Science sweeps teaching awards

BY PAUL MAUNE

The Faculty of Science has the winning formula this year with faculty members— including the dean—sweeping all the Excellence in Teaching Awards, the university's nod to classroom skill. Established to recognize outstanding contributions to classroom instruction, academic counselling and tutoring, course design, research on university teaching and development of innovative teaching methods, the awards will be announced Friday at Senate and will be presented at the 2005 Spring Convocation ceremony in June.

Since being established in 1980, more than 100 Excellence in Teaching Awards have been presented to Western faculty. The winning professors, with comments from members of the Senate Subcommittee on Teaching Awards, include:

EDWARD G. PLEVA AWARD

Fred Longstaffe – Department of Earth Sciences

Noted for good science, solid research and diplomatic administration, Fred Longstaffe is also a highly skilled teacher. Longstaffe came to Western in 1987 to join the Department of Geology. Since then he has acted as Department Chair, Dean of Science and as of July 2005 will become Provost. But, as Roberta Flemming, Chair of Earth Sciences Awards Committee, explains, "Despite this plethora of administration responsibilities, and outstanding accomplishments in research, Fred has steadfastly remained devoted to teaching."

Even though his administrative and research responsibilities are beyond most faculty at Western, Fred manages to maintain an overall effectiveness of 6.6 to 6.8 in his student evaluations and has been on the USC Honor Roll since 1995.

His commitment to teaching goes beyond excellence in the classroom. He is truly dedicated to undergraduate education and graduate mentorship. His students describe his teaching as "rigorous and challenging, making one think and apply knowledge in creative ways."

Perhaps Longstaffe's approach to teaching summarizes his success best, "Students challenge us to teach summaries of his success best, "Students challenge us to teach.

Sandra Smeltzer's taste for adventure has taken her to the far reaches of the planet. So what brings her back to London?

AFRICA JOURNAL

Two young Western interns have arrived in the African birthplace of HIV as part of a unique campus effort to stem AIDS transmission. But first they have to kill a chicken.

FREE WILL VS. GENES

Are you to blame for crime if it's in your genes? Molecular geneticist Shiva Singh takes a walk through the social policy minefield of free will versus genetic predisposition.

ANGELA ARMITT AWARD

Kay Calvin – Department of Chemistry

Kay Calvin joined the Department of Chemistry at Western in 1976, initially as an external demonstrator and lab coordinator of first-year chemistry courses. In the most recent years, Calvin expanded her teaching role into the classroom, a move that was met with tremendous success from the very beginning.

The secret of her success is, at least in part, due to, as indicated by one of her nomination letters, her ability “to care deeply for her students and treat them respectfully as individuals.”

As stated by one of her peers, “Kay puts a lot of effort into the course for students - providing partial notes in advance for each lecture, revising these notes based upon experience to improve them each time she teaches the course, and diligently attending each tutorial session and help-room hour that she has been assigned.”

But most of all, the letters from her students are a reflection of why Calvin is deserving of the award. Students write about “her amazing ability to not only teach chemistry, but to make it enjoyable at the same time.”

MARTIN ROBINSON AWARD

Cameron Tsujita – Department of Earth Sciences

A paleontologist with interests in broad areas of Earth Science, Cameron Tsujita has taught a wide range of introductory courses from physical and environmental geology to evolution and biospheric interactions. In his eight years at Western he has developed a reputation among students for his flamboyant demonstrations of concepts that students refer to as the dinosaur chicken, the banana echinoderms, and the paper towel time scale - events in his amazing classes which keep them riveted.

Tsujita is innovative not only in his creative use of Skittles candies, fruit and other familiar materials for experiments and explanations, but also in designing new courses to bridge knowledge across fields within science and for non-science students.

His impact on students goes beyond the classroom through his open-door policy for discussion and counseling, and also through the successful joint program in Biology-Geology that he conceived and coordinates.

Energetic, creative and passionate about his field, Tsujita has had a tremendous impact on students and colleagues alike.
Western acquires Westminster

By Jim Anderson

Western has acquired the Westminster College property.

With the acquisition, Western gains approximately 50,000 square feet of space from nine existing buildings and 30 acres of land.

Cost of the acquisition, including the land and buildings, totals $7.5 million.

Located in the city’s north end at the corner of Richmond Street and Windermere Road, the Westminster property is considered a critical acquisition for Western that is in keeping with the university’s Campus Master Plan.

“We’re very pleased at this acquisition,” says David Estok, Associate Vice-President, Communications and Public Affairs at Western.

“The Westminster property is invaluable to us because it’s an extension of our existing property, and as Western continues to grow so, too, does the demand for space.”

Estok says future plans for land use include sports fields, recreational space and other facilities.

Westminster College currently provides a residence for 250 Western students. Other facilities offer various learning and activity programs for seniors over 55.

The property will be transferred to Western in June.

Conference week

Western News will not publish next Thursday, February 24. Weekly publication resumes with the issue of March 3. See you at the Staff and Leaders conference March 7.

ERW COLLOQUIUM

All Environmental Research Topics

Deadline: Friday, February 18, 2005

Maximum length: 200 words

Presentation length: 15 minutes + questions

Both faculty and students are welcome to submit abstracts

Please include: 5 keywords

E-mail abstracts to: drbob@uwo.ca

subject: ERW Colloquium

Professor Butler is a valuable community instructor because she is an expert in a critical area.
Century-old bone wasting mystery solved

New research has solved a 100-year-old medical mystery and pointed the way to potential treatments for several common bone-eating ailments.

Researchers at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Group in Skeletal Development and Remodeling at the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry have discovered how the acid in the body interacts with cells responsible for bone loss and what can be done to stop it.

“The discovery helps us understand the biological basis of several diseases affecting bone,” says Jeff Dixon, director of the CIHR Group and professor of Physiology & Pharmacology and Dentistry.

“The discovery helps us understand the biological basis of several diseases affecting bone,” says Jeff Dixon, director of the CIHR Group and professor of Physiology & Pharmacology and Dentistry.

Physicians and researchers have known for the last 100 years that too much acid in your body (known as acidosis) causes bone loss. Acidosis can result from illnesses like kidney disease, diabetes, and chronic lung disease, leading to further medical complications such as osteoporosis.

About 1.4 million Canadians are affected by osteoporosis and, by the age 65, half of all women will have osteoporosis. In order to provide answers to how the acid in your body leads to bone loss, the research team examined the role of a protein called NFAT in mediating the effects of acidosis on osteoclasts, the cells responsible for bone destruction.

