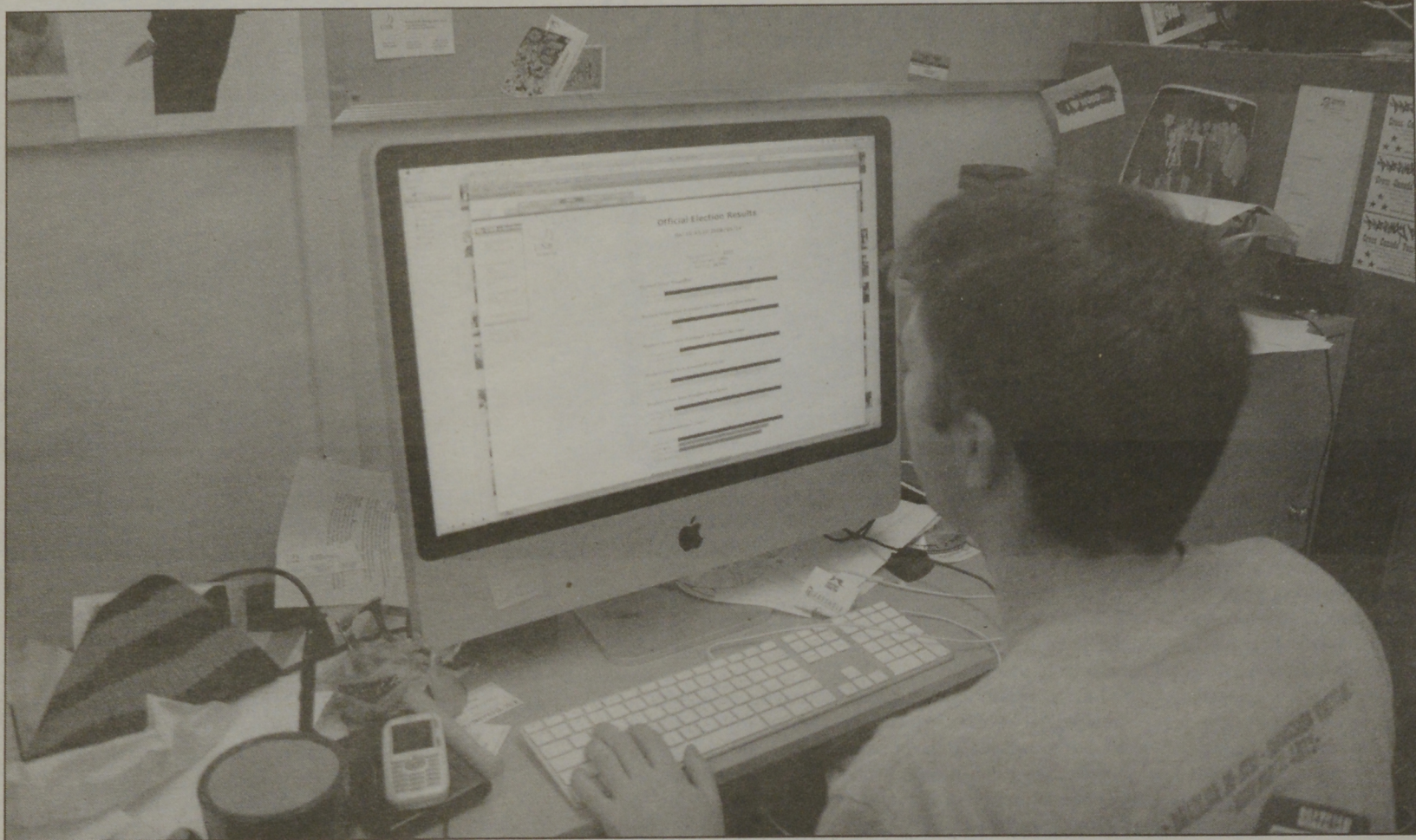


brunswickanopinion

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UNBSU Election: It's all about education



Andrew Meade / The Brunswickan

Voting in the upcoming UNBSU general election is as simple as logging onto your UNB eServices from Feb. 22 - 27.

the brunswickan

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The Brunswickan relies primarily on a volunteer base to produce its issues every week. Volunteers can drop by room 35 of the SUB at any time to find out how they can get involved.

About Us

The Brunswickan, in its 142nd year of publication, is Canada's Oldest Official Student Publication.

We are an autonomous student newspaper owned and operated by Brunswickan Publishing Inc., a non-profit, independent body. We are a founding member of the Canadian University Press, and love it so. We are also members of U-Wire, a media exchange of university media throughout North America.

We publish weekly during the academic year with a circulation of 6,000.

Letters

Must be submitted by e-mail including your name, letters with pseudonyms will not be printed. Letters must be 400 words at maximum. Deadline for letters is Friday at 5 p.m. before each issue.

Editorial Policy

While we endeavour to provide an open forum for a variety of viewpoints and ideas, we may refuse any submission considered by the editorial board to be racist, sexist, libellous, or in any way discriminatory.

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Tony von Richter

In case you haven't noticed the hundreds of signs and posters being put up around campus, it's election time here at UNB and we're well into the first week of campaigning.

