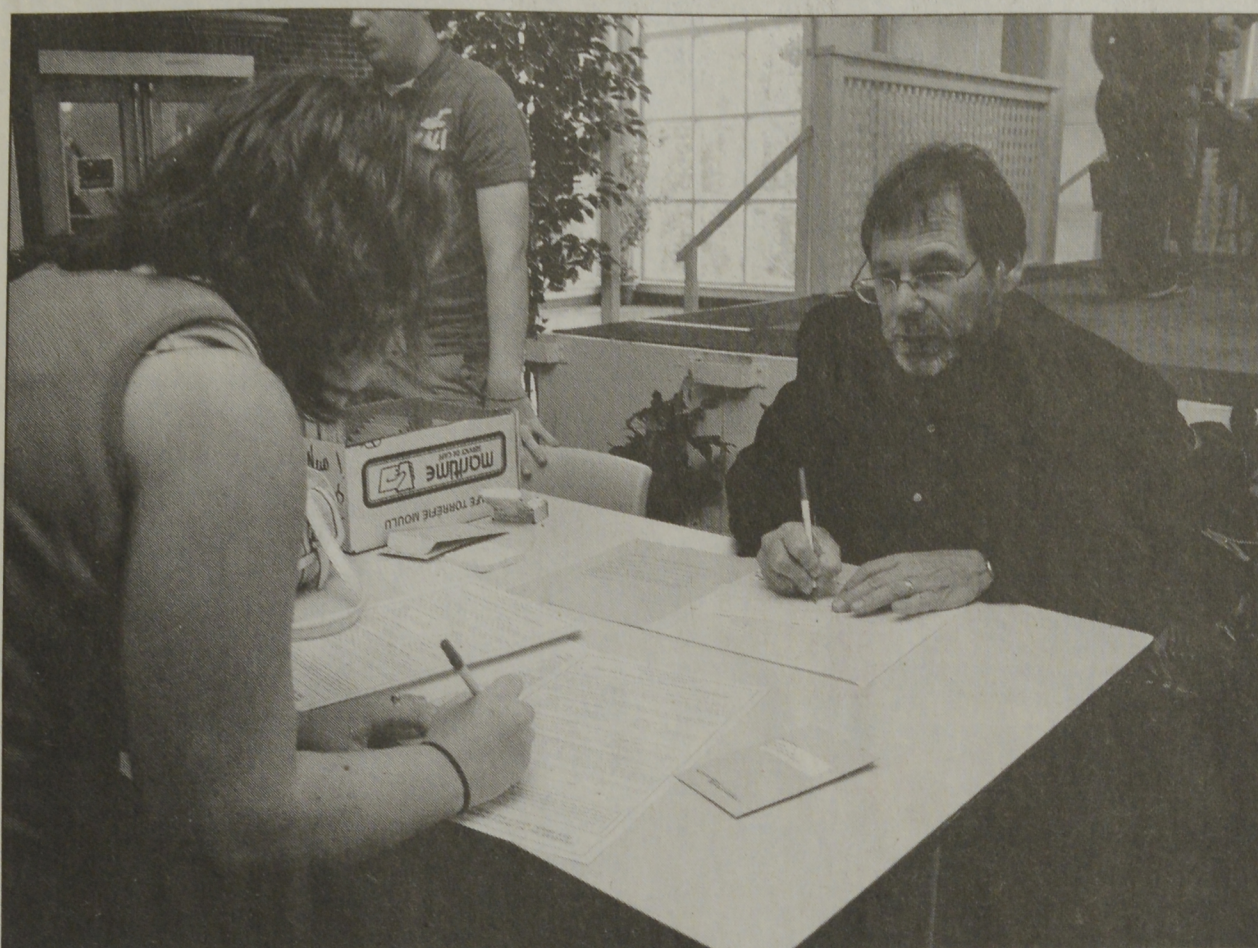


Residence closures avoided this year



James Brown, Executive Director of Res Life, assists a student on move-in day.

One floor is closed in Tibbits Hall and another in McLeod House, but Res Life is on budget this year

JOSH O'KANE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

It's been a tough few years for UNB Res Life.

As university enrolments declined across the Maritimes, UNB saw steep declines in residence applications. Two years ago Jones House shut its doors, while Aitken narrowly avoided the axe only months later. Bridges House spent the last school year cut in half with no first-year students.

This school year, each house – except for Jones, which is now a rededicated Student Services building – will remain open and accept first-year students.

