letters to the editor.

Arts students are as important as other students

Dear Editor,

I would like to write a response letter regarding Sarah Farquhar's first-ever personal column, "BA does not stand for 'barely anything'" dated January 21, 2009. (I'm her hall proctor, so I'd like to give my congratulations to her).

Today, the Bachelor of Arts population are often deemed as the "lazy, getting-drunk-all-the-time-and-still-get-B's" students. I am very angered by that stereotype that is put upon them today. The ironic thing is that every time I have asked arts students what their program of study was, each one of them would give me a shoulder shrug. Wait, what? If you are not proud to be in Arts, then why are you even in it?

It is inevitable that the arts students are overwhelmed by science and engineering students' demanding schedule and assignments. The only difference is that the Arts students don't have labs, and extra engineering fees. Who doesn't say that reading *Romeo & Juliet* in Old English is easy? Who doesn't say that re-enacting MacBeth for a play on a stage in front of hundreds of people is a breeze in the wind?

Some of you might think that math is everything, but that is not entirely true. Yes, math does provide us the comfortable and the satisfaction of a good life. Now think about this: imagine a world without movies. What are you thinking now? Thanks to actors, producers, and screenwriters for making movies a reality. In thermodynamics, we are generally known only to care about a system in its initial and final states. We don't care what path it took to get from state one to state two. Arts are able to fill that blank with movies, television series, and books.

Secondly, the world would be a very boring place without people educated in the arts. They are constantly reminding us of our own personal emotions, and teaching us to appreciate music, nature, and the sunshine. That doesn't make them lower-functioning than engineering students; it's just a different way of discovering themselves with their path in their life.

Believe it or not, all the girlfriends I have dated in the past have been arts students. Don't ask me why. Maybe it's just that most of them like to learn new languages, namely American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate with me. I am always learning the most random things from them, things that I would never think of on a daily basis, and I really appreciate them for that.

It's disappointing for me to see arts students letting the stereotype being put on them. Next time, when someone asks your program of study, reply to the question with a confident voice and a smile.

Being an engineering student myself, the arts students always bring the life out of me with happiness and much love.

In conclusion, I concur with Miss Farquhar that the Arts students should receive some more respect.

Sincerely,

Michael Stewart
Third year mechanical engineering student

Representing student interests includes representing students from abroad

Dear Brunswickan Editors,

Please consider the following letter for your op-ed section.

An anonymous friend at UNB tipped me off to your issue two weeks ago (Issue 17, January 21, 2009), which I read online. I have to say that I am appalled by the actions of the nine Student Union (SU) Councillors/Executives who voted against a motion to oppose the presence of Lockheed Martin—a weapons manufacturer that profits from death and destruction—at the UNB campus. I suspect the nine Councillors that voted against the must not know anyone from any of the various parts of the world torn by war and conflict.

These nine Councillors and Nick Ouellette ("Has our student council opened Pandora's Box?") have effectively and condescendingly said to all non-white, non-domestic students, "We don't care about you and your issues."

The Brunswickan reported ("Council shuts down Lockheed Martin motion;" "Has our student council opened Pandora's Box?" and opinion letter "Stop using SU to push political and ideological agenda") that the SU's executive, some of its Councillors, and one Council observer, believe that such a motion is beyond the scope of a student association. Furthermore, the SU's President believes "council is not a place to debate these issues." Where, then, is the place to debate issues that concern students, if not in their student council? I thought an student leaders were elected to represent the interests of their members, and let's not forget this includes students from abroad. The nine that voted against the Lockheed Martin motion effectively slammed an ignorant hand down on the table in protest that they might have to actually take action on something meaningful.

Bethany Vail, by saying "council is not a place to debate these issues," has said that the SU, a supposedly democratic organization, should not democratically entertain issues brought forward to council. I'm just curious as to what issues will be debated at the UNB SU, if its Executive does not respect its members and their requests. The motion, as reported, only asked the SU to denounce the presence of Lockheed Martin at UNB. All it would take is a media advisory. The motion didn't ask for the SU to organize an emergency rally, although that would have been a better response from the SU's leadership. What has happened and what has been said is shameful, and I would be embarrassed if I were a student at UNB.

Regards,
Jim Stanley

What part-time faculty are fighting for

Dear Editor,

This is the first anniversary of the agreement of the New Brunswick Labour Board admitting part-time academic faculty at UNB to the union. It is important that a good first contract change the conditions of work for the part-time faculty. I think students would like to know more about "what we are fighting for."

