Chemistry 211a – where students become teachers

By Karmen Dowling

Students in Martin Stillman's Chemistry 211a class are teaching each other about "Metals in Life" through a week-long poster session.

While poster sessions are a common way to present new research information, large undergraduate classes seldom have the time or available resources to incorporate this kind of intensive teaching method into their curriculum.

Still, across campus, many faculty – often with assistance from the Teaching Support Centre – are incorporating new approaches that go beyond standard lecturing.

In particular, education research shows interactivity is an effective means of heightening learning. Interactivity is a key feature in Western-pioneered clicker technology that allows students to respond to questions in-class so an instructor gains a better grasp of their comprehension.

For Stillman's class, all 60 students are participating in groups of three or four, in 18 round-robin presentations where students try to sell their knowledge to others in the class. Held in the hallway outside Stillman's class, at times the corridor can look more like a marketplace for ideas than simply a way to get to and from class.

Stillman says this project is worth the time and effort – and it has meant a lot of extra time and effort.

“Getting students to engage in the material, to critically think about the issues and defend their research with one another, deepens their knowledge of the material and leads to greater student learning.”

Jillian Porter, a fourth-year Biology student says, “This offers more personal interaction with other students. For the average person (who) wouldn’t ask questions in a large group, they would here.”

Each student must visit the other posters and discuss the content with those teams. In addition, Stillman and his graduate students who specialize in bio-inorganic chemistry (metals in biology) will assess the content and knowledge of the teams, through 18 hours of interviews.

“If teaching is related to learning, then maybe this helps the learning,” says Stillman. “It is very time-consuming and takes an enormous effort – it couldn’t be done without graduate student help. While it’s an invaluable addition to the way of teaching – it’s expensive and requires department support.”

Stillman says nontraditional teaching is what many students want today.

“Embracing these ideas is very important,” says Director of the Teaching Support Centre, Debra Dawson, who applauds Stillman’s effort in adapting teaching methods to generate interest within a large class.

“Getting students to engage in the material, to critically think about the issues and defend their research with one another, deepens their knowledge of the material and leads to greater student learning,” says Dawson.

“This type of project also increases development in both oral and communication skills which are expectations in an undergraduate degree. These critical ingredients in one project make this teaching method unique.”

The peer advertising continues in the lower level of the Chemistry building until Friday. As an added inducement to learning, information presented on the 18 posters will be included in the final exam.
Lowering crime rate starts with helping hand

By Paul Mayne

Western grad Kathleen Lowe knows how to stop crime before it happens. But she needs more of the kind of help provided by the United Way.

Lowe (BA’98, BSW’00 – King’s University College) is a social worker with the John Howard Society and for almost six years she has worked with people – particularly youth – at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

A United Way of London and Middlesex funded agency since 1953, the John Howard Society of London and District was the second such group formed in Ontario – the first being Toronto, where it was founded in 1929.

Lowe says tackling issues that lead youth towards crime is vital to success. Often referred to the John Howard Society by high schools, physicians, children’s aid societies and others in the probation system, Lowe says risk factors can be anything from living in poverty, being a visible minority, having a parent who is also criminal and drug use.

“We are a heavy counselling agency with a number of different programs,” says Lowe. “Our highest portion of funding comes from the United Way. Because they are so proactive in their work, and we do a lot of prevention work on behalf of the United Way, that’s probably why we are funded so highly by them.”

There are programs to deal with youth and adults already in the criminal justice system, such as post-institutional counselling, family services and crisis intervention, so a major emphasis is being placed on a more pro-active approach in dealing with at-risk youth.

“We’ve taken a bit of a step back where we’re now doing a lot of pre-institutional counselling, so we’ll go to high schools working with a lot of high-risk, high-needs youth in the community,” says Lowe.

“It’s nice that we can be so proactive with the United Way funding because to get a youth before they move into the system, it’s a lot easier to work with them because once they get into the system and are exposed to other negative role models, it becomes harder to pull them away. Better to keep them in the community and working on the problems and put them around pro-active role models that are positive.”

For example, Lowe works with the Sir George Ross Secondary School Program to assist youth in remaining in school, help identify ways to change problem behaviours and prevent involvement in crime.

“We work with youth who need counselling to divert them from the criminal justice system, to steer them away from institutionalization.

Typically dealing with clients age 16 to 25, Lowe has even had to deal with 12 year olds. Whatever the age, she says support makes a difference in the likelihood they will offend or re-offend.

Many social workers helping area youth are graduates of King’s, says Lowe. King’s students in their third or fourth year of the social work program complete an internship at the John Howard Society.

“We employee social workers, are a teaching agency, and take a lot of King’s students. They come here and love the work and if there’s an opening are usually offered a job.”

Without funding from the United Way, she says a number of area youth and adult could be at risk.

“The work of the United Way is so important; it goes right into our community and makes it stronger. It is so important for us,” says Lowe.

The campus United Way campaign has reached $373,000 a target of $400,000.
What’s your top federal election issue?

By Paul Mayne

Ontario’s Auditor General (AG) Jim McCarter will in the future include universities and colleges in his “value-for-money” examination of operations to ensure government funds are spent properly.

In October, the AG met with the Ontario University Internal Audit Directors to discuss the impact of the expanded mandate and to explain its procedures in measuring and reporting on how effectively a government program meets its objectives.

Speaking at a Board of Governors meeting, President Paul Davenport says he has no problem with this latest move.

“We want to be seen as being supportive of accountability,” he says. “I think we are going to have to go outside the school to excel at their particular activity because of lack of funding.”

The expected approach of the AG will be to select a financial or operational area and conduct work in a cross-section of universities to compare best practices in Ontario. It is not likely that one or two universities will be reviewed extensively.

Initially, the AG will try to learn more about universities before choosing an area to review. Work is expected to begin in 2006-07 with more resources being added the following year.

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PENDING FEDERAL ELECTION

With a federal election set for January, Western wants to ensure proposed funding for universities remains a top priority no matter which political party is in power.

With Liberal promises already completed his two-year term with new faculty for the planned increase in graduate studies.

“With Liberal promises already completed his two-year term with new faculty for the planned increase in graduate studies.”

McDougall (MBA ’64), who appointed to the Board by the Alumni Association in March 2001. Her first meeting as Chair will be January 26.

By the Board of Governors.

Connell assumes the top Board position from Don McDougall (MBA ’64), who completed his two-year term last week.

Board members are nomi-
Montreal Massacre - more than violence against women

Alumna Sue McPherson hopes Canadians can re-examine that terrible day 16 years ago and rethink the killer, the victims and the lives of others involved.

On December 6, 1989, a 25-year-old man walked into the École Polytechnique in Montreal and shot to death 14 women, wounding 13 others. The Montreal Massacre was an appalling tragedy which has now taken its place in Canadian history, remembered mainly as an ultimate example of male violence against women. The lives of the women who died are remembered with sadness and pride. The realization of this injustice, that ruined the lives and promise their women had to offer that can never be recovered, will not go away.

The gunman, Marc Lépine, a Quebecer born Gamli Gharbi in 1964, is not thought of by people so much any more, old memories portraying him as inhuman, a representation that is met by many with revulsion.

The reasons behind this atrocious event — including Marc Lépine’s life — have never been adequately explored. Lépine saw himself as a political activist, but unable to resolve his own personal dilemma or what he saw as political wrongs in society. Instead of accepting his fate or leaving quietly he chose to use a violent means of making his point — a political statement — by killing 13 others. The Montreal Massacre was a conscious event, including Marc Lépine’s identity choice of being the main target group on the basis of gender. Consciously chosen, it was less than a human being. The lives of the women who died takes away from the fact that it was women who were killed.

The lives of the women who died were killed take away from the fact that it was women who died. Yet remaining fixed on the fact that it was women who were killed takes away from the social significance of the shooting that day.

Memorials that commemorate the lives of the women who died are just one part of the multiple strands of memories of all those wounded within themselves by this tragedy. If something positive is to come out of the violence that Marc Lépine committed, it would involve a rethinking of how Lépine’s life is remembered, how the women are remembered, and recognition of changes brought about by feminism and its impact on the lives of the women and men of today.

