



A Guide for New Members of the *UPEIFA*

Congratulations on your new academic position at UPEI! The UPEI Faculty Association (UPEIFA) extends a warm welcome to all new members. To help you make the transition to the UPEI community, the UPEIFA has prepared this guide. If you have any further questions, please contact our office [Room 214, Main Building, UPEI, Phone: (902) 566-0438, Fax: (902) 566-6043, Email: facultyassociation@upeifa.ca] or check the website at <http://upeifa.org>

■ What is the UPEIFA?

The UPEI Faculty Association is a certified labour union and the sole and exclusive bargaining agent for academic staff members at UPEI. The UPEIFA is a member of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), the CAUT Defence Fund, and the National Union of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (NUCAUT).

■ Who are members of the UPEIFA?

There are approximately 400 members in two bargaining units. Faculty members (tenured, probationary or term appointments), librarians (permanent, probationary or term appointments), sessional instructors, and clinical nursing instructors (permanent, probationary or term appointments) are in BU #1. BU #2 is comprised of clinical veterinary professionals (continuous and term appointments).

■ What is the UPEIFA's responsibility to its membership and collective agreements?

- negotiating terms and conditions of employment through collective bargaining processes, including those for salary, benefits, workload, intellectual property, appointments, and academic freedom
- defending the collective agreements through the grievance and arbitration process
- lobbying on behalf of the Association and members on issues relevant to the Association and members
- building community among members
- other responsibilities consistent with the objectives in our constitution, which are:
 - a) to promote academic freedom and advance teaching, scholarship and research;
 - b) to regulate relations between the employer and academic staff;
 - c) to provide a common field for mutual exchange of ideas between the Association and the broader university community, as well as the general public;
 - d) to promote the joint interests of the UPEIFA and affiliated associations, including CAUT.

■ What are your roles & responsibilities in the UPEIFA?

The UPEIFA invites all Members to participate fully in its activities, including attending meetings and social events, and volunteering to serve on committees. Any service you provide to the FA counts towards "Contribution to University Governance", just like any other university committee (BU # 1 CA, Article A11.7). The UPEIFA also encourages you to familiarize yourself with the collective agreement and policies of the UPEIFA, and to fulfill, in good faith, your obligations under the collective agreement.

■ How are your dues used?

Your dues fund the activities of the Association, including expenses for the salary and benefits for full time UPEIFA support staff, office expenses, website and newsletter management, course releases for FA Officers (such as the Chief Grievance Officer and Chief Negotiator), student scholarships and awards, social events, and grievance/legal fees.

■ What to do if the collective agreement is not being followed:

A collective agreement is a legally binding and recognized contract which covers all aspects of the working relationship with the employer. It is the most powerful tool we have when it comes to defending our individual and collective rights in the workplace. Contact the Chief Grievance Officer regarding any concerns about how the Employer administers the Collective Agreement or any conditions which might restrict your eligibility for tenure/permanency and promotion, or your academic freedom.

■ Helpful hints for settling into University life:

This will be a busy time for you, preparing for the academic year. Suggestions for **all new members**:

- Arrange to open an **e-mail account** by contacting Computing Services on the ground floor of the Atlantic Veterinary College (at the end of the hallway on the right of the main lobby of AVC).
- Get a **UPEI Campus Card** (Photo ID) at the front counter in the Sports Centre. All buildings are (or will be) fitted with security swipe card readers. Your UPEI Campus Card will allow access to your building(s), in addition to being a form of ID with a unique barcode.
- Apply to obtain a **parking permit** via the Accounting Office or parking kiosk at the Sports Centre.
- Determine in what **rooms** you are scheduled to teach and decide whether they suit your needs. If you think that a different room would be more appropriate, or if you need different equipment, speak to your department chair for advice on how to proceed.
- Get an overview of **library services** and resources (library.upei.ca/facultyguide) and contact your liaison librarian.
- Become familiar with The **Webster Centre for Teaching & Learning** located in the Robertson Library Annex. Faculty members who are new to UPEI are invited to join the Teaching Partners Program, designed to support and develop teaching at UPEI. New Faculty have the opportunity to work with a mentor, receive a travel grant to attend a teaching conference, and receive various teaching resources.
- Investigate **Internal Research grants** that are available by visiting the Office of Research Development office for a handbook or at the web site (www.upei.ca/research/internal_funding). Note that all proposals (internal and external) using human or animal subjects, or biohazards, need the appropriate approval forms (www.upei.ca/research/ethics_safety).
- Attend the reception and dinner for new academic staff held in September.

Specifically for Unit 1 Members:

- Make sure your **office** is reasonably well-equipped with necessary furniture and equipment (telephone and, if previously agreed, a computer). If any of these things are missing, speak to your department chair to find out when you can expect delivery.
- Make sure your **workload** is what you expected, and is in accordance with the Collective Agreement. Departments have various amounts and types of teaching duties, so ensure that your workload is consistent with the other members. Seek advice from other members of the unit about Honours programs (e.g., what would be a reasonable expectation, # of students) and any other programs that interest you.
- Ensure that you are properly reimbursed for your **moving expenses**.

■ Helpful hints for settling into *the P.E.I.* way of life:

- ▶ For information about all the local activities in the **arts and music**, etc., get the free monthly newspaper *The Buzz*, which is available around campus and at many shops and restaurants.
- ▶ For information on **sports**, visit www.gov.pe.ca/infopei/index.php3?number=19663&lang=E.
- ▶ There is a daycare centre on campus (566-0344) and other centres in the greater Charlottetown area. Many of these centres have waiting lists.
- ▶ As can happen with a move to any new place, Canadians and non-Canadians have reported experiencing **culture shock** as they adjust to life in PEI. You might find solace in the idea that it's good for you (<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/people/CGuanipa/cultshok.htm>). The PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada (www.peienc.com; 628-6009) is a support agency for immigrants to PEI. Other social groups (e.g., Rotary Clubs, Commonwealth Society, etc.) provide a good outlet for connecting with others.
- ▶ For **international** newcomers: Many insurance companies charge very high rates to car owners who have come from abroad and do not have a history of driving in Canada. However, competitive rates are usually available from insurance brokers. Information on how to get a PEI licence, health card, SIN, tax forms and work visas *etc.* may found at www.gov.pe.ca/infopei/. Also, we encourage you to meet with someone in Human Resources (Kelley Building) to address visa and tax concerns.

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