They discovered that acidosis triggers a receptor called OGR1 on osteoclasts. This leads to an increase of cytosolic calcium, which activates NFAT leading to bone loss. This suggests that new drugs targeted at the OGR1 receptor could stop the bone loss that results from acidosis.

The research is being published this week in the journal National Academy of Sciences.

Research support was provided by CIHR (Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis) and the Canadian Arthritis Network. The research team includes post-doctoral fellows Dr. Svetlana V. Komarova and Dr. Alexey Peresvetov, undergraduate dental student Jonathan Shum, and Dr. Stephen Sims, a researcher in the CIHR Group in Skeletal Development and Remodeling and professor of Physiology & Pharmacology.

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Grad Club faculty benefit

Some faculty worried about accessibility for disabled

By Jim Anderson

Western’s Grad Club might be getting a lot more crowded.

Western’s Faculty Association will buy memberships in the Society of Graduate Students’ Grad Club for all its 1,300 members. A motion to purchase annual memberships in the Grad Club was adopted unanimously at a UWOFA general meeting last week.

The move will cost UWOFA $6,000 annually since a special rate of $4 a member was negotiated with SOGS, says UWOFA President Allan Gedalof.

“Since there is no faculty club at Western, this will provide an amenable place for faculty members to meet with their colleagues and with their graduate students. It’s another service we can offer our members,” says Gedalof. “No one is obliged to drink alcohol. They have coffee, tea, soft drinks and juice as well.”

The only note of concern raised at the meeting was one of accessibility for people with disabilities.

Prof. Lisa Klinger, School of Occupational Therapy, says the club is “not a welcoming place for people with disabilities.” She notes Middlesex College, where the Grad Club is located, is one of the “least accessible buildings on campus.”

She adds that the club does not have automatic doors and there is difficulty in accessing the facilities for those in wheelchairs or using walkers. “It would not necessarily cost a lot of money to make it more accessible.”

Gedalof said he would discuss accessibility with SOGS, which leases the space from the university.

“More importantly, this discovery may lead to the development of drugs before bone loss occurs, without disrupting the rebuilding of normal bone for SOGS,” says Gedalof.

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Budget should boost student aid

By Paul Mayne

Thousands of Ontarians were full of advice for former premier Bob Rae during his six-month review of Ontario’s postsecondary system.

But one phone call more than most offered the inside scoop – it came from Western’s Dianne Cunningham.

The former Minister of Training, College and University Affairs, and current director of Ivey’s Lawrence National Centre of Policy and Management was among those offering suggestions as Rae mulled what Cunningham calls an “extremely complicated subject.”

Cunningham was watching closely when Rae’s report was unveiled 10 days ago. Differences in political platform aside, she has praise for his work and recommendations.

“I think his emphasis is in the right place – that is if you’re going to put more money in postsecondary education there has to be accountability,” says Cunningham, pointing to a call for boosting day-to-day budgets by $1.3 billion by 2007-08.

“A lot of money is essential for the postsecondary system is essential and student needs should be in the forefront, she says.

“Part of the challenge for postsecondary education is to take down the barriers, and many of them are for students,” she says. Still, she favours deregulating tuition.

“I see an increase in tuition but I hope we don’t go back to those days of 10 per cent increases,” she says. “I feel very strongly that it can only happen where the students are getting the quality education they expect.”

Cunningham urges a united front in moving postsecondary issues to the top of the public agenda.

“These are not partisan issues,” she says. “The right plan, the best plan, is having the best postsecondary system in Ontario.”

The biggest competition is health care and politically it can be very difficult.

Cunningham expects recommendations will be phased in over time. She says Rae’s financial numbers are correct and his approach is “extremely responsible”.

The government may have signalled an intention to bankroll better student aid with an announcement last week by Premier Dalton McGuinty that the tuition freeze will come off after next year. Rae had urged the freeze remain until a better student financial aid package was in place.
In 1901 John Nash was hired as the caretaker of Western's second medical school located at the corner of Waterloo and York streets. Since there were no technicians his duties also included preparation of the cadavers and other specimen material used in teaching anatomy and pathology. He also rang a hand bell at the end of each lecture period and acted as librarian until one was appointed in 1916. For all of this he was given use of a small apartment in the basement of the building and a monthly salary of $45. Nash retired in 1920 and died three years later at the age of 73.

Contributed by Alan Noon, photo courtesy Jerry Minder

VIEWPOINT

Dual citizen reflects on change

Retired Western Dean Earle F. Zeigler has watched keenly, and sadly, as our southern neighbour loses its way and world position.

I moved to Canada twice from the States, the second time for good in 1971. Then I became a dual citizen in 1984 as this became possible. I have occasionally “looked back,” but now am more certain than ever that I made the right move. I like Canada’s social climate much better. Vancouver’s at times “dour complex” leaves me unfazed. On nice days it’s a glorious vista!

We have our own peculiar problems up here but I believe, if not leaned on too heavily by our elephantine neighbour, we can set an example for many countries. However, it does hurt and disturb me to watch something occurring next door that seemed unbelievable only a few short years ago. I believe we are witnessing the beginning of the decline of the American empire.

The 20th century belonged to the United States, but unless America mends its way internationally and takes care of its innumerable internal and external problems, who knows what this and the next centuries hold in store?

The re-election of George W. Bush was, in my opinion a tragic mistake. The great historian, Arnold J. Toynbee, wrote about certain “themes of action” evident in the rise and fall of the world’s great civilizations.

The “one-two rhythm” of the present “challenge and response” theme adopted by the United States so as to reduce the increasing level of world terrorism will inevitably have a most stifling effect on America itself. This will occur as the U.S. strives to make the world safe for its present brand of “democracy, capitalism, technology, and Christianity.”

President Bush and his compatriots along with Prime Minister Blair of Britain decided to take over another country with force without the backing of the United Nations. Their claims against Iraq turned out to be spurious. The U.S. has now set the tone for the 21st century with this highly dangerous action. The clash of civilizations is well underway between American Christianity and Mideast Islam. China and India are watching carefully, while standing in the wings.

Concurrently we are experiencing a steady decline of America’s earlier enlightenment ideal. Instead of social progress being guided by such values as justice, freedom, and self-fulfilment for all, these goals of vital interest in a democracy are being steadily subjugated to a burgeoning society dominated by supposedly more important instrumental values (i.e., steadily increasing gross national productivity, etc.).

The United States must face the fact that many countries on the world’s other continents will not model themselves in America’s image. They will incorporate the many technological advances that have been developed. They’ll also experiment with their own brand of capitalism. Further, they’ll gradually introduce varying levels of representative democracy. However, there’s no way these other cultures with their own theistic, agnostic, or atheistic traditions will accept America’s brand of Christianity, especially the fundamentalistic version. God has not endowed America with a manifest destiny.

