



acifa

Alberta Colleges & Institutes Faculties Association

Faculty Circuit

September 2009

President's Message

by Dave Purkis



It's fall again, the beginning of a new semester with new students, tasks, colleagues, and for some of you, a new employer. I always feel a sense of anticipation in September, looking ahead at the possibilities latent in the year ahead. I think we all remember the childhood excitement of our fresh stack of school supplies with all of the promise they held. This year is no different in offering exciting possibilities. Among the most noticeable new events this year are the creation of two new universities and a government that is making dire predictions about the funding of our institutions. Mount Royal and MacEwan are two of the largest members of ACIFA and I'm sure the rest of us are congratulating you on your new status while joining you in speculation of the changes ahead. Also on everyone's mind is the news that every post-secondary institution in the province is warning its employees of impending poverty and the need for belt tightening. With all of the institutions facing a salary re-opener or new contract this year, we should be in for some very interesting times. Welcome to the new year!

Alison Cervi Wins Teaching Award

Alison Cervi, a faculty member of the Nuclear Medicine Technology (NMT) Program at SAIT Polytechnic, was presented with the **ACIFA 2009 Award for Innovation in Teaching** at the 2009 ACIFA Conference in Canmore this past May.



The award is sponsored by Johnson Inc., ACIFA's preferred insurance provider, and is awarded annually to a faculty member or team from one of ACIFA's member organizations. The award winner and two runner ups are selected through a nomination process sponsored by the Professional Affairs Committee of ACIFA. The award winner receives a cheque for \$1500 and their faculty association receives \$500. Further, the winner's expenses to attend the conference to receive their award are covered by the Post Secondary Trust fund, administered by ACIFA.

Alison's innovation titled *Visual Learning Through Videocasting* involved the creation of videotaped demonstrations of three critical medical procedures using consumer level equipment. A role play of appropriate dialogue with subtitles throughout the videos further assisted her students in learning the steps of the procedures and demonstrated details of the techniques that they could repeatedly review to achieve the desired learning outcomes. An important piece of this innovation was the placement of the videos on *Youtube* to facilitate student access. The use of this popular culture entertainment and communication tool was readily accepted by students as a new learning resource, minimizing any negative connotations associated with traditional learning resources. A follow up survey of students provided strong evidence of the learning benefits of the video demonstrations and the popularity of being able to access them on *Youtube*.

To share the details of this innovative teaching strategy Alison offered a well received session at the ACIFA conference.

Don't Cut Us Out



Take Action NOW to
Build Alberta's Future!

Alberta's post-secondary education system is facing cutbacks that threaten **students, faculty, staff** and the **quality** of our education.
Who's cut out of this picture?

www.pialberta.org



Public Interest Alberta

On September 15, Public Interest Alberta launched a campaign in support of post-secondary education, stressing the following primary message:

Invest in Post-Secondary Education to build Alberta's Future – Don't Cut Us Out

Investment in post-secondary education is good for Alberta's future. It will improve our economy and the health of our society, and will help solve current issues affecting our education, health and environment.

- 1) Cuts to post-secondary education will make the economic downturn worse. The government is looking to cut over \$40 million from PSE this year and much more significant cuts are being proposed for next year.
- 2) The current funding situation is already having an impact on staff and faculty in many institutions, and further cuts are going to reduce significantly the quality of education in Alberta.
- 3) Students entering the system now and over the next number of years are going to have a harder time getting into institutions. Those that do get in will have a harder time accessing required higher-level classes.
- 4) There have already been cuts in a number of areas of post-secondary education, and there continue to be significant deferred maintenance issues at most institutions.
- 5) Increased workloads are going to result in more stress and long-term disabilities. Increased workload is due to the trend of reducing numbers of staff, not refilling positions that have been vacated.
- 6) The government should be increasing support for all research, not just in targeted areas.
- 7) The provincial government has the resources to invest in post-secondary education – it is simply a matter of priorities. Securing the future of Alberta by investing in post-secondary education should be at the top of the list.



The campaign will continue into the fall. Please visit http://www.pialberta.org/program_areas/pse for more information and TO GET INVOLVED.

NAIT Academic Staff Association President Betty Anne Ross presented on behalf of faculty and ACIFA members at the media conference in Edmonton on September 15, and speaks here with CBC News.

Meet Members of the ACIFA Executive

ACIFA would like to introduce the newly elected Bob Graves as Vice President Records and Finance and the newly re-elected Jacquie Flood as Vice President Professional Affairs. Bob and Jacquie were elected at the Annual General Meeting at the 2009 ACIFA Conference.

