

# The Poll: How it breaks down, what it means

By Sarah Murphy  
NEWS EDITOR

Faculty members have spoken. In efforts to enhance communication and share ideas on how to improve UPEI, the student newspaper, the CADRE, decided to give UPEI faculty members a voice. 50 identical questionnaires were distributed to 50 faculty members, raising questions of pride, reward, quality, and opportunities available at UPEI for these professors.

The poll was run anonymously to ensure honesty of responses. Of the faculty members who responded, 35 per cent have taught at UPEI for 0 to 5 years, 20 per cent have taught for 5 to 10 years, and 45 per cent have done so for over 10 years.

The poll revealed that 65 per cent of faculty members' time is spent teaching. An additional 20 per cent is spent researching and/or

writing. The remaining 15 per cent is eaten up by meetings and other administrative matters. One respondent described teaching as including preparing lectures, preparing library reserve material, and marking.

All respondents

identified teaching as their primary role. One faculty member who did not answer the question said it was "an important part of [his/her] job." A colleague added that it was by no means his or her only role.

Teaching comes with responsibilities but also rewards. All respondents said they had some influ-

ence on their students, both personally and academically, although one professor was disappointed at his or her student's casual attitude towards work and course requirements. 89 per cent of respondents characterized UPEI students as average when compared to students encountered in previous academic experiences.

60 per cent qualified their UPEI career as rewarding thus far. Over 70

per cent stated they were very proud to be teaching at UPEI. Almost 30 per cent admitted that they were proud of their work rather than where they worked.

Faculty members' opinion on what UPEI has to offer differed. Although a large portion agreed that UPEI was sufficient to fulfill

their academic requirements (72 per cent said yes, 28 per cent said no), and that working on PEI generally did not have a negative influence on their work, one respondent's critiques included insufficient or inadequate library holdings, the university's isolation from other research facilities, and the poor quality of computer and internet services on campus.

One respondent spoke in favour of UPEI's "approachable and helpful administration" and the "above average interpersonal connections with student, staff, and faculty." Yet, a third of respondents said that university administration hindered their work.

"Working at UPEI has afforded me a number of opportunities I would not have had elsewhere, said one respondent. "But its demands and its limits have hurt my career in other ways."

work, 95 per cent of those surveyed said it would be worse.

One professor explained: "I would not work as a professor if I couldn't teach, but, it might help my research and the quality of my teaching if I only had to teach 2 courses a term as my friends at other schools do, or if I only had to cover a couple of fields within my discipline instead of 4 or 5."

Tenure remains an important concern for UPEI professors. Almost 60 per cent of those surveyed stated that it was very important.

One professor explained, perhaps, why tenure is such a concern.

"I'm a full-time, tenured faculty. Many of the part-time, untenured (sessional) faculty are poorly paid, receive no benefits, have no job security, and receive too little respect from [the administration]. Yet they are essential to UPEI and its students. They are not as 'rewarded' as full time faculty."

A number of faculty members commented on the survey itself. Many were dissatisfied with its format, and some insisted that answers were too simplistic.

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