

in Focus

FALL 2000



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Dean of the Faculty of Education, Ratna Ghosh

Dear Graduates and Friends,

The Faculty of Education has been an exciting place this past year. The faculty is in transition because we are responding to a society that is changing at an unprecedented rate.

The rapid evolution of information and communications technologies, the changing professional needs of teachers, and the new focus on lifelong education are challenges that also offer us opportunities. As we prepare for the new millennium, the potential for evolution is great. The radical changes in the structure of the Quebec school system, with a

shift to linguistic boards, school-based management, governing boards, and new curricula, are positive initiatives that also create opportunities for us. We want to fully equip our student teachers to tackle these developments with creativity and dynamism. The current trends in educational research and research funding are encouraging, and we are now looking forward to faculty renewal after a long period of severe budget cuts.

The faculty has already undertaken many productive initiatives, and will be involved in many more. Some of them are detailed in this Newsletter. We are making progress in increasing our undergraduate enrolments and attracting quality graduate students locally, nationally and internationally. We are working towards having a student-centred faculty, and we have improved many services and programs. In keeping with McGill's international mission, we are trying to respond to the pressures of globalization through various programs.

We also have a significant presence in the community and the world. Our professors have been increasing the profile of the faculty in the school and academic community at large through their teaching, research and various other activities. As well, the faculty was the site for several very successful conferences organized by faculty members in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. A few international conferences are planned for the coming year. Two international centres have been established.

The Faculty takes great pride in its students' activities, including the activities of our Graduate and Undergraduate Student Societies. Our Education Undergraduate Society won the 1999-2000 Faculty of the Year Award.

We also are very proud of our graduates. Many of you are teachers (at various levels) and engaged in educational activities, many others are in professions in which you find your initial training in the faculty of use. Some of you are in Montreal; many of you are in other parts of Canada and the United States, or in countries all over the world. We would like you to keep in touch with us. We want to hear your stories and learn about your experiences. Please send us your e-mail addresses, and we will create an alumni network. We invite you to take a look at our newly designed web page: www.education.mcgill.ca.

As well, we greatly appreciate your donations and pledges because they assist us in funding new initiatives, student activities, and scholarships. This Newsletter is our way of keeping in touch with you and telling you about our activities in the hope that you will keep in touch with the Faculty. Here's wishing you the best for the new millennium!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ratna Ghosh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ratna Ghosh
Dean, Faculty of Education

Honours and Achievements

Gretta Chambers named a Companion of the Order of Canada

Former McGill Chancellor Gretta Chambers, who is an adjunct professor in the Department of Educational Studies, has been made a Companion of the Order of Canada. The Order is Canada's highest honour for lifetime achievement, and recognizes individuals who "have made a difference," in the words of the Order's web site. The Order recognizes "distinguished service in or to a particular locality, group, or field of activity."

The citation mentioned her as a "powerful force for inter-cultural harmony in Canada...(who) contributes to a better understanding of French Canada" through her columns appearing in major English-language dailies.

Dean Ratna Ghosh named to the Order of Canada

The Dean of the Faculty of Education and William C. Macdonald Professor of Education, Ratna Ghosh, has been named a member of the Order of Canada.

In his congratulatory letter to the Dean, the president of the Royal Society of Canada – of which she is a Fellow – said the appointment "celebrates the great public respect accorded to your contributions to making Canada the finest country there yet can be."

Dr. Bruce Shore, Chair of the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, has accepted the presidency of the McGill Association of University Teachers (MAUT) for one year.

Award-winning graduate supervisor gets her charges involved



Susanne Lajoie is the first winner of McGill's newly-created Carrie M. Derick award for graduate teaching and supervision

It is perhaps appropriate that the first winner of McGill's newest University-wide award for excellence in teaching comes from the Faculty of Education.

Susanne Lajoie has won the Carrie M. Derick Award for graduate teaching and supervision. The Award is a companion to McGill's David Thomson Award, which normally goes to the most experienced teachers; the Derick prize is open only to teachers with 12 or less years of teaching experience.

"It's hard to know why people like you," Lajoie asserts. But she is perhaps just being modest: those who supported her nomination say they do know why she has been such a success.

