

NEW BRUNSWICK UNIVERSITIES PRESIDENTS' GROUP

Submission to:

The Government of New Brunswick's
Commission on Post-secondary Education

April, 2007



**Some Fast and Important Facts
About
New Brunswick's Universities**
*(Université de Moncton, Mount Allison University,
University of New Brunswick and St. Thomas University)*

Economic Impact

New Brunswick's four universities are a key economic driver of the provincial economy.

- **\$1 billion plus in total economic impact**
- **\$550 million in direct spending**
- **3,600 full – and – part time employees**
- **\$202 million plus in total annual payroll**
- **\$113 million annually in R&D activities**
- **72 percent of New Brunswick's total R&D performance**
- **\$110 million in total tax revenues**

Critical Issue: Campus infrastructure renewal

Capital funding for New Brunswick's universities is absolutely essential to simply maintain current levels of quality and competitiveness.

- **Total current replacement value of \$1.3 Billion**
- **Total accumulated deferred maintenance of \$236 Million**

Context

“Our post-secondary institutions must be prepared and equipped to compete successfully in a global environment.

That means our graduates must be able to take their places with the best in the world, and our institutions must be as good as any anywhere.”

*Commission on Post-Secondary Education in New Brunswick
Discussion Paper March 2007*

This view, so clearly expressed by the Commissioners of New Brunswick’s Commission on Post-Secondary Education (the Commissioners) in the March 2007 Discussion Paper, is a powerful statement. It strongly reinforces the sentiment of the leaders of New Brunswick’s four universities. And, that is why those leaders have formed the New Brunswick Universities Presidents’ Group (NBUPG).

The NBUPG has a clear-eyed view of the future. Our university leaders know, perhaps more acutely than most, the absolute importance of their institutional competitiveness, nationally and internationally.

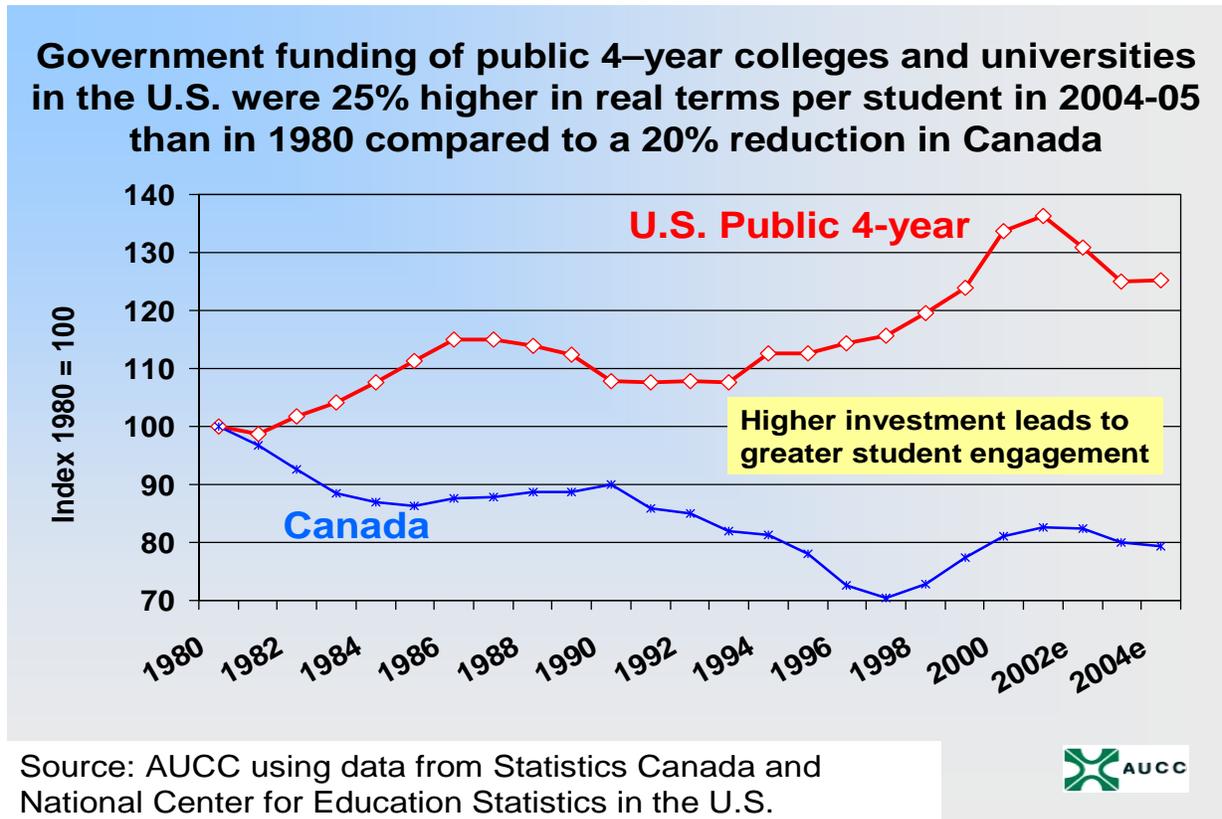
It is only by having universities “as good as anywhere” that New Brunswick will achieve Premier Graham’s vision of “self-sufficiency”.

