Discovery credit takes root at Western

BY ADELA TALBOT

Effective Sept. 1, Western’s undergraduate students will have the option of pursuing a “discovery credit” as part of their degree module.

The pass/fail credit, advocated by student Senators, has been on the horizon for some time, said John Doerksen, Vice Provost (Academic Programs and Students). The motion passed at Senate last week.

“We want students to be encouraged to explore fields other than their own and to do that in an environment where there’s no risk or concern about having an effect on the cumulative average,” he noted.

“But the devil was in the details. We’ve been trying to work out how would this look in the end. A lot of thought has gone into the details, but the key thing is this relates to elective courses, not mandatory courses that are part of the student’s program.”

This new policy will allow students in modular degree structures – of which there are more than 2,000 unique combinations – to designate what would be an elective course as a discovery credit, Doerksen explained. Their potential discovery list cannot include any core, mandatory courses. At the end of term, the student will receive a pass/fail grade instead of a percentage grade on their transcript. Students can take a maximum 1.0 discovery credit courses towards their degree.

The idea of the discovery credit is to encourage academic exploration, he added. A student can pursue something they find interesting, even if it is not related to their primary academic pursuits. Because it is a pass/fail grade, it would not affect applications to professional programs or graduate school, or award eligibility.

Students who find the discovery credit has sparked new interest, and then want to change their program or module, have the option of petitioning and requesting the pass/fail grade be converted to a percentage grade, Doerksen said.

“We want students to be encouraged to explore fields other than their own and to do that in an environment where there’s no risk or concern about having an effect on the cumulative average.”

- John Doerksen
  Vice Provost (Academic Programs and Students)

“We recognize it’s an important change. A lot of other universities are doing this and I think as we go through a cycle of this, we will sort out the details. We might have to tweak a little here and there, but our sense is the core structure will work.”

Discovery credits can be used to fulfill breadth requirements, but not essay requirements. The policy advises students to carefully consider the impact of discovery credits.

Applications to Ivey’s HBA program will not consider a discovery credit. The policy does not extend to first-year students because they don’t declare a module until the second year, Doerksen added.

Students in professional programs such as Engineering, Nursing, Music, Law, Education, Business, Medicine and Dentistry are also excluded because their degree structure is not modular.

Discovery credits also don’t count as mandatory courses needed for an honours specialization, specialization, major, minor modules or certificates and diplomas.
Read. Watch. Listen.

Read. Watch. Listen. introduces you to the personal side of our faculty, staff and alumni. Participants are asked to answer three simple questions about their reading, viewing and listening habits - what one book or newspaper/magazine article is grabbing your attention, what one movie or television show has caught your eye, and what album, song, podcast or radio show are you lending an ear to.

Stephan Crub is the Associate Director (Sales & Communications) with Western Retail Services. Today, he takes his turn on Read. Watch. Listen.

**BEST BETS**

Visit the Western Events Calendar at www.events.uwo.ca for a full look at the week ahead.

**DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES**

Michael Copeland, LSFS'93, MBA'99, a member of the Leadership Team at Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment, and former CEO of the Toronto Argonauts, will discuss the business of modern leadership.

**HELEN BATTLE LECTURE**

Listening through the lens of avian malaria, and its effects on songbirds. Helen Battle will discuss how this powerful method selection has influenced field history trends such as sexual displays, mate choice and temporal patterns. This research results in a vast snapshot of how these threats work and what can be done to mitigate for the future.

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**ART WORK. WORK. WORK.**

Have questions about working in the arts and what to do after graduation? Jim Davison believes science plays a significant role in both the day-to-day life of a university and the generator-to-generation preservation and expansion of human understanding. He wants the world to know that.

**READ. WATCH. LISTEN.**

If you have a suggestion for someone you would like to see in Read. Watch. Listen., or would like to participate yourself, drop a line to inside-western@uwo.ca.

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**NEW SCIENCE DEAN: ‘WORLD NEEDS WHAT WE ARE PUTTING TOGETHER’**

Matt Davison, MI$'93 (Applied Math), PhD'93 (Applied Math), was named the new Dean of the Faculty of Science, effective July 1. After an eight-month search, he follows Charmaine Dean into the position.

**BY JASON WINDERS**

**Academics**

“arctic and subarctic and northern communities.”