"I place her in the 'star' category," wrote Bruce Shore. "Behind a warm and gentle availability lies a demanding intellect that pushes students up another step as soon as they climb one."

"There is unanimous agreement among my peers," wrote doctoral candidate Arshad Ahmad, "that Dr. Lajoie is an excellent teacher and consistently demonstrates the ability to promote deep learning."

"Students say they like activities that simulate what they will do in the future," says Lajoie. "Every year I plan a student conference that mimics major conferences where they would present their work. Each student gets 15 minutes to present their paper,

Honours and Achievements

there is a chair and a panel, and students feel the same anxiety as though it were real.”

Students are encouraged to take charge in class. Each week, Lajoie assigns one person to prepare discussion questions, relying on them to select key articles and generate classroom dialogue. Discussion doesn't end when they leave the room: Lajoie has set up and monitors an online forum where students continue to talk about the issues raised.

Her knack for getting students involved shows itself in numerous graduate student co-authorships throughout Lajoie's published research. “Her expertise is sought internationally,” wrote Shore, “and she has mentored her students into the front line of work in the area.”

“Something I really value about this award is its focus on supervision,” says Lajoie.

She regularly holds team meetings where all seven graduate students she is supervising share readings and knowledge. Since their research tends to cluster by theme, they often collaborate on classroom research as well.

Knowing how difficult it can be to remain on track during a sometimes lengthy graduate degree process, she watches carefully for students who get stuck. If they do, she arranges weekly or biweekly meetings, tracking their progress, for as long as three months.

When not in her McGill classroom or supervising others, Lajoie builds tutoring computer systems that make learning fun for high school students. One of her projects, Bio-world, lets students pretend they are physicians for a day. They are given patient cases and must make a hypothesis, then perform diagnostic tests to confirm or reject their diagnosis.

“Kids learn a lot of labeling and factual knowledge, but they don't necessarily know how to apply it in context,” she says. Her aim is to encourage scientific thinking. “I look at how experts in the field solve problems, then plot out how they think and incorporate their skills in the tutoring systems.”

McGill team earns Sheffield Award

Lynn McAlpine and Cynthia Weston, of the Department of Culture and Values in Education, along with Catherine Beauchamp, Carol Wiseman and Jacinthe Beauchamp, have won the Edward F. Sheffield Award. The award is given to the author(s) of the article judged to be the best published by the *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*. The group won for a 1999 article entitled “Monitoring Student Cues: Tracking Student Behaviour in Order to Improve Instruction in Higher Education” (vol. xxix, No. 2, 3, pp 113-144).

Professor Janet Donald won the 2000 W.J. McKeachie Career Achievement Award from the Faculty Development Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association.

Professor Lynn Studham had one of his works selected for the Millennium Exhibition in Sydney, Australia, for the 2000 Olympic Games. He is the only Canadian among artists from 24 countries around the world.

Student garners two distinctions

Graduate student Samia Costandi was one of the winners of the Helen Prize for Women, named after the Australian physician and anti-nuclear activist Helen Caldicott, made famous in the film *If You Love this Planet*. This prize honours women from around the world who have made heroic but unrecognized contributions to their communities. Costandi has written for several years on justice, peace and women's issues, often with respect to the conflict in the Middle East. She also earned a Margaret Gillett Graduate Research Award, given out by the McGill Centre for Research and Teaching on Women.

Award-winning student teacher is a quiet catalyst

It usually takes many years for a teacher to develop his or her own style, but undergraduate student Patricia Morrissette is well on her way, according to reports from a teacher whose class Morrissette temporarily took over.

Morrissette, who won the Jean M. Gwynne Student Teaching Award this year, is described as someone who "developed her own quiet, respectful and collaborative style" that worked well with the Grade 7 and 8 students she taught at Centennial Regional High School. "I have worked with many over the last five years," continued teacher Stephanie Vucko, "and Patricia, by far, is the most talented of them all."

Morrissette is also an innovator: she introduced "Circles of Courage," that looked at students' goals, support systems and accomplishments. Several other teachers copied this technique after seeing it on the blackboard, "realizing that it met the need of teenagers, who have many questions about themselves and their surroundings that need to be discussed along with the traditional curriculum," according to one of Morrissette's sponsors.