The preparation of lectures is very time-consuming, calling for months or even years of work. Each time a course is taught there is student feedback. If the job is to be done properly, and if the teacher is to be appropriately paid, courses need to be offered at least five to 10 times. In effect, a teacher's lecture notes are his or her capital, and the stipend paid for delivering the lectures amounts to a return on that capital investment. But the system does not always meet that requirement. I have prepared four new courses in as many years. Only one has been taught for more than one year. That course, to which I had committed six months preparation time not to speak of a life-time spent researching in the field, was taken away from me after two years by a permanent faculty member, and I was offered back a course I developed in the early 1990s, but was poached away from me years ago. Full-time faculty would never accept those conditions for themselves.

Part-time faculty want an end to practices that are contrary to the logic of teaching, and place an unreasonable burden upon the teacher. They want their qualifications to be respected by their colleagues, and they want to be able to deliver their best. For this to happen, their seniority has to be recognized in the university and in their departments, and their advice about the governance of their department must be welcomed. Terms of employment, full-time and part-time, should not be confused with job description.

Some compensation needs to be offered for time spent preparing to teach a course that is subsequently canceled, and a formula needs to be established that recognizes the equivalence between the teaching undertaken by permanent employees and that by part-time faculty, one that recognizes the continuing requirement to support teaching by participation in research and writing. University teachers can only provide lectures to introduce students to the state of the art in their fields if they are themselves involved in that research.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Tracy
Adjunct Professor of History

Study abroad in France



Submitted

Students on a previous summer session in France trip.

Constantine E. Passaris
Submitted to the Brunswickan

For a third consecutive year, the University of New Brunswick is offering its very popular Summer Session in France.

Two courses will be offered in France from July 6 to 25, 2009: FR 3594, "Paris in Literature", taught in French by Dr. Robert Viau; and ECON 3705 "Canada and the New Global Economy", taught in English by Dr. Constantine Passaris. Classes will be held in French Universities, museums, churches, banks, restaurants, sidewalk cafés and in other important sites related to French economics, literature, politics and history.

All are invited. You may choose to audit the courses or take them for credit. Come practice your French and learn about the European economy. Don't worry, after a few days, you will have adapted quite well and greatly improved your knowledge of the French language. The idea is to give you the opportunity for a full immersion in the French culture and economy.

The city of Poitiers has a vibrant culture that attracts many young artists and is the dynamic regional capital of the Poitou-Charentes. From our base in the medieval city of Poitiers, we have planned excursions by bus in the Poitou-Charentes region: Touffou castle, La Roche-Courbon castle, the seaport of Rochefort, the medieval village of Chauvigny, St-Savin abbey, and the Renaissance castle of Amboise in the Loire Valley.

We will be invited to official receptions (by the University of Poitiers and the Vienne departmental government) and enjoy gastronomic meals in regional restaurants. After a full week exploring Poitiers and the French countryside, we will settle for the next two weeks in Paris.

In Paris, we will go to all the legendary landmarks, including a full day in Versailles, and have many exceptional visits (allowed only under special permission to UNB): the Sorbonne University, the Bank of France, Unesco, the Canadian Embassy, the Senate, the National Assembly, and the National Library of France. We will also have a nocturnal visit of the Louvre, a Parisian fashion show, a banquet in a renowned restaurant, an excursion by boat on the Seine River, celebrations of the National Holiday (July 14) and many other activities.

Come and visit the Louvre, follow the steps of the characters in the Da Vinci Code, search for Quasimodo in the belfry of Notre-Dame Cathedral, see where the French Revolution started and where the guillotine ended the life of Marie-Antoinette, admire the monuments of Louis XIV and Napoleon, climb the Eiffel Tower, sit where Hemingway wrote The Sun Also Rises and drank with Scott Fitzgerald and Henry Miller, play chess in the café in Montparnasse where Lenin and Trotsky waited for the Russian Revolution to start, walk through Picasso's studio, pay your respects to rock star Jim Morrison (of the the Doors) at his final resting place and create your own enduring myths!

Program fees include almost everything and lodgings are of superior quality.

For more information about the course or how to register, please visit *http://www.cel.unb.ca/travelstudy/france/index.php*

For the 2009 Summer Session in France, we accept a limited number of participants.

Poitiers and Paris are waiting for you! Register now!

For more information about the course or if you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to write *rviau@unb.ca* or *passaris@unb.ca*.