However, if the Government of New Brunswick and its universities are to strive successfully together into the future, it is vital to have insight into the environment in which are institutions are competing for undergraduate and post-graduate students, for operating, capital and research funding while aspiring to achieve the highest possible quality standards.

Canada – U.S. Funding Comparisons

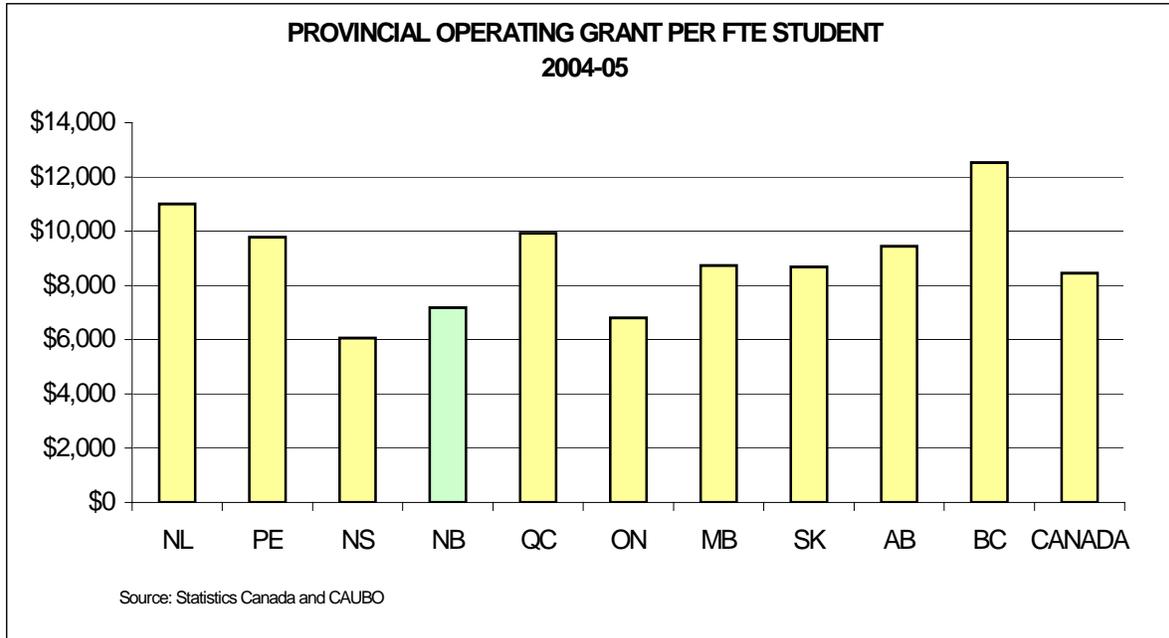
There are some that opine that money should be the last, not the first, thing discussed in looking at the future of our universities.

However, the evidence shows that Canadian universities simply do not have the resources available to their peer institutions in the U.S. As a result, a growing quality gap is emerging.