Morrissette didn't only work hard on lesson plans; she threw herself into school activities, bringing ideas to weekly student club meetings and volunteering for lunch lab supervision as well as the thirty-hour Famine Fundraiser.

"Staff began to consider her as a full-time colleague, she fit in so well," says the sponsor. High praise indeed.

Dr. Elizabeth Wood was selected as the recipient of the Faculty of Education Award for Distinguished Teaching. The award will be presented at the fall 2000 convocation.

Teaching, Learning and Programs



The Chair of Educational Studies, Anthony Paré, says bringing together under one umbrella the Faculty's undergraduate programs will give students a "more coherent and cohesive program."

More cohesion coming to undergraduate programs

The Faculty of Education is bringing under one umbrella nearly all undergraduate teaching programs, doing away with divisions that kept the teaching of history separate from that of art, culture separate from language, and philosophy of education separate from curriculum.

"Some of the divisions are so old, they're medieval," says Anthony Paré, Chair of Educational Studies and Acting Chair of the Department of Second Language Education. "The new department will be an umbrella department that deals with a whole range of issues."

Coming together are Educational Studies, Culture and Values in Education, and Second Language Education. The plan must be approved by the appropriate University bodies. Paré says the faculty is planning for the restructuring to be complete by September 2001.

Only one program, physical education, is not affected by the merger, because it is in a separate location. Otherwise, the new department brings together all elementary, secondary and specialist Bachelor of Education programs.

"Students will get a more coherent and cohesive program," says Paré. "We will be able to more completely help them." Under the existing structure, most students take at least one course outside

their department, a situation that has led to some difficulties that should be eliminated with programs being grouped together.

As well, previously "no group of people sat down regularly to address undergraduate programs," says Paré. "We will physically meet together, which we haven't done before."

The new department, as yet unnamed, will be better able to plug holes in programs that need filling, says Paré. At the graduate level, it will eventually abolish the many varied MEds and replace them with a single MA – with or without thesis options. A department-wide MA would offer a truly cohesive Master's program – one that is more likely to attract prospective students.

This would also be an excellent base from which to construct a PhD program, he says.

"It's a good time for us to reexamine what we're doing, because of the new curriculum [enacted by the Quebec government for its schools]," says Paré. In other words, there is a parallel between what the faculty is creating in terms of curriculum and the Quebec schools' revamping. Like the merged department, "the new curriculum is far more integrated than the old. Our merger puts people in the same room, in the way that teachers in the schools will be having to work together."

A commitment from associate schools

Too often, placements ebb and flow as teachers and principals with varying degrees of dedication to student teachers come and go.

The McGill Associate Schools pilot project was designed by the Director of the Office of Student Teaching, Spencer Boudreau. It is to be the base for the creation of a school-wide welcoming atmosphere for student teachers going into cooperating schools. The first step has been to cement good relationships with 10 Montreal-area elementary schools and four major high schools.

"They asked me, 'What's different from what we're doing now? We take teachers all the time!' " says Boudreau. "I said, 'We've been living together. Now we're getting married.' "

The formal commitment comes with a signed agreement that declares the participants' desire to develop "creative positive learning and teaching opportunities for student teachers, cooperating teachers, [and] the school's students."

The agreement is not a one-way street. Boudreau has arranged for the McGill Education Library to give memberships to participating

The building blocks of good math teaching

As a way of coping with student numbers that can reach 270 for the methodology course Teaching Mathematics I, Howard Riggs of the Department of Educational Studies has conceived and organized unique mathematics labs. The core of the course is a series of two-hour math labs where 30 students meet at a time. The Chair of the Department, Anthony Paré, says Riggs is working wonders despite the enormous class sizes.

“Howard is not just teaching his students how to teach math, he’s teaching them about math, so that they, in turn, can be creative and innovative teachers,” Paré says. “He wants them to think mathematically, to grasp the elegance and complexity of mathematical concepts, to take pleasure in math as an extraordinary human achievement. He is an enormously dedicated teacher who is always looking at new ways of capturing his students’ interest and imagination.”