Now that time has passed, perhaps there will be a willingness to reconsider the lives of others involved, and how commemorations of the event help to reflect the lives of all those whose lives changed that day.

To read more

Writer Sue McPherson has written a longer essay on the Montreal Massacre and from which she has developed this Viewpoint. “Perspectives on the Montreal Massacre: Canada’s 1989 Ugly Revisited” can be viewed at http://montrealmassacre.homestead.com/Essay.html.

Contributed by Alan Noon

Photo Credits: Left, McIntosh Gallery Right, London Free Press Collection/Western Archives

Columnist ‘ill-prepared’ on Islam

By Haleel Sarwar

In the Nov. 24 issue of Western News, Professor Emeritus Heinz Klatt mentioned the eroding effects of multiculturalism in his extremely judgmental article “Are universities more afraid of unpleasant facts?”

Multiculturalism, as defined on the government website for Canadian heritage ensures “that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging”. Thus it is completely justified for Muslim students to take offence when a professor of history talks in a condescending tone about the prophet who every Muslim tries to emulate.

I aim to clarify his inaccurate interpretation of facts which are dripping with prejudice, based on difference of faiths. First of all the writer seemed to be surprised at the trigger for the First Crusade was Emperor Alexius I’s appeal to Pope Urban II for mercenaries to help him resist the prominence of Islamic teachings in the territories of the Byzantine Empire. My point is that Muslims did not start the religious war.

The writer accused Islam of being intolerant towards other religions, again his incapacity to understand the situation baffles my intellect. The Quran stringently forbids the association of anything in this universe to God himself, be it idols, human beings, animals, objects, etc. This belief is the foundation of Islam.

For Muslims, the Haram Sharif aka Kaaba is the most sacred site on the planet, in addition to that Muslims pray facing the Kaaba as a representation of their absolute submission in front of God. The idols were smashed not as an insult but rather as an indication that worshipping idols is absurd and ridiculous considering they are man-made.

Christians and Jews were given complete freedom in practising their religions because fundamentally they are praying to the same God.

Each individual has the responsibility of thorough investigation of the facts and understanding them in context of the situation at the time. It is important not to skew and malign the facts in order to project false impressions about an event or a belief.

I am in full support of the student and assistant professor who were offended by the questions presented by Klatt at the lecture. Reading the article one gets the vibe that Klatt was condescending, biased and ill-prepared not only to question the Muslim speaker but also to write about it for the Western News. I would advise future writers, be it professors or students, to conduct thorough and professional research before writing about matters which they do not completely understand or give importance to.

The writer is an HBA student in the Richard Ivey School of Business.

IN REPLY

The writer is an HBA student in the Richard Ivey School of Business.

The Way We Were: 1941

In September, 1940, Wilhelmina McIntosh left a bequest to build an art gallery on campus within two years or the money and accompanying paintings would revert to the University of Toronto. Within three months construction began on McIntosh Hall, a leading London contractor, built the McIntosh Gallery as well as University Bridge, the Science Building, Boiler House, JW Little Stadium, Lawson Memorial Library and the Cronyn Observatory.
Colleges shouldn’t offer degrees

By Judith S. Eaton

Many years ago I worked in a state where a community college began awarding an honorary doctorate at its commencement. Supporters of this effort said, “Why not?” It didn’t matter that the highest degree that the community college awarded was the associate. Detractors, on the other hand, said, “This doesn’t make sense; an institution should not award honorary degrees if it doesn’t provide an earned degree at that level.”

I am often reminded of that incident when I read and hear about the baccalaureate community college. True, the baccalaureate is earned, not honorary. At the same time, however it smacks of the same reaching beyond that I think characterized the honorary doctorate.

Do we need increased access to the baccalaureate? Yes. Does the community college need to offer this degree? I don’t think so.

Community colleges were created, above all, to provide access to higher education. Often referred to as “education’s colleges,” these two-year institutions have the mission to offer access to lower-division courses in career, vocational, liberal-arts, and general education. Community colleges provide entry to the work force or the chance to transfer to four-year institutions. These institutions also offer comprehensive remedial and developmental education and continuing education.

But if our goal is access for many first-generation college goers, lower-income students, and minority groups, community colleges have kept their tuitions low, attracted faculty members who are enthusiastic about teaching, and strategically located their campuses to provide ease of attendance. Governments and some community colleges have financed these institutions appreciate that taxpayer dollars going to the colleges stretch quite far, attributable to a lower cost per student when compared with nearby four-year institutions. By many accounts, community colleges have been a huge success. Wanting to move beyond those accomplishments, some community colleges in the United States are indeed moving toward awarding baccalaureate degrees. According to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities’ July 2004 report

update on the community college Baccalaureate,” 11 states have at least one community college with baccalaureate programs and three states were pursuing approval to offer the baccalaureate.

For some community-college leaders who support this move, offering the baccalaureate is a way to extend access and respond to the growing demand for higher education. The community-college leaders believe they have, more affordable than a four-year institution’s degree. Students get more education for the dollar spending less on tuition, and they have additional choices with regard to their education.

Offering the baccalaureate is also a way to respond to the political climate in which a community college is operating, especially when lawmakers are concerned with work-force and economic development. In fast-growing states, lawmakers see baccalaureate community colleges as part of a potential solution to major work-force shortages in nursing and teaching, for example. Busi- ness leaders sometimes see the baccalaureate community college as desirable when there are perhaps only one or two four-year institutions in rural areas.

Offering the baccalaureate is also a way for community colleges to gain prestige. Having worked at community colleges for 20 years and been president of two of them, I acknowledge that we do not get much respect. That was forcefully brought home to me years ago when a well-known election official said my community college was where students went “before they go to a real college.”

But establishing baccalaureate community colleges comes with too high a price. Such a move would betray community colleges’ mission, especially low tuition and remedial and developmental education. It would result in an inequitable institutional identity and undermine access to higher education generally. Above all, why pay the price of establishing baccalaureate community colleges when we simply do not need them? There is a range of other viable and sensible means to increase access to the baccalaureate community college, including increasing financial aid, increasing costs, and confusing structural change in a major sector of higher education.

“Credibility of the institution is almost always more costly to operate than a two-year college. For example, in order to attain additional accreditation requirements for operating as four-year institutions would increase costs permanently. And, as Florida has learned, start-up costs for a four-year operation, especially when coupled with initial low enrollment, can result in community-college expenditures per student that exceed those of some state universities.

Additional costs will, at least in part, most likely be passed on to students in tuition and fees. Yes, the tuition for a baccalaureate community college may be lower than that of the nearby four-year institution. But what will protect students who are in associate-degree programs from having to pay the higher tuition to baccalaureate college would have to charge?

We also will betray the community-college mission if we divert resources from remedial and developmental education to baccalaureate programs, which require a robust academic support environment, including a comprehensive range of those offerings. Without them, students might be more likely to drop out or not attend college at all. How will we continue to support this important function while moving to the baccalaureate? Given that most baccalaureate granting four-year institutions are unable to make a major commitment to remedial and developmental education, what is a community college that offers a baccalaureate, anyway? Is it a two-year institution? A four-year institution? Or are we moving to some type of “hybrid institution,” wonders James Jacoby, director of the Community College Research Center at Columbia University’s Teachers College. If that is the case, how do we deal with the resulting incoherence of identity? Is the community college a "second-class degree," asks James Wat- tenbarger, a professor emeritus of education at the University of Florida? Will the incoherence of identity of the institution, in the end, diminish the importance of the credential?

Finally, the baccalaureate community college may reduce access to higher education generally. At such colleges selective admission might replace open admission, with the eventual addition of graduate programs. Selective admission and graduate education, especially when coupled with higher tuition, are not ordinarily key components of access to higher education.

And, as Dale F. Campbell, an education professor who directs the Community College Leadership Consortium at the University of Florida, points out, the two-year degree may cease to play its vital entry function in professions where it has historically played a strong role if the same colleges offer baccalaureate degrees in those same areas. The associate degree as an entry credential in some health professions, journalism, and interior design is already endangered.

