

UdeM students enjoy new tool

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Business students pleased with new financial markets room

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The traditional ringing of the bell signals the start of trading daily on the Toronto Stock Market.



GREG AGNEW/TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

Brigitte LeBlanc, a bachelor level student at the Université de Moncton in the financial studies section, works in the new Financial Markets lab unveiled yesterday. The lab simulates a working office in the world of financial transactions.

Likewise, it signaled the opening yesterday of a new financial markets room at the Université de Moncton, where students use ultra-modern equipment to bridge the gap between honing their financial savvy in the classroom and actually using that knowledge in a real-world setting.

"This is unique in Atlantic Canada," university president Yvon Fontaine said against a backdrop that looked for all the world like any other actual portfolio-management business.

"The new financial markets room represents a significant added value for training business students and will contribute towards even better preparing our future graduates for the job market."

To call the room ultra-modern is a bit of an understatement. Students sit at brand new work stations, each featuring three computer screens giving real time information on stocks and other investments, the same as might be found at any investment house.

Two giant television screens broadcast interest rates, stock movements, graphics, commodity prices and more, including the ups and downs of the TSX-60, the Dow Jones and other exchanges.

CNN and BNN are broadcast continuously.

A new teleconference system will allow guest speakers to lecture to the students from afar.

"This is actually a financial laboratory that recreates the atmosphere of a financial office and it will go far towards supporting the teaching that takes place here, bringing together the theoretical with the practical," Fontaine said.

Gaston LeBlanc, dean of the business administration faculty, relished the opportunity to ring the opening bell.

LeBlanc said the room allows the student to experience what traders and others in the world of finance do, day in and day out.

"It allows us to teach the students in a way that better responds to the needs of the working world," LeBlanc said.

The students have an actual investment fund of \$100,000, thanks to the generous support of the financial community, which they invest under the guidance of veteran investors and traders like Placements Louisbourg, based in Moncton.

Other students can also take advantage of the room, he noted. For example, a student in human resources might want to check out job prospects at certain companies, or a marketing student could use it to check how a marketing campaign is paying off for a certain firm.

"So it's a great day for faculty of business students," LeBlanc said, "but it's also a great day for all Université de Moncton students."

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