

THE
UPEI CADRE

The Cadre
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Letters to the editor and submissions from contributors should be sent to upecadre@gmail.com. All articles submitted must include name, year and field of study (if applicable) and contact information. Submissions for which we are unable to verify authorization will not be published.

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Ray Keating
Editor in Chief

This week our university made national headlines. We didn't do it through some great discovery or because of the fundraising, building and expansion that's going on; we ended up in the headlines because one professor decided his class was too big. For all the comments people have made about the issue, and how charged it has become, it simply comes down to that. Dr. David Weale walked into his class on the first night and promptly said he wanted to get rid of half of the class. Dr. Weale is getting a bad rap on this, but, in his defense, I am in the class, and the room was packed... it was hot, stuffy and there were people left standing around the edges of the room. I personally don't blame him for wanting to get rid of half of the class. That said, when he came back a week later and saw that very few people had actually left the class he made this "January Clearance" offer that has everyone's knickers in a knot. For those of you who didn't read the other articles about this, he basically offered anyone who promised to leave and not come back a 70% in the course.

On a personal level, I disagree with his decision to make this offer to students. I came to UPEI to get a degree to be certain. But I also came here to learn. I actually want to possess the knowledge that the courses I take are proposing to impart. If I wanted to buy a degree, I'd fire up Google and find

But I Digress...

someplace that would sell me one... it shouldn't be hard... I get popup ads trying to sell them to me all the time. The question here really is: what do students want from their university education? It would be great if we all stood on some moral high ground and said we were here for the pure joy of knowledge... blech... that's such a load of crap it's hard to even write it. Face it, most of us are here to get a piece of paper that will tell some future employer that we are qualified to do some job. I have discussed it with a lot of people in the last few days, including students from at least a dozen other universities, and the consensus seems to be that a good portion would take the offer.

A lot has been made of the fact that this offer was made during the university's academic integrity week. This is obviously ironic, but if you were to ask Dr. Weale he would likely tell you it is meaningless. He is challenging the entire basis of our educational and moral system. By his own admission in the article on the front page this week, he has probably crossed the line in terms of the ethics of the situation. But he asserts that the line is an imposed one that he is not fully prepared to recognize. The fact still remains that, as pointed out by another professor, he accepted the terms of employment when he came to work at the university, so whether he recognizes the ethical guidelines set out by the "rule makers" or not, he is still bound by guidelines which he did accept.

Right Here and Now

Hell, I know of one or two of those 14 that don't even read this newspaper. So I don't even have to worry about offending them... how much fun is that?!

So here's what I'm doing. I'm issuing a challenge to those 14 people to get off their asses and write something for us.

Not much, maybe one news story every two weeks (and that's an actual news story, with quotes and a picture, not an editorial or review). I'm calling you guys out, throwing down the gauntlet, whatever it takes to get these talented people working to make a better newspaper for UPEI.

I was very tempted to list everyone's name, but I figured that would be going too far, and really there's no need. It's PEI, you know who you are and so does everyone else. If this editorial embarrasses you, then good, because it sure as shit embarrasses me that I have to write it. Frankly, I find the whole thing shameful.

Why aren't you writing? Why?! So far I've heard it all, every excuse in the book (And I wrote most of that book).

"I'm really busy!" Well no shit Sherlock, so is everyone else at university. But a 500-word story every two weeks isn't going to break anyone's back.

The bottom line on the issue is that some day in the near future, when I go out with my piece of paper from UPEI, I wouldn't be entirely surprised if someone asked me if I had attended classes or if I just bought the credit. And that really makes me angry. The value of a degree, outside of just possession of knowledge, is in how impressive it is when it's listed on your resume.

We can stand and shout from the rooftops that we were ranked highly in Macleans magazine, and we can talk about how much research is being done here, but at the end of the day, if people feel that students are leaving here with knowledge that is below an acceptable level, they will devalue the degree.

The impact of this offer goes way beyond the 20 or so students who accepted it and decided not to study for their History 332 credit. This offer has an impact on each and every student here at UPEI now and it has an impact on all of the students who attended before and who will attend after. Questions of ethics and integrity are important, but this is a question of a practical nature. At current tuition rates, the cost of forty credits is \$18,480. This doesn't include any fees, books or living expenses.

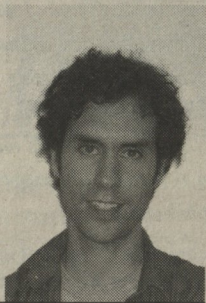
I hope that when I leave here that will prove to be a good investment since I am sure the finance office is not about to start writing cheques for the perceived devaluation of the degree.

"I don't live in town!" And there's no news happening outside of town? Let's be honest, it's not exactly news city in Charlottetown either.

And what, pray tell, are you going to say to a potential employer or editor when you sit down for a job interview, and they ask where your portfolio is from the last year? Do you honestly think that "I was busy" is going to cut it in this business? That a year (or more) gap in your portfolio won't be noticed?

Even if you're not planning on continuing on with a career in journalism (much like myself) there are loads of reasons to join *The Cadre*. We pay (although admittedly not much). It looks great on your resume, builds a solid portfolio and, on top of that, helps represent the voice of people who might otherwise not have one. Oh, and we get free pizza every week.

However, none of this is to say that you need to be a journalism student, reporter or even a great writer to help with *The Cadre*. We love taking submissions from everyone, student or not. Even if you're interested but not sure what you could do to help out, just email us or stop by the Cadre office, which should have people there most afternoons. Our meetings are 4:30 pm on Mondays, upstairs at the W.A. Murphy Student Center.



Rob Walker
Copy Editor

I'm going use my time here today to address something that's very near and dear to my heart: journalism. Sitting in my 15th floor hotel room in Toronto, after having spent the last three days hearing from newspaper editors, writers and columnists (as well as listening to my peers) talk about journalism, I realize we have some major issues back on PEI.

Did you know that there are 17 people currently taking the journalism program at UPEI? Did you even know that UPEI has a journalism program? Well we do. We've got a 2-year Holland College and 2-year UPEI split degree/diploma program running right now.

And of those 17 people, out of which at least half are "real" journalists (with a diploma in newspaper reporting and everything!) only three of us were writing for *The Cadre* this year. Three out of 17! And not only that, but we're losing Kim, our awesome A&E editor! (We'll miss you Kim!)

Is it just me, or is there something spectacularly wrong with those numbers?