How should Canada react to the behemoth from its south. We must be clever about it and not have too many frontal collisions. On the other hand, we simply can’t sell our souls in the process. We need to sharpen our focus and present a clearer image of what it means to be a Canadian. This will be difficult in an avowedly multi-ethnic culture.

However, it can, and must, be done gradually and steadily. America talks a good game, and I am not referring to so-called trash-talking in commercialized sport. Their politicians say “we the greatest,” and they’ve got the majority of people there believing it.

Our vantage point lets us see, however, where the gaps and omissions are in their vaunted claims.

If we are honest in our assessment of our own situation, we can learn from their mistakes and avoid making too many of our own. Canada will be walking an often indistinct line in the years immediately ahead.

Western News welcomes submissions from faculty, staff and students. Submissions must be no more than 550 words and should deal with issues concerning the university and higher education. Submissions must be delivered via e-mail. The editor reserves the right to edit or reject any submission that does not comply with policy. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of Western News or The University of Western Ontario.
Information will help dissolve stereotypes

By Heinz Klatz

The Muslim Chaplain (Western News, Feb. 3) deplores that the “post-September 11 mind-set,” “inadequate knowledge of Islam” and “years of negative stereotyping” are responsible for the word Sharia to send shivers down our spines. It can hardly be disputed that Westerners are woefully ignorant about Islam, although September 11 has shown us one very important aspect of Islam that had been more discreet before.

Fortunately, Professor El-Kassem can do a lot to increase our knowledge of Islam and to break up our stereotypes. He can, for example, go public, for all of us to read, with the message of his disapproval of slaughter in the name of Allah. He can post on his office door and the door of the prayer room that Islam has a right to exist and that requesting the return of a million Palestinians to Israel is an insincere propaganda slogan used to block any effort to reach a peace agreement.

He can organize demonstrations with his students loudly and visibly reproving Muslim terrorism that is done with a Kalashnikov in one hand and the Koran in the other. He can organize conferences at Western and give a paper about why unmarried pregnant girls in Muslim countries should not be executed for fornication, according to sharia law. He can publish the letters that he may have written to the presidents of Concordia University and the Université du Québec à Montréal deploring the criminal vandalism of Muslim students designed to prevent Israeli guests from speaking.

There are opportunities on a daily basis to show that our stereotypes are wrong but that these efforts must be made by our community! If any of the above suggestions indeed have already been implemented, I am sure we will hear about them.

Finally, he could give us some accurate information about Islam and, as he says, the “noble history” of sharia law. Contrary to what the Chaplain said about the testimony of women at court, the widely respected and updated Reliance of the Traveller: A Classic Manual of Islamic Sacred Law (1999) by Ibn Naqib al-Misri states the conditions for establishing that rape has occurred. First, the testimony of the female victim is inadmissible; and second, it requires that witnesses who must testify that they have “seen the offender insert the head of the penis into her vagina.” In Pakistan apparently the four adult males must be of “impeccable” character. With those requirements statistics from Muslim countries become credible again. There is no rape in those countries! In addition, would not all four male witnesses risk being charged with abetting a crime?

How “noble” really is the history of sharia law? It hardly requires mentioning that not all practices of sharia law are uniformly implemented across the many Muslim countries.

If any of the above suggestions are accepted, the post-September 11 mindset and our stereotypes will evaporate like smoke.

The writer is a professor emeritus.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BACK TO WESTERN

The recent move to gradually emphasize the name “Western” as part of a re-branding initiative owes its historical roots to a 1923 decision about what to call our university.

When founded in 1878 as a church institution sponsored by Huron College, the original name was The Western University of London, Ontario. That name was changed in 1882 to The Western University and College of London, Ontario—try squeezing that into a football chant!

This longer name survived until the University Act of 1908 when we went back to the original name. That was the same year Western was severed from the Anglican Church, becoming a secular university sponsored and largely financed by the City of London.

The inclusion of “western” in the name reflected the location of the university in the original western part of Ontario, but as the modern provincial boundaries evolved between 1882 and 1912 our university was more accurately situated in southwestern Ontario with the true western part of Ontario, but as the modern provincial boundaries evolved between 1882 and 1912 our university was more accurately situated in southwestern Ontario with the true western area of Ontario at the lake head.

As the university moved to relocate to its new campus in the early 1920s, there appears to have been some discussion about incorporating “southwestern” into the name, to make it a more accurate description. But, as Dr. J.R.W. Gwynne-Timothy observed in his book Western’s First Century “history triumphed over geography” and the 1923 University Act opted for the name The University of Western Ontario with the initials UWO as the official short form.

Dr. Gwynne-Timothy further notes that the new name “established itself in popular usage, but hardly displaced the older and simpler term ‘Western’, which had the additional advantage of being used in the college yell”.

So I guess you can call it a new branding but also, most fortunately, preserves our history.

Jim Etherington
Past President Alumni Western

LEARN SELF DEFENSE

After reading Paul Mayne’s February 3 article “Women learn to battle attackers”, I want to commend Western for providing its dynamic females an opportunity to transcend their intellectual power to learn physical protection through the Rape Aggression Defense System (RAD) soon to be offered here.

Even within our seemingly safe campus surroundings, personal protection is a vital tool that is far too often overlooked. Providing the women of Western with an opportunity to learn the skills and tactics of self-defense will not only help to improve self-confidence, personal comfort and feelings of capability but could actually save one’s life. I encourage Western women to take part and learn these life-saving strategies.

Anne Morello
English

CHANGE STRENGTHENS MEETING DEMOCRACY

Steve Lupker of the Department of Psychology discussed in last week’s Western News some constitutional amendments about to be considered, by mail ballot, by members of UWOFA.

He decry’s the elimination of one clause, that which circum-

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Do you get your money’s worth with student fees?

“I think it’s fair, it’s mostly going to pay for this building (UCC). It’s like taxes, if they don’t get it one way they’ll get it another. Bile the bullet, accept it and take advantage of what your fees pay for, like the gym.”

—Kristof Chirvaiu
Science ’06

“Personally, I feel it’s worth it. The money is used to create a welcoming environment at the university for students. I know extra expenses are hard for students, but it’s not like it is being wasted on things students aren’t using.”

—Rajini Perera
Science ’06

“I use a lot of the services, so I have no problem with it. A lot of the problem may be students really don’t understand where their money is going, or their parents pay for it and they don’t care. Tuition fees should be more of a concern than student fees are.”