But the most important reason not to move to the baccalaureate community college is that it simply is not needed. Access to the baccalaureate can be enhanced in a number of other ways. The Community College Baccalaureate Association, created in 1994 to promote such institutions, acknowledges other means of access when, in 2004, the association changed its mission to a more general focus on students’ achieving the baccalaureate in a variety of ways.

Other models to expand access to the baccalaureate, as described by the editors of The Community College Baccalaureate: Emerging Trends and Policy Issues, involve partnerships between two-year and four-year institutions in which four-year universities would confer the degree.

“Articulation” models focus on formal transfer agreements; “uni- versity centre” models involve concurrent use of campuses; and “university extension” models use branch campuses. Shared facilities and joint programs, and transfer agreements are all valuable in providing access to the baccalaureate for community-college students.

The baccalaureate community college would undermine one of our finest educational achievements: the open-admission, two-year community college. Access to the baccalaureate does not need to replace the community college. We do not have to go there.
Juggling workload and quality in Music

Editor’s note: The University of Western Ontario Faculty Association recently conducted a workload survey of faculty members, a project mirroring an exercise conducted almost 10 years ago. As a component to that project, professor emeritus and former UWOpera president Ernie Redekop sat down to discuss workload issues with Theodore Baerg, associate professor in the Performance Department, Faculty of Music.

Ernie Redekop: You are the head and director of UWOpera, as well as the Graduate Co-ordinator in charge of the voice section of the Performance Department, Faculty of Music, and lately, a founding member of the new Vocal Health Clinic, cross-appointed to the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. I am here as a member of UWOFAs committee on the first workload survey since 1996, and I want to ask about the ways in which teaching is done in the Performance department and about your views of the place of the performing arts, especially opera, in this university.

Theodore Baerg: I’m happy to answer your questions, although I should state that I am not speaking for the whole Performance department. I can speak for the opera program and the graduate vocal studies area, since I am coordinator of both.

The opera program has almost tripled in size in the last decade and even though my own credited hours devoted to this program have almost doubled, I am not complaining. In the arts we must look to growth and professional relevance. However, when we have had success in these endeavours we must follow up with support in teaching and faculty. In order to increase the number and quality of graduate students in this field, we must have a first-rate opera program, since this provides the most significant recruitment focus.

Our reputation in this faculty for the teaching of voice, of opera and choral singing is beginning to draw some important national attention. In the September 2005 issue of Classical Singer, a major American journal in the field, has an article on the four largest university vocal programs in Canada, the programs at McGill, Toronto, UBC and Western. It describes these programs as “vibrant and well respected internationally,” devoting two pages to a description of Western’s program.

Redekop: I know from my own observations as an opera fan how much your opera program has grown over the past decade, both in size and in quality, but in reading the article, I am impressed not only by the descriptions of these programs but also by the advice and suggestions American students should seriously consider these four Canadian music schools. This reputation derives from the high quality of the teaching and the students, which brings me to my next question: how are the various appointments distributed in your area?

Baerg: We have three full-time professors, two who are on limited-term contracts (one of these primarily in the choral conducting area) and an additional twelve or thirteen who are part-time and paid at an hourly rate. In addition, we have an essential group of professionals associated with our opera program who are paid for their services on a contractual basis. Several of these people have significant national reputations, and we would be much better and effectively served if there were funding for such anomalies, especially for additional limited-term appointments.

Redekop: It seems to me that, within the Faculty of Music, the Performance department is unique, not only because of its central role in the Faculty, but also because much of the teaching has to be on a one-to-one basis. This makes teaching expensive. What is your view?

Baerg: Yes, this department is unique within the faculty and the university in the teaching of performance music, but not when compared to the other significant programs in Canada in the United Sates. While there are significant costs involved in the delivery of this kind of teaching, the results of the past decades would suggest that the money has been very well spent. With the growth of quality and recognition the department must come a greater recognition of our corporate responsibility for improved and well-targeted support. In the UWOpera program, we would not have been able to foster this growth without the special PAS funding that has enabled us to sustain this program for the past four years; however, there remains significant room for an improvement in funding.

Redekop: What are the implications for faculty members of your success in enlarging and improving the opera program and in the Faculty’s attracting some 160 undergraduate students of voice and 18 graduate singers?

Baerg: I’ll answer that by pointing out that each new production of an opera is analogous to a new course for me; there is a brand new schedule of rehearsals and virtually every part of the process connected with the production has to start from scratch. The quality of the result, both as a learning experience for the students and the performance on the stage is directly linked to making each year’s experience meaningful for all participants. Like other professors, I’m expected to keep up my own schedule of performances (for example, I have just agreed to play the role of Emile in next season’s production of South Pacific at the Stratford Festival). This is our equivalent of research as practiced in other departments. Thus there is always a tremendous pressure on available time.

Redekop: What would enable the opera program and indeed the whole Performance department to meet the challenges presented by this ever-increasing student enrollment? Do you need more appointments? If so, what kind of appointments do you need?

Baerg: Yes, we badly need more appointments and we will always need to include part-time teachers. However, our current statistics tell us that the workload is skewed in the wrong direction. Our growth in numbers and quality, and the long-term health and indeed the future of the institution, clearly deserve the commitment only full-time faculty can provide. Such commitment is always reciprocal. I personally feel very committed to UWO, since I have received a real commitment from the University.

In our particular area, I believe that we need some appointments that are limited-term; however, not at the current 36-hours/week level. In the teaching of music performance, every hour is a contact hour and there is no credit for the necessary preparation, so the limit on hours/week should never go beyond 30 hours, and even that should be carefully monitored.

Redekop: You seem to be suggesting that in your area, limited-term contracts would be preferable to tenure-track appointments.

Baerg: No, I’m not suggesting that, but in some cases, as in the coaching of opera, as well as in some studio teaching areas, limited-term contracts would be appropriate. Our present and future funding could provide much needed additional courses and support if it were targeted carefully at some of these needs. Tenure-track appointments, of course, are always preferable, for all the reasons of commitment and community so necessary to the creation and maintenance of unfettered creativity.

Redekop: Thank you for taking the time to talk to me. We hope that the appointment and workload problems in your department can be addressed and ameliorated. Meanwhile, I, for one, will continue listening to you and the outstanding young singers taught by you and your colleagues.

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**DOUBLE THREAT**

Recognizing excellence in the classroom and on the playing field

Rugby + Chemistry = success for Cation, Western

**By Jeff Renaud**

It’s the classic chicken or the egg debate. Western women’s rugby phenomenon Jayne Cation has been a Mustang for two seasons. The Western women’s rugby team has won the last two Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) championships in 2004 and 2005. So which is it? Did Cation’s arrival give the Mustangs the extra weapon the team needed to win the top prize on the national stage? Or was Western on the cusp of great things with or without her?

Coincidence, unlikely, but no matter. Western is winning and folks on campus are pleased to have Cation sitting high atop the coop. This was shown by the warm reception received by the team November 30 in the UCC Atrium hosted by the Women’s Athletic Alumnae and highlighted by Dr. Paul Davenport’s enthusiastic acknowledgements.

The fiery red head is no stranger to performing at elite levels. Cation also holds her own in the classroom. The Terra Cotta, Ont.-native earned CIS Academic All-Canadian honours in her rookie season after posting an 88 per cent average in Chemistry.

On the field, the second-year inside centre followed up her “surprising” CIS rookie-of-the-year award in 2004 with All-Canadian honours in 2005. As is the case with many young women, Cation didn’t pick up the game of rugby until her high school days at Mayfield Secondary School in Brampton.

“When I first started playing in Grade 9 all I knew was that you had to pass the ball backwards,” quips Cation. “To go on to become the top rookie in university rugby was surprising, for sure.”

Cation was a member of the Canadian Under-19 squad, a team coached by Western head coach Natascha Wesch, prior to joining the Mustangs and is now a member of the Under-23 program.

Her relationship with Wesch made her choice of coming to London for her studies an easy one.