Since the closure of Jones House, there are a total of 1334 beds available at UNB's traditional undergraduate residence system. Accounting for double rooms having been turned into large 'super-single' rooms, there are 1228 potential beds to be filled, of which 1120 were paid with deposits before students moved in.

The only two residences to take on cuts are Tibbits Hall and McLeod House.

Tibbits had the lowest number of returning students with paid deposits as of the end of May, a number which in years past led to the cuts at Jones and Bridges Houses. The hall's third floor will be closed for the school year, with its rooms to be occupied by office space and research, as determined by the new VP Academic, Anthony Secco.

James Brown, Executive Director of UNB Residential Life, Campus & Conference Services,

says the selection of Tibbits for the temporary office space makes sense.

"Tibbits had the lowest returner rate, and since Tibbits East is already office space, it made the best sense to locate the vacancies in that area," says Brown.

McLeod House's second floor is currently being occupied by persons waiting to move into the campus' new suite-style residence across the street from the SUB. The space will be used for a variety of needs throughout the year, including space for persons visiting the campus for conferences.

Staffing has changed at Res Life as well, with director Angela Garnett on maternity leave, and one coordinator, Misty McLaughlin, having moved to the Conference Services division. Tana Geiger left as a coordinator at the end of the 2007-08 school year but will be reentering the system as a Don at Lady Beaverbrook Residence.

Joining Res Life this year is new Coordinator Karina Wong Chong, who was previously a manager with the New Brunswick west district branch of the Canadian Cancer Society.

She explains that she applied for the position because she needed a change.

"I wanted to work for an organization where it was still about giving back to the community and having a heart."

Wong Chong joined the Res Life community several days before their proctor training session began, and was quickly swept up with preparations for the upcoming school year. She'll be working with Krysta Lee Skentelbery, a former proctor who will be spending the year in the new position of Res Life Assistant, which will ease the spread of duties left while Garnett is on maternity leave.

In the meantime, Brown's duties will increase as he takes on a more direct relationship with residence house dons.

He says this will not affect his

ability to manage the rest of his portfolio, which includes oversight of conference services as well as the Aitken Centre, the SUB and various contracts the university maintains.

"Although I have executive director oversight over some things, I have very strong people in directorship in most of those areas," he says.

"Angela's absence will allow me to get closer to the residence life program, which remains the core of what we do. It's opportunity to be more directly involved."

Res Life is expected to meet its budget this school year, but this includes meeting the projected deficit of half a million dollars. That cost will be absorbed by funds from the rest of the university, says Brown.

"The deans and the other operating areas of the university are very aware that they are supplementing the operation of residence to the tune of about a half a million dollars through resources that would otherwise flow to them," he says.

"No one's too happy about that, but the reception amongst the deans was extremely positive. Because everybody's budget is tight, every dean, every director is well aware of how the university resources are being carved out. Money flows from other resources in order to balance the university's budget. And we're extremely grateful for the university's support."

While Brown admits the residence system's rooms are in dire need of refurbishment, he boasts that the people in residence make it an extremely welcoming environment.

"The rooms are not luxurious and badly in need of renovation, which is our other challenge. But the strength of the program are the proctors, the senior students, the house committees, the people who return and maintain the legacy of residence life. The university has been prepared to invest in that."

Wired for science

JOSH O'KANE
THE BRUNSWICKAN

David Magee pursued academia for the lure of the freedom, and applied for the Dean of Science position because he believes that it's part of his responsibility to the community to which he belongs.

A chemistry professor by trade, Magee is a native of Gagetown, N.B. and received both his BSc and PhD from UNB. He completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Rochester in New York before coming back to UNB as a professor.

The 48-year-old was chair of the UNB Chemistry Department from 1998 until 2006 and served a brief stint as Acting Dean of Science in 2005, filling in for then-dean Al Sharp while on a study leave.

"I felt it was time to maybe step outside my comfort zone and to do something I haven't done before," says Magee.

When the opportunity to apply to be Sharp's successor came up, Magee says his colleagues – both in chemistry and other science departments – were very supportive of him applying.