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Time to connect the dots to improve safe cycling on campus

BY NAVANETH MUTHAN

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can downshift her bike to a lower gear with a third click. Riding into the side favor of Western University’s engineering students, Mathilde Delphine, a master’s student in computer science, is no stranger to commutes on two wheels. She bikes along a series of major roads connecting to the city by bike, which is less congested in the intersection of Perrolle and University Drive. Within a few months after these incidents are expected to increase.

“North America lacks a biking culture, but Western can change that, at least in the extent of the campus. The campus has the infrastructure to create protected bike lanes like Montreal and Calgary. Even a bike share would be feasible for a campus of such size.”

-Ben Couto

ADENA TALTONT (WESTERN NEWS)

Andrew Botterell, the Chair of Western’s Department of Philosophy, was asked in a joint appointment with the Faculty of Law, recently returned from Ethiopia, having taught jurisprudence at Bahir Dar City, University, having volunteered without discipline.

Internationalization

Law professor crosses ‘Borders’ in name of global understanding

BY ADENA TALTONT

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drew Botterell couldn’t ignore the appeal. When a note from Academics Without Borders (AWB), an international volunteer program with Academics Without Borders, asked for volunteers to teach, he saw it as an opportunity to give back. It happened to be during a time of political tension in the country.

“The proposal (from AWB) makes us come to mind: A volunteer law school to beehive,” Botterell explained. “We’ve had it for a number of years. The one in Ethiopia, it might not be that well addressed directly. Botterell explained. “As a law professor in Ethiopia, it might be the time of your life. There are many students and faculty who need the help of their Western counterparts. Botterell explained. “We’ve got a great deal of experience in a number of disciplines during the period of time. Botterell explained. “We’ve got a great deal of experience in a number of disciplines during the period of time.

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As we strengthen our university’s national and international reputation, it is critical we recruit the best students – both international and domestic. This is a step towards doing that.

BY LINDA MILLER

President and Provost and Funded Student.

“The one thing that really stood out to me was the level of support for students. There are many programs that provide support, but the level of support was really impressive.”

Time to go in the OR, or time to go out for a coffee break? That’s the question you might ask yourself when considering your university’s national and international reputation. And it’s a question that has been facing students for decades.

By Adela Talbot

Western students have hope for a new strategy to help international PhD and DMA students. The plan involves giving them the opportunity to compete against their local and international peers in research. The idea is to recognize their hard work and the potential for their future success. The hope is that this will lead to their success as they pursue their international and local goals.

BY PAUL MANN

Make the difference in your career and your surgical precision

BY JACQUELINE PAISH

In some disciplines, particularly those that have larger numbers of international students, the costs can be much higher than the domestic rate. If a student finds themselves in this situation, it can be a huge burden that is lifted from their shoulders.

“Seeing the difference in the funding, it was a huge burden that is lifted from them.”

The Proteus Innovation Competition is an intense, four-week competition that challenges teams to create a commercialization plan for their technology. The competition is open to all students, with or without a mentor, and it’s a great opportunity for students to learn about how to commercialize their research.

The competition is divided into two parts: the technical and commercial. The technical part involves developing a plan for the technology, while the commercial part involves developing a business plan for the technology.

“Seeing the difference in the funding, it was a huge burden that is lifted from them.”

Winning with surgical precision

“Make it another innovation and commercialization win for Western’s PhD and DMA students,” said Michael Patterson, PhD, co-founder of Western Research Parks, TechAlliance, and Western Development. “It’s a great opportunity for students to learn about how to commercialize their research.

“Winning the competition is a great opportunity for students to learn about how to commercialize their research. It’s a great opportunity for students to learn about how to commercialize their research.”

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"Seeing the difference in the funding, it was a huge burden that is lifted from them."
Golf-Grip Study May Reduce Pain, Improve Play for People with Arthritis

GOLDEN PAINT/WESTERN NEWS

Sara Holland, a master's student in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering, is analyzing whether arthritis golf grips marketed to consumers as having low force and low impact actually benefit people with arthritis.

BY DEBORA VAN BREK

Ground-breaking work by Western researchers may soon help golfers with arthritis get a better grip on playing with less pain and more control.