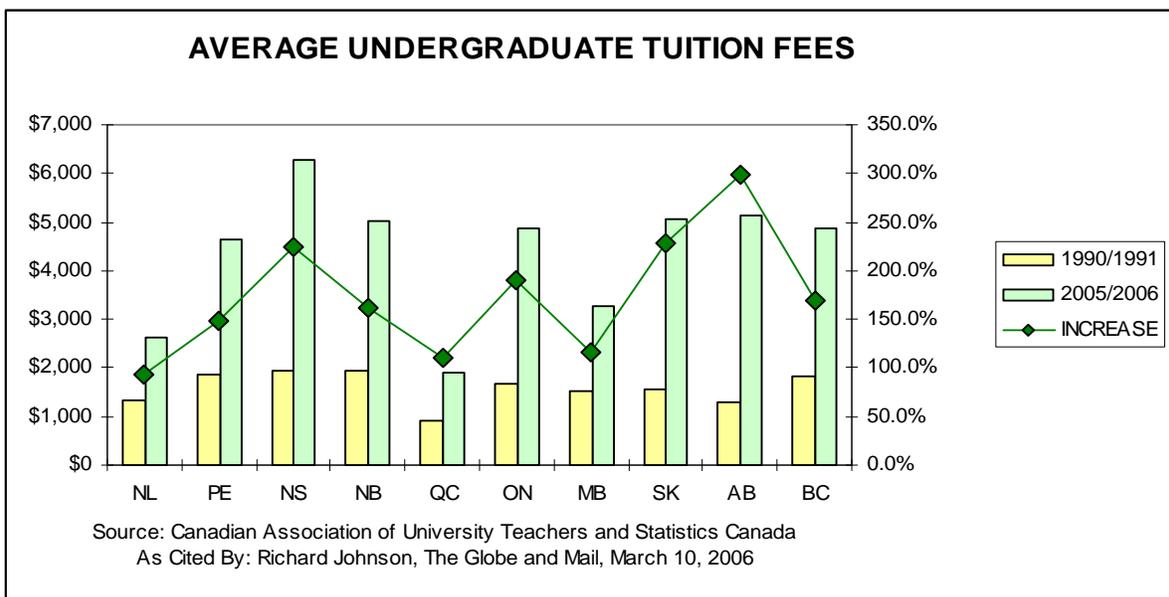
Provincial Operating Grants for Universities in Canada

The following chart illustrates the investment made by the Government of New Brunswick in its universities compared to other Provincial governments.



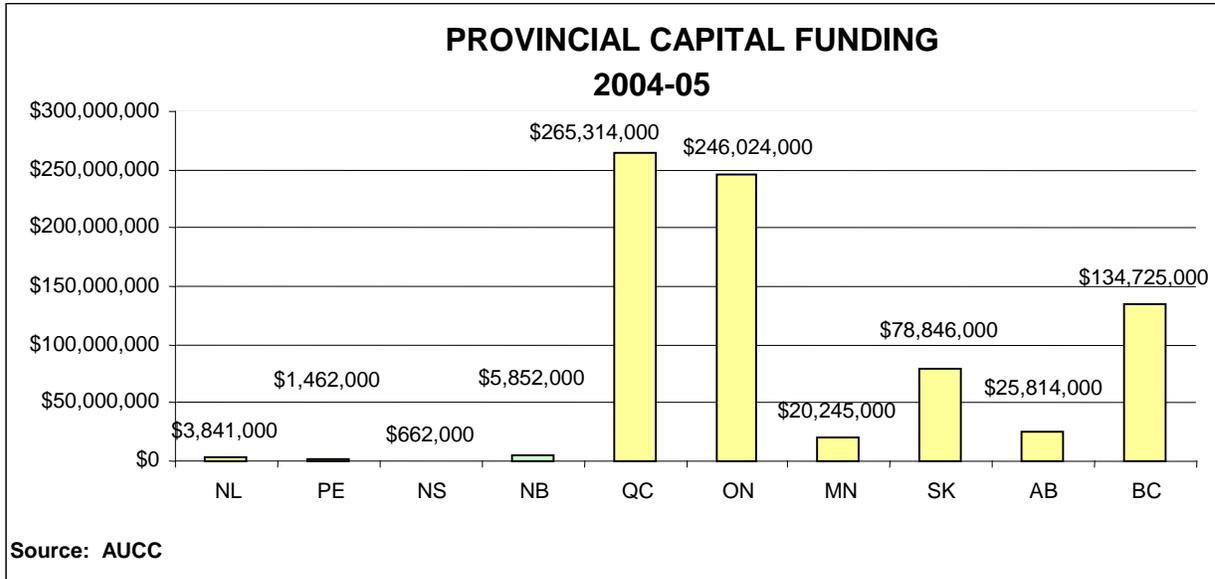
Average undergraduate tuition fees and growth percentage across Canada 1990-2005

New Brunswick currently has the fourth highest university tuition fees in the country and the sixth highest tuition fee growth in Canada, second only to Nova Scotia in the Atlantic Provinces.