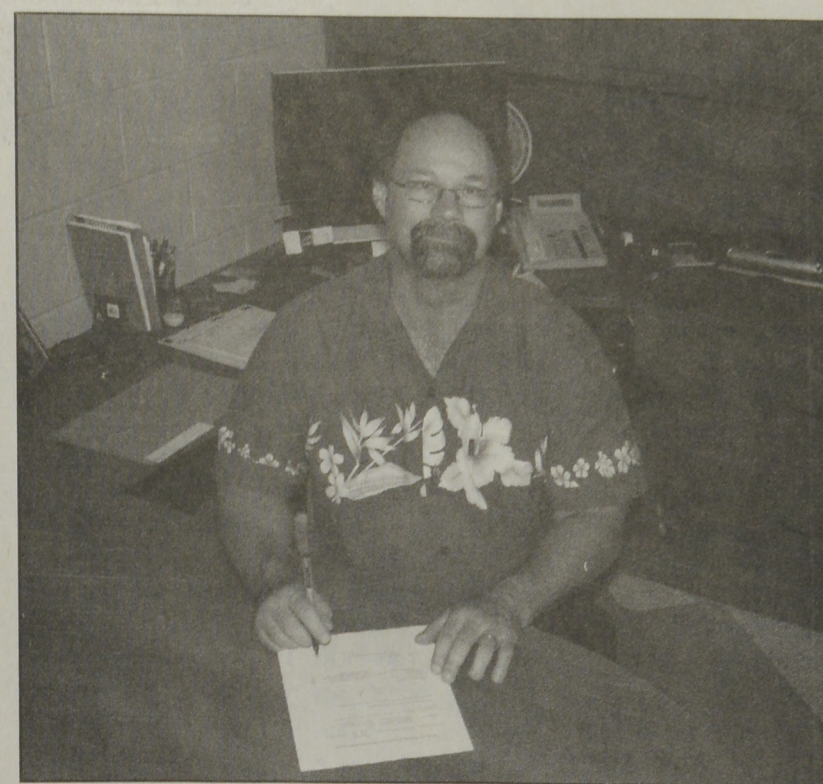
He says it was a chance to try something new while giving back to the community.

"I felt it was time to maybe step outside my comfort zone and to do something I hadn't done before."

"Part of everybody's professional responsibility is service to the particular community they belong to," he says. "I belong to the chemical community and I belong to the university community."

Science has always been Magee's natural direction. Though he excelled at most subjects while in high school, he knew that science was where his future would lie.

"That is really how my brain is



Dave Magee is the new Dean of Science.

Josh O'Kane / The Brunswickan

wired, is from the science end of it," he says. "Although I had an interest and continue to have an interest in a lot of the arts, I think my true aptitude was always in the sciences, and still is."

The freedom to pursue his own research interests was what drove him to academia versus pharmaceutical research. The chances to interact with students also lured him to the profession.

"There's a whole spectrum of students that always changes. Since that always changes, then your experiences always change. The interaction with people is important as well. In some respects, every fall is like a new beginning."

Magee says he fully intends to continue teaching during his tenure as Dean of Science. He's currently slated to teach an organic chemistry course in both the fall and winter terms this year.

"I don't know what a dean's normal teaching load is, but yes, I will teach. I fully expect to teach," he says.

The new dean also has his

hands full with his research group – with four graduate and three undergraduate students researching under his supervision.

"It's going to be a reasonably sized group. I fully expect to keep on at the research end."

"I think the biggest impact on research will be doing things in the lab. I have continued to be hands on working in the lab. That has diminished, and will probably evaporate. Having the time to be able to work in the lab is something that I assume will disappear."

Though the sciences were always his passion, Magee says chemistry wasn't initially the career path he aimed for.

"I entered university thinking I wanted to be a meteorologist, but then found out you had to be good in physics to be a meteorologist. Physics was not my strongest subject. That, by default, left me with chemistry. I didn't take any biology, not even in first year. I took geology. Of the remaining sciences, chemistry was the one that I liked the most."

Bookbag feeling Heavy? Lighten the load!

Class of 2012 hits UNB

From Orientation A1

There is programming that's trying to target different personalities, different interests."

Several days of academic orientation also led up to the first day of classes on Sept. 4.

The evening of Thursday,

September 4th will give students a chance to familiarize themselves with the city of Fredericton at the Freddy Beach Party in Officer's Square.

Here, students from not only the University of New Brunswick, but also St. Thomas, New Brunswick Community College and New Brunswick College of Craft and Design will meet downtown and are welcomed by city officials

and residents of Fredericton. The evening will not only allow students to meet more of their kind, but there will be prizes, food and entertainment.

Orientation Week concludes with Shinerama, which is the year's largest fundraiser and raises money for cystic fibrosis. It also allows students to work together in groups and further budding friendships.

Now when you pay your tuition or residence fees through online banking you will be automatically entered in a draw for a chance to win one of four University Bookstore gift certificates, valued at \$250 each. Contest closes September 19th 2008. Gift certificates can be redeemed at UNB Fredericton or Saint John Campus Bookstores.

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