“Academically, the decision came down to Western or Queen’s, but Western was the better rugby school. Natascha has created a feeder program for the national team here at Western and that’s where I want to be,” explains Cation.

With a goal of joining the Senior Women’s National Team for the 2010 World Cup, Cation is right on track.

Her teammate Barb Mervin of Peterborough netted similar CIS rookie-of-the-year honours in 2002 and was named the national player of the year in 2005. Mervin now plays with the senior squad as does Cation’s workout partner Megan Gibbs of Barrie.

Wesch says Cation is a “pleasure to coach” and “a huge prospect for Canadian rugby.”

Beyond the back-to-back national titles, another of Cation’s career highlights occurred this past August when she trained with the Under-23 team for a month at the University of Alberta and played in a big win over the United States: “It was the worse beating the Americans have taken in the last 10 years.”

Cation is now looking forward to 2006 and 2007 when the Mustangs look to three-peat and four-peat as national champions. The championship is set to run at Western November 2-5 in 2006 and November 1-4 in 2007.

“It would be great to win four straight, especially the final two here in front of our home crowd,” says Cation.
Latest phase of Biotron breaks ground

BY MITCHELL ZIMMER

Western broke ground last week on the $28-million Biotron building, a project touted by many scientists as being at least five years ahead of any similar facility in the world.

The doors are expected to open on this Canadian Foundation for Innovation and Ontario Research Fund supported facility in early 2007.

The new five-storey Experimental Climate Change Research Facility will not only house separate state-of-the-art research modules for earth science, microbiology, plants and insects, it will also feature an imaging centre with electron, confocal and digital light microscopes.

As data is accumulated through the various measurement instruments, growth chambers and imaging devices, researchers will be able to access this information through a secure networked central server.

What will really sets this research facility apart is the inclusion of six biomes on the rooftop. These environmentally controlled greenhouse-like structures will enclose small scale ecosystems where even minute interactions between plants, insects and microorganisms can be monitored.

The 24-square-metre biomes are the key research settings for studying climate change where it is often difficult to obtain hard data.

Biology Professor Norman Hünner notes the centre will be able to provide detailed evidence about the impact of climate change that has not been available before, a shortcoming in the past that has allowed governments to refuse to take political action.

“While we monitor various aspects on a global scale but it’s impossible on that scale to understand what’s cause and effect on a biological system and that’s always been an argument that various governments have used,” he says.

Without experimental proof, there is a heavy reliance on anecdotal evidence.

Hünner says that these findings will have an impact on policy.

“The long, broader goal of the Biotron is to use this information for policy.”

The Biotron will also be able to provide valuable insights about the effect of introduced species on biodiversity. Since the biomes are controlled environments, researchers can assess the impact of these organisms on an ecosystem.

Learn more about the facility at www.biotron.uwo.ca.

KEY BIOTRON RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Insects
About $1 billion a year is spent in Ontario on agricultural insect control. It helps farming but poses a potential threat to the environment and health. As well, more insect-borne diseases are being introduced from underdeveloped countries, such as the West Nile Virus. The Biotron Insect Facility will permit investigation of genetic-based insect management strategies under controlled experimental conditions.

Earth Science
The Biotron will mimic Arctic and agricultural conditions to investigate the fundamental processes associated with global climate change in the Arctic and intensive agricultural regions such as Southwestern Ontario. This will enable investigation of the impact of carbon cycles upon natural greenhouse gas production, transfer of agriculture-related pathogens through the ecosystem and transfer of antibiotic resistance among soil microbes.

Plants and algae
Humans have a dramatic, negative impact on fresh water and marine aquatic ecosystems. Presently, this impact is measured by loss of fisheries, loss of water quality due to higher levels of toxic bacteria in drinking water and closing of recreational areas. The Biotron will develop “early warning” biosensors to assess impact of human activity and climate change on sensitive aquatic ecosystems.

Microbiology
Integration of soil scientists, microbiologists and earth scientists will enable a better understanding of the origins of human pathogens and their progression from soil to human diseases. The ability of multi-drug resistant bacteria to cause disease has become a health threat. For example, the usually harmless bacterium B. cepacia can cause devastating infections in patients with diseases such as cystic fibrosis and is also found in sporadic outbreaks of infection among hospitalized patients.

Transgenic plants
The controlled growth capacity will be critical to develop and exploit transgenic plant species for human and ecological health purposes. Molecular farming includes production of foreign proteins in plants, including the testing of novel plants in the prevention and treatment of human diseases. The Biotron will also help researchers develop chemical and pathogen-free food, a clean environment, healthy alternatives to conventional medicine and cheaper and effective diagnostic and therapeutic products.

Plant productivity
Scientists will be able to accelerate our understanding of terrestrial and aquatic organisms’ responses to climate change. This will help create crops better able to adjust to and resist the stress of climate change, even taking advantage of new conditions—higher UV levels and CO2 concentrations, wide temperature changes, drought, poor soil nutrients—to deliver higher yields.
Farrow shifts from premier to president

BY KARLEN DOWLING

This has been a life-changing year for Karli Farrow. She turned 30. She got married. And just over a week ago she started a new job as Manager of the Office of the President.

Despite her youth, Farrow is no novice when it comes to functioning in a pressure-cooker environment.

The University of Guelph political science grad has held several positions in the Office of the Premier of Ontario, including Director of Policy where she provided strategic advice to Dalton McGuinty and senior staff.

Prior to her government work, Farrow coordinated special events for York University’s Department of Alumni Affairs. Farrow says her move to Western came at the right time.

“The breadth of issues at Western is so wide and so much relates to my past work,” says Farrow, who is pursuing a master’s at the University of Toronto. “Western is a great community full of interesting people. I am excited to meet more students and faculty on campus.”

Farrow knows she shifted back to the education sector at a turning point. Over the past year, federal and provincial politicians have repositioned post-secondary education reform high on their list of priorities.

Western is seen as a leader in the province, says Farrow, and President Paul Davenport has the ear of government officials.

In her new role, she will be serving as operational and administrative lead for the office, in addition to providing advice and support to the President and Vice-Presidents regarding strategic policy and planning for the university.

“All corners of the world are here, with all manners of interest. I can’t wait to be a part of it.”

Karli Farrow
Manager, Office of the President

“I’m most looking forward to coming to this institution that is strong and seeing how that strength grows even more,” she says. “As well, I’m looking forward to working with the people. There is such an interesting collection of individuals with different backgrounds. All corners of the world are here, with all manners of interest. I can’t wait to be a part of it.”

Meanwhile, her husband Dave is in Western’s Law school and articling at McCarthy Tetrault in London. Farrow says once she has settled she hopes to transfer her credits to complete her master’s at Western.

Already feeling at home, Karli Farrow stands in her office, as Western’s new Manager of the Office of the President.

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Feeling at home in Social Science

By Karmen Dowling

There’s something different about the Social Science Centre these days…it looks downright homely.

Gone are the institutional looking study alcoves. Warm colours have been added, furnishings recovered, seating added and the mammoth concrete pillars made more attractive. And that’s before you ever get to renovations in the food area on the lower level.

“These changes make it a more pleasant environment to be in, where students, faculty and staff feel at home.”

Brian Timney
Dean of Social Science

The Social Science Centre is one of the largest buildings on campus, but following cosmetic changes to common areas of the first two floors, it no longer feels quite so cavernous.

And serving a faculty where members are renowned for their independent spirit and readiness to express an opinion, the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

The changes include addition of 47 cubicles for graduate students. Located in a large, but quiet and comfortable room on the lower level, each area has already been spoken for. The hope is to create a space for professor emeriti, as well.

The Academic Counselling Student Centre has expanded and a new booth known as the “Welcome Centre” is now located in the main lobby.

“We wanted to make the Social Science Centre a place for students to go to, outside of their classes,” says Dean of Social Science, Brian Timney. “These changes make it a more pleasant environment to be in, where students, faculty and staff feel at home.”

With campus in the midst of a building and renovation boom in which six- and seven-figure construction bills are the norm, this project was modest by comparison.