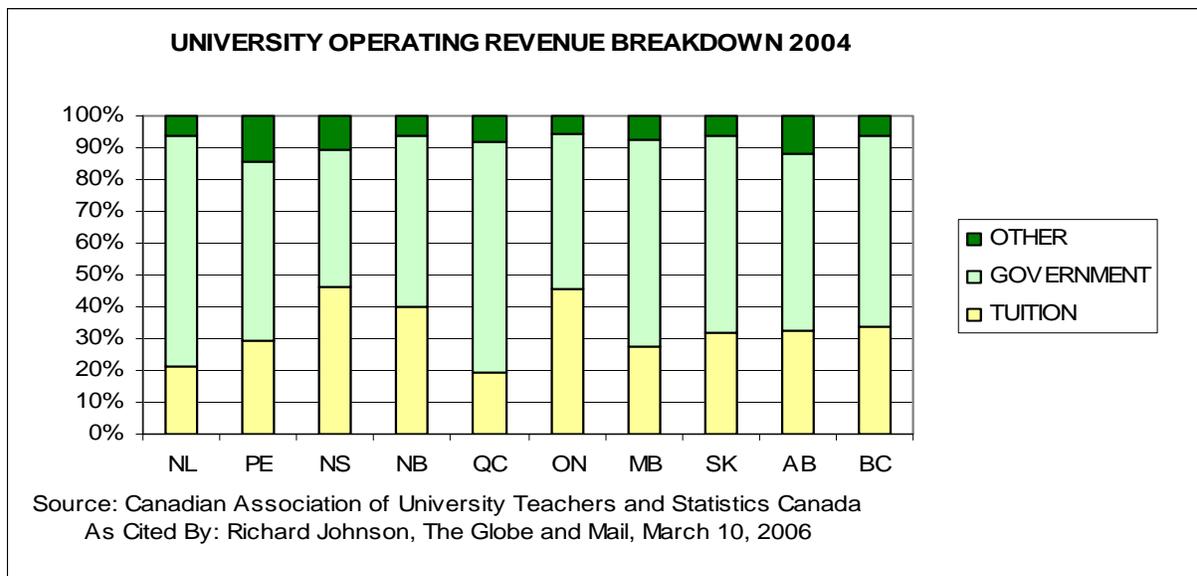
Provincial Capital Funding

New Brunswick's Capital Funding, while the best in the Atlantic Provinces, is still far below the National average of \$79 million.



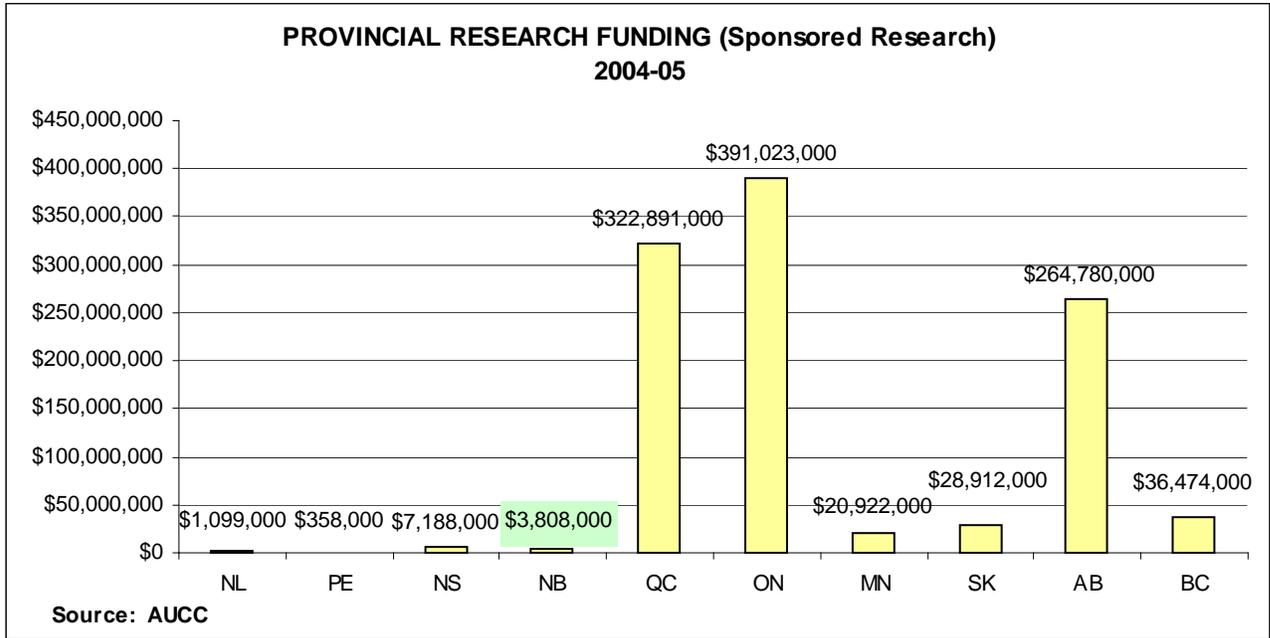
University operating revenue breakdown 2004

