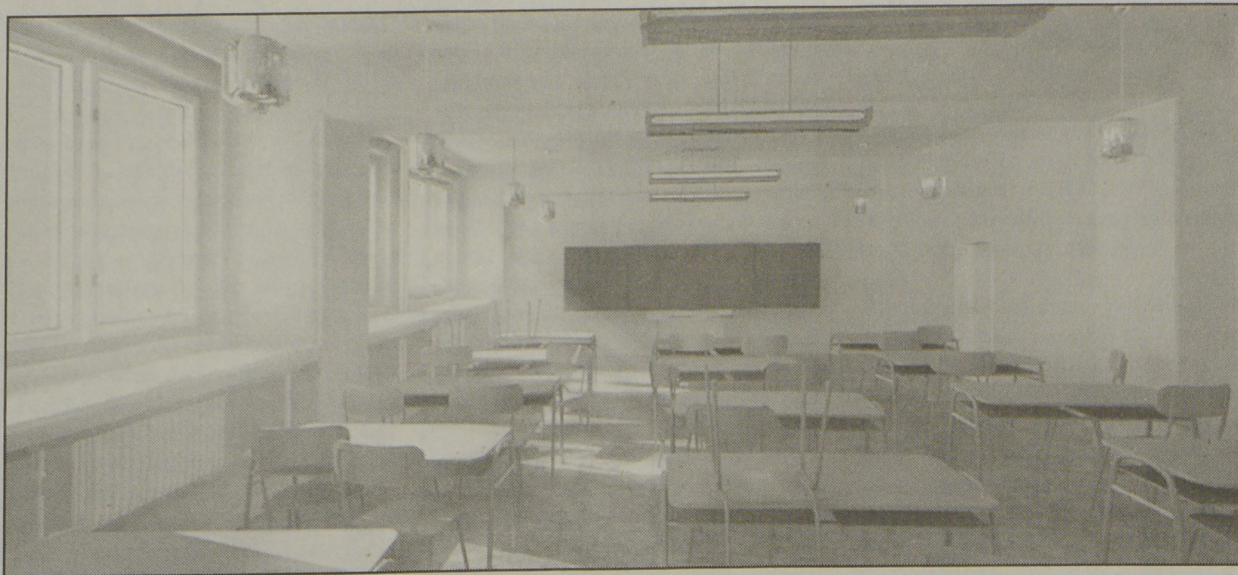


Declining enrolment plagues Atlantic universities



Jonathan Hudon/The Brunswickan

by William Wolfe-Wylie

CUP Atlantic Bureau Chief
SACKVILLE, N.B. (CUP) - Enrolment at Mount Allison University has dropped for a third consecutive year. This year's total student enrolment is currently estimated at 2,060 students, down more than 10 per cent from 2003.

It's a trend that is being seen throughout Atlantic Canada. A report from the Association of Atlantic Universities confirms that enrolment in the area has been declining steadily since 2003.

The demographics of the region (how many potential students actually exist), and participation rates (how many of those potential students actually attend), combine to create dropping enrolment numbers, according to the report.

Dalhousie University, the University of New Brunswick, the University of Prince Edward Island, and Mount Allison University have all experienced drops in enrolment between one and 10 per cent in the past five years.

But while a number of universities are feeling the effects of dropping enrolment, others are reaping the benefits of low tuition and innovative marketing, as students become aware that universities really are fighting for their education dollars.

At Memorial University of Newfoundland, for example, which boasts the region's lowest tuition fees (\$2,550

for full-time undergrads), enrolment has risen by approximately 10 per cent since 1999.

"We are attracting more students from the Atlantic region," said Ivan Muzychka, a spokesman for the university, adding, "our low tuition is a factor."

Saint Mary's University in Halifax, which sits in the middle of the pack in terms of tuition fees, has also experienced an increase in enrolment in the past few years. It has 31,000 students registered this year, up from 25,500 students in 1998.

Among those schools experiencing a drop in enrolment, a number of theories have emerged to explain the lower student numbers.

Chief among them is that there are simply fewer students graduating from high school than in previous years, and that this, combined with the same number of universities competing for them, has resulted in lower enrolment over all.

"Due to provincial demographic challenges and an increasing competitive international market, registrars have forecasted a slight decrease in enrolment on each campus in 2006-07, and a continuation of similar declines in the near future," commented the University of New Brunswick's 2006-2007 budget outline.

"Our enrolment is probably under pressure from smaller graduating classes in Nova Scotia," said Scott Roberts, a spokesman for Acadia University, where enrolment has been in flux since the late 1990s.