Golfers with joint pain in their hands often try work-arounds that include wearing gloves or wrist braces, changing the types of clubs or using grips that are larger and softer. Beyond personal preference, equipment-marketing and clubhouse wisdom, though, “no one has tested empirically whether larger and softer golf grips work,” said Sara Holland, a master’s student in the Department of Mechanical and Materials Engineering.

Holland has decided to do just that. She is analyzing whether arthritis grips marketed as having low force and low impact actually benefit people with arthritis.

Holland is testing more than a dozen different grip types among 40 participants – 20 healthy, 20 with arthritis – by securing small sensors called strain gauges to golfers’ fingernails. The sensors attach to wires that run up their arms and to a backpack-type device that ultimately measures the force the golfers use when gripping and swinging a club.

“The less force it takes to grip a club, the easier it will be for a player with arthritis,” Holland said.

“If we can decrease the force occurring in the hands while swinging, we can hope to improve an arthritic player’s function and decrease pain,” Holland explained.

“It’s about reducing pain. But it’s really about preserving the joints,” said study supervisor Emily Lalone, a Mechanical and Materials Engineering professor and member of the Bone and Joint Institute. The study is supported with funding from the Arthritis Society and is a collaborative effort with co-supervisor Louis Ferreira (Mechanical and Materials Engineering) and co-investigator Joy MacDermid (Physical Therapy).

Lalone said some people also endorse using specific club heads, although she believes that may be of limited benefit because it doesn’t address how the club is connecting with the hands.

“This is actually the only contact point between you and the club,” she said.

The testing began in February and is set to be complete in October.

Researchers believe the information they glean from this work can translate to racquet sports, softball and hockey – activities all requiring a strong and effective grip.

“They’re trying to find ways to keep playing, but using this help to improve their overall hand function for the long-term benefit or at least a short-term solution for the pain?” Holland questioned.

Lalone said many manufacturers focus on the head of clubs, specifically drivers, to market longer and straighter shots. However, she believes it’s secondary to the overlooked aspect of the club – the grip.

“We have to remember, your hand-grip interface is the only contact point between you and the club,” she said.

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“There’s a huge feel aspect. You have to feel comfortable to perform well,” Holland said.

Holland started playing the sport when she was 15 and was captain of the Western’s Women’s Varsity Golf Team throughout her undergraduate years, including her individual 10th-place finish and team sixth-place at the Canadian University/College Championship last May during her final year as a Mustang.

During her training and continued work with the team at Sunningdale Golf & Country Club, Holland noted a number of members play the sport they love while working through arthritis pain. Some wear gloves on both hands, believing this offers comfort without sacrificing performance. Others try building up the grips with a foam wrap to reduce pain in arthritic fingers.

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Eluchok balances creativity, practicality in top legal job

BY PAUL MAYNE

Paul Eluchok began his new role earlier this year as Western’s legal university secretary. Eluchok returned to London where he began his new role as University Legal Secretary and support units.

BY PAUL MAYNE // WESTERN NEWS

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Searching for Celia

“My back two Cubans about Fidel Castro, one might love him, and one might hate him, but all agree about Celia Sánchez, and everyone loved her,” said a clothing store clerk. “She connected with the people; she was the embodiment of all Cubans.”

Sánchez was a leader in the rebel army throughout the war against the Batista regime. She helped supply ammunition to the rebels, amongst her many roles.

A picture of Celia from her home in Pilon where she moved when she was 20. The poster read: “Heroines of the Revolution.”

She returned with one of her at the hotel, a poster that read: “Heroines of the Revolution.”

She returned with one of her at the hotel, a poster that read: “Heroines of the Revolution.”

Our first night we stayed at a casa particular – a Cuban homestay – in the town of Galápagos. I asked the hotel manager to call Yolanda, a female cyclist we had met before, to bring our luggage to the casa. She arrived with a bowl of sugar to sweeten the drink, I ran out the door.

As Fidel’s right-hand woman, she was fierce, fast, and fearless. She supplied weapons, food, and supplies, often taking pregnancy tests through符号deadlocks. She delivered messages in the largest national flowers, walking barefoot to avoid suspicion. She had giant boots to hide guns, boxes and ammunition, and a big hat to block the sun.

She wore giant skirts to hide guns; she never made it on that road with these bikes. It was treacherous navigating the infinity of the road, where chunks of asphalt disappeared where the road disappeared. To our left was the ocean. At times, the road disappeared under the sea, where the ocean was the only solid surface.

