

To the Editor:

Well March is here, mid-terms are over, and that always means that time will speed by from now until the end of the semester, and in my case, Graduation. This seems a good time before "term-paper" panic strikes for me to say good-bye and thanks to all who have made my four years at UPEI a little easier. No, they didn't help me cheat! They just helped in so many ways-

When should I start? Probably at the beginning - my freshman year.

Like all freshman, I was, to say the least, scared when I started out at UPEI. Good God I kept thinking there is hardly a ramp to be seen and those washrooms... Well ramps and washrooms being a necessity, I wasn't sure I would survive. These two things- ramps and washrooms- haven't changed much in 4 years, but at least there were lots of people to help out.

First, there are my room-mates in Blanchard- Bonnie Glover, and Sandy Beogan were great to help me in that first year. They pushed and shoved me through all kinds of stuff being mostly paths and paths of unplowed snows- and they usually managed to get me to class on time. They helped me in lots of other ways too numerous to mention now but they both know what I mean. Thanks Sandy and Bonnie. You two are terrific.

Then, in my second year, I moved downtown to live on my own. In that year, Pat and the elephant were my greatest help. While the elephant didn't always get me to class on time at least it got me good and close to the buildings my classes were in. This was a big help to me. Thanks so much.

In my third year I have to give a special to a driver for Star Taxi, Buddy MacDonald. Not only did he get me to class on time but for an entire semester he carried me up the stairs to Kelly for my first class. And then, in the

second semester, he retrieved me numerous times from upstairs in Steele. A special thanks to a special cab driver.

In my fourth year there is Gladys who I can never thank enough. Friend-like you are hard to come by.

And then there are the staff who helped me all 4 years. All of you who work at the library deserve a special thank you. You were wonderful. You opened doors, got books that were too high or too low, and best of all, gave me my own elevator key. Remind me to return it before I leave! Thank you all very much.

Certain Professors, especially those in the English Dept. were terrific to come to my assistance. Until this year I couldn't get into Main very easily (and even now its a little tricky) so whenever I would have to meet with a prof I would make arrangements with that prof to come to me. There was never any hassles. And when it came to moving a class to a building I can get into, all the profs on campus would do their best to oblige. Thank you all for making things a little easier.

And last but not least, there are all the others who deserve a special thanks. Not only my friends (because they have always been there to lend a hand) but also all those who have taken me from one building to another, the "jocks" who have carried me up all these stairs, and those who have pushed me up the Mt. Everest Junior that sprinkle this campus. Thank you, thank you all.

Ah, but now I feel I have to change my tune. Going to UPEI and going there comfortably if you have a physical disability are two entirely different things. Now, those who know me know I am not blowing a sympathy trumpet by saying what follows.

This in fact, and believe me I have proven it, that out of the very few ramps on campus there

is not a single one that is built to the proper dimensions. Not only are the ramps ridiculously steep and dangerous to any one who uses them, they are a waste of money. And I have heard that UPEI doesn't have money to spare. Why build something a disabled person cannot use on his/her own? Silly? You bet!

The University (since I can't pin this on any person) doesn't seem willing to change either. Oh, it probably thought it was doing wonders when it reserved two spaces in the Visitors Parking area for people who have a "reserved for disabled persons" parking sticker on their car. Why in the world are these spaces next to the biggest curbs on campus? (Curb is a four letter world if you use a wheel chair). The situation

is even more ridiculous when these spots are quite often taken and sometimes not even plowed.

I tried hard while I was at UPEI. I wonder if UPEI will try harder to accomodate those who come after me? It seems rather silly that a person should receive a degree and not even be able to get into the building on her own where she took the courses for that degree.

Again I say thanks to all who helped me. And I welcome a response to what I have said.

Sincerely,
Susan Buchanan



The Sun

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