Acadia University's 2005-06 enrolment was the lowest in six years. In the previous five years it had dropped by approximately 11.3 per cent, according to a senate report from May. Acadia's tuition fees, at just over \$8,000 for full-time undergraduate studies, are the highest in the region.

As the phenomenon progresses, however, universities are developing their own strategies to try and balance their budgets with declining revenues from both provincial and student sources.

At Memorial, said Muzychka, the declining number of students graduating from high school has forced the university to change its marketing tactics.

Acadia University has created a new position, the office of enrolment management, which aims to increase international student enrolment to 15 per cent of the total student body (international is defined as not from Canada or the United States), and focus on domestic recruiting in Nova Scotia, Alberta, and B.C.

Mount Allison University has designated one international recruiter to tour Southeast Asia, and provided a travel budget of \$100,000 to recruit students from that area.

But according to the report from the Association of Atlantic Universities, the numbers for the coming years don't look any more encouraging. Demographic projections show the number of people aged 18-24 in all four Atlantic provinces will continue to decline until at least 2014.

The new iPod: Now 66 per cent easier to lose

by Josh O'Kane

Last week I was unfortunate enough to lose my iPod Shuffle walking from point A to point B across campus. As far as I can remember, it was in my pocket, and then all of a sudden it wasn't.

After a few days of depression (and going running to only the sound of the my feet hitting the ground), while I put off buying a new one, I was shown a new announcement from Apple - a whole new generation of iPods, and a brand new redesigned iPod Shuffle.

The new Shuffle has the same basic control pad, similar to the standard iPod, but scaled down. The distinct difference from the first generation is that the whole mp3 player is somehow even smaller.

The original Shuffle was the size of a standard stick of Trident gum. I could barely feel it in my pocket when it was there. This new model trumps that it is about the size of a matchbook, and can clip onto whatever you're wearing.

Ah, the innovations of Apple - mak-

ing their products even more incredibly losable with every generation of product.

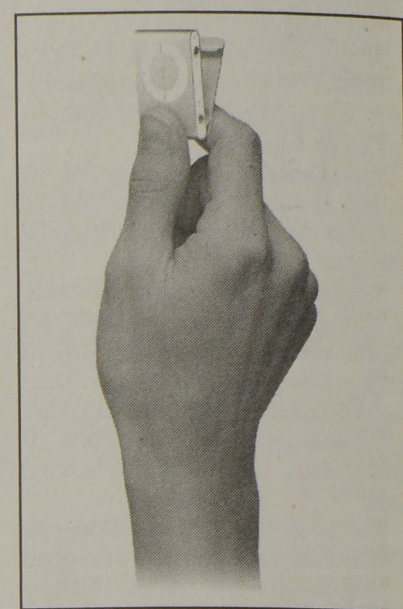
The new model features two functional buttons instead of one, allowing you to turn the mp3 player onto shuffle mode without the risk of turning it off (this was a problem with the first generation of shuffles). As well, the built-in clip allows you to attach it to anything. This makes it even better than the previous generation, which in itself was already incredibly light and great to take running.

The pure size is where the iPod Shuffle triumphs over its larger, older, standard iPod partner. For the most part, I find that I don't need a whole library of music wherever I go, and I'm satisfied with a simple playlist. What I do care about is how small (despite how losable) an mp3 player can be.

Not only are the new smaller standard iPods still considerably larger than the Shuffle, they're also that much more prone to scratching, dropping, and breaking. Having a screen alone means you need to take more care in assuring it doesn't become scratched.

For people who are looking for an mp3 player for capacity, Apple now offers the 80-gigabyte iPod. But with the new Shuffle as well, Apple has surpassed itself yet again, as they now provide what is considered to be the world's smallest mp3 player.

Now I just have to be even more careful about losing the new Shuffle.



Get to know your Student Union

by Jenn McKenzie

This week, our almost weekly piece on an elected member of the Student Union focuses on its President, Jessica Stutt. Jess is, in essence, the head of the SU. Not a huge fan of celebrity babies, Jess is energetic, eager and enthusiastic about her job and students on campus. She could, possibly, be the nicest person you'll ever meet. Here are a few things she had to say about herself:

The last book I read: "Lizard Cage" by Karen Connolly.

My three big goals for the year are:

1. Increasing the visibility of the union by making us relevant to students. This involves attending/throwing events that students enjoy, supporting effective programming and creating/maintaining useful services.

2. Create/promote a new website that is a real tool for students to use, as well as for our clubs and societies - and through that, to improve on our relationship with our clubs & societies.