With a wide variety of candidates there are sure to be a number of different themes and topics over the course of this election, but one thing you're sure to hear is that you should get out and vote.

That's what we're supposed to do, right? To get out there and exercise our democratic rights and help appoint which people will be representing UNB students interests for the next year?

But here's a thought: maybe we shouldn't.

At least not until we understand the candidates and the issues.

While it's great that people have the good intentions to go out and vote, an uninformed voter is a potentially dangerous voter, reducing what should be an important decision to some kind of high stakes multiple choice test.

And this isn't one of those tests where there is no wrong answer. There certainly is one, but which one that is is entirely up to you.

That's where the education part

comes in.

I'm not saying that everyone needs to commission an in-depth study into the background of each candidate or that you should be able to quote a candidate's platform word-for-word before deciding how to vote, but you should at least know what everyone represents before making your choices.

So, if there's a debate in the SUB, stop by and check it out, even if just for a minute. Take a look at the candidates' platforms in the Bruns each week, and at the candidates' websites and Facebook pages. See where they stand on issues like tuition, student services, and academics and determine who you think best represents students' interests.

Even with all that information at our fingertips sometimes we can still refuse

to use it – and that would be just as big a mistake as not knowing anything at all. As harsh as it sounds, one thing we shouldn't be doing in this or any election is voting for someone just because they are our friend, or a friend of a friend.

As much as I hate to say it, intentionally choosing someone who you feel is less qualified just because of a personal relationship may end up doing more harm than not even voting in the first place.

So get educated. Know your candidates. Then, and only then, make an informed decision on who you think will be the best persons to represent UNB students for the next year.

Tony von Richter is Managing Editor of The Brunswickan. Feel free to contact him at managing@unb.ca.

letters to the editor.

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Letter failed to understand ethical concerns

This is written in response to Jacques Landry's letter to the editor:

In the January 18 issue of the Brunswickan, Jacques Landry expressed his concern about a planned protest of a Lockheed Martin recruitment session, and a motion brought forward to the Student Union, among other things.

In criticizing Councillor Matt Abbott and the student group STRAX, it seems that Mr. Landry is missing the point. His concerns are primarily those of social niceties and etiquette, while he fails to understand the legitimate ethical objections raised by those individuals. His lack of concern is disconcerting because it ignores the far more serious issue of unquestioningly supporting corporations that manufacture weapons.

In my first draft of this letter, I wrote that it was a good thing that Lockheed Martin chose not to host a recruitment presentation, however, it would seem that my reasons for believing so end up sounding frightening similar to Mr. Landry's: because "I" don't like it. In virtually every instance I support

open dialogue, and on principle, I think that the same applies to this situation. That does not mean that I support Lockheed Martin, or think that they should be let off the hook if they decide yet to visit UNB; but I do think that the moral culpability of working for such a company is a debate that should occur.

In his letter, Mr. Landry said that he is insulted that his student fees are funding radio airtime for groups he doesn't support. However, his comments undermine the very foundation that community radio and student newspapers stand on. That would be like me suggesting that student fees for the Brunswickan be revoked just because I don't agree with what he has written. Which, by the way, is not what I am suggesting.

If it was really the allocation of student fees that concerned Mr. Landry, perhaps he could start by questioning the Student Union's \$30,000 budget for Campaigns and Self-Promotion.

Regards,
Kerri Krawec

Don't impose values onto
SU without constituents'
support

Dear Editor,

I thoroughly agree with your open letter to Alex Corey. Councillors who do not represent their constituents properly and use their position to self-serve his or her own morals, personal values and views should be removed from their position as member of the Student Union.

I am the Business Representative; as such, I represent the needs and concerns for registered undergraduate business students. A day before the meeting was scheduled to determine the fate of the Lockheed Martin motion, I had openly approached many business students and even random students who I knew from other classes about said motion. My final tally of students: 25 business students, 11 arts students, 7 engineering students and 17 science students. Yes, 17 science students. What was the result? All of them were NOT in favor for the motion.

I wonder where Councillor Corey received his support for his motion? Perhaps a gang of 50 science students knocked on his door and profusely expressed their desire and hatred for Lockheed Martin. Perhaps Councillor Corey simply decided to take his views from STRAX and apply them to everyone in his constituency.

Perhaps Councillor Corey can tell the

rest of his constituents which is the bogus story, and which is the bona fide truth.

Councillor Corey's actions were naff and selfish. Lockheed Martin does much more than just make weapons. They are involved in: integrative technologies with communications, wireless and mobile computing, environmental sciences, public health information systems, network centric solutions, energy solutions and biometric computing solutions. What does this translate into? This equates to jobs for computer science students, science students, engineering students and business students.

I may not agree with some of what Lockheed Martin does, and I may even hate them for doing it, but I am not my whole constituency. My vote is for the constituency, not for me. This motion directly opposed the views of the students I spoke with; this includes your constituents and mine.

I hope that the next time Councillor Corey decides to impose his values onto the Student Union that he has a little more than personal righteous indignation, and a fair amount of constituents' support.

Solidarity,
UNB SU Business Representative
5th year BBA (Hon) Finance
Chris Gunter