Students in New Brunswick's universities contribute the third highest proportion of revenue from tuition fees in Canada and the second most (next to Nova Scotia) in the Atlantic Provinces.



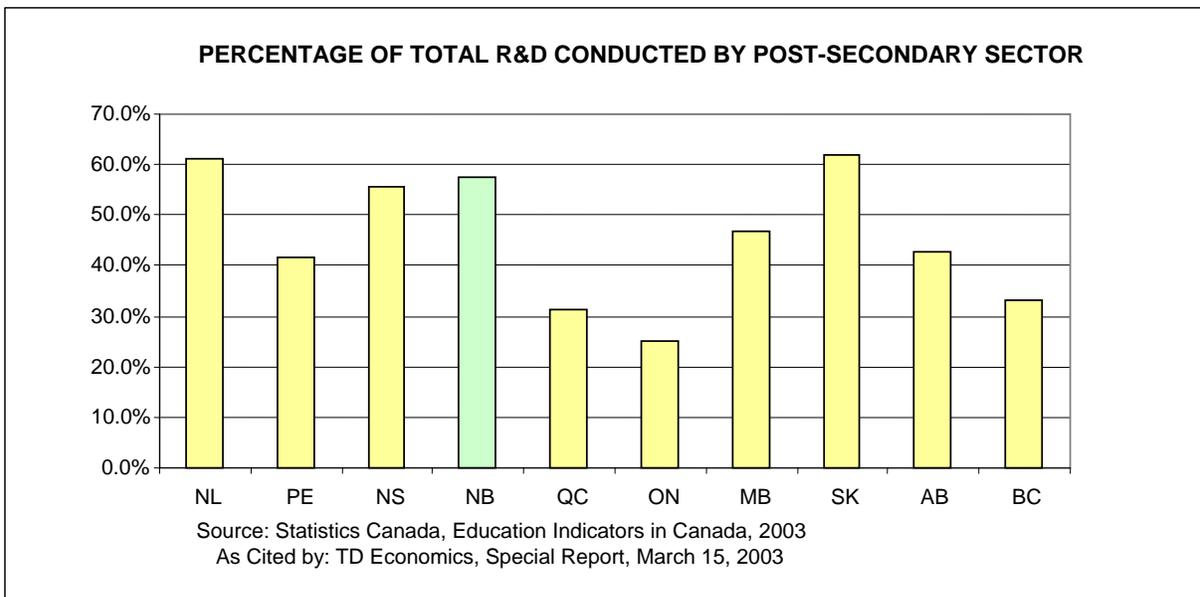
Provincial Funding of University Research

Research and development is crucial to New Brunswick's economic prosperity and quality of life.