3. To continue to improve the financial sustainability of the SU.

I believe all UNB students are: Extremely busy and extremely involved!

My favorite thing about UNB is: The

campus.

If I could spend one hour with anyone, it would be: Gord Downie.

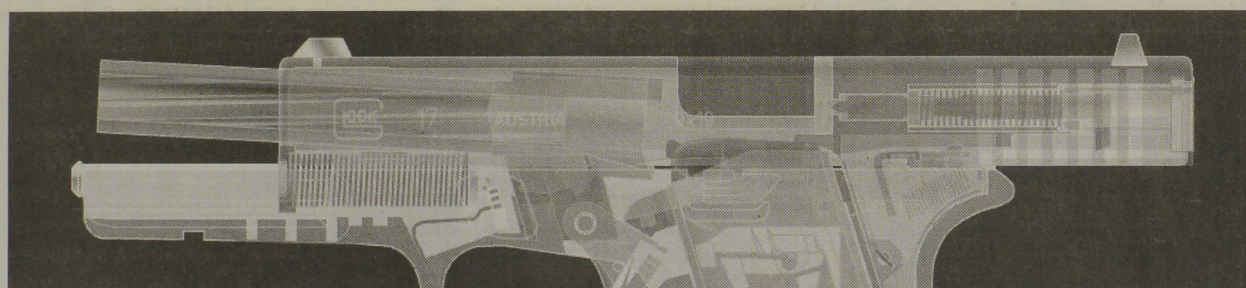
My favorite condiment is: Frank's Hot Sauce.

I feel very strongly about: Working with students at a grassroots level. I want to meet everybody!

Every student should know the SU is: here for them! And that we're not scary!

If you want to talk to me, it's best to: email, phone or stop by.

Also, I want you to know: I'm extremely approachable.



Anti-gun majority silent

by Jeanette Stewart
CUP Central Bureau Chief

REGINA (CUP) - In the wake of a deadly shooting at a Quebec college, opinions on gun control have become polarized, with advocates calling for changes to Canadian gun control policy.

And while they may hold different opinions on what could have prevented Kimveer Gill, 25, from firing on students at Montreal's Dawson College Sept. 13, leaving one student dead and 11 others injured, people on both sides of the debate cited training as a key component.

Dave Tomlinson, president of the National Firearms Association (NFA), said prevention is "a matter of education and a matter of who is doing the education."

Tomlinson said that proper training and "immediate introduction" into the firearms community is necessary for young people with an interest in guns.

Wendy Cukier, chair of the Coalition for Gun Control, has a different idea of what kind of education is necessary.

"The NFA talks about training kids," said Cukier. "This guy [Gill] didn't need any more training."

She believes that training focused on "professionals in the community" who can identify dangerous behaviours early on, is what is needed. Cukier noted that Gill was part of a rifle club, whose "members said that they had concerns."

Gill was a licensed firearm user, with legally registered weapons. According to Bill C-68 of the Criminal Code, if public safety concerns are expressed, a review of the license or a revocation of the weapons can occur.

Cukier says that the information needs to be relayed to authorities.

"Work needs to be done to increase community ownership for community safety," she said. In a "number of really awful shootings," people say they knew the shooter

was dangerous.

Currently, neither the NFA nor the Coalition for Gun Control supports the legislation introduced June 16 by the Conservatives to amend the registry so that owners of non-restricted rifles and shotguns will not have to register their weapons.

"Why we would be in favour of the changes if the changes are being drafted by idiots?" said Tomlinson. His group favours allowing firearms users to be able to make the legislation.

The Coalition for Gun Control is protesting the changes, saying that the current system is working. They say that "prevention is hard to measure," but their statistics show that 500 fewer people per year are killed by gun violence since 1989, the year the group was founded.

The Canada Firearms Centre re-

ports that 17,861 firearms licenses were revoked from December 1998 to June 30, 2006, for reasons including a "history of violence, mental illness, the applicant is a potential risk to himself, herself or others, unsafe firearm use and storage, drug offences [or] providing false information."

To Cukier, statistics like this are a measure of proof. "All the major health and safety organizations support it," said Cukier, adding that she believes the majority of Canadian citizens do as well.

She is supported by a 2003 Environics poll that found 74 per cent of Canadians supported gun control legislation.

"The anti-gun majority is silent," said Cukier. "If every student in this country called their MP next week, my job would be done."

Clubs and society day: finding out where you belong



Jonathan Hudon/The Brunswickan

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