The faculty spent less than $50,000 for upgrades on the two floors, as well as all of the study alcoves on each floor near the elevators. In addition, Hospitality Services covered the $210,000-cost of renovating the Tim Hortons area. The next step is to work with Hospitality Services to revamp Biscotti’s located on the third floor.

Another addition is a wall of plaques on the second floor, with the names of all faculty in Social Science who have won teaching awards. There is also a display case with faculty-written books. There are a number of subtle cosmetic changes that Timney says may not be readily noticeable but have enhanced the space.

Timney says he has received a lot of positive feedback, especially about the cozier feel to common areas. He sees more faculty members having coffee in the building, rather than going to the University Community Centre.

While Timney has been very supportive of this effort, he says the work was the brainchild of Linda Brock, who coordinated all the efforts.

“It has been enormously successful,” says Timney. “This is something we’re really pleased with.”

Dean of Social Science Brian Timney leans against a concrete pillar which has been covered and painted in the student lounge/study area on the second floor of the Social Science Centre. The seating in the background has been recovered and the walls repainted.
Winning by ‘any means necessary’

BY PAUL MAYNE

The proliferation of performance-enhancing drugs in sports has reached the point where it is more than an issue of the integrity of sport, says a top expert on doping.

Montreal lawyer Dick Pound, chair of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) formed in 1999, says professional sports agencies have failed to bring the doping issue under control.

“It’s starting to become a public health problem and not just a sport problem,” says Pound, who spoke to Western Law students last week. “We can’t be putting our heads in the sand as if it doesn’t exist. It’s clearly a problem without an awareness of the potential consequences.”

Set up as a foundation under the initiative of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), WADA has the support and participation of intergovernmental organizations, governments, public authorities, and other public and private bodies to fight against doping in sport. The agency consists of equal representatives from the Olympic Movement and public authorities.

Pound, a former Olympic athlete, says for years drugs were used, but quite a different problem to know that they are being used, says Pound. “It’s one thing to devise any tests for the drugs that were being used,” says Pound. “They didn’t have the knowledge at that time to devise any tests for the drugs that were being used,” says Pound. “It’s one thing to know that they are being used but quite a different problem to try and detect and enforce it.”

In addition, athletes were always one step ahead. It wasn’t until 1974 that a test to detect anabolic steroids was even discovered. But with advancements in today’s technology, and a WADA budget of almost $24 million, the odds are beginning to switch in favour of “fair play.”

“‘We’re starting to see benefits as far as finding the so-called designer steroids and masking agents before they’re being used.”

For more about WADA, please visit www.wada-ama.org/en/
Flow Cytometry Core Facility Manager

A full-time managerial position is available in the London Regional Flow Cytometry Facility at the Robarts Research Institute. This is a rapidly growing facility that provides services for Robarts, The University of Western Ontario, and the affiliated hospitals and institutes.

The Facility is equipped with a FACSVantage SE DiVa cell sorter with Aria optics upgrade, 2 FACSCalibur analysis cytometers as well as both PC and Mac data analysis stations.

The successful candidate will be an enthusiastic, self-motivated individual, willing to work independently, and in collaboration with researchers. The major requirements for this position are: 1-2 years experience in Flow Cytometry (FACS); flow cytometric cell sorting using BD Biosciences-based equipment; working knowledge of Cell Quest, DiVa and FlowJo software and strong skills on both PC and Mac platforms. Knowledge of tissue culture and aseptic/sterile techniques are an asset but not required.

The successful candidate will be responsible for training users to independently operate FACSCaliburs; for cell sorting and multi-colour analysis; for managing the on-line scheduling calendar; and for the administrative duties associated with running such a core facility.

Qualified candidates should send a letter of introduction, resume and the names of contact of three references by Friday, December 16, 2005 to: Director of Human Resources, Robarts Research Institute, P.O. Box 5015, 100 Perth Drive, London, Ontario N6A 5K8, Canada, email resumes@roburts.ca or fax: (519) 663-2988.

Appreciation is expressed to all who respond to this advertisement. However, only those to be interviewed will be contacted.

DECEMBER ARTS CALENDAR

December 5
Don Wright Faculty of Music- UWO Singers and St. Cecilia Singers celebrate the season, von Kuster Hall admission free, 12:30 pm.

December 9&10
Don Wright Faculty of Music - Amahl and the Night Visitors with Orchestra London - The delightful children’s opera by Gian Carlo Menotti, Amahl and the Night Visitors, is presented with Amabile Boys’ Choir and Orchestra London, conducted by Timothy Vernon. Opera Series, St. Paul’s Cathedral, Tickets $35 through Orchestra London, 679-8778, or cash at the door, Dec. 9, 10 am and 115 pm & Dec. 10, 2:30 pm.

December 9
USC Comedy Movie Series – Old School, Spoke Lounge, 2 p.m.

December 9
USC Comedy Movie Series – Dodgeball, Spoke Lounge, 2 p.m.

December 9
The Royal Conservatory of Music.

December 4
Don Wright Faculty of Music- UWO Singers celebrate the season, von Kuster Hall admission free, 12:30 pm.

December 7
Don Wright Faculty of Music- UWO Singers participate in this collaborative music making proj
Don’t Blink

Photographs taken just over 48 hours apart at the same location on campus reveal how quickly late fall weather can change… and likely change right back again.

ACADEME

PhD Lectures

Dana K. Adkinson: A Chemistry PhD Public Lecture will be held December 1 at 1 p.m. in Room 175, Chemistry Building. Title of Thesis: “Photolysis of Pyridyl Carbonyl Azides and Azidoarylones as Monolayers on Pt(111)”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 2 p.m. in Room 142, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Mark S. Workentin.

Alexander M. Ferreira: An Anatomy and Cell Biology PhD Public Lecture will be held December 1 at 12:30 p.m. in Aud B, London Health Sciences Center. Title of Thesis: “Analysis of Monocyte Diapedesis and its Regulation By Integrin Mediated Signalling”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 2 p.m in Room 125A, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Martin Sandig and Dr. Ken Rogers.

Marty Klassen: A Medical Biophysics PhD Public Lecture will be held December 2 at 10 a.m. in Aud B, London Health Sciences Center. Title of Thesis: “Towards Noninvasive MRI Measurement of Cerebral Metabolic Rate of Oxygen Consumption: Techniques for Measuring and Validating Deoxyhemoglobin Concentration”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 11 a.m in Room 142, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Ravi Menon.

Amr Alghamidi: An Education PhD Public Lecture will be held December 2 at 1 p.m. in Aud 100, Faculty of Education Building. Title of Thesis: “Guilfed Narratives of Arab Muslim Women’s Tapestry: Intersecting Educational Experiences and Gender Perceptions”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 3 p.m in Room 142, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Sharon Rich.

Mahdi Tavakoli: An Electrical and Computer Engineering PhD Public Lecture will be held December 2 at 12:30 p.m. in Room 234, Thompson Engineering Building. Title of Thesis: “Haaptic Interaction in Master-Slave Minimally Invasive Robotic Surgery”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 1:30 pm in Room 102, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Rajni Patel and Dr. Mehrdad Mostafavi.

Bill Gaspar Santos: A Chemistry PhD Public Lecture will be held December 2 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 195, Chemistry Building. Title of Thesis: “The Effect of Surface Composition on the Anodic Dissolution of Nuclear Fuel (UO2)”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 3:00 p.m in Room 142, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. David Shoesmith

Christopher Andreese: A Geography PhD Public Lecture will be held December 6 at 9 a.m. in Room 9430, Social Science Centre. Title of Thesis: “Evolution of the Port of Quebec, 1858-1936”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 10 a.m in Room 142, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Millfred B. Green.

Hao Song: A Mechanical and Materials Engineering PhD Public Lecture will be held December 7 at 1 p.m. in Room 2009B, Spencer Engineering Building. Title of Thesis: “Point Cloud Simplification in 3D Object Representation”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 2 p.m in Room 125A, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Hui-Yung (Effie) Feng.

