

# UPEI Rises to Ninth Place in Maclean's Survey

By Julie VEINOT

The list is in.

And UPEI has climbed from spot 15 on the Maclean's top undergraduate university list to ninth place.

The annual survey, compiled by the national magazine, takes into consideration information sent by the schools, as well as surveys completed by various businesses across the country.

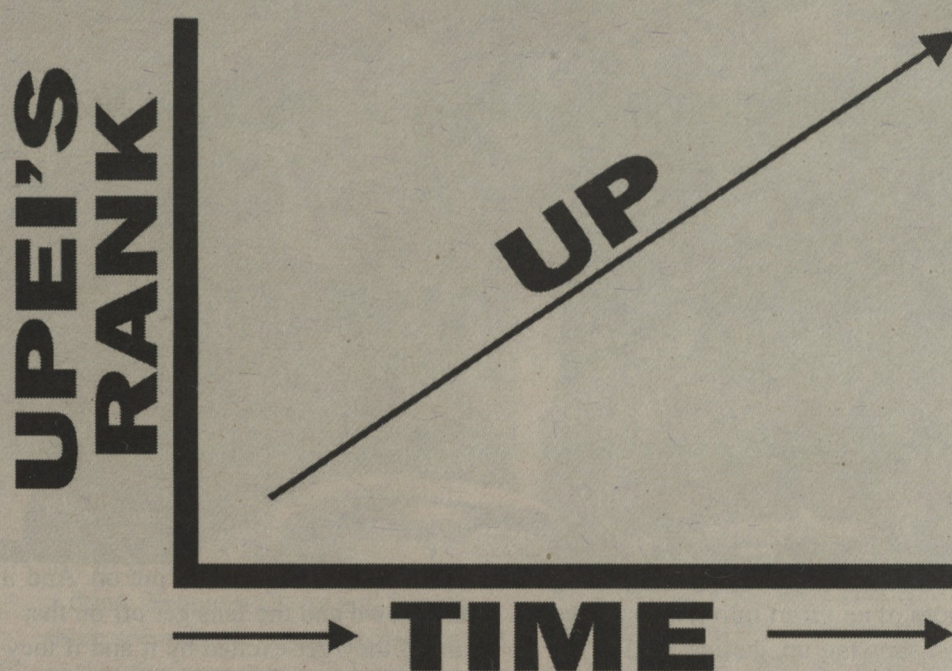
Universities are then ranked according to the various factors: class size, expenditures, library, faculty, reputation and so on.

Student Union President Chris Power says the New Student Centre is probably one of the reasons UPEI fared so well in this year's survey.

"The University has seen great improvements," he says. "It feels good to be part of the University at this time."

In fact, the new rink and aquatic centre, which is supposed to be open for next year's hockey season, may give UPEI a further advantage in the ranking next year.

"I think we're only going to



Graph: Accurate to 2.3%, 19 times out of 20

see improvements in the upcoming years."

Power says the University shouldn't get too caught up in the ranking, but adds it is certainly a pat on the back to receive a favourable spot on the list.

English Literature associate

professor Shannon Murray says Maclean's survey is not an accurate representation of what schools have to offer students. It is a oversimplified way of dealing with a complex problem and does not help students in choosing what school will best suit their needs, she says.

"Often people choose their programs with less information than they use to buy a car."

The Maclean's evaluation also doesn't take universities' mandates into consideration - including one of UPEI's goals: to educate Islanders.

In his Nov. 12 newsletter, University President Wade MacLauchlan also says the survey does not take into consideration what UPEI offers Islanders. For example, when Maclean's evaluates the University's budget, it does not take into consideration the amount of money that goes to the Atlantic Veterinary College.

"Because our base budget includes AVC, which has for understandable reasons a quite different mix of expenses than would generally be found at a primarily undergraduate university, we tend to come in at the low end of these relative measures," he says.

Another factor in the ranking includes in grade averages of incoming students - universities receive favourable marks for higher averaged incoming students.

MacLauchlan says it is important to gauge a university by the quality of its teaching environment instead of restricting its soil for an "increasingly elite group of students." He adds it is no accident the highest-ranked universities on Maclean's list also require the highest averages on university entry.

Despite these drawbacks to the evaluation system, MacLauchlan says he expects UPEI will continue to do well in the future on the Maclean's list.

"I am confident that we will see many positive results from this momentum and from this commitment to excellence, including - in due course - their reflection in Maclean's and other measures of our success," he says.

## Top Undergraduate Universities According to the 2002 Maclean's Ranking

1. St. Francis Xavier
2. Mount Allison
3. Acadia
4. Winnipeg
5. Wilfred Laurier
6. Bishop's (TIE)
6. Trent (TIE)
8. UNBC
9. UPEI
10. St. Thomas
11. Saint Mary's
12. Mount Saint Vincent
13. Lethbridge
14. Brock
15. Moncton
16. Ryerson
17. Lakehead
18. Laurentian
19. Nipissing
20. Brandon
21. Cape Breton

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