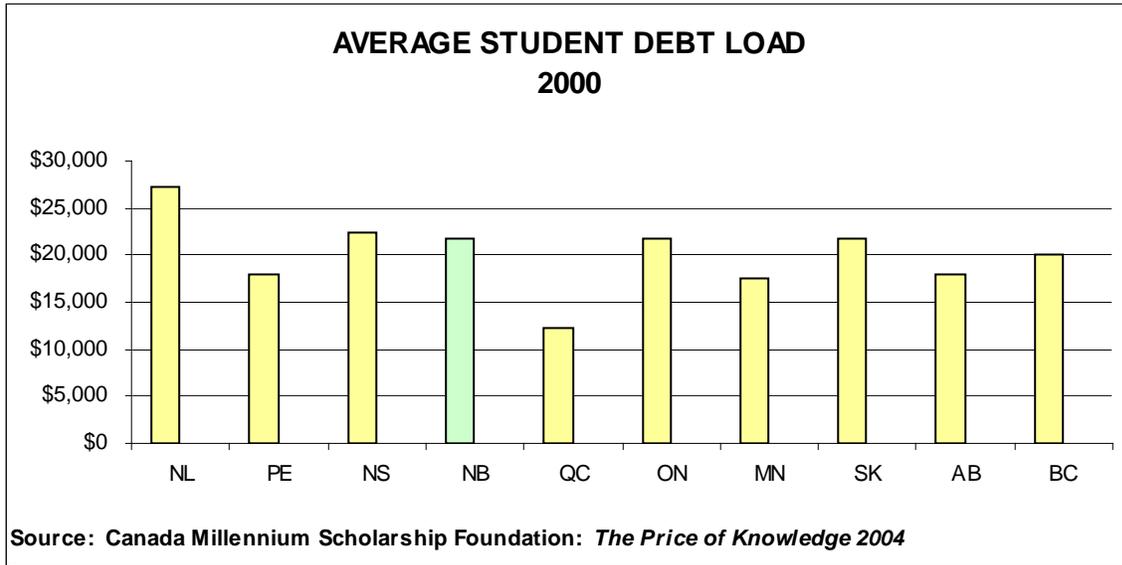
Role of New Brunswick's Universities in Provincial R&D

The percentage of R&D conducted by universities in New Brunswick is the third highest in Canada (57.5%).



Student Debt Load

The incidence of student loan debt among university graduates in New Brunswick in 2000 was 51.7%, the second-highest rate in the country and much higher than the national average of 42%. The average amount of student debt among New Brunswick graduates was \$21,700, which exceeds the national average of \$18,900



Background

“My vision for this province is as straightforward as it is challenging. I want New Brunswick to join the ranks of the ‘have’ provinces and I want the province to accomplish this over the next 20 years.”

The Hon. Shawn Graham, Premier, Government of New Brunswick
Charter for Change, September, 2006

This is a bold and important vision for New Brunswick.

It is critical to New Brunswick’s future that the province’s universities are strategically aligned with the Government’s vision of a self-sustaining provincial economy within the next 20 years.

New Brunswick’s historically strong university sector is well known for its role as educators and as the inspiration and training ground for the next generation of business, government and political leaders, professionals and entrepreneurs.

New Brunswick’s Universities at a Glance

- **20,500 undergraduate students**
- **1,390 graduate students**
- **2,880 part-time students**
- **1,961 international students**
- **4,800 degrees granted annually**
- **80 percent of students remain in the province following graduation**

In recent years, the role of universities as the leaders of New Brunswick’s research and development and innovation agendas has emerged dramatically. University-led R&D is driving the creation of more and more commercialization of new products, services and ideas for export to the world from New Brunswick.

Greater recognition for the role of universities as a key driver of provincial prosperity and quality of life improvements has grown in tandem with the rapid emergence of New Brunswick’s knowledge economy.

This is an important foundation to build upon. However, New Brunswick’s universities do not have an eye on the rear view mirror. Our universities are fixed on the future and on their role for ensuring that New Brunswick becomes a ‘have’ province.

We believe the Commission on Post-Secondary Education (the Commission) and the province's universities can and should be at the heart of creating a new future for New Brunswick.

The Commission offers our province an unprecedented opportunity to maximize the strengths and opportunities offered by the post-secondary education sector to re-create New Brunswick as a great destination within Canada and around the world for new and life-long learners, for researchers and scholars, for the new creative class, and for budding entrepreneurs.

This submission from the New Brunswick Universities Presidents' Group (NBUPG) focuses on big ideas which are absolutely achievable in the context of the Government's Charter for Change if, and only if, education--teaching quality, infrastructure and research--is made a top public policy priority by the Government.