Samuel Nova: A Chemical and Biochemical Engineering PhD Public Lecture will be held December 7 at 1 p.m. in Room 2009A, Spencer Engineering Bldg. Title of Thesis: “Optical Sensors for Particle Clustering Studies in Downflow Reactors”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 2 p.m in Room 142, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Hugo deluca.

Faculty & Staff

Carole Orchard, Director of the School of Nursing, received the Elzeth Johns Award from the Canadian Association of the Schools of Nursing (CASN) November 21. The award is named after the founding Director of the first university nursing program in Canada and presented in recognition of distinguished service to nursing education in Canada. CASN has presented this award to outstanding nursing education leaders since 1988.

Beverly Leipert, Chair, Rural Women’s Health Research, presented a paper entitled, “Gender and Health Research: The Case for Rural Women’s Health Research” at the Research Award Recipient Symposium and Student Workshop hosted by Canadian Institutes of Health Research - Institute of Gender and Health in Vancouver in November.

Richard Seewald, National Centre for Audiology, School of Communication Sciences and Disorders, and K. Shane Hoodie, H.A. Leeper Speech & Hearing Clinic, School of CSD, participated in a workshop in Atlanta, Georgia, in November on fitting amplification for infants and young children for the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM). His lecture title: “Multi-level impact of gender on sympathetic neurovascular control.”

Kevin Wamsley (Kinesiology) addressed the ActiveLondon2005 symposium November 15 on the topic: “Active Living in Your Workplace. What’s in it for You?”

Kevin Shoemaker (Kinesiology) toured San Antonio, College Station and Dallas-Fortworth, Texas in October, a trip sponsored by the Texas affiliate of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). His lecture title: “Multi-level impact of gender on sympathetic neurovascular control.”

ALUMNI

Alan Salmon, School of Kinesiology, was an invited speaker at the University of Windsor in November on the topic: “Principles of community based research.”

Alison Doherty (Kinesiology) presented a paper at the inaugural Coaching Research Symposium, held in conjunction with the Sport Canada Sport Leadership Sportif 2005 (National sport forum hosted by the Coaching Association of Canada) in Quebec City in November. The paper, presented with kinesiology doctoral graduate Melanie Grego, and George Cunningham (University of Texas AM). The title was “Understanding the Gender Imbalance in Coaching: A Model of Intentions to Become a University Head Coach.”

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Wind tunnel breezes through 40 years

By Paul Mayne

In a fairly nondescript looking building on the southwest side of campus lies a hidden gem. From the outside it could be a typical office building. But on the inside, pioneering research in wind tunnel testing and analysis is taking place on a daily basis and helping to reshape our built environment, in Canada and around the world.

Western’s Boundary Layer Wind Tunnel Laboratory (BLWTL) has tested everything from bridges in Hong Kong and Britain to buildings in the United States and the United Arab Emirates.

This year marks its 40th anniversary of providing solutions in the design of a wide variety of worldly structures.

Research Director and Chair of the Board of Directors, Peter King, says when the BLWTL was founded in 1965 by Alan Davenport, it almost immediately stood out as a leader in its field.

“This was the first wind tunnel that was devoted to the testing of buildings and other structures,” says King. “Every other wind tunnel had been aeronautical or automotive. This was the first in the world and we continue to lead the way.”

Originally located in the Bio-Engineering Building, the BLWTL moved to its current location, just behind the Thompson Engineering Building, in 1984.

The construction of a second wind tunnel at that time, allowed for a greater range and ability to test engineering structures.

“At that point, the initial tunnel was 20-years-old, a bit small and had a maximum speed that was not quite adequate,” says King, who began his time at the BLWTL as a high school student in 1968.

“The new tunnel was just fantastic. It was twice the size, twice as fast...it was better all the way around.”

As the physical tunnel size was growing, so was the technology. The researchers, who make up the Alan G. Davenport Wind Engineering Group, has adapted to these changes, allowing them greater exploration possibilities with their work.

“The original way we measured (wind loads) was on a board where there was a whole bunch of glass tubes with liquid in them, which was connected to the buildings,” recalls King of the then advanced, yet now rudimentary, measuring device. “The liquid would rise or fall and someone with a clipboard would write down the number.”

That has changed dramatically, adds King, to the point of having more than 1,000 electronic transducers that can sample, simultaneously, gigabytes of data almost every second.

“It’s amazing,” he says.

For all its groundbreaking work, King says the depth and importance of the science that goes on at the BLWTL goes largely unrecognized outside the engineering community.

“I don’t think people on campus really understand or appreciate what’s here, nor here in the city,” he says. “But I think in the engineering community we are really well known; architecturally as well. I think we’re viewed among those two groups as leaders in the field.”

The ongoing work on studying wind loads can truly pay off, admits King. Not only in spotting future structural quandaries, but in potential repairs down the road.

“We’re telling them (engineers/architects) the loads they have assumed are being underestimated by the particular shape or the structural properties - and we can help them fine tune those to improve it,” says King.

Often the cost of a wind tunnel study is recovered by the outside architect/builders through the savings in avoiding costly repairs at a future date.

While the casual observer may think one building or bridge is little different from another, King says there are so many influences on a structure’s performance that there will never be two structures the same.

“I mainly work in the area of bridges and there really hasn’t been two identical bridges come along in the length of time I’ve been here,” says King of his 37 years at the BLWTL.

“Everyone is unique. Every designer has a better way of doing things, as far as they’re concerned, so every problem that comes in is unique.”

Unique designs challenge the testing skills and model construction skills of researchers.

Not only helpful for researchers, Western students are also benefiting from the BLWTL.

“There’s a reason why we’re on the university campus,” says King. “We’re not just involved in these projects because we’re engineers and this is what we like to do. We’re here for education - that means educating graduate students, undergraduates and also the community.”

He adds graduate students can make a significant difference in the way future structures are built.

“There are a number of different projects that come in with buildings and bridges that are really current and state-of-the-art,” says King. “The grad students can actually work on these cutting-edge projects and see what needs to be done, and actually improve the design methodology.”

It will be these graduate students on hand Friday afternoon (Dec. 2) from 2 until 4 p.m. to answer questions and provide tours of the BLWTL during an open house.

“It’s important to let the public see what we’re all about,” he says. “We’re here to educate.”

Wind Tunnel Projects

Many famous building projects have been tested at Western. They include:

- Canary Wharf - London, U.K. (photo left)
- Cyberport Cybercenter - Hong Kong
- Emirates Towers - Dubai, UAE
- Hong Kong Convention Centre - Hong Kong
- World Trade Centre, New York
- Walt Disney Concert Hall - Los Angeles
- Confederation Bridge - P.E.I.
- Baltic Millennium Footbridge - Gateshead, U.K.
- Bronx-Whitestone Bridge - New York
- CN Tower - Toronto
- One London Place - London, ON

For more information, please visit www.blwtl.uwo.ca

Open House

The Boundary Layer Wind Tunnel Laboratory will celebrate 40 years of research and reshaping skylines with an open house Dec. 2, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. All are welcome. Faculty, staff and students will be on hand to answer questions and provide tours.

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A multidisciplinary approach that includes the use of molecular biological, immunocytochemical and functional techniques is used. For the current position, the successful candidate will possess at a minimum a B.Sc. (or equivalent degree) and should have significant skills in and experience with molecular biology and immunocytochemistry. In addition, the candidate must be a highly motivated team player who is keen on expanding their present technical expertise. Applicants possessing sound computer skills will also be given preference. Salary will be commensurate with experience and level of training.

Interested applicants should forward a CV and the names and contact information of applicable references by December 16, 2005 to: Director of Human Resources, Robarts Research Institute, P.O. Box 5015, 100 Perth Drive, London, ON, N6A 5K8. Fax: 519-663-2988. E-mail: resumes@roberts.ca.

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Honouring victims of violence

By Karen Dowling

Sixteen years ago on December 6, Marc Lepine, opened fire on a classroom of female engineering students, yelling “I hate feminists.” He persisted through the corridors of Montreal’s École Polytechnique shooting 27 people, killing 14 women and then himself.

The Western community continues to remember those and others, as commemorative events occur across Canada on the Canadian National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, December 6.