—Kaitlin Zangari
Honors English ‘05

“I think they’re pretty fair. I use the weight room and cardio room. They may be kind of high perhaps, but I don’t think they’re out of hand at all.”

—Tim Nguyen
ACS ’08

“We have to maintain the facilities and services here on campus. I know I use quite a few of them. We all go here, we’re all students—it’s something that goes along with being a student.”

—Sabrina Pasini
ACS ’06
Western Heads East: the journey begins

Editor's Note
Interns Cynthia Medeiros and Brian Healy have arrived in Africa to develop the Western Heads East outreach project. With help from clinicians in Mwanza, Tanzania, they hope to bolster local immune systems and stem AIDS transmission with a dietary supplement developed by Western's Dr. Gregor Reid and Brescia's Dr. Sharareh Hekmat. This article, dated Feb. 8, is the first in an occasional series the pair will produce in coming months.

By Cynthia Medeiros and Brian Healy

It has been nearly two full weeks since leaving home. So far, we have successfully achieved a good number of our goals, while experiencing a great many firsts. Charles Mbakaya from KEMRI (Kenya Medical Research Institute) was waiting at the airport in Nairobi with a sign reading “Welcome to Nairobi! Can’t wait to meet Cynthia & Brian!” It was nighttime already, but the air temperature was a warm 24 degrees. All throughout our second leg of the 17-hour journey, we had looked forward with great anticipation to swimming in the pool at our hotel. We were escorted to our hotel and assisted with our belongings to our respective rooms. We grabbed our swimsuits and made a beeline for the pool. It was FANTASTIC!

We spent the next 43 hours or so in Nairobi being shown the city and assisted in our shopping efforts. Everyone at KEMRI was extremely friendly and helpful. They are all eager to build a strong relationship with Western. It was in Nairobi that we were

Continued on page 8

Review of the Dean and Faculty of Music

A Senate Decanal Selection Committee for the Don Wright Faculty of Music has been struck and is now engaged in a review of the Faculty’s operations and its Dean. Input from faculty members, staff, and students is an important part of the assessment of the unit’s administration, scholarly and educational programs, and its academic plans for the future. This input also will be used to evaluate the performance of the current Dean, Dr. Bob Wood, and critical to the consideration by the Committee of the possible reappointment of the Dean for a second term.

External consultants will visit campus on March 16 & 17. They will meet with members of the University and Faculty administrations and with representatives of particular constituencies within the Faculty, including students, to seek their perspectives on the Faculty’s operations, especially over the term of the current Dean. The consultants’ itinerary also will include an open meeting in which individual faculty members and staff will be invited. The external reviewers are:

Dr. Elizabeth West Marvin, Former Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of Music Theory, Eastman School of Music
Dr. Carol Richardson, Former Chair, Department of Music Education, University of Michigan
Dr. Gordon Smith, School of Music, Queen’s University

Faculty, staff, and students in Music are encouraged to make written submissions regarding any aspect of the Faculty’s operations, the characteristics required to be a successful Dean in this Faculty at this time, and the question of the renewal of the current Dean. Submissions may be addressed directly to: “External Consultants - Faculty of Music, c/o The Office of the Provost”, on the Western campus or at the Faculty’s website.

Those wishing to make such comments directly to the Selection Committee may address them to: “External Consultants - Faculty of Music, c/o The Office of the Provost”, on the Western campus or at the Faculty’s website or email capp@uwo.ca. All submissions will be shared with Committee members but otherwise kept in strict confidence.

Western Heads East

www.uwo.ca/flshousing/westernheadseast

THE STILLER CENTRE FOR BIOLOGY COMMERCIALIZATION

The Stiller Centre is an organization created for the support and development of technology-based companies in our region. We offer facilities, mentoring, business planning and networking. We work closely with all organizations in the community committed to the creation, development and support of startup companies. Stiller is embarking on a set of programs designed to help support those entrepreneurs interested in starting/growing their research based venture. We are seeking a qualified person to join our team to lead the shared services program.

Shared Services Coordinator

Reporting to: President

The Stiller Centre is an organization created for the support and development of technology-based companies in our region. We offer facilities, mentoring, business planning and networking. We work closely with all organizations in the community committed to the creation, development and support of startup companies. Stiller is embarking on a set of programs designed to help support those entrepreneurs interested in starting/growing their research based venture. We are seeking a qualified person to join our team to lead the shared services program.

Representative duties of this position include but are not limited to the following:

• To manage the day-to-day affairs of the Convergence laboratory facility in terms of equipment, ordering, coordination, sourcing equipment, scheduling and other tasks as relates to the functioning and administration of the Convergence Lab. The Convergence Lab Program is a 280m2 wet lab being equipped for entrepreneurs at affordable monthly rates.

• Network with regional emerging and emerging companies to determine needs that can be filled by access to resources in regional research institutions / organizations. Primary focus would be on London and area firms but also includes firms ranging from Hamilton (Guelph), Cambridge-St. Thomas.

• Network with laboratories within research institutions to foster willingness to perform small contract research services and technology access for the benefit of emerging companies.

• Work with the President to establish formal terms of contract to simplify access to shared services identified and sourced. This requires working with senior management and administration of research institutions.

• Build awareness of the convergence lab and build revenue streams through lab access and equipment access.

• Coordinate with Stiller Centre Business Analysts on all identified emerging company opportunities where the Business Analyst program may add value to an emerging company or to a scientist considering entrepreneurship.

• Assist in the ongoing development of business plans relating to the Shared Services Coordination function and the Convergence Lab Program to help assure the success of both programs.

• Perform other tasks as directed by the President.

This position requires a positive, enthusiastic customer service attitude and the willingness to constantly learn and upgrade skills for the purposes of providing excellent service to clients of the Stiller Centre.

Please send your cover letter and resume to peg@stillercentre.com or fax to 519-458-5142. No telephone inquiries please. We thank all applicants for their interest, but advise that only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Deadline for submissions March 1, 2005.

Check out our website: www.stillercentre.com and our networking portal www.biovelocity.net

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued from page 5

vents a general meeting of the membership by obtaining the signatures of 100 members on a petition and forcing an issue -- perhaps one already decided at a general meeting -- straight to a mail ballot without further discussion.

He argues that this petition is a right of the membership. Added to the constitution in 1978 (after a fractious meeting concerning salary negotiations), the provision has only been used by Professor Lupker, and only after having lost votes to alter negotiating goals during the faculty’s first and second contract negotiations.

In both cases, the position of our negotiating team was significantly undermined (no matter the result of the vote) because the administration could point to our protracted disagreements while rejecting our opening position. We need healthy debate about these issues in public meetings, not petitions afterwards. This package of proposed changes to the constitution would greatly strengthen the democracy of the Selection Committee’s meetings and the rights of members.