As a travel writer, Melanie Chambers has written about creating a zine in Cuba, getting stuck in Buenos Aires, and most recently cycling 900 km across South Africa in a mountain bike race. She teaches writing in Western’s Writing Studies department.

The more I learned about Sánchez, the more I not only identified with her but also came to respect and admire her. I’ve never felt more connected to someone I’ve never met.”

Melanie Chambers

She created schools and hotels for farmers for only three years. After Sánchez died, the hotel turned into a tourist-only resort. And I’m not a tourist; I’m a local. And she was a local – not entirely surprising, either, as she was a children’s writer for more than 20 years, the more I not only identified with her but also came to respect and admire her. I’ve never felt more connected to someone I’ve never met.”

Melanie Chambers
Critic takes a novel approach to the arts

BY DAVID SILVERBERG

It’s not enough to唬 Kate Taylor simply as a book critic. “You have to know her,” is all that’s needed to sum her up. That was the challenge national cultural columnist and film critic at The Globe and Mail posed to the writer as she debuted the fifth installment of her monthly column, “ 내의 카페.”

When she reviewed anything, “I try to be a voice of objectivity.” She pointed out that the paper was not the only one to do so. It was a way of thinking critically about the world around her. “I try to be a voice of objectivity.” She pointed out that the paper was not the only one to do so. It was a way of thinking critically about the world around her.

“Taylor is a writer who is highly sensitive to pace and that’s carries through right away,” Taylor said. “I could be hired by a newspaper or a radio station. So when we graduated, I was more interested in the real world. So when we graduated, I was more interested in the real world. So when we graduated, I was more interested in the real world.”

Beyond her national cultural columnist and film critic role at the Globe and Mail, Kate Taylor, MA’85 (Journalism), is author of three novels: Proust and the Kosher Kitchen, Serial Monogamy, and The Battle of the Books. She has also received the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for her playwriting in the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for her playwriting.

“I’ve always loved what being a writer does for me,” Taylor said. “I’ve always loved what being a writer does for me.”

Taylor said she applied for an arts reporter position at the Globe and Mail, and was hired by the newspaper. “It was a great way to learn about the arts and cultural world.”

“Beyond her national cultural columnist and film critic role at the Globe and Mail, Kate Taylor, MA’85 (Journalism), is author of three novels: Proust and the Kosher Kitchen, Serial Monogamy, and The Battle of the Books. She has also received the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for her playwriting. Taylor has found that writing for the paper is a worthwhile hobby to pursue, even though the liberty line be expected.

“I hope to continue writing for the Globe and Mail, and to keep writing for the Globe and Mail, and to keep writing for the Globe and Mail. I love the paper, and I love the paper, and I love the paper,” Taylor said. “I love the paper, and I love the paper, and I love the paper.”

Taylor serves as a member of two Senate committees: Senate Agriculture and Food, and Senate Education. “Dr. Goodall has been in negotiations with the GTAs, and we have no desire to see that happen,” Taylor said. “She is the highest honour Western can bestow upon an individual and there is perhaps no greater living sculptor in the world that deserves it.”

The awarding of an honorary degree will take place at the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for her playwriting. Taylor has found that writing for the paper is a worthwhile hobby to pursue, even though the liberty line be expected.

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Federal budget signals commitment to science

BY ADELA TALBOT

Western researchers are better positioned to undertake cutting-edge work, thanks to the largest investment ever in fundamental science research, tabled late last month as part of the 2018 federal budget.

“It’s tremendous news for Canada. This was long awaited and we are thankful for the government for having the foresight to inject strategic funds into the research ecosystem,” said John Capone, Vice-President (Research). “The impact on Western will be significant.”

In Equality + Growth: A Strong Middle Class, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Finance Minister Bill Morneau, BBA’86 (Political Science), committed $3.8 billion over the next five years to further propel innovation and science at Canadian universities. The investment also includes $1.22 billion in new funding to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), known collectively as the Tri-Council.

“The funding from the tri-council agencies has been fairly restrictive over the last number of years. This opens it up to significantly greater opportunities for us,” Capone continued. “There’s also new funding for infrastructure that will enable us to undertake revitalization of expensive equipment and facilities. And, importantly, there’s a greater thrust towards equity and inclusion.