Canada’s only university-level women’s college, Brescia University College, will host its annual Ritual for Re-Memorium at noon in the auditorium, with guest speaker Rashmi Bahar.

Kim Young Milani, coordinator at The Circle Women’s Centre at Brescia, says it is important to re-tell the story of the Montreal Massacre since few students have first-hand knowledge of the event.

“We as women have to mentor them and tell why to remember, that a very, very short time ago women were combatting such sexism,” says Young Milani.

Chair of the Ritual of Re-Memorium committee at Brescia, Sheila Horrell, says the ritual honours the 14 women, Western student Lynda Shaw who was murdered in 1990 near Highway 401 and all women who have been victims of violence.

“Our focus this year is Roots Run Deep, using garden analogies to emphasize the need to weed out small violations and attitudes of disrespect before we all become desensitized to them and they grow out of control,” says Horrell.

“We as women have to mentor them and tell why to remember, that a very, very short time ago women were combating such sexism.”

Kim Young Milani
Coordinator, The Circle Women’s Centre, Brescia College

“I look at pruning as a loving act that addresses the need to cut back behaviours that erode on the lives of others and threaten their survival. Everyone needs a safe and nourishing space and by carefully tending that space, all will thrive. Although the roots of violence run deep in our society, the roots of women’s courage and experience run even deeper and are our hope.”

Women In Engineering will host a Montreal Massacre Memorial Ceremony at 9:30 a.m. in Spencer Engineering Building, room 1059.

The ceremony will include guest speaker Constable Colleen Kelly, a Western police officer. Her talk will include working in a male-dominated field and positive steps in ending violence against women.

The ceremony will include a brief outline of the Montreal murders as well as a candle-lighting ceremony for victims. In addition, a candle will be lit for Lynda Shaw.

Western’s CHRW 94.9 FM is presenting Women’s Voices All Day, an all-day radio program featuring women talking about women’s issues.

Female artists from the community will be at the station to participate in interviews, discussions and acoustic performances throughout the day. Women wanting their opinion heard can offer suggestions for discussion by e-mailing chrw@uwo.ca.

The University Students’ Council, in conjunction with The Women’s Issues Network and President’s Committee for the Safety of Women on Campus is hosting a speaker from Changing Ways at 2 p.m. in the University Community Centre atrium. Changing Ways is an educational service for men who are abusive. A male choir will perform.

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‘Exploration great metaphor for self-discovery’

BY KARMEN DOWLING

Western Reads returns to campus for the second installment of this season’s series of book club meetings, on December 14 from 12 – 1:30 p.m. in the Grad Club Boardroom.

The Navigator of New York by Wayne Johnston is the selection by celebrity panelists Western President Paul Davenport and Entertainment Editor for A-Channel News Janice Zolf. The two are gearing up for the public debate in March, where all 10 celebrity readers will be on hand to speak for their book selections in an effort to persuade the audience to vote for their chosen title.

Each team of celebrities hosts a book club, inviting the Western and London community to a discussion about the book. Zolf will be the host on December 14.

The Navigator of New York is set against a background of tumultuous rivalry between Lieutenant Peary and Dr. Cook to reach the North Pole at the beginning of the 20th century. It is also the story of a young man’s quest for his origins, from St. John’s, Newfoundland, to the bustling streets of New York, and the remotest regions of the Arctic.

“The story of exploration is a great metaphor for self-discovery,” says Zolf, who was initially hesitant to read Davenport’s pick. “It’s a difficult journey that everybody has to go through to understand who they are. It’s incredibly sad and enlightening, terrifying and exhilarating at the same time. I loved it.”

She adds Wayne Johnston is an amazing writer who expertly weaves fact and fiction. Asked to choose a Canadian novel for Western Reads, Davenport turned to Western professor and specialist in Canadian literature, David Bentley, who suggested The Navigator of New York. Davenport was pleased with the choice.

“I really enjoyed this read,” says Davenport. “It is a great Canadian story about growing up, about voyages in ice and snow and about complex personal relationships. The fact that the principle character arrives in Brooklyn at a time when my grandfather was living there and not too long before my father was born there added a very special dimension for me.”

Rush Home Road, The Navigator of New York, The Mysteries, All That Matters and The In-Between World of Vikram Lall can be purchased from The Book Warehouse for a discounted price. Alternately, books can be borrowed from the London Public Library or Western’s Weldon Library.

For more information about the books, book club dates and panelists, visit: www.westernreads.ca

Cafe must obey laws of physics

BY MITCHELL ZIMMER

Einstein, or someone looking somewhat like him, may show up tomorrow for a unique event.

To mark completion of Western’s participation in the International Year of Physics, Physics Chair John de Bruyn and Christopher Essex, Associate Director for the Program in Theoretical Physics, will lay down the law with Einstein’s Café in the Natural Sciences Building.

On Friday at 10:30 a.m., in a bit of science theatre, de Bruyn and Essex will issue a mock permit enabling Einstein’s Café to function as long as it continues to obey the laws of physics.

The certificate requires the popular eatery to operate as long as it properly displays all formulæ and obeys the laws of physics during regular business hours.

The International Year of Physics commemorates Albert Einstein’s “miraculous year” of 1905 in which he introduced three revolutionary concepts including using Brownian motion to prove the existence of atoms; exploring the nature of light and explaining the concepts of space, energy and matter through the theory of special relativity.
Student engineers safer hockey

By Allison Stevenson

New gear for carrying hockey sticks is scoring goals with the public and getting a shot at the NHL.

“My family and I have invented a new product to make hockey safer,” says Alex Dolson, a second-year civil engineering student. “Stik-Rak makes carrying hockey sticks from the house to the car to the arena safer and much easier.”

The Original Stik-Rak, or just plain Stik-Rak, was brought to life using hockey sticks as handles and nylon material for the backing. It is a portable tool to help coaches, trainers, players and parents easily carry sticks through crowded rinks. Players have a place to store sticks, eliminating the hazards of loose sticks on dressing room floors and bench benches.

Most importantly, the device solves the problem of carrying sticks in an awkward manner. Coaches and trainers can carry up to 16 hockey sticks and still have one hand free.

Dolson is like most inventors, utterly convinced this creation is the best new development since sliced bread.

“People no longer have to worry about sticks getting loose in the car and breaking a window, or slipping out from under their arm as they walk across the icy parking lot to the arena,” explains Dolson. “Stik-Rak makes it easy for a hockey player of any age or size carry sticks.” Developing and producing Stik-Rak has been a real learning experience for Dolson, assisting him inside the classroom and out. “In my engineering first-year design course we were tasked with a project to develop something innovative that helps,” says Dolson. “At the time, my family and I were just having Stik-Rak patented so I thought I had it made, but the professors told me I couldn’t use it for my final project because it wasn’t fair to the other students.”

“Even though I couldn’t use Stik-Rak for my project, I still learned a lot in the class that I could bring back to my family for our product,” Dolson further explained. “In class we learned about design notebooks, arranging meetings and developing prototypes. It was great to see the theory behind what I was doing with my family to create Stik-Rak.”

Stik-Rak was recently picked up by R. J. McCarthy Ltd. and the company has made the product available in the Canadian retail market.

The product retails for $150 and is available in red, blue and black. One NHL team is currently testing the product.

For more information, visit www.stikrak.net or www.rjmcCarthy.com.

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Pension plans reach $1 billion

Western’s pension plans have assets of about $1 billion and rank 116th among all plans in Canada. A report to the Board of Governors covering 2004 shows membership of 5,835 persons, a level that has been growing by 5.3 per cent a year over the past six years.

Ranked by market assets, the plans are ninth largest among Canadian universities and ninth largest among all Canadian defined-contribution plans.

The non-investment cost of running the plans is about $1 million or a tenth of a per cent of assets under management. The investment and custodial costs are slightly higher at 0.16 per cent.

According to the report, “When compared to other universities and institutional operations, the level of operational costs is extremely lean.”

“The average retail mutual fund costs are approximately 2.5 per cent of assets under management. The average institutional defined contribution plan fees are 1.3 per cent of assets under management.”

