

general consensus is in the 80-85 percent range.

"Communication really is everywhere today, and in order to be a success, one has to master the skills of effective communication, no matter what the field of endeavour."

Regarding paragraphs, MacLauchlan claims he is very effective at using them. He says that paragraphs should:

1. have their own coherence or integrity
2. have a sequence or a progression

"If we improve our vocabulary ... we become better communicators."

3. from your first paragraph to your last, should have an opening and a closing

"And it's something that, in student work, is more rare than it should be. I have often seen work with wonderful vocabulary, grammar, syntax, organization, good ideas, insight, originality ... and it will just sit there on the page as if I were, as a reader, supposed to go into it with a knife and fork and sort it all out as a pile of words. And it's a terribly missed opportunity. So use those paragraphs to really lift your message off the page."

Redundancy, he concedes, is a trap he occasionally falls into. In his memo, he employs the term "key measures" three times. He assigns the students the job of rewriting a section of the memo by coming up with new ways to say "key measures."

"If we improve our vocabulary ... we become better communicators."

Pronouns seems to be a real hang-up with MacLauchlan. He points to one of the drafts of the staff Christmas party memo as incorrectly using pronouns.

"There is nothing in writing today – you can even get away with incomplete sentences if they're stylistically necessary – there's nothing in writing today that is so blatantly wrong as the way we use pronouns."

Assignment number two is to rewrite the memo, eliminating as many pronouns as possible.

The final assignment MacLauchlan gives is to re-write the holiday message in a Christmas card he received from another university last year. Presumably, the best submission will be used as this year's UPEI Christmas card message.

President MacLauchlan expects all the 101 students to hand in these assignments to him through their 101 teachers. However, with the number of 101 students this term being in the hundreds, it is doubtful he will return the assignments with extensive comments.

President MacLauchlan begins winding down his lecture by passing out a glossy, folded pamphlet that the graphics department concocted and was mailed out to all UPEI alumni recently. It is an appeal for donations. MacLauchlan says this is a perfect example of a piece of written communication with a clear objective (to extract money from the reader). MacLauchlan claims that a lot of work went into this mail-out, to make it come off the page in such a way as to ensure recipients don't immediately throw it in the garbage.

President MacLauchlan concludes by returning to his original message. He says a person has only one chance to walk in that door, to make that first impression; by mastering the skills of effective communication, one is far more apt to make that first impression a good one.

And with that, he donned his jacket, grasped his umbrella, and set out for the long trek through the fierce storm back to his office, likely to write more memos.

Power Hopes to Improve Barn Events and Attendance

by Erin FAGAN



UPEI Student Union Vice-President of Campus Affairs Chris Power.

In spite of recent setbacks and a low turnout to recent on-campus events, Vice-President of Campus Affairs Chris Power states that, "I think we'll be back to the old Barn."

I spoke with Power recently in the boardroom of the Student Union, while UPEI President Cynthia Dennis was busy making posters for the Friday afternoon movie pubs.

"The attendance was good up until The Watchmen," Power noted, citing the Firestarter tour, The Back-to-School and Halloween pubs, and the Finger Eleven concert. The Watchmen concert, Power estimated, drew 275 people, while the more recent Econoline Crush concert drew an estimated 200.

Power's numbers contradict a reviewer's estimate of the concert, which placed the number of people in the upper level concert area at only fifty people.

When I asked whether Power was happy with these turnouts, Dennis offered an emphatic "No," and Power echoed her response.

"I don't want to say I'm not happy..." Power qualified, and Dennis added that, "We can do better."

The Barn, says Power, has been, "down, in general ... days last year were always busy."

Power attributed this low

turnout to an emphasis on jam bands over the first two months of the year, which the council had been told would be a campus trend at a conference over the summer.

This month, however, is being promoted as "Local Band Month," and a recent Flush concert allowed Power to note that, "The crowd was up Friday night."

As far as the movie pubs are concerned, Power conceded that "there wasn't much promotion for this year." As an extra promotion of the drink deals involved in these pubs, he remarked that, "We like to treat a student to a cheap beer."

He added that a major problem in promotions lies in UPEI's status as a commuter school.

"It's always harder to promote our events than at other schools," he added, noting a heavy reliance on posters to advertise events.

As a final note, however, Power brought up the new Student Union website, which he says has been averaging a high eighty to ninety hits a day.

Power and Dennis decided not to comment on the recent firing of Operations Manager Aaron Carr, who was dismissed the weekend of November 3rd-4th.