Among Riggs’s many creative solutions for helping math concepts sink in is one that is as basic as toy blocks. His students are challenged to use blocks to model mathematical ideas.

“Young children learn by manipulation,” using their fingers or some object, says Riggs, who has taught at McGill for 27 years. “So do adults. Some teachers may say, ‘You don’t need these babyish things any more.’ But it’s never immature or inappropriate to use tools to help with learning.”

In the labs, students are further divided into

small working groups. Group objectives include relating to mathematics as a subject, understanding how children learn, and understanding how teachers can facilitate learning.

Part of a recent lab, for instance, set students the task of devising ways to model the number four using dice, cars, blocks and milk cartons. “One group used the cartons by making them into garages for the plastic cars,” says Riggs. “Driving the cars into the garages was a way of hammering in the idea of ‘four.’”

Using one’s imagination on the fly is good practice for teachers who are regularly faced with one student who just doesn’t understand the concept, even after the teacher has used his or her best methods. The teacher must come up with yet another way to explain.

Riggs also must deal with the all-too-common problem of math phobia among his budding teachers. “Young teachers reluctant to make an effort to enjoy math must understand that they cannot hide their negative feelings from students,” he added.

Riggs enjoys mathematics and loves teaching. Despite having taught the math lab-style course for a decade – with two full days every week spent running back-to-back labs – he feels there is still room for improvement in the course.

“Teaching is a craft. You keep fiddling with it, keep trying to make it work a bit better.”

The Director of the Office of Student Teaching, Spencer Boudreau, conceived the McGill Associate Schools pilot project, designed to ensure the most welcoming atmosphere possible for student teachers in cooperating schools.



school staff members. The Faculty of Education also promises professional development days on such topics as mentoring, and will give the schools first access to visiting professors and research teams.

In return, the schools must promise “a critical mass” of staff. In other words, the school will have 30 to 40 per cent of its teachers agree to have student teachers in their classroom. While elementary schools are often eager for student teachers, high schools can be recalcitrant.

“They can be reluctant to give up classes to student teachers because they are subject specialists, and can be training students for ministry exams,” says Boudreau. “We try to tell them students will not be a liability, but a help.”

“We prefer to cluster our students; it helps with their supervision and it stops students from feeling isolated.”

The pilot project will be refined after this first year is complete; then any and all schools will be welcome to join.

Recent Appointments

Glenn Cartwright: new Associate Dean, Information Technology and Continuing Education

Glenn F. Cartwright has been named Associate Dean, Information Technology and Continuing Education, after 28 years with Educational and Counseling Psychology. His three-year appointment as associate dean, as he sees it, gives him a mandate to nurture technology's best uses in McGill classrooms as well as in classrooms run by Faculty of Education graduates.

"It's an everyday tool and we have to learn what to do with it, in the right way," he says. "I hope, after my three years, that we will be much changed and that people will be interested in the good use of technology."

Cartwright recognizes some student reluctance. "Education students liked schools the way they were when they were there," he says, "but technology isn't going to go away."



Sylvia Sklar: new Director of Professional Development

In this new position in Continuing Education, Sylvia Sklar is pursuing three main goals: supporting practicing teachers; having her team be a service unit for departments within the faculty; and recruiting students to the faculty by introducing them to education courses.

The "service unit" role could mean helping to publicize, promote and deliver certificate and diploma programs. Sklar gives as an example an off-campus inclusive certificate of 30 credits given by the department of Education and Counselling Psychology.

Sklar is particularly interested in developing and promoting certificates in education that teachers can use to upgrade their skills, as well as their salaries and their value to their school boards. She points again to the Educational and Counselling Psychology certificate as a good example. It gives teachers and teaching assistants a good background in working with special needs students.



Peter Kalil: new Manager of Budget and Finance

Determined to do its utmost to work toward a balanced operating budget, the Faculty of Education created the new position of Manager of Budget and Finance in August 1999. In less than one fiscal year, Peter Kalil has led the faculty to a 21 percent decrease in the overall accumulated deficit. He expects the budget to balance within five years.

“The support staff are very committed,” he says, “and that’s why it’s working so well.”