The academic plan was created in 1970 and the administration plan in 1974. Prior to that, the pension plans were a defined-benefit design, meaning annual pension income was promised based on a formula.

In 2004, the average return of member accounts was 8.9 per cent, down from 14.6 per cent in 2003.

IN MEMORIAM

Lucia Mazzotta, a retired staff member from Physical Plant, passed away on Wednesday, November 23, at the age of 75.

Mazzotta had 26 years of service with Western until her retirement in 1992.

Mazzotta was the wife of 57 years of Giuseppe and mother to eight children- Elizabeth Roberts, Maria Michienzi, Susan Nicoletti, Cathy Hird, Carmela Mendonca, Patti Babington, Peter Mazzotta and Joanne Hollis. She also had 18 grandchildren. She was sister of Giuseppe Mazzotta.

Lucia will be fondly remembered by the Cenacle Prayer Group of St. Mary’s Parish.

A funeral service was held in her memory on November 26 at St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society, Autism Foundation or St. Mary’s Church Restoration Fund.

REGISTRAR’S BULLETIN

Mid-Year Examination Dates, December
December 7: Classes end.
December 8: Study Day.
December 9 - 21: Mid-year examination period.

Mid-Year Examination Timetable, December
The Final Schedule is now posted on the Registrar’s Web site. Students booking flights for the holidays are advised to book a flight date of December 22 or later.

A student who, for religious reasons, is unable to write exams on a Sabbath or Holy Day, must have given notice of this fact in writing to his/her Dean not later than November 15.

Due dates for tuition fees
Second instalment of tuition fees for undergraduate and professional students is January 9, 2006. Winter term fees for graduate students (except MBA’s) is January 11, 2006 and for MBA’s is January 16, 2006.

Statements of account will be mailed early in December to the address on the University’s computer system. Please update your address by logging into www.registrar.uwo.ca with your student number and PIN.

January OSAP Distribution for students in the following faculties:
- Arts and Humanities, Science, Social Science, Health Sciences (including Nursing), Engineering, Music, Information and Media Studies, Business (MBA and MBA) Graduate Studies. Professional programs please check with your faculty for location and times.

Great Hall
Jan 4-6 9 am-4 pm
Jan 9-12 9 am-4 pm
Jan 13 9 am-1 pm

Please note there will be no OSAP pick-up available on January 2 or 3.

Hours of Operation
Information Services Room 190
Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays – 9 am to 4 pm
Wednesdays – 10 am to 6 pm
Telephone Helpline: (519) 661-2100
Regular hours – 9 am to 4 pm

For more information about these and other items, please visit the Registrar’s website at www.registrar.uwo.ca
CAW boosts Law’s international focus

BY ERICCA BARRETT GREEENHAM

Two markers on Western Law’s road map are increased internationalization and the revitalization of its labour law program. The faculty gained on both recently with the help of the Canadian Auto Workers Union (CAW).

CAW President, Buzz Har-grove, announced the creation of the Robert White International Student Internship in Labour Law at a reception in the John and Dotsa Bitove Family Law Library. Established through a gift of $62,500 from the union, the internship will place a Western Law student in Geneva with the International Labour Organization (ILO) each summer to assist on projects related to equality, workplace rights and the law.

“CAW is thrilled to have created this internship,” said Har-grove. “It is an opportunity to introduce the next generation of Canada’s labour lawyers to the work of the ILO and at the same time pay tribute to a respected colleague.”

White was a labour leader in Canada for more than 40 years. He helped establish the CAW, leading the succession of the Canadian wing of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) from the American UAW in 1985. White also served as President of the Canadian Labour Congress from 1992 until his retirement in 1999 and today continues his long-time relationship with the ILO.

“The idea for a student to spend time at the ILO is an excellent one,” said White in expressing his gratitude to the CAW and Western Law for setting up the internship in his honour. “The organization does as well as contribute to its knowledge.”

In thanking the CAW for its gift on behalf of Western Law, Dean Ian Holloway noted the faculty’s mission to be a national law school with an international outlook as well as its success in placing more students in labour law than any other Canadian law school. He concluded, “We can mark today as another step in our journey towards progress.”

Among those attending the recent announcement of a gift from the Canadian Auto Workers are, from left, CAW President Buzz Har-grove, former CAW President Robert White, Patrick Groom, president of Western Law’s Labour Law Society, Law Dean Ian Holloway, Law professor Michael Lynk and Vice-President, Academic Fred Longstaffe.
December 1
McIntosh Gallery Exhibition - Rafael Goldchain: Familiar Ground and Sounding Identity: New Music in New Places - until December 11th

Dept of Microbiology & Immunology - Dr. Patrick Sullivan, University of Kentucky “Novel Therapeutic Interventions for the Treatment of Brain and Spinal Cord Injury” Taking Aim at the “Powerhouse” of the Cell, Dental Sciences Bldg. Rm. 300B - 11:30 am

Lunch Session (Ivey Biotech MBA Event) - Come join an informal lunch session every Thursday for those interested in biotechnology and business. Share knowledge from the science and business communities at Western. Special guest speakers will be arranged on occasion, Ivey Building, 2B07, 12-2 pm

Physics Colloquium - Donald Spector, Hobart & William Smith Colleges, “Mean, but Still Marines: Researching Pacific War Veterans of the 1st Marine Division.” SSC, Rm. 4317 - Dept. of History, 4:30 pm

Bruce McCaffrey Memorial Graduate Seminar Series - Dylan A. Cyr, “Not So Lean, Not So Mean, but Still Marines” SSC, Rm. 2322 – Geography Speaker Series - William Quinton, “The Trouble with Wasting for Godot in Copenhagen” - Physics & Astronomy Bldg. Rm. 123, 1:30 pm

December 2
Anatomy & Cell Biology Seminar - Alan Burns, Baylor College of Medicine, “Leukocyte Migration in the Injured Cornea”, DSB, Rm. 1002, 12:30 pm

Psychology Colloquium Series - Phil Zelazo, University of Toronto “Mechanisms underlying the development of ‘hot’ and ‘cool’ executive function” SSC, Rm. 2028 - 3 pm

Geography Speaker Series - William Quinton speaking on “Runoff hydrology of wetlands dominated by pineda bosss” SSC, Rm. 2322 - 2 pm

Ivey Biotechnology session - Walter Groszkevics, Worldwide Solutions Web Executive for IBM, New York, “Information Based Medicine: a revolution is underway towards a new era in patient care”, Richard Ivey School of Business, Rm. 2B07, 3:40 – 5 pm. To register for this session send an email with your name to biotech@ivey.uwo.ca. A free session for those wishing to enhance Spanish skills with people from different Spanish-speaking countries. UC 117, 3 – 4 pm

December 3
Men’s & Women’s Track & Field - Season Opener @ Western 3 – 8:30 pm

Pre-Ivey Day - Meet HBA students and professors, admissions counsellors and tour Ivey. Room 8440 Ivey Building, 11 am – 2 pm. Open to university and high school students.

Men’s Basketball - Waterloo @ Western, 2 pm

Women’s Volleyball - Brock @ Western, 5 pm

December 4
University of Western Ontario Choir Christmas Concert “The World Awaits” at New St. James Presbyterian Church. The concert will include seasonal songs from Wales, France, Spain, Germany, and Africa. 2 pm. Tickets ($10) sold at the door and in advance at Infosource in the UCC

December 6
Senior Alumni - Paediatric Surgery - Our vision for Southwestern Ontario. K. Kellie Leitch, Chair/Chief Paediatric Surgery, Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario McEhrrr Rm. UCC, 9:30 – 11 am

December 7
Speaking Skills Practised Weekly - Campus Communicators/Toastmasters meets every Wed., 12 noon, Rm. 330, SLB. Visitors welcome. For more information, Chandev Abhayaratne, cabhayar@uwo.ca or 661-2111, ext 85968

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures invites students, staff and faculty to “LA TENTOUI” – Spanish Conversation for anyone wishing to enhance Spanish skills with people from different Spanish-speaking countries. UC 117, 3 – 4 pm

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