Please vote in favour.

M.J. Dowell

Vice-President, UW OFA

REJECT AMENDMENT

I would like to second the suggestion of Steve Lupker in last week’s Western News, namely, that faculty reject the attempt by the UW OFA Board to amend the constitution to remove the right of members to force an electronic ballot on an issue of concern.

Sadly, our general meetings have long been poorly-attended. These meetings typically attract far fewer than the 100 members needed to force an electronic ballot on a decision. The FRANTIC recent general meeting attracted only 36 members. Recurrently poor attendance is problematic given the Board will almost certainly be asking for “strike authorization” (again) and given GMs have the authority to commit UW OFA to bargaining positions that could become the basis for strike action.

The most reasonable approach would be for the Board to figure out why meetings are so poorly attended and work to increase participation, but failing that to explore other ways in which the membership as a whole can express critical issues (something that would seem easily done in an age when information, position papers, etc. can be distributed electronically).

Instead of acting to increase member participation, the Board has hereby proposed a resolution that does just the reverse -- which, just as Professor Lupker suggested, is why it should be defeated.

Michael Carroll

Sociology

TRAVEL 2005

- Queen Charlotte Islands and the Inside Passage May 2005
- Walking Coast to Coast England August 2005
- Exploring Provence September 2005

Novacks Avid Traveller

www.avidtraveller.com

519-434-2282 or email terry@novacks.com
Back home...via Sweden, Malaysia

BY BRIAR McGORMIN

Her sense of adventure has taken her to Sweden, Tanzania, Malaysia, the Philippines and most recently, the beach volleyball court. But these days she calls Western home.

Sandra Smeltzer joined the Faculty of Information and Media Studies in July to teach courses in Media, Information and Technology.

“The role that the West played.”

Mount Sinai Hospital

Back home…via Sweden, Malaysia

Assistant Professor Sandra Smeltzer (Faculty of Information and Media Studies) encourages students to travel, teach abroad and work abroad — seeing themselves as global citizens.

Call For Nominations

THE HONORABLE G. HOWARD FERGUSON AWARD

To be awarded annually to a student who has shown the highest achievement during his or her university career in athletics, scholarship and university life.

Award - a replica of the Honorable G. Howard Ferguson Trophy

Selection Criteria:

1. Demonstrated excellence within the intercollegiate athletic program at Western.
2. Registration as a full-time student, with at least a “B” average in the previous year’s work, and completion of at least three years of full-time study at Western or at one of the affiliated colleges by May of the academic year of the award. Preference will be given to a graduating student.
3. Contributions to university life.

The successful candidate will have established a fairly prominent position in each of the three areas listed.

Nominations must include not more than three letters of reference. Each referee should provide comment and factual information on the candidate’s achievements in each of the three areas cited above.

Nominations must be sent to:
Chair of the Hon. G. Howard Ferguson Selection Committee
Office of the Registrar
Room 110 Stevenson-Lawson Building
The University of Western Ontario

Deadline for receipt of nominations is February 28th each year.

You’re not the only one concerned about your retirement plans

“I work with many of your colleagues from The University of Western Ontario, specializing in Life Income Funds (LIFs). Upon retirement, financial planning decisions can be overwhelming, but, together we have worked on practical retirement investment strategies. My focus is on risk management. The result is your peace of mind.”

Brian R. McCormick
Investment Advisor
Vice-President
(519) 640-7745 or 1 800 265-5982

CIBC Wood Gundy

CIBC Wood Gundy is a division of CIBC World Markets Inc., a subsidiary of Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and member CIPF.
Continued from page 6

It was in Nairobi that we were treated to our first real East African meal of ugali (gritty corn flour porridge), michael (boiled spinach), and nyama ya mbuzi (goat cutlet) with Charles. We ate our meals with our hands in the traditional way. We were both eager to adopt their customs.

We flew out of Nairobi on the 21st of January and arrived in Mwanza, Tanzania one and a half hours later. The flight was a bit bumpy as our plane was a dual prop, 20-seater (including pilot and co-pilot), however the landscape below was fantastic. Cyn-

thia was happy to have her feet back on the ground.

Maimuna, a representative of Kivulini, a women’s rights organization in Mwanza that is partnering with the Western Heads East project, and three of her staff greeted us at the small airport in Mwanza.

After showing us our apartment and giving us a chance to unpack, the Kivulini staff took us out for dinner, treating us to their local special of tilapia (a fish native to Lake Victoria) at the Freedom Hotel. We were surprised to see that instead of serving fish accompanied by vegetables, it was a whole fish (head, tail, fins, and all) along with a fried banana and pilipili (hot peppers) and salt. The fish was excellent and light, with a mild, sweet taste to it.

On the morning of Saturday, January 22, we were greeted by Maimuna and her colleague Masele to do some much-needed banking and grocery shopping. We hit the market to purchase groceries that would hopefully last us into the following week. The first item on our list was chicken. Masele helped us pick out a live chicken, which then needed to be slaughtered and plucked. The market was busy and difficult to navigate. This first market experience was quite stressful, as we were in a new place, with a foreign language, people bustling about, and facing a great deal of unknowns.

That night we prepared our first home-cooked dinner, consisting of cooked chicken, rice and green string beans. Failing to light the gas stove, we used a back-up electric hot plate to cook our meal.

We were able to meet the whole Kivulini team during a Monday morning meeting held in Kiwahili, a language common throughout East Africa. Thankfully we both had staff members who helped to translate the information into English during the meeting. We also had the opportunity to visit Kimakunaka, the farm where we will be purchasing the milk used to produce yogurt.

The following day we went to the National Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) to meet the director of microbiology, John Changalucha. It was a very informative meeting and we both look forward to working closely with John and his staff as we prepare to begin producing our probiotic bacterial cultures.

By the end of the week we had depleted our food stocks and were up to another market trip. This time we went shopping with a friend from Kivulini. We were able to meet the whole Kivulini team during a Monday morning meeting held in Kiwahili, a language common throughout East Africa. Thankfully we both had staff members who helped to translate the information into English during the meeting. We also had the opportunity to visit Kimakunaka, the farm where we will be purchasing the milk used to produce yogurt.

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By the end of the week we had depleted our food stocks and were up to another market trip. This time we went shopping with Mama Joyce, a gentle motherly woman from the area. Mama Joyce also showed us where to buy some foods close to our apartment and Kivulini, which will be convenient. This second experience was much less stressful than the first, as by this time, we had mastered our numbers and were getting more accustomed to the culture and environment.