Jacquie Flood, Portage College – Vice President Professional Affairs



Jacquie Flood has been an active member of the Portage College faculty for eleven years. As an instructor in the Academics for Careers and Education (ACE) department she has been an integral part of academic upgrading for adult students in the Cold Lake Region.

Jacquie recently completed her Master of Arts in Educational Studies through Athabasca University. She has earned two Bachelor's Degrees, the first in Psychology from the University of British Columbia, and the second in Education from the University of Alberta. Prior to her teaching career at Portage, Jacquie was a career counselor which has helped her assist her students in career exploration. Her compassion as a teacher is often expressed in her drive to help adult students to reach their educational goals. Jacquie also notes, "I am passionate about lifelong learning and try to share this passion with my adult students."

Jacquie was motivated to seek re-election for the PAC Chair position because she finds working with the committee members an extremely positive experience. She feels like she has grown in her own professionalism as a result of her 8 year association with the Committee. Jacquie also believes networking with colleagues around the province is an excellent way to stay current in her field. She has been an active participant in several professional organizations and is a regular conference presenter at the ACIFA Annual Conference.

In her personal time, Jacquie enjoys nature and outdoor activities and spending time with her family. At Portage, her reward comes from seeing her adult students achieve their goals. When asked what makes her passionate about teaching, Jacquie simply replies, "the persistence and hope demonstrated by my students."

Bob Graves, MacEwan College – Vice President Records and Finance

Bob joined Grant MacEwan College as an Instructor in the Management Studies program in 2007. He has served as a faculty member at a number of institutions including AVC--Grouard (now part of Northern Lakes College), Lethbridge College, and Keyano College. While at Keyano, he held positions as Treasurer and President of the Keyano College Faculty Association. He received a Bachelors of Commerce and Diploma of Education from the University of Alberta, a Master of Business Administration from the University of Manitoba, and a Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee (Knoxville). In addition to being the Treasurer of ACIFA, Bob is currently serving as the Treasurer for the Grant MacEwan College Faculty Association.



Name Changes: Mount Royal University and Grant MacEwan University

On September 3rd Mount Royal College announced that the institution's name has changed to Mount Royal University. Premier Ed Stelmach made the name change official at a ceremony that afternoon. Lt.-Gov. Norman Kwong, an alumnus of Mount Royal College, received the university's first honorary Bachelor of Arts degree. "This name change simply reflects what we have become," President David Marshall said. "There is no change to our mandate, just a change to our name." (Mount Royal named University, CBC.<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/calgary/story/2009/09/03/calgary-mount-royal-college-university.html>) As a university, Mount Royal will offer seven baccalaureate degrees, eight applied degrees, four university transfer programs, twelve diploma programs and five certificate programs. (Calgary's Mount Royal college becomes a university by Katie Schneider, Edmonton Sun .<http://www.edmontonsun.com/news/alberta/2009/09/03/10741456.html>) David Hyttenrauch, president of the Mount Royal Faculty Association, said graduates will have more opportunity as a result of the new status. They will be able to move on to graduate work or transfer to other universities more easily. "It's been difficult over the years for graduates of colleges, generally, to move onto graduate study at universities," he said. "Having the university name doesn't really change the programs we offer, but it changes the national recognition and our status among other institutions." (Mount Royal named University, CBC. <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/calgary/story/2009/09/03/calgary-mount-royal-college-university.html>)

Later in the month, on September 24, the Provincial Government announced that Grant MacEwan's name has changed to Grant MacEwan University. A ceremony took place at the school, attended by Premier Ed Stelmach as well as Doug Horner, Minister of Advanced Education and Technology. Christina Grant, a graduate of MacEwan's Bachelor of Arts program who is now pursuing a Master of Arts in English at the University of Alberta, spoke of her positive experience of being a student at Grant MacEwan. All those in attendance received a commemorative coin. In 2006 the college launched a four-year arts degree and has added others in nursing, commerce, child and youth care, and now science. The name change is "just formal recognition of what we've been doing for quite some time," said Jerry Zdril, head of the faculty association. (MacEwan University won't change its focus by Elise Stolte, Edmonton Journal. <http://www.calgaryherald.com/health/MacEwan+University+change+focus/2027689/story.html>) The name change will not affect the institution's mandate.

ACIFA Conference 2009

Thumbs Up from Conference Goers

The ACIFA 2009 conference received top marks on an online feedback survey conducted shortly after the conference. Of the 189 surveys distributed, 144 individuals completed the survey. Fully one quarter of the respondents indicated that this was their first ACIFA conference while nearly another quarter indicated they had attended five or more ACIFA conferences.