Undergraduate education is the foundation stone upon which our national success is erected. It cannot be weakened by redirecting resources to graduate education and research and, thereby, ironically and seriously compromising the quality of the latter. Excellence at the undergraduate level is a pre-condition for excellence at the graduate and research levels.

“A Leader in Economic Development...Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth...A Vibrant Cultural Sector...Population Strategy...High Hopes for Higher Education”

Charter for Change, Premier Shawn Graham's plan for a Better New Brunswick, September, 2006

Like the Government of New Brunswick, the province's four universities also have “high hopes for higher education”.

We hold the view that the strategic integration of education and research with advanced information communications technologies as well as internationalization of the provincial economy and its communities, are absolutely central to creating a new narrative for New Brunswick.

From the outset it must be recognized that traditional channels of delivering fundamental education and research, skills development, life long-learning and societal development must change to take full-advantage of the technology revolution.

The Pew Internet and American Life Project in the U.S. conducts surveys and produces reports that explore the impact of the Internet on the daily lives of Americans. They found in 2005, that 75 percent of Internet users aged 12 to 17, and 66 percent of those aged 18 to 27 (Generation Y) went online to Instant Messaging (IM), compared with 52 percent of the next-oldest (Generation X) group. And groups older than Gen-Xers rated even less IM use. Further, in 2004, Pew found that 57 percent of Generation Y users would rather use IM than e-mail, compared with just 16 percent of those in Generation X, something they dubbed the “The IM Gap.” Another Pew survey, conducted last fall, found that 55 percent of 12-17-year-olds use online social networking sites, nearly half of these users visit these sites daily or more often.

AUCC/University Affairs, March 2007

'Cyberinfrastructure' for a better New Brunswick

“The evolution of knowledge communities enabled by cyberinfrastructure will require extensive collaboration among individuals from all fields and institutions across the entire education spectrum. In particular, universities must be responsible for initiating, developing, and supporting the lion’s share of cyberinfrastructure.”

Cyberinfrastructure: The Second Resolution
Arden L. Bement, Director, National Science Foundation

'Cyberinfrastructure' has been compared to vital infrastructure such as the power grid and the national highway system, because it potentially combines many complex elements to create a dynamic new system. It goes beyond hardware and software components, enabling people and their interactions with technology to become the central focus.

According to Arden Bement, *“At the heart of the new ‘cyberinfrastructure’ vision are cultural communities that support to peer-to-peer collaboration and new modes of education. They are distributed-knowledge communities in an institutional context, not of bricks and mortar like the traditional university, but rather virtual organizations that work across institutional boundaries – and ultimately around the globe.”*

New Brunswick’s university leaders envision a new opportunity for research and learning in our province – a system where 'cyberlearning' augments the more traditional learning environments. Such a system will foster additional channels of interaction among people, communities, information and facilities.

Just as there is a regional, national and international trend toward collaboration in developing larger research facilities that are just too costly for provinces and institutions to replicate, when 'cyberinfrastructure' tools are integrated into virtual networks, they become community-based resources, on a provincial, national and global scale.

The 'cyberinfrastructure' envisioned by our universities will give the world an open window to New Brunswick and all it has to offer in terms of post-secondary education institutions, workplace learning and skills development centers and creative hubs.

In time, New Brunswick’s 'cyberinfrastructure' will extend to every level of education, providing learners and communities with unparalleled access to a networked learning environment including universities, community colleges, P-12 schools, specialized training centers within business, industry and government.

It will go well beyond providing access to learning and research programs, it will promote and enable inter-activity between learners from within New Brunswick and around the world with institutions and their faculty, researchers and students, as well as entrepreneurs, technologists, arts and culture groups, and communities.

While New Brunswick has relatively high participation rates in post-secondary education, the province's illiteracy rate is at a staggering 56 percent of the population. In addition, there remain many under-represented groups in our universities, such as those from financially disadvantaged families, remote rural communities, Aboriginal learners, the disabled, and new immigrants.

'*Cyberinfrastructure*' will help fulfill the Government's commitment in Charter for Change "...to do better at getting low-income students through the doors of our universities and colleges." And, it has the potential to connect the under-represented, the illiterate and the disadvantaged to each other and most importantly, to the province's post-secondary education system.

Population Growth Strategy

The '*cyberinfrastructure*' envisioned by New Brunswick's universities has the potential to become the platform to advance the internationalization of the province in support of the Government's Population Growth Secretariat.

