

in 1994, but it has not been brought into force.

As I look at the outstanding issues on which the Faculty Association and the administration have not reached agreement, they are significant - but they are not insurmountable. In each of UPEI's first three decades, we have confronted and worked through equally challenging issues at the bargaining table to come to amicable agreements. We should be able to do so again. By labour relations standards, it is strange to be considering strike action when the parties have spent less than twelve hours at the table, in negotiation and/or conciliation, since the tabling of complete proposals from the two sides. This is clearly a situation that calls for continued discussion at the bargaining table.

To be clear, the outstanding issues can - and must - be resolved through negotiations. It would not be in our short-term or long-term interest to resolve them through a strike, or the threat of a strike. Neither will it be in our long-term interest to require a third party to settle this for us. Ultimately, there is only one path to an agreement: i.e., through negotiation.

We should all remain optimistic that negotiations can produce an agreement that will provide the platform for UPEI's continued success. It is toward negotiations that our attention and highest priority should be directed over the coming weeks, with a view to laying down a path that we will want to travel for decades and generations. In so doing, we can build a collective culture that will permit UPEI to thrive long into the future.

In closing, it is very important to reaffirm that this exercise is fundamentally about people, and relationships. We will continue our path of success at UPEI only through the talents, goodwill and collective efforts and esteem of faculty, staff and students. Our objective in these negotiations should be to put in place a culture, and a collective agreement, that permits all of this to continue flourishing.

Sincerely,
H. Wade MacLauchlan
President and Vice-Chancellor

Here Are the FAQs: Frequently Asked Questions About A Possible Strike

HAS A STRIKE BEGUN?

No. Classes resume as usual on Monday, January 5, 2004. There are no present plans for a strike or lock-out. All students should be back on campus and resume normal university activities on Monday.

WILL THERE BE A STRIKE SOON?

UPEI will continue to make every effort to avoid a strike. The University's complete offer has been with the Association negotiators since December 8th. A number of unresolved areas remain, some significant. The University is committed to continuing discussions to resolve outstanding issues and avoid a work stoppage.

WHY IS THERE TALK OF A UPEI FACULTY ASSOCIATION STRIKE?

The UPEIFA applied for Certification on February 23, 2001 and was officially certified as a trade union on August 2nd. Contract negotiations began on October 31st, and some 25 separate Articles had been tentatively agreed to by February, 2002, when the Faculty Association suspended negotiations.

In June 2002, the Faculty Association, under a new executive and with a new negotiation team, began negotiations essentially from scratch with a new set of items and proposals, including the renegotiating of all articles that had been agreed to that point. Non-monetary items were re-tabled by both sides in October, 2002 and discussions occurred throughout the fall and winter and summer. During this time, the University negotiating team repeatedly requested that the Faculty Association table its full set of proposals, including all economic items.

On November 13, 2003, and following some 75 meetings, the Faculty Association presented approximately 55 pages of proposals that included its financial demands along with other proposals that the University had been waiting to see. The University Team presented a complete response to all outstanding items on December 8th. The Faculty Association rejected it in its entirety on the following day. In the meantime, and prior to receiving the University's response, the Association had filed for Conciliation. The Conciliation Officer met with both parties on December 17th, and submitted his report to the Minister on December 18th, indicating there was no settlement of the outstanding items.

This series of negotiations has led to a point where The Faculty Association is now in a legal position to strike.

SHOULD I PAY MY TUITION?

Yes. Although at this time, the Faculty Association is in a legal position to proceed toward a strike, the University continues to be optimistic that an amicable settlement can be reached and is working hard to achieve this outcome. The University and the Faculty Association have indicated an intention to return to the bargaining table in a spirit of good will.

WILL THE UNIVERSITY OFFER TUITION REFUNDS IF THERE IS A STRIKE?

Unless a situation develops in which students cannot complete their classes - that is, receive final grades - there will be no tuition refunds. In the history of Canadian Universities there has never been a semester lost due to a labour dispute.

WILL ALL CLASSES BE CANCELLED IF THERE IS A STRIKE?

No. All classes that have faculty not partaking in strike action will proceed as per usual. All proceeding classes will be posted on the UPEI website and it will be up to you to check that site on the status of your classes.

WHAT DO I DO IN THE EVENT THERE IS A STRIKE?

The University has action plans in place to deal with a strike situation. Current information about the status of a strike and what that will mean to students will be made available in three ways: Web, e-mail and phone.

- **Web:** Please check the website at www.upeinegotiations.ca for more and up to date information.
- **Student Email:** Watch your e-mail account for updated information. If a strike takes place, please check regularly.
- **Phone:** A dedicated Information Line will be in place effective January 7th. The number is **566-6050**.

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

Continue with your UPEI experience as per