

Student Council Reacts to University Task Force Proposal

At its meeting last Sunday evening the UPEI Student Union Council discussed and reacted to the proposal for a task force to examine sexual violence against women on campus. The proposal calls for a 15 member task force to be established under the authority of the UPEI Board of Governors. The task force would examine different aspects of the problems faced by women on campus who face or are threatened by sexual violence.

The proposal was discussed by Council for approximately 45 minutes. Council decided to endorse the task force proposal as an essential part of any effort to make real progress towards a safer campus. Although support for the task force was unanimous on Council, concern was also expressed over fact that only three students are included on the task force as it now stands.

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It was felt that three students was not sufficient representation on the task force, in light of the fact that the vast majority of women at risk on campus are students and it was considered essential that the task force should be comprised of at least 50% women although no provision currently exists to ensure this. It was decided that these concerns would be represented to the administration and to ask for an additional two students to be added to the task force.

The task force as it currently stands calls for student representation to be a student from the UPEI Student Union, one from the MAPUS Association (Mature and Part-time University Students), and one student from residence. Students who have names to suggest for any of these positions were being asked to bring names forward to the Student Union or MAPUS. ■

The Once and Future V.P.I.

by SEANMcQUAID

Rick Gallant was, until recently, the Vice President Internal of the Student Union. He resigned during the controversy over the actions of S.U. President Tracy Arsenault, and more recently agreed to this interview to better clarify the reasons behind his actions.

When asked why he resigned, Gallant had several reasons, one of the foremost being that he wanted to draw attention to student dissatisfaction with Arsenault, who was criticized for inactivity and failing to keep students informed in the wake of an alleged sexual assault, resulting in her eventual resignation after she proved unable to explain and justify her actions to the Student Council. Prior to that, Gallant felt that, in his words, "everything was gonna be shoved under the carpet." He was told at that time that the petition to impeach Tracy had run

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-- Ex-V.P. Internal Rick Gallant

of steam, and Arsenault herself apparently believed that she had nothing to answer for. Gallant felt that the Student Union Executive had stagnated under her continued leadership, and nothing could be done as long as she had nothing to answer for. Gallant felt that the Student Union Executive had stagnated under her continued leadership, that nothing could be done as long as she stayed. "I think it was my resignation that made people see this was a serious matter," Gallant said. "I really believed in my convictions and a lot of people believed in them too. I thought that the students wanted her out." That did indeed seem to be the case as time went on, many students accused Arsenault of having lied in later statements regarding her actions and student concerns that were brought to her. "I really believed in my convictions and a lot of people believed in them too," said Gallant, "I could not work with someone who had been caught lying. I didn't have confidence in her and the executive didn't."