Most gratifying to the conference organizers was that 95% of respondents indicated they would definitely recommend the conference to a colleague, while 87% indicated they would like to attend the conference next year at Jasper Park Lodge. All eight items relating to the conference location, facilities and food received satisfaction ratings of a four or five on a five-point scale by 75% or more of the respondents. Satisfaction with the program (15 items) scored equally well. The majority of respondents also took time to add comments that further supported the high level of satisfaction with the conference as well as providing valuable suggestions for future improvements to the conference.



Faculty Reviews of Conference Sessions

Faculty members were asked to submit a brief commentary on sessions they attended at the 2009 Acifa Conference held in Canmore. Here are a few of their responses:

"I felt fortunate to have the choice of listening to Dr. David Swann, the leader of the Alberta Liberal Party. I found Dr. Swann sincere, motivated, and informative. I was impressed with his lack of rhetoric and double speak. His intention was to inform and to have a dialogue. It's obvious that service to Albertans is at the top of Dr. Swann's priority list. ACIFA has done a great job presenting credible, relevant speakers. I came away from the ACIFA conference motivated to be a better college instructor."

- **Bruce Beamer, Northern Lakes College**



"As a curriculum consultant who works directly with subject matter experts and instructors, I found that one of the most applicable keynote and subsequent concurrent sessions was that on creativity. Robert Kelly, (author, educator, and public speaker) provided a very interesting and human perspective on working with and motivating students through their college journey. He also shared a multitude of ideas of how creativity and innovation can be applied in the classroom. The "take away" (along with Robert Kelly's new book on Creative Expression) was that we as post-secondary educators must be open to being creative ourselves, trying new ways of doing things, and sharing them with others."

- **Gary Gora, NAIT**

"I attended the Aboriginal Art Project session. It was most enjoyable meeting and connecting with fellow Faculty members in the session; the speaker provided a comfortable environment for dialogue. The session was flexible, informative and experiential, and I found it reassuring to be with agreeable colleagues including the speaker. It was satisfying to interact on a personable level regarding professional and cultural issues, bringing us or keeping us closer as a community."

- **Nathalie Mercier, NorQuest College**

"A major stream of the ACIFA conference at Canmore this year concerned the ideas of academic freedom and Academic Copyright. Mr. Jim Turk, the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), discussed academic freedom. He proved to be a very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and entertaining speaker."

- **Rick Castelein, NAIT ELT Program**

"Party politics aside, David Swan, leader of the Alberta Liberal Party, was a provocative choice to present at the ACIFA conference. He seemed to have two goals in his talk: 1) to inform the ACIFA membership with his main message being, " all politicians react to heat and light, so turn their awareness to your plight and put on the pressure on to have politicians/ government change things"; and 2) to listen to issues that the ACIFA members were concerned about. It was a thought provoking, discussion stimulating session that struck issues at the political heart of our profession."

- **Glenda Baker, NASA Communications Committee**

"Jim Turk, the keynote speaker, related the challenges facing colleges today, the transformation of students into customers, the focus on numbers as opposed to a quality education; as well as the bureaucratization of administration which affects our jobs and effectiveness as instructors. Through his later lecture on governance, he brought out many ideas on how instructors should have more influence into decision making. I also took part in a meditation class that provided some relaxation strategies for our busy work environment as well as a hike to rejuvenate the mind. Robert Kelly, the keynote speaker for Saturday, taught me about the value of creativity both from the instructor and student perspectives. I learned some techniques to stimulate creativity in thought and activity that may help my class in the future. Dianne MacDonald spoke of nurturing a culture of engagement that again provided some techniques to stimulate discussion and original thoughts in students."

- **Robert Siegmund, Medicine Hat College**



"Susan Menzies, a practicing artist, and Ben Fullalove, an art historian from the Alberta College of Art and Design provided a solid hour of useful information and entertaining stories about their first hand travels and exploration in the Canadian Rockies. Interspersed in their discussion were references to the historical accounts of early travelers and explorers in those regions surrounded by the province's majestic mountainsides. Special visual features included dramatic and colourful images as represented by several contemporary artists. The collection of humorous anecdotes and candid photos truly enriched the speakers' presentation."

- **Dorothy Gray, MacEwan**

Thank you to everyone who shared their session experiences!

ACIFA 2010 Annual Spring Conference

May 16 – 19
at Jasper Park Lodge



Watch for the Call for Submissions starting in October!

Hosted by the NAIT Academic Staff Association

New ACIFA Staff

ACIFA is very happy to welcome new staff member Kerri Sway, who has been hired as Administrative Officer. Kerri brings to the position a wide range of experience and skills, including an in-depth knowledge of ACIFA activities and the Post-secondary system, along with strengths in organization, communication, writing and analysis. Kerri has worked for ACIFA on a part-time basis for a number of years while completing her degree and is elated to join ACIFA fulltime.



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