We had an incredibly relaxing weekend. We practiced our Swahili. We explored the town of Mwanza on our own. We found an English-speaking Catholic church at which to attend Mass on Sunday mornings. We went out dancing with friends from Kivulini. We even took a daladalala (mini-bus) out to a suburb community to play basketball with local youths and to visit a friend from Kivulini. We are really having a fantastic time learning the language and the culture. We even had a few friends from Kivulini over for dinner to thank them for all of their help.

It was at this time that we learned that we have no idea how to cook African beef, as the beef that we made was tough as leather. We bounced back from this culinary setback by learning how to properly cook the beef and our subsequent home-cooked beef meal was a success!

We have been so busy settling in and there have been so many new things we wish to share. We’re looking forward to our next journal entry.

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Do genes trump free will?

Society faces challenging social, ethical, and legal questions surrounding genetic research, including limits of personal responsibility.

The aspect of individuals with genetic labels remains a controversial social issue. There is no doubt that it is here to stay as more and more causal genes are identified.

By Shiva M. Singh

It has taken less than 50 years from a model of DNA double helix with beads (1953) to the first draft of the complete human and other sequences. The progress during this period has been fast and furious and measured in days, weeks and months. At every step, it has yielded unprecedented insights, incomprehensible implications and solutions that could be described as, fantasy or divine intervention. Hold on! It is just the beginning.

The genome sequences have unified all areas of life sciences in a single evolutionary continuum. This was predictable on February 28, 1953 when Francis Crick (of Watson and Crick) rushed into the Eagle tavern in Cambridge, England and made a startling announcement. “We have discovered the secret of life!” he told fellow customers as they enjoyed a quiet lunchtime drink. It is also said that he was intoxicated, but not from too many drinks. Their model was so elegant and perfect in every way. It explained and predicted all necessary features of a master molecule of life.

However, no one in 1953 could have predicted the tsunami on December 26, 2004 in Indian Ocean and the use of DNA in identification of the bodies of its victims. So what else is in the future?

The most recent publication of the finished human euchromatic (gene coding) sequence in 2004 suggests that there may be as many non-coding genes as (protein) coding genes in the human genome. It stresses the importance of non-protein coding DNA in directing cellular processes. In doing so, it changes our almost complete reliance on the working hypothesis, which is largely based on DNA to RNA to Protein.

Further, it forces us to think out-of-the-box in search for determinants of variety of biological functions including illnesses and its mechanism of action. It also emphasizes that our understanding of the human genome is far from complete. In fact, it has just begun. It is fair to say that at least one reason for the focus on genome sequences has been for identification of genes causing rare diseases and their mechanism of action, as it offers most logical solutions to their prevention and treatment.

Disease genetics however is a very small part of the genomic revolution. Are we in a better position in 2005 to predict all of its future impacts? The answer is probably not. What we could safely say is that one of the impacts of this evolution will be realized in dealing with variations in common features, particularly behavior.

The nature of the variation is limitless. It is not too far to start thinking about looks, shapes, height, color etc.

Have you seen pop star Michael Jackson lately on TV? There may be more money to be made by pharmaceutical companies dealing with non-disease traits, as apparent from the sale of Viagra and other performance-enhancing drugs. So, what is the limit? It is hard to say. A recent book by Dean H. Hamer, a noted scientist from the National Institute of Health, entitled “The God Gene: How Faith is Hardwired in Our Genes (2004)”, may give us no choice but to pray.

The question of how far would the genome revolution take us, and how it would affect world and society is wide open. What is known is that the genetic technologies are changing our world. This includes the world of a student, teacher, farmer, doctor, lawyer, priest, business, investor, ethicist, pilot, driver, judge, jury, researcher and research financiers among others. It raises challenging questions about the social, ethical, and legal quandaries surrounding genetic research, and about the limits of personal responsibility.

Let us consider a (almost) real example. I will use alcoholism as an example, as our research involves finding gene(s) and genetic mechanisms involved in psychiatric disorders including alcoholism.

R.B. is an alcoholic. He also gets very aggressive and violent after a few drinks. His interconnected family belongs to a defined group called Islanders. The DNA from Islander for genes including R.B. is a number of cleverly combined frequent focus of research towards identification of gene(s) responsible for alcoholism and aggressive behavior. We anticipate that such gene(s) will be found in very near future. Such results are needed in order to develop specific and effective corrective and treatment measures for a large number of people in this society, not just Islanders. Of course we will be delighted to identify such gene(s). The results will help develop specific preventive and treatment strategies that may help relatively large number of people affected with alcoholism and aggression.

As we move along this path, we are mindful of two specific concerns; label and choice. On the issue of label, assume that we find a gene variant that contributes to alcoholism and aggressiveness in R.B. It is fair to say that at least some people in the Islander population will have this variant. It will identify individuals who may develop this abnormality. There is no doubt that when research is released to the press, a media firestorm will erupt. It will label R.B. and any one with the mutation with a genetic label. The consequence of such a label will be incomprehensible.

On the positive side one may argue that these are the people that will benefit from this research, as it will lead to novel preventative and therapeutic outcomes. However, such individuals may face variety of discriminatory practices. These may include prospect for a job, education, insurance coverage and the action of mates and even children.

The aspect of individuals with a genetic label remains a controversial social issue. There is no doubt that it is here to stay as more and more causal genes are identified. The other aspect of “label” will not be limited to individuals only. It may involve a “group”. In this example depending on the frequency of the disease variant, it is likely that the “Islanders” as a group could be labeled as the risk factor for alcoholism and aggression. How does one deal with such group or individual specific labels is not up to the Islanders and researchers. It is the responsibility of the society.

The question is, is society ready to deal with such ethical nuisances? The worst we could do is to ignore positions with proper knowledge and understanding. Here, only the knowledge and not the ideology will offer rational solutions. It is very likely that a single answer will not cover all issues for one and all. It will be a different kind of medicine, not based on diagnosis but on prognosis. The devil (genetic predisposition) we know may be better than the devil we do not. Used properly, it will hold the key to the proper use of this new found genomic knowledge.

As for the issue of choice, it is fair to say that over the years, R.B. has been in a number of conflicts. Two summers ago, he was in a fight and killed his opponent by breaking a chair on his head. As a result, he is in jail with a life sentence. He is eagerly awaiting our research results. He is praying (he may have Hamer’s gene variant for praying!) that we will identify a genetic mutation that may cause or contribute to his alcoholism and aggression. It gives us another cause for concern. Should someone with a given genotype not be rendered responsible for his/her actions?

The question is should an individual be acquitted on genetic grounds? Does a genetic predisposition override free will?

