

# THE GATEWAY

volume XCVII number 4 ♦ the official student newspaper at the university of alberta ♦ www.gateway.ualberta.ca ♦ thursday, 14 september, 2006



DAN PLOUFFE, THE LINK

**SENSELESS VIOLENCE** Three women are directed away from Dawson College after a gunman opened fire in the building.

## Fatal shooting at Montréal college shocks Canadians

### Chaos at Dawson College brings city's centre to a halt as police evacuate area

JEREMY DELMAN  
CUP Québec Bureau Chief

MONTRÉAL (CUP)—A shooting in a Montréal college early yesterday afternoon has left one student and the gunman dead, and 19 others injured.

The shooter's identity is being withheld by police, but it's known that he's a 25-year-old resident of the Montréal area. The man reportedly entered Dawson College, an English-language institution in the city centre, and began firing into the school's crowded cafeteria at around 12:45pm.

The City of Montreal Police Service (SPVM) arrived minutes later and exchanged gunfire with the man, who was later found dead with multiple gunshot wounds. It's still unclear if the wounds were caused by police or self-inflicted. The officers then evacuated the school floor by floor, sending thousands of students into the streets.

But three hours after the shooting began, students on upper floors and in the basement were still locked in their classrooms, supposedly because police weren't sure whether more suspects were roaming the halls.

"There was blood everywhere around the cafeteria and gunshot holes through the main doors," said Roxanne Michaud, through tears and gasps, as she ducked under the police cordon. "I just want to go home."

Most of the injured were taken to Montréal General Hospital, where eight

people were listed as being in critical condition, while five others were taken to other medical centres in the city.

Fehr Marouf, a Dawson College student, was leaving for lunch with a friend when he saw a man in a trench coat and black boots approach the school with a large firearm.

"We ran back into Dawson and through the atrium telling people to leave. We got out from the other side," he said.

Though other descriptions from witnesses match Marouf's account, it's still not clear whether the suspect was a current student.

With SWAT teams preparing to enter the building and helicopters hovering overhead, hundreds of police officers manned a five-square-block perimeter of the scene, helping students leave and searching for any suspects who might have escaped in the crowd. After being directed away from the school, students and faculty sought refuge at nearby Concordia University. The institution's Student Union converted a building into a temporary shelter for those evacuated, and offered counselling to the traumatized students and staff.

"This is not something we've ever done before, so we're in uncharted territory," said Concordia SU President Khaleed Juma. "But at the same time, as soon as we heard, we started making the provisions to accommodate any number of students who would be arriving here."

Students from McGill University also had representatives on hand, guiding students from Dawson through the city streets towards the Concordia campus and to DB Clark Theatre, where medical staff was on hand.

Outside of Concordia and along the side streets of downtown, students clutched each other in disbelief.

"It's just so surreal," Dawson student Samantha Tauby said. "This sort of thing isn't supposed to happen here."

"C'était la confusion totale," student Jonathan Mailhot echoed. "The police had their guns, there was blood everywhere, everyone was screaming."

The SPVM closed down the city's Metro system and a nearby shopping centre following reports of three other suspects attempting to escape the school—though it was later confirmed that there had been only one gunman. The transportation system was eventually reopened later in the day.

For many, including Ray Bourgeois, Dawson's Dean of Science, the shooting brought back memories of the 1989 massacre at Montréal's École Polytechnique, where a gunman killed 14 women, although the victims in the Dawson shooting are of both sexes.

"There's going to be a long healing process," Bourgeois said, acknowledging that, for the time being, the college is closed indefinitely.

—With files from Jesse Rosenfeld, Mike Dineen, Misha Warbanski and Lina Harper

## Provincial gov't hints at major loan alterations

CHLOÉ FEDIO  
Managing Editor

As student debt continues to rise across the country—the average Alberta graduate owing \$20 000—discussions and proposals on how to solve the problem are suggested on a regular basis. However, one proposal in particular may see Alberta leave the Canadian Student Loan Program behind for a new program regulated by the province, explained Denis Herard, Alberta Minister of Advanced Education.

"I'm trying to make major changes to our student loan program, but I'm tied to a bunch of federal regulations," Herard told the Gateway in a phone interview on 28 August.

Since Alberta is only responsible for 40 per cent of loans administered—the other 60 per cent provided by the federal government—Herard explained that the province can only give remittance for that portion once students graduate and it comes time for them to pay the loans back.

"There's progress being made, but we're just on the verge of taking our recommendations through the approval process," Herard said in a follow-up interview on Wednesday, explaining that it must go through the Cabinet and caucus. "So, what's in there I can't share with you until at least my colleagues have had an opportunity to see what it is we're recommending."

Other concerns the ministry hopes to address are lowering interest rates and reforming eligibility rules for loan applicants.

"In order for Alberta to have a consistent set of rules, we have to tailor our rules to that of the federal government, otherwise it would be just too confusing for students," he said, adding that the federal regulations are a serious challenge for student loans in the province.

"That sounds to me like a lame excuse for not doing anything," said Dave Taylor, Liberal Critic for Advanced Education. "There are things that we can do right here in Alberta that we should get on about doing and then, after we've cleaned up our house, we can go to Ottawa and say, 'Now boys, let's talk about a change.'"

He went on to say that remittance programs are ineffective and costly for the province, and pointed to a much easier solution to the problem of student debt.

"We lend students the money and

then when they successfully complete the degree, we remit the money, or we forgive some of the loans, and we spend all the money that it costs to administer that program—the salaries, the stamps, the printing of the forms, et cetera, et cetera," Taylor said. "A simpler way than going through that whole remission dog and pony show would simply be to reduce the cost of tuition up front and more adequately fund postsecondary education."

Raj Pannu, NDP Critic for Advanced Education, pointed to creating non-repayable grants to reduce the debt burden to students—a recommendation coming out of the *A Learning Alberta* review this summer, which was championed by student groups across the province.

"One way of doing that would be, of course, to say that students who complete successfully their programs within a certain number of years won't have to pay back their loans," Pannu said.

**"A simpler way than going through that whole remission dog and pony show would simply be to reduce the cost of tuition up front and more adequately fund postsecondary education."**

DAVE TAYLOR,  
LIBERAL ADVANCED  
EDUCATION CRITIC

Dave Cournoyer, Students' Union Vice-President (External), attended the Alberta Government's Students Finance retreat in July, where approximately 100 people gathered—students and government officials alike—to discuss ways to create a more affordable postsecondary system in Alberta.

"One of the discussions was the potential removal—simply as a discussion item—of the Alberta Student Loan Program from the Canada Student Loan Program," said Cournoyer, who is also the Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS). "I think it's a pretty drastic step—I don't think we're at that point yet."

PLEASE SEE LOANS ♦ PAGE 4

### Inside

News	1-6
News Feature	7
Opinion	9-13
Feature	15-18
A&E	19-24
Sports	25-29
Comics	30-31
Classifieds	32



### What's your Fantasy?

With a Polar Music Prize nomination and a growing solo career, Owen Pallett is no longer dreaming.

A&E, PAGE 19



### Covered in Oil

The Oiler Rookies looked pretty slick dominating the Golden Bears Tuesday in front of 3000 at the Drake.

SPORTS, PAGE 25