

Important announcement

You Can't Always Get What You Want

(But if you try sometime, you just might find you get what you need)

This is a special announcement concerning X-Press policies regarding the submission of announcements, notices, and other such informational or advertising submissions sent in by student groups and students at large. For our policies regarding regular submissions (stories, articles, cartoons, reviews, features, columns, creative writing, etc.) see the submissions policy details printed on the inside cover of every issue of the X-Press.

The following announcement is written in response to a number of rumours that have been circulating regarding our submissions policies, specifically the printing of announcements, notices, ads and other such publicity submissions sent to us by student organizations and students at large. Late this summer, rumours began circulating that we were planning to charge students and student groups full advertising rates for any publicity submissions they wanted to send us. Not only is this not true, but it was an option we had never even considered, let alone proposed. What we had discussed, among ourselves and with certain student union executives, was setting a clearer and firmer policy regarding the printing of unsolicited non-article student submissions. This clearer and firmer policy would detail what kind of submissions we accept and how we are able to present them. For special requests (demands for specific size, page placement, or specialized presentation) we would charge a token fee far less than the going advertising rate.

Our goal in this matter was never to make a profit off students (we're students ourselves, and the money we take in from advertising goes not to the staff or the paper but to your student union, which controls our funding). We pursued this as an attempt to eliminate any confusion regarding what types of submissions we accept, since in the past we have often received rather bitter complaints about submissions not being printed, or not being printed at the size or in the style desired. These complaints, while understandable, are often unfounded and ill-informed. For one thing, if you read the submissions notice inside every front cover of the X-Press, you will notice that the X-Press, like most papers, "reserves the right to edit or reject any submission". In other words, contrary to what some of you seem to believe, we don't have to print anything and everything that's sent to our office.

That doesn't mean we toss whatever doesn't interest us, though. We are very conscious of the fact that this is a student paper: funded by students, produced by students, and read by students. We should and do place a priority on the publication of information regarding or

aimed at the students of U.P.E.I. This includes announcements and notices for things like club meetings, financial news, sports schedules, and so on; however, again contrary to what some folks think, we can't always print your notice (or whatever) exactly the way you want it. We have to consider space limitations, page count, and the overall appearance of the layout before we go sticking a submission in. If that submission cannot be inserted for any of the above reasons, we will try to take the submission content and lay it out in simpler or smaller form (but without altering the informational content), often by shrinking it if it's a graphic, or printing the information as a simple text paragraph(s) in the announcements section of the paper. If your ad or publicity submission is important information for students at large, we make every effort to include the information itself if at all possible. Very rarely do we drop such a submission altogether (it only happened twice last year), and then it is usually for reasons such as time constraints or other insurmountable difficulties. The only thing we won't guarantee, and this seems well within the bounds of reason, is that we can't always print your ads or publicity submissions in the particular format you may desire. Where the possible fee we discussed comes in is if you want to guarantee your submission seeing print at the exact size and in the exact format you wanted. As I said, this is not a profit-making scheme; rather, it is an attempt to make you think before you make special requests of us, so that you aren't disappointed if we don't happen to meet whatever idle demands you might make if you don't know the limitations of our submissions policy and the factors that affect it. As for that marginal fee for specialized requests, we had discussed charging 25% of the advertising space used (a more than reasonable fee), but in deference to the limited financial resources of students we are considering a smaller student fee, tentatively set at the following: twenty-five dollars for a full page, fifteen dollars for a half page, eight dollars for a quarter page, and five dollars for an eighth of a page or less (considering that the going rates on these spaces are 200, 110, 60 and 25 dollars, that's one heckuva deal). These reduced prices

(token fees, really) would apply to students and student organizations (other than those of the Student Union) only, and again the charge only applies if you want to guarantee your ad or notice being printed at a specific size and in a specific format. Chances are that, space limitations and other considerations allowing, we might be able to print your notice in a special form at no extra cost anyway; however, we will not (nor are we bound to) guarantee that. We don't want to discourage you from sending us notices, ads, and publicity submissions. We just want to make clear once and for all that various restrictions (discussed above) apply. We hope this will eliminate any confusion or disappointment for students and student groups in the future.

On a related note, I would also like to stress (hopefully for the last time) that we do not play favourites with submissions, whether they are stories or not. In filling our pages we do give spatial priority to actual articles (regardless of their subject matter), but if important notices are submitted we make every effort to include them in some form or another. As for stories, we try to cover a little bit of everything, and if you feel there's not enough coverage of a given subject then by all means, write for us. If you think there's too much coverage of a given subject (a frequent complaint in the past being our inclusion of so many arts and entertainment features), you should know that this is not indicative of any editorial preferences. We use the material that our writers (virtually all volunteers) provide. If you want to see more of a certain thing, volunteering your writing services is the best way to ensure that.

Incidentally, if any individuals or groups on campus have questions or concerns regarding paper policies, the best things to do are to come to us or write us a letter. Besides the fact that these options show a bit more class and guts than grumbling behind our backs to each other or to the student union, the direct approach is always the best way to get our attention. We're here to address your concerns wherever possible, and by writing letters for print you also raise your concerns for the student body to see. The recent anxiety regarding the rumours about our publicity submissions policy is a good example of how unconfirmed rumours and indirect complaints serve only to foster confusion and ill will. If you have questions, criticisms or (dare to dream) praise for the paper, tell us about it. Otherwise, you run the risk of your concerns being unaddressed or misinterpreted. We're here to listen, so talk to us.

Finally, I would like to point out that we still welcome your submissions of all sorts and are gratefully receptive to the participation of all students in the paper. I hope that with your help the paper can be a prosperous, informative and beneficial aspect of life here at U.P.E.I.

Sean McQuaid
Editor-in-Chief