This is a very interesting question that already is bedeviling society. The reasons are necessarily genetic. Rather, it includes such mitigating factors as upbringing, abuse (including sexual abuse) or fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) due to mother’s drinking during pregnancy. How much choice is there to drink or not undertake an action? We all recall the horrific descriptions of actions by individuals in causing death by pushing another person, including family members in front of an incoming train, drowning, shooting, etc. Is that action a matter of free will or is it because of their genetic make up? This scenario is not theoretical any more.

The question is should an individual be acquitted on genetic grounds? Does a genetic predisposition override free will?

The answers are not likely to come from continuing to do the same things and expecting a different result, or by simply committing new money to old ways of solving old problems.

We cannot continue to think about it as we have in the past. What is required is a fundamental change in public education involving continuing education. Only knowledge and education will avoid DNA related ethical disasters. It is timely to take appropriate societal action, before it surprises us as a societal tsunami.

The writer is Professor of Molecular Genetics at Western.
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Canada risks being absorbed

By Armando D’Andrea

Canadian sovereignty is at risk and that’s why the country’s participation in NAFTA must be reviewed, former federal PC Party leadership candidate David Orchard said last week.

The visit to Western, supported by the political science department, is part of Orchard’s ongoing “Campaign for Canada,” a 20-year crusade to explain the risks with free trade and promote economic and political self-sufficiency.

The Borden, Sask. farmer, who unsuccessfully ran for the federal PC Party leadership in 1998 and 2003, told about 50 students and faculty the free-trade agreement will continue leading Canada to integration into the United States.

“My position is instead of Canada going down this road – deeper and deeper integration into the U.S. – we need to take control and build within Canada so we can stand on our own two feet,” he said.

Addressing the crowd in cowboy boots and a blue suit with a red maple leaf lapel pin, Orchard said NAFTA hurts Canada’s ability to govern itself.

“As an example he noted NAFTA’s section 11, which allows U.S. companies to sue the Canadian government if a law contravenes their investment rights in Canada. Orchard said the Ethyl Corporation sued the Chrétien government after it approved legislation outlawing a neurotoxic gas additive Ethyl produced for sale in Canada. The Canadian government settled the lawsuit, retracted the law and issued a statement that there was no evidence of harm caused by the product. (“NAFTA) has nothing to do with free trade, but to do with our right to govern our own country,” Orchard told the audience. He said there is a growing economic dependence on the U.S., noting almost 15,000 Canadian companies have been taken over by U.S. corporations so far, with The Bay currently in talks to be bought by an American owner.

Orchard said a clause in NAFTA allows Canada out of the deal with six months notice to the U.S. and Mexico and a review is essential in light of cultural, political and economic threats posed to Canadian sovereignty.

“We’re a big country. We’ve got resources. We’ve got intelligent people,” he said. “We have to work to make this happen.”

Orchard, who aside from campaigning works full-time on his family’s century-old 2,500-acre farm, would not confirm whether he is contemplating a return to the political arena.

When asked about his aspirations he was committed to visiting schools and universities across Canada to speak to students.

“These issues are ones university students are concerned about….they’re coming to meetings, at the forefront. They’re an important audience to speak to.”

David Gordon, a fourth year history and political science student in attendance, agreed.

“A lot of people feel powerless about these issues. They feel it is an inevitable direction, and there’s nothing they can do about it. But to hear someone say we can do something is inspirational,” he said.

“We’re going to be the people running the country. We’re inheriting this country, our children (too). We should realize that we can do something if we have that dream.”

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Western faculty in the news

Several faculty members have been called upon by the national and international media in recent weeks to offer their assessments on issues in the news.

Law professor John Craig weighed in on the case of Nortel suing ex-officers over improperly obtained bonuses. He shared his expertise labour and employment law with the New York Times and the Ottawa Citizen.

Michael Parkin, professor emeritus in the Department of Economics and specialist on interest rates and inflation was quoted in the Globe and Mail, the Toronto Star and CBC News online. He commented on various economic issues, for example, on how low Canadian interest rates and a high dollar are challenging investors.

Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee, visited Canada this month and called on Canadians to get behind the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The media consulted Kevin Wamsley for his opinion. The professor of kinesiology and director of Western's International Centre for Olympic Studies spoke to CTV, TSN.ca, CBC News online among other media.

IN MEMORIAM

Funeral service was held February 10 for Gordon George Canniff, a retired Physical Plant employee, who died February 7 at age 82. He had 20 years of service with the university.

Music students winning composers

Two Western Music students are winners of the inaugural New Choral Composition Awards of London Pro Musica.

Mario Fonti, a third-year Bachelor of Music student (Theory & Composition) won the $1,000 first prize for his composition, “A Dream”. Second prize of $500 went to Scott Bruhacher, a first-year master of Music student (Composition) for his work entitled, “In a Garden”.

The two were selected from among seven entrants in the competition, established by London Pro Musica to promote Canadian music, musicians and composers.

London Pro Musica will perform the two prize-winning compositions in its season finale on Sunday, May 1 at 3 p.m. in Metropolitan United Church. London Pro Musica will retain the right to the first commercial recording of the works.
FEBRUARY 17, 2005 13

COMING EVENTS

February 17
Reclamations • McIntosh Gallery - Continuing until February 20
Dept. of Modern Languages • Cine-Forum, Film in Spanish (English subtitles), "25 Watts", UC, 12, 7 pm


Wind Ensemble • Gary McCumber, Director - free. Talbot Theatre, 12 noon

Physics Colloquium • PT. Jayachandran, Western - "Proton Aurora and Auroral Substorms", Physics & Astronomy Bldg. RM. 521, 1pm

Dept. of History • Forrest Pass, "White Collar Pioneers: The Native Sons of British Columbia and Role of Myth in the Formation of an Urban Middle Class" - SSC, Rm. 4317 - 4 pm

Paint & Suffering: Medicine & Art Series • Ruth B. Phillips, Art Historian, Carleton University, Part of the interdisciplinary conference. Frost Free: The Culture of Cool, VAC - Art Lab, 8 pm

February 18


Dept. of Modern Languages & Literatures • Seminar on Transatlantic Studies • Joyce Brune de Garavits, “Preliminary Thoughts on Linguistics and Biology” - UC RM. 207, 3 pm

Men's Basketball vs Lakehead @ Western, 8 pm

February 19

Visitors in the Arts Speaker's Series • Hot Flashes: A Symposium in Honour of Sheila Butler, VAC, RM. 100, 10 am - 6 pm