“There’s support for gender equity through an increase in the number of Canada Research Chairs, which are more aligned with the aspects of achieving equity, diversity and inclusiveness. That’s good news for us. We were well prepared for that in the last number of years at Western, and this really aligns with our own priorities and strategies. Having the funds to undertake and implement those ideas is a great opportunity for us.”

The federal government started to implement measures to improve equity, diversity and inclusion, with the recently established Canada Research Coordinating Committee tasked with strengthening equity and diversity in research. The 2018 budget supports the following initiatives:

- The collection of better data on underrepresented groups to inform action plans to promote stronger representation of underrepresented groups in granting council programs, with clear targets and annual reporting to measure progress;
- Research institutions will receive support to advance equity and diversity through the adoption of the Athena SWAN (Scientific Women’s Academic Network) program. Its goals include structural and cultural changes, such as increased support for women’s careers and efforts to challenge discrimination and bias;
- Research institutions will be able to compete for grants to tackle challenges in addressing underrepresentation and career advancement faced by women, Indigenous Peoples, members of visible minorities, people with disabilities and LGBTQ2 individu als; and
- Indigenous communities will be engaged to identify strategies to grow their capacity to conduct research, partner with the broader research community and assist in establishing a national research program.

What’s more, in 2018-19, the granting councils will be required to publish an annual report for Canadians on progress in addressing challenges in the research system, including equity and diversity, and support for researchers at various career stages. Western has already started to implement the Athena SWAN program, Capone noted.

“I am thrilled about Canada’s investment in investigator-led, fundamental research, and its emphasis on equity and diversity, in the 2018 budget,” said Lisa Saksida, Western’s Tier 1 Canada Research Chair (CRC) in Translational Cognitive Neuroscience and Scientific Director of BrainsCAN. “This is a major boost in the places where it is most needed – and a big step toward creating an environment that will make Canada a powerhouse of cutting-edge research and innovation.”

As the federal government has highlighted gender equity as a priority, Saksida hopes awareness and causes are more aligned with the aspects of achieving equity, diversity and inclusiveness. That’s good news for us. We have really thought about everyone who would be excellent, or did you just nominate the first (excellent) person who came to mind? When interviewing faculty candidates, have you thought about how implicit bias might make you ask different questions of the woman, or have different assumptions? I was very surprised to find out recently that only about 20 per cent of faculty members in the area of cognitive neuroscience at Western are women,” she continued.

“Once you are at the undergraduate and the graduate level in cognitive neuroscience, there are equal numbers of men and women. So, like many places, we do need to raise our game. The greater awareness of the issue that we are now seeing is the first step toward that improvement.”

The implementation of Athena SWAN can only help in this regard, Saksida explained. Things like meeting schedules, which one might not consider an equity issue, need to be addressed to foster inclusivity.

“In academic departments, it is common to hold important meetings where decisions are being made around 3:30 p.m. – the rationale being it doesn’t disrupt peoples’ days. An unintended consequence of this is people who have responsibilities outside of work (e.g., young children) often have to miss these meetings due to school pickup times,” she said.

“This disproportionately affects early to mid-career women, who end up not having a voice at such meetings. Largely because of Athena SWAN, the notion of core hours is something now fairly standard in the U.K. – the idea all meetings where decisions are made should be held during core daytime hours so as not to disadvantage any groups of individuals who have other responsibilities outside work. And this relatively minor change has made a big impact on inclusivity.”

The federal budget also includes $275 million for a new fund aimed at research that is international, multidisciplinary and fast-breaking – three hallmarks of Western’s own strategic plan – and $21 million towards increasing diversity in science.

“This is something we have done here and have probably have done better than most Canadian universities – the cluster program is an example of that. It’s almost a template for the government’s funding approach to this,” Capone added. “We were doing it on a shoe string, but now that there is some competitive funding available, we can scale it up.

“We are in a great position mostly because we had the foresight and the resolve to invest in these different directions at a time when there was so much demand on resources. For a number of years now we’ve geselessly pursued partnerships across faculties and across departments with hiring partnerships, not only in research. It’s been pleasing to see some of that now through funding mechanisms.”

The government’s continued support for scientific research infrastructure with an expected $173 million coming to the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the $210 million earmarked for the CRC program, which will create significant funding and renewal for the country’s top academic scientists, is also a boost for Western researchers, Capone said.