

Tech fee to help curb spam

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THE BRUNSWICKAN

Due to a large number of complaints surrounding inboxes full of spam, UNB Integrated Technology Services (ITS) has made steps to reduce the irritating extraneous emails.

After receiving comments from annoyed students, UNBSU VP Student Services Stephanie Lord put in a request to ITS, asking them to do something about the issue.

"I complained based on the students' complaints," says Lord. "This is the first time I've seen someone change it.

"I'm sick and tired of e-mails about penis enlargements," says Lord.

A total of \$4,104 was requested to improve the quality of spam filters. That number has been approved in the 2009-10 student technology fee budget.

Janice El-Bayoumi, Director of the Student Technology Fee, says that there will be an option created to automatically delete UNB tagged spam or have it re-directed to other places. This will be enacted by clicking a "simple button."

"Everybody complains about spam. It's an irritant. We try to take student suggestions," says El-Bayoumi.

The situation seems to be looking up now.

"To me, the key item is that a student suggested the change," says El-Bayoumi.

"We try to turn their suggestions into something that can meet their needs."

Senior Technical Analyst Bill Hamilton says that ITS hopes to implement the new filters by September 2009, in time for the coming academic year. Timing, however, cannot be determined until May, since the budget depends on funds that UNB expects to collect in the coming year.

"We'd like to get this implemented over the summer, so students get the benefits from the fee," says El-Bayoumi.

Once the new filters are put in place, an e-mail will be sent to students explaining how to access the new settings.

There are other changes expected in the new budget as well. One of the changes that Hamilton and El-

Bayoumi are especially excited about is the completion of wireless accessibility across all UNB campuses, including Moncton and Bathurst.

"Students seemed to be saying, 'We pay the tech fee too, and we don't seem to be getting anything,'" says Hamilton. The 2009-10 tech fee is expected to provide wireless internet to all student areas.

There are other highlights as well. "Public labs are being pretty much totally renewed through the tech fee," says Hamilton.

El-Bayoumi says that, if under-budget, the overturn from the tech fee is turned over to the next year, continuing to benefit students.

"Every bit gets put back in," she says.

McLaughlin leaves the building

FROM McLAUGHLIN PAGE 1

a lot of difficult moments," he says of the public debate in Fall 2007 that was sparked by the Miner/L'Ecuyer report. "But one of the things I've taken away from this is how the community rallied behind the vision. The parts contributed to something bigger."

While the fight to save UNBSJ was a tough one, the end result was positive for the UNB and New Brunswick communities, says McLaughlin.

"Students were so effective politically, it was very hard for politicians to say 'we want to do what's best for our students' when our students were saying, 'why don't you give us a chance?'"

While students did find a voice in government PSE policy – as evidenced by last month's provincial budget – the university has found itself in uneasy financial circumstances moving ahead.

"It used to be that we looked with envy to the rest of Canada" for government financial assistance, says McLaughlin. "Now, unfortunately, we're also looking at the other provinces in Atlantic Canada. We aren't getting the same level of support that the other Atlantic provinces are."

Investing in universities, he says, is investing in the future of the province, and he hopes that the provincial government recognizes post-secondary education as an essential human capital investment.

"Virtually every other jurisdiction in Canada, even though they're all going through a very tough time financially, all found new money to invest in universities, because they all know that this is where the future is ... Even in tough financial times, you still have to focus on strategic priorities. And that was not displayed in the provincial budget of New Brunswick."

McLaughlin believes that the localized perspective of the government in New Brunswick is responsible for the treatment of PSE funding in the province.

Its key shortfall, he says, is "an inability to move beyond the local to build a strategic future for the province."

"We've got to be able to do that before we can really layer in why post-secondary is more important."

In the last six months, he says, the dialogue with the provincial government has been getting better. The appointment of Donald Arseneault and Byron James as the new Minister and Deputy Minister, respectively, of Post-Secondary Education, Training & Labour, has sped up the discussion, says McLaughlin.

"I would say the provincial budget was a bit discouraging, but outside of that, it has been a positive conversation."

However, he says, "I think the government still has a lot of work to do to create an effective communication and engagement strategy."

At the end of the day, McLaughlin says he never skipped a beat during his term as president.

"There was a lot of heated stuff, but I can't remember a day when I didn't wake up just full of excitement. I've absolutely loved it."

He believes that the team behind him has helped make UNB an incredible university.

"A president is at best a conductor. It's all about an orchestra," he says. "And an awful lot of people gave everything to the cause over the last couple of years."

When we talk about how we're on our way to being the top public university in the country – that is a goal we can realize."

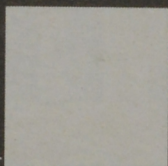
McLaughlin will be succeeded by Dr. H. E. A. (Eddy) Campbell on Sept. 1, 2009.

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