

Impact of new vet college studied

By Ruth Edgett

The first convocation ceremonies for the Atlantic Regional Veterinary College may be a long way off, but the politics of integration now will determine whether the school is seen by then as part of the university or as an unwanted outcast.

In upcoming months the university administrators and faculty will be studying the impact the \$38.5 million

facility will have on the university.

Professor Verner Smitheram, the newly appointed dean of arts, says he foresees advantages and disadvantages with the new college on campus.

"The vet school is not so much a threat as an opportunity if we handle it right," he says.

Handling it right, in Smitheram's view, means keeping sight of UPEI's

foundation as a liberal arts and science university and properly integrating curriculums, faculty and students of both institutions.

Integration will be the main topic at Friday's senate meeting when members of the UPEI senate will have the opportunity to ask questions about the college to newly appointed vet college dean, Dr. Reginald Thompson.

The meeting is open to the public and begins at 3:00

p.m. in the board room of the Kelly building.

Thompson discounts worries some members of the university community have about the possible erosion of programs in liberal arts and science in lieu of the new college. Thompson says the arts and science faculties can only benefit as increasing numbers of students will enroll at UPEI for pre-veterinary studies.

Once students become undergraduates at the college however, they won't be permitted any courses outside the vet school's curriculum. Thompson does admit the college increases the university's focus on applied education as opposed to the more traditional liberal arts. That could result in a change in the public perception of UPEI, he said.

But that perception could be a plus where Atlantic provinces residents are concerned, Thompson says.

The college will be turning out graduates trained to serve the agricultural and fishing industries which make up the major portion of the Atlantic economy. The increased expertise in veterinary medicine and aquaculture will be a boost to the economy of the four provinces, he says.

Smitheram said he's optimistic the new facility will be easily welcomed to the UPEI campus, but isn't willing to see that happen at the expense of the liberal arts and science programs already established.

Smitheram plans to organize studies into the relationships between veterinary and arts faculties at other universities. Among other considerations, they will need to discuss how the veterinary faculty of 50 or more will be represented on the university's organizational bodies, such as the senate and the board of governors.

The news of an agreement among federal and provincial governments and the university for the construction of the college came last May. It

marked the end of a nine year struggle among the Atlantic provinces over the location of the college and its funding.

But as planning begins for construction of the facility, which will accept its first class in 1986, two other Canadian veterinary colleges are in trouble.

The Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph has been placed under limited accreditation status for up to five years by the American Veterinary Medicine Association. It joins the school of veterinary medicine at St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, which has been put on a two-year probation by the same body.

But Thompson said he foresees no accreditation problem for the Atlantic college. He expects the Ontario and Quebec colleges to gain their original status back as soon as each completes upgrading that is already underway.

When the first graduates leave the UPEI campus in

1990, they will be filling positions that previously required recruitment from outside the country. Currently Canada imports about 40 veterinarians a year.

Thompson said he is conscious of the need for the vet college and the university to work together.

"We are part of the university and we should participate in the university the same way that any other faculty and club participates."

A former chair of pathology at the Ontario Veterinary College, Thompson said he has personal experience to show a veterinary college need not be an isolated entity on campus.

"It is my objective to see that does not happen," he said.

While Smitheram organizes his own studies into the effects of a veterinary college on a university, Thompson will be meeting with representatives of UPEI departments to answer questions and exchange information.

The Netted Gem

ARCHIVES
U.P.E.I.

Volume 1 Number 1

Thursday November 3, 1983



UPEI panthers won the AUAA soccer title for the first time ever Sunday in a 2-0 victory over finalist UNB. Photo: Blackquiere

Nine years of wrangling

By John Dougan

Construction on a \$38.5 million veterinarian college at UPEI is expected to begin this fall after nine years of federal and provincial wrangling.

The issue surfaced in December 1974 when the PEI agriculture minister A. E. Ings announced his plans to establish the college here. A committee was struck by the Maritime Higher Education Commission to look at the proposal and make suggestions concerning its practicality.

Local response to the idea was enthusiastic. The Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce welcomed the idea stating the college would be appropriate and advantageous to the Island because of the province's high livestock density. It would also provide such economic spinoffs as employment, revenue and construction contracts.

But PEI was not the only province see the advantages of the college.

In 1975 then Nova Scotia premier Gerald Regan insisted Truro would be a better site because of the existing agricultural college there.

Regan continued to lobby for the Truro site even after the MPHEC had recommended the vet college be located at UPEI.

Meanwhile PEI started its own negotiations with the federal government over the funding of the college here.

By 1980 the issue was still unresolved, although the premiers of the Atlantic provinces realized they had to make a decision before federal monies were diverted elsewhere. A college in the Atlantic region would be preferable to the existing situation where vet students had to travel to the University of Guelph in Ontario for training.

Late in 1982 premier Jim Lee announced Nova Scotia had agreed to contribute towards the capital cost of the vet college in Charlottetown.

By February 1983 federal agricultural minister Eugene Whelan announced \$500,000 in federal money had been appropriated for the architectural plans for the complex. By May, the federal government agreed to contribute 50 per cent of the cost. The four Atlantic provinces would pick up the remaining half of the \$38.5 million price tag. The official signing of the agreement took place in June.

The college is expected to accommodate 200 undergraduate and 40 graduate students when completed. Faculty is expected to include about 70 instructors.

The complex will be constructed on MacAdam football field and is expected to take two years to complete.

Dr. Reg Thompson has been named Dean of the new college. Federal and provincial co-ordinators for design and construction have also been named.

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Vol. 1

"Buddy system" established

By Carolyn Ryan

A "buddy system" providing escorts to women students reluctant to walk alone on campus at night has been established at UPEI.

The system, established at a meeting of the UPEI womens' committee Oct. 26, will provide escorts upon request from (tentatively) 6-12 pm. Monday to Saturday and 6-10 pm on Sundays.

Student "buddies" would be stationed at the chaplaincy centre, where they would be dispatched to answer requests.

A telephone line has been in service as of Oct. 31. Women requesting escorts should call 892-4121 ext. 116.

About 60 men and women have already volunteered to be "buddies" although additional volunteers are encouraged to add their names to a shift-schedule posted in the chaplaincy centre.

Shift hours are flexible, and the womens' committee points out that although "buddies" would have to remain at the chaplaincy centre during their shifts, the

centre is an excellent and comfortable place to study. Volunteers are only required to work one shift every three or four weeks.

Volunteers will not be screened for the job this semester, but they will be carefully monitored and be given official certification at each shift by the system supervisor. "Buddy buttons" and modification of student ID cards to indicated "buddy" status is also being investigated.

Members of the womens'

committee say the service will greatly improve safety conditions on campus, especially in areas with inadequate lighting and at times of special risk, such as during and after campus social events.

The womens' committee also discussed activities for this month, including a lecture and film on sexual assault November 9, a presentation on battered women November 16 and a two-session seminar on self-defense at the end of the month.