This past year, Kalil made the budgets consistent so that departments could be easily compared, and used funds other than operating funds for special purchases whenever possible, such as when buying computers. To keep the budget deficit shrinking, this coming year the faculty will be putting programs under the microscope.

“The faculty will have to examine money-losing programs that aren’t meeting the needs of students,” he says.

Glenn Cartwright (above left) has been named Associate Dean, Information Technology and Continuing Education; Sylvia Sklar (left) is the new Director of Professional Development for Continuing Education; Peter Kalil (above) has been the Faculty's Manager of Budget and Finance since 1999

Valentina de Krom: new Director of the Office of First Nations and Inuit Education

For the first time in nine years, Valentina de Krom is heading south from the Arctic to take up permanent residence. The Nunavut resident is the new director of McGill’s Office of First Nations and Inuit Education.

De Krom, who grew up in Montreal’s south shore community of St. Bruno, combined her interests as an educator and geographer at Nunavut Arctic College. As an Arctic geomorphologist, Valentina de Krom was attracted to the far northern landscape. As a teacher, she was drawn to the special bond formed when you live and work closely with your students.

Aside from teaching mainly elementary school teachers, de Krom helped develop a science curriculum for high schools that incorporates traditional Inuit knowledge.

“Rather than dissect pigs and frogs, for instance, they will be doing seals, fish and caribou,” says de Krom. The pilot project involves other teachers constructing social studies and language arts programs of greater relevance to native children.

When asked about the special skills she will bring to the job, “they say it will be nice to have someone who’s been up north,” de Krom says. “I know the issues they’re facing up here; I am aware of the unique cultural needs of students.”

De Krom is currently on a steep learning curve, finding about more about other native cultures served by the office. She has identified one goal already – to try and increase the small number of native teachers for middle schools and high schools. (*see p.13 for an article on the Office’s summer school program*)

Research

New “Evolution Education Research Centre” tackles controversial subject

The Evolution Education Research Centre has an unusual goal: to make itself redundant. “I hope we’ll put ourselves out of a job someday,” says Brian Alters, the director of the Centre. “If 90 percent of people come to understand evolution well, we’ll close our doors.”

There is a long way to go. Current studies across North America show that fully half of incoming university students do not believe in evolution. Past studies prove the high level of rejection has remained unchanged for decades. The numbers are even higher for younger students.

Alters likens it to students believing the Earth is flat, or rejecting the concept of gravity. No other fundamental scientific concept, he says, is under attack the way evolution is.

Though the debate over evolution is often seen as a religious one, most young adults reject evolution for other reasons, Alters says, asserting that the Pope’s encyclicals show there is no religious barrier to Darwinism – at least for Catholics.

His interviews with 1,200 college and university freshmen turn up rationales for scepticism such as: “What about all those gaps in the fossil record?” “There are things wrong with the dating technology that shows the Earth is millions of years old.” “I can’t understand how mutations can be good, when most are seen to be bad.” “It’s impossible to think that a frog or fish evolved into a human.” “Why aren’t we evolving today?”

The Centre has no intention of entering the religious debate. “That’s a matter for the religious community,” says Alters. Nor will it enter the political fray, typified by the outcry that arose when the state of Kansas removed evolution from its curriculum last year. “We are a research institute,” says Alters. “Our mandate is to research ways to better educate people about evolution.”

The Centre, established last December, is a joint McGill-Harvard initiative and is populated by such household names as Harvard’s Stephen Jay Gould. Each university is considered to be its country’s foremost proponent of evolution education. After participating in a trio of lectures on evolution at McGill last fall that drew more than 3,000 people, Alters and geneticist Graham Bell were invited to Harvard to debate creationists.

One of Alters’ current research projects may provide clues on how to deliver the evolution message effectively. Lucent Technologies has given a \$650,000 grant to go towards improving science education in primary and secondary schools.

“Lessons are constructed quickly by teachers alone, or science educators alone, or scientists,” says Alters. “This time we’re doing it in collaboration from the ground up.”

Twenty teams of five people – three teachers in the field, one education graduate student, and one science graduate student – are sitting down together to develop lessons. One common thread is that each lesson is based on righting a scientific misconception.

