

The Cadre Interview

Wade MacLauchlan

Part 3 of 3

(Kent Bruyneel) In regards to those corporate relationships we've discussed, it is really a bargain that you make that in the end is really about the money, isn't it? While I may not be so concerned about an article being pulled from the paper, I am concerned with the appearance of another icon for that corporation (Irving) on a place that is supposed to be icon proof, except for knowledge.

(Wade MacLauchlan) Well, I don't know if that's quite the case, if knowledge is suppose to be free. We accept 27.5 million dollars a year from the government of PEI. In your earlier line of questioning, which I had no problem with, we should be getting more. Now, is there some problem of conscience in accepting those donations. I think it's clear you can look at one side of the university or another and you will see that there are people making fresh, sometimes critical, contributions to public policy, which by nature are at odds with, or at least pose challenges for, people in power. I don't see how we can ever be in a position where knowledge is free. It costs to have a place of the quality and of the value of UPEI. I'm prepared to say right now, I'm not going to see the place run into the ground. I don't think we've had the level of support from a number of constituencies that the university should get.

(KB) In your past fundraising efforts, you have approached faculty, amongst others. This experience certainly informs what you are undertaking now. At the AVC and at the school of business you have many professors able to work outside the university

through writing papers and doing research. I wonder how you do that with the social sciences. How do you stimulate independent fiscal growth when it is so hard to sell a philosophy paper? You must realize how important the study of the classics, of the humanities and of the social sciences, is for a well rounded education. If we stimulate only the sellable schools, we become a trade school.

(WM) I'm not sure it's as hard as the premise of your question suggests. It has historically been a longer path to those kind of partnerships for what you might call the humanities than it has been for some other sectors. But there are people in our arts faculty who hold grants from Social Science Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and are at the leading edge of their field and do get support. You have enterprises like, the LM

Montgomery Institute, like the Institute of Island Studies that are engaged in the kind of active partnerships that you are suggesting. People in psychology are up to some very interesting things, I'm sort of focusing on the arts because that was the basis of your question. Another part of our university, which 6 or 8 years ago you might have asked the same question, is education. But, our education faculty won an award

this year for its international education program. In 2 years time we may have something in the order of 100 students through our masters of education program. I'm not underestimating how close you are to putting your finger on a very important issue, you are, but we are in a time when the value of knowledge is appreciated in a lot more ways that frankly might have been the case five or ten years ago.

(KB) Where is the future of UPEI, is it as an undergraduate facility, or as both graduate and undergraduate? Can UPEI be both?

(WM) To capture your question completely it is clear

that in everything I can determine thus far about the university that the quality and commitment to undergraduate life, in all faculties, is amongst our top priorities. Now a key part of that quality of that experience is that we are gaining in exposure for the work that is being

done, for the relationships between students, both graduate and undergraduate, and professors and the research that is being done. Much like your previous question, is it scholarship or teaching, I don't think it is an either or. There are 24 hours in a day and so long as we use

them wisely we should be able to grow and be strong on both fronts.

(KB) How do you stimulate student enrollment and retention? Is

your focus on Islanders or non-Islanders or both?

(WM) My number one priority is to enhance student recruitment. Specifically our numbers by four years out should be up 10% from where they are now. It is very important, not just financially or publicity wise, but as a measure of how we are doing and how we are being perceived by prospective students that have choices. And the reason that our enrollment will be up will be because of the things that we are doing here, not from running a press gang. I don't think we will, nor should we hope for, an exclusively PEI student population. One of the measures of whether we are doing the right thing is not only that we have 2700 students, but that we have cosmopolitan student population from across the country and around the world. These people will choose to come to UPEI because of the things we are doing; moreover, these people will bring with them diverse abilities and backgrounds and we will have even better engagement around the place. That stated we should really be judging how UPEI is doing based on how we do at keeping Islanders who have choices here. Another independent measure of how well we are doing, is how many part-time students (they will be largely from PEI) go to UPEI for that life long learning. If we are offering quality programs and we are being responsive to peoples needs, and we're offering them in a flexible format that meets the opportunity those numbers will go up too.

(KB) It must be nice to be home?

(WM) Definitely. There is a whole personal side to this as well. The support I have received has been incredible. END

