

UPEI Student Union

- UPDATE -

Bruce Davison,
Vice President External,
Acting President

I'd like to take this opportunity to update all of you on some of the recent activities of the Student Union Executive and Council. I've meant to put an update of sorts in the X-Press since I took over as President several weeks ago, and I finally have some time to write it. Here are a few issues that are ongoing for the Executive and Student Council:

The University Proposal for a Task Force on Sexual Violence Against Women

Most of you have by now probably heard about the proposal that the administration has put forward to examine problems of sexual violence faced by women at UPEI. We have discussed this proposal extensively at the Student Council and feel that it is a step forward for the University Community. The proposal originally called for three of its fifteen members to be students. We felt quite strongly that three was not an appropriate number and requested that two more students be added to the task force and that its membership be at least 50% women. I'm pleased to be able to say that the administration has agreed to add an additional two students and it now appears likely that at least half of the task force's members will be women. Two of the five students on the task force are to be from the Student Union membership, one member of the Student Union who is also a mature student and one part-time student, both to be appointed by MAPUS, and one student who lives in residence.

At last Sunday's Student Council Meeting two councillors, Shannon Trainor and Tara O' Connor, indicated that they would be willing to make the commitment to take part in the task force and to make themselves available to hear the concerns of the Student Union membership regularly. They have agreed to serve as our interim representatives on the task force, pending feedback from the membership on their possible appointment to the task force. Please contact the Student Union Offices in the Barn or any Councillor for more information on the task force, to comment on Tara's and/or Shannon's possible appointment, or suggest alternate names.

Summer Employment Positions

Last June the Canada Employment Centre on Campus closed as a result of Federal Government cutbacks. This unfortunately means that summer jobs that must be applied for before the summer are less accessible to students. Working with Student Services, we've been able to take over the files for quite a number of summer jobs that were previously advertised with the

Employment Centre on Campus. I'm currently organizing these files and will shortly be publicizing a list of the positions we have information on. If there is a particular position you're interested in for next summer call or drop by my office at the Barn.

Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Semi-Annual General Meeting

I will be attending the CFS General Meeting in Ottawa, from the 17th to 23rd of this month. This meeting is an excellent opportunity to express UPEI's needs and concerns at the national level and to find out a great deal about information, contacts, campaigns, and programs that can benefit UPEI students. For more information about CFS and the many things it does for us call or drop by my office in the Barn.

Travel CUTS (Canadian Universities Travel Services)

One of the services that CFS provides us with is Travel CUTS, the travel company we own through it. Travel CUTS can usually provide students with domestic and international air and train tickets at prices that are almost always lower than can be found anywhere else. Although there is no Travel CUTS office on PEI, the 'CUTS office at Dalhousie can be reached at 494-2054 and if you tell them you're calling from PEI, they'll be more than happy to call you right back. Again for more details call or drop by the Barn.

Letter Writing Campaign to the Minister of Education

Finally, I just want to update everyone on an idea I first mentioned at the Student Union General Meeting several weeks ago. All indications are that the Provincial Government will be freezing the amount of money the University has to operate on again for this upcoming year. This would most likely result in a tuition hike even higher than the 7.5% we faced last year. I've prepared letters to the Minister of Education for students to sign. These letters are available from the Barn or Councillors for anyone interested to sign. In addition to calling for an end to the freeze on the University's funding, the letters also highlight students' concerns with cutbacks to the Provincial Bursary program and systemic problems faced by mature and part-time students. Sign a letter and let the Provincial Government know that the cost and quality of an education at UPEI are very important to you.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Student Union or anything else on campus or having to do with education, talk to a Student Councillor or call or drop by the Barn. ■