“They have already spent more than 4,800 people hours face to face,” says Alters. “They discuss, argue, fight, and so far have conceived 200-plus activities for students, involving everything from life sciences to physical sciences, some of which are now being field tested.”

Stemming the growing tide of high-risk behaviour among youth:

The International Centre for Study, Treatment and Prevention of Youth Gambling Problems

Early results from their studies examining children's gambling behavior surprised Rina Gupta and Jeffrey Derevensky of the Faculty of Education.

"We did surveys with children as young as Grade 3, and found their gambling patterns had already been established," says Gupta. "About 80 percent of them gamble, and those rates are similar for CEGEP students. The only changes during those many years are the types of gambling activities and the frequency."

Young children spend their lunch money on scratch-and-win lottery tickets, teens mistakenly believe they can outplay video lottery terminals, and young adults can get into tremendous debt through both legal and illegal gambling.

Between four and eight per cent of all adolescents have a severe gambling problem. That is two to four times the proportion of adult addicts, according to research.

Alarmed by both the problem of youth gambling and society's seeming unawareness of it, the two researchers spearheaded the creation of what will be known as the International Centre for Study, Treatment and Prevention of Youth Gambling Problems. Loto-Québec has given a \$2.5-million five-year grant to develop and operate the centre.

"The thrust of the centre is to increase awareness, and increase services for the public," says Gupta.

Based at McGill, the centre will be a hub not only for Gupta and Derevensky's research, but also for training professionals working with young problem gamblers, giving legislators throughout the world research and information they can use to construct appropriate laws, designing and enacting prevention programs, and treating young problem gamblers. More than a dozen people – researchers, professors, clinicians and graduate students – will work at the centre.

"The centre will also be home to an international advisory board with experts from the United Kingdom, Australia and the U.S., among other countries, who are actively involved with the problem of youth gambling, says Derevensky.

Soon after the centre is established in spring 2001, it will host an International Youth Think Tank, in collaboration with Harvard University and Washington's National Council on Problem Gambling, to establish a global research agenda.

Problem gambling among youth may be even greater than Gupta and Derevensky's research indicates. Their criteria for who was considered a "gambler" were stringent: only children and young adults who used money of their own to gamble were included.

"The first part of our research was to find out what on earth is going on out there," says Gupta. "We found that children and adolescents gamble mostly for excitement and fun, not money. Most gamblers put the money they win right back in.

"The second part is: how do we prevent this? What are the characteristics that put certain children at risk? We're looking at attitudes towards gambling and the influence of family and society."

What they know so far is that any parent with an addiction, such as drinking or drugs, increases their child's chances of becoming an addict by 25 per cent, says Gupta. Also, boys are four times as likely as girls to develop a severe gambling problem.

"We're working on several prevention programs," says Derevensky.

Student News



Graduate students

Above: The president of the Graduate Students' Society, Samia Costandi

Recent improvements to student services have been a boon to graduate students, says the outgoing president of the Graduate Society, Adam Finkelstein. These changes include two new offices devoted to graduate students, and faculty efforts to make comprehensive exams more consistent among departments.

Samia Costandi took over from Finkelstein in February. Finkelstein had revived the Society after it had been dormant for years. Costandi says the administration has been supportive of the Society's efforts; she credits Dean Ghosh and Associate Dean Mary Maguire for their determination in improving communication among students, faculty and administrators.

A trailblazing EDUS

In one academic year, last year's edition of the Education Undergraduate Society (EDUS) racked up an impressive list of firsts: a new education committee for first-year students; a new academic committee; and the faculty's first student forum. It also carried out a comprehensive survey of students on their views on everything from career services to courses.

It never anticipated adding the first that culminated its year – being named McGill's top student society.

"The award is based on commitment, dedication to students, relationship with administration, teamwork, and overall academic achievement," says outgoing president Jennifer Cavasin.

Cavasin says the EDUS's most notable "first" was the student forum held in November 1999, which was an outgrowth of the academic committee.

"I think it made a few people nervous," she says, "but quite a few people – including faculty – showed up." In fact, fully half of the 50 who attended were faculty. "It resulted in a proposal to make improvements to some courses, gave ideas on how to improve placements, and suggested that the content of courses be more tangible and useful."