The Population Growth Secretariat has been created to help stop the population decline and increase the number of people living in New Brunswick. It will be responsible for retaining young New Brunswickers, aggressively repatriating former New Brunswickers, improving and increasing immigration and settlement services to retain newcomers, and aggressively marketing the province as a great destination to live and to work.

At its highest level, the Population Growth Secretariat is about the internationalization of New Brunswick, an important opportunity because our universities are becoming more and more active through a complex set of efforts including classroom learning, research partnerships formed by faculty members, international diplomacy on the part of institutional leadership, and the pursuit of revenue through fundraising and international student recruitment.

It is important to note that the universities draw new faculty to their collective ranks from outside the Province, and as a consequence contribute to population growth.

Internationalization of New Brunswick

“The scope and nature of Canadian universities’ international engagement underpins a range of foreign policy objectives including stronger diplomatic, scientific, commercial and trade partnerships, particularly with countries of strategic interest to Canada; finding solutions to global development challenges; promoting Canadian values abroad through people-to-people interaction; and fostering a strong sense of global citizenship in the next generation of leaders.”

Achieving Canadian Excellence in and for the World:
Knowledge Partnerships as Building Blocks of Canada’s
International Relations.
Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
October, 2005

The sustainable economy envisioned by the Government of New Brunswick is linked to the ability of our universities to turn out graduates with strong international skills, knowledge of foreign languages and cultures, and an understanding of global economics—all of which are essential components of a solid undergraduate education in the arts.

New Brunswick’s universities are eager to deal with these highly valued and important expectations of government, business and industry. Our institutions are allocating senior resources to oversee many international ventures, including research, community outreach and teaching. Faculty are adapting classroom teaching to bring global perspectives to their students, and institutions are developing branch campuses or joint-degree programs in foreign markets. And the recruitment of highly motivated and highly qualified international students to New Brunswick from countries worldwide has intensified over the last four years.

In short, New Brunswick’s universities are uniquely positioned to make a valuable contribution to enhancing the province’s role nationally and internationally through knowledge partnerships, while at the same time providing a window on the world for its communities and citizens.

New Brunswick has a spectacular opportunity to leverage the strength of its universities to communicate to the country and to the world our considerable commitments and achievements in education and research – strong and growing linkages between English and French institutions and community colleges, professional schools, first order teaching at the undergraduate level, graduate programs and researchers, and urban and rural communities.

Strategic and intensified marketing of New Brunswick’s post-secondary education sector to the rest of Canada and the world is a means to attract students and faculty; repatriate graduates; build knowledge partnerships and encourage research investments..

The collective goal of the Provincial Government and its universities should be to make New Brunswick the destination of choice among the best and brightest students from New Brunswick, Atlantic Canada, the rest of Canada and in select markets internationally. This promotion and marketing effort would not be just aimed at students but also graduates, faculty, research scientists and technologists and life-long learners.

This initiative would bring both short-and-long term economic benefits to New Brunswick, its institutions and communities as well as enhancing the talent pool immeasurably.

Summary

“Four years; eight years; 10 years – this is not a long time to transform the destiny of a province. We cannot afford to lose a moment to fear or complacency.”

Premier Shawn Graham, Charter for Change, September, 2006

The Government of New Brunswick has set high but achievable objectives for our province.

The Commission has a unique opportunity to shape the public policy priorities of the Government and set the wheels in motion for a spectacular, new future for New Brunswick.

University leaders strongly advocate that the Government begin its transformation of New Brunswick from a “have not” to a “have” province by:

1. making education its top public policy priority;
2. substantially re-investing in operational and capital funding for its universities;
3. building upon the province’s history and reputation for technological innovation by investing in the second technological revolution – “cyberinfrastructure”;
4. beginning an intensive program of internationalization of New Brunswick’s economy and educational infrastructure;
5. ensuring investments in universities’ educational, research and technological infrastructure and internationalization are fully-integrated into the province’s sustainable economy and population growth strategies and,
6. taking full advantage of the powerful role the province’s four universities can play in helping transform New Brunswick for the better.

NEW BRUNSWICK'S UNIVERSITIES

Université de Moncton

www.umoncton.ca

Mount Allison University

www.mta.ca

University of New Brunswick

www.unb.ca

St. Thomas University

www.stu.ca

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