Men's Basketball versus Lakehead @ Western, 8 pm

February 20

London Senior Alumni Program • What a Waste - How to store and dispose of radioactive waste products from Ontario's nuclear power stations, David Shoemith, Dept. of Chemistry, Western, McKellar Room, UCC, 9:30 - 11 am

Microbiology & Immunology Seminar • Woong Kyung Suh, University of Toronto - "Regulation of immune responses by the members of C028- B7 family costimulatory molecules", MGB, RM. M341, 11 am

February 21

Campus Communicators/Toastmasters • meet every Wednesday, 12 noon, SLB Rm. 330. Visitors welcome. Contact Chandev Abhayaratne at cabhayar@uwo.ca or 661-2111, ext 85968

Althouse Theatre presents Stephen Sondheim's "Into the Woods", Running until Feb. 26. Tickets $10 in advance at Althouse or Grand Theatre, $2 at door, Althouse Theatre, 7:30 pm

February 24

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February 25

Anatomy & Cell Biology Seminar • John A. Kiernan, Western. The Histochemical Study of Macromolecular Carbohydrates", DSB, RM. 1002, 12 noon

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February 26

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February 28

Physiology & Pharmacology Seminar • Christy Ludlow, National Institute of Health, Maryland, "Sensory-motor interactions in laryngeal control for voice and swallowing", DSB, RM. 1002, 4 pm

March 1

London Senior Alumni Program • Driving Discovery - Robarts winning formula of attracting the best and brightest. Susan Horvath, Robarts Research Institute,McKellar RM. UCC, 9:30 - 11 am

Deadline for submissions to “Coming Events” is Wednesday, one week before publication. Please send submissions to comingevents@uwo.ca

The Centre for Women's Studies & Feminist Research presents:
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Dr. Sandra Harding
"Women, Science, Democracy: Feminist Issues"
Thursday, March 10, 2005 4 pm
Conron Hall (University College room 224)

Everyone welcome!

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Dr. Harding is Professor of Education and Women's Studies at UWO, a co-author of more than a dozen books, including Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? and The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader (1994), and co-edits Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society. She has been a consultant to several UN agencies, including PAHO, UNESCO, UNIFEM, and the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

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Insider Access

On a regular basis, a member of The Globe and Mail’s editorial staff will respond to questions submitted by online subscribers. The transcript of questions and answers will be available exclusively for INSIDER Edition members.
The Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, its members, and volunteers, would like to thank students from

The University of Western Ontario

and local residents for their support of Shinerama 2004.

Canada-wide, Shinerama raised over $920,000 to help beat cystic fibrosis!

Each fall, student 'shiners' from over 55 universities and colleges hit the streets to shine shoes, or anything else they can think of, for a donation to fight cystic fibrosis.

Cystic fibrosis, which is fatal, attacks the lungs and the digestive system. When Shinerama began, most children with CF did not live to age four. Today, half of all Canadians with CF may be expected to live to age 37 and beyond!

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Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Summer Activation
Undergraduate students interested in taking a course during the 2005 Spring/Summer term must complete the online term activation at least 12 hours prior to registering for their desired course. Summer Term Activation will be available beginning February 21 by logging into the Registrar’s Web site at www.registrar.uwo.ca.

OSAP - Summer 2005
Summer OSAP applications will be available in late March. They will be available in hard copy or can be downloaded from the Registrar’s Web site.

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MISCELLANEOUS
Essays edited – Enhanced English revision for non-academic credit. Academic, professional or business text, including general components of technical papers, articles and proposals, creative work, and ESL, promotional or sensitive material. Say it with Words - 433-6840.

For more information about these and other items, please visit www.registrar.uwo.ca/classifieds.

Summer Activation
Undergraduate students (excluding Richard Ivey School of Business) wishing to enroll in courses for the fall/winter term must submit an Intent to Register no later than February 18.

Undergraduate students requesting to remain in a program in which they are currently in, may complete an online Intent to Register beginning February 7 by visiting http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/ITR.

The 2005 Academic Calendar is available free of charge at Counselling Offices February 7 - 18. After Feb. 18, Academic Calendars will be available online at www.registrar.uwo.ca/calendars or at The Book Store.

Additional word. Payment must accompany ads. Please submit by noon, Thursdays to Western Administration Building, 125A, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Angelo Belcastro.

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PhD Lectures
Deborah L. Enns: A Kinesiology PhD Public Lecture will be held February 17 at 2 p.m. in Room 11, South Valley Building. Title of Thesis: “Response of the Calpain Calpastatin System to Microgravity Induced by Hindlimb Unweighting”. A Thesis Examination will follow at 3 p.m. in Room 125A, Stevenson-Lawson Building. Supervisor: Dr. Angelo Belcastro.

To advertise in Western News call 661-2045 or fax 661-3921.

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Taking music to community

BY PAUL MAYNE

For Gary McCumber it’s all about the music. It’s about loving to play and sharing that love through encouraging others and, in turn, encouraging them to encourage others.

A Western music graduate ('71), McCumber finds his career coming full circle as he wraps up his first year of teaching at the Don Wright Faculty of Music. It is his first go at instructing at the post-secondary level, but by no means is he coming into this new phase with a lack of experience.

Upon graduation, McCumber ventured off to teacher’s college and quickly found himself teaching music at the secondary school level. The St. Catharines native spent six years at Westminster Secondary School in London before obtaining a Masters in Music Education at the University of Michigan.

“Performing was something I didn’t want to leave,” admits McCumber, whose instrument is the clarinet.

Returning to London, McCumber landed a similar teaching job at Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School where he spent the next 24 years teaching music to eager youngsters.

So, after 31 years of teaching, what’s next back into music at Western?

McCumber was about four months into retirement and was still getting calls to help with high school recitals. To put it simply, he missed it.

“I’ve never had an opportunity to teach at this level,” says McCumber. “This is the next level of clientele of music and I want them to see the passion in an old guy like me.”

That passion is coming through in his teaching of symphonic band and wind ensemble. Not only does McCumber have his students hitting all the right notes, but the community is chiming in as well.

It’s not uncommon for high school music classes to attend performances at Western. In fact many classes have to be turned away. At the same time, McCumber’s students are heading back to high school, mentoring and inspiring young musicians.

“It’s a win-win for both sides,” says McCumber. “The commitment and knowledge of the university students is being passed on to a younger audience. And the university kids can learn a few tricks themselves.”

A thirst for assisting in musical discovery keeps him coming back.

“You put the energy out to them and when you start to feel it come back in their efforts you’re like ‘wow’…and you come in the next day and do it again.”

TODAY

Check out Gary McCumber and his students as the wind ensemble performs a free concert at Talbot Theatre beginning at noon.

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