

NEWS & FEATURES

Student Union survey on teaching at UPEI

A chance for students to have some power

BY SHANNON YOUNKER

EVERY AUGUST AND DECEMBER, A FEW thousand people here at the University of Prince Edward Island pore through the university's calendar and time-table trying to plan their lives for the next four months. Many feel that the type of professor can make or break a course. Not knowing any more about a prof than his or her name before you take a course can be frustrating. Similarly, the calendar provides a short description of each course, but some indication of former students' opinions of the course would be helpful. Based on these ideas, some people on the Student Union Council have come up with a solution. They felt that UPEI students deserved to know more about the courses they planned to take, and that polling former students would be the ideal way to accomplish this.

Several other universities in Canada, including UNB and Dalhousie, have published "anti-calendars" - course and professor descriptions by students, for students. The UPEI Student Union Survey on Teaching at UPEI is the same thing. Vice President Internal Andrew MacPherson says the goal for this survey is for the administration to make students evaluations mandatory. As it is now at UPEI, professors are under no obligation to have their students fill out evaluations. The Survey on Teaching was distributed in December, right around the time most students were filling out the evaluation forms designed by the various departments. Students were given three forms and asked their opinions on three of their courses. Three thousand evaluation forms were printed, 1500 were actually distributed to students and 745

completed forms were returned to the Student Union for analysis. MacPherson said he was not happy with this level of response and urges students to fill out and return their surveys for the January - April semester when they come out. Profs and courses were required to receive either 10 or a certain percentage of responses to be considered in the analysis. Darcy Rossiter was hired by the Student Union to coordinate the project.

When the project was being designed, the danger that students might be too rash in their judgements was voiced. It was decided that UPEI students are adult enough to give fair responses and not create a backlash about "bad" professors.

Steven Ellis, a member of the committee struck to work on the students' evaluations, said council is not calling the project a success

or a failure, but the experiment will definitely be repeated. Work on the evaluations is ongoing, and Student Council is still looking for input on questions to ask or not to ask in this spring's version, or any other advice. For example, one student felt a question about whether the professor respected the students should have been added. As well, the instructions on how to respond to questions concerning the different sections of a course when no such sections existed were not well understood. Ellis would like to thank all the students who filled out evaluation forms or are working on any aspect of the anti-calendar.

UPEI's first student-run student evaluation results will be published as a supplement to the X-Press in mid-February.

Apothecaries

LOUNGE

JANUARY SCHEDULE

Mon. New Sounds

Tue. Solos

Wed. Rock Trivia
(Beginning the 12th)

Thu. Jam Nite

Fri. Live Bands

Sat. The Dogs with
Joey Kitson

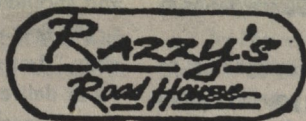
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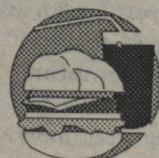
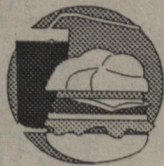
Thur: Chicken Breast Platter...\$5.25

Fri: Fish & Chips...\$5.95

Sat: 6oz. Steak & Fries...\$5.95

Sun: Monstrous Hot Turkey...\$4.95

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