The series of proposals, submitted to the dean in early 2000, are under consideration. One proposal emerging from the first-year education committee has already been enacted.

"A big problem for out-of-province students in first year is that they have no education courses," says Cavasin. "A lot of students feel they're not part of the faculty. And we don't want people finding out in their third year that they want to switch majors. We made a recommendation and Dean Ghosh switched the curriculum so that first-years will have three education courses starting in September."

While the focus this year was on creating academic strength and improving communication with faculty, the EDUS did not neglect community activism. Among other activities, it raised \$1,000 for the Telethon of Stars.

A boost for student services

A one-stop shop for students set up in March is the first step in the Education Faculty's plan to centralize all services of importance to students on the second floor.

Since the Student Affairs Office, Office of Continuing Education, and Distance Education moved into one revamped office space, life has been easier for both students and administrators. Undergraduate students no longer have to dash from one side of the building to the other to resolve scheduling conflicts. Administrators, too, find the new arrangement more efficient.

"The closer liaison makes for more efficient service to students," says Chris Milligan, Associate Dean, Student Affairs. "I'm working closely with all members of my staff – my chief officer is right here, and the chief secretary sits across from me. We're all within two paces."

Renovations to the office created a single counter for all student enquiries, and placed computer terminals and internal telephones within student reach day or night. At the old office, student access to timetables, campus events and personal records was not possible after office hours.

A total of 11 administrators share the new office, including records clerks.

Local and International Outreach



Office of First Nations and Inuit Education summer school program celebrates 10 years of success

Ten years ago, the Office of First Nations and Inuit Education hosted its first on-campus summer school.

For four weeks in July 1990, Cree, Mohawk, Mi'kmaq and Algonquin First Nations students from the communities of Lustiguj, Gesgapegiag, Kahnawake, Kanehsatake, Maniwaki, Rapid Lake, Winneway, Waswanipi, Waskaganish, Whapmagoostui and Eastmain came to McGill for the first time to take courses in the Certificate of Native and Northern Education (now the Certificate in Education for First Nations and Inuit).

That summer was a particularly turbulent one: it was the time of the Oka crisis and Kahnawake blockade, and midway through summer school, we lost all of our Mohawk students. (The exception was one Kahnawake student who had come in early to go to the library. He rented a room in residence so he could finish his courses, sneaking back on the weekends to visit his family on the boat shuttle. The other Mohawk students were able to complete their courses in the fall.) The profound impact of the experience on both the teachers and the children from the communities was incorporated into that summer's child development course.

Now ten years have passed, and the summer school has flourished. The First Nations and Inuit Summer School has continued to offer courses both at the

Certificate and Bachelor's level. While the teacher education courses offered through the office during the school year take place in each community, the on-campus Summer School is designed to offer an opportunity for students from different nations and communities to learn together and share their experiences and perspectives as teachers in Aboriginal classrooms.

They also have to figure out how to bear Montreal's summer heat, tend to their children who accompany them, and navigate the public transportation system! Students who survive this intense cultural challenge often look back on the experience with affection.

This summer, students attending from Kahnawake, Kanehsatake, Ahkwesashne, Winneway, Whapmagoostui, Waskaganish, Eastmain, Chisasibi, Ouje Bougoumou, and Mistissini took courses at both the Certificate and Bachelor's level.

The new director of the Office of First Nations and Inuit Education, Valentina de Krom, lower left, with Debbie House, front row centre, of the Cree School Board, and BEd students

Teachers from abroad find Faculty a welcoming environment

A new International Education Office has been established to carry out three main functions: 1) attract large international development projects in which the Faculty will participate, like the recent endeavours in South Africa and Indonesia; 2) run international professional development courses; and 3) organize international and local conferences and workshops on education. In this article, we will focus on some recent successes under heading number two.

The faculty's International Professional Development Courses are designed so that each is uniquely suited to the needs of the foreign teachers attending.

"It's a user-friendly place," says Rachelle Keyserlingk, who coordinates the courses. "The client is extremely important and we accommodate ourselves to them."

The intensive courses are entering their third year. So far, they have been running as five-week segments in May attended by English as a second language teachers from Mexico. A new eight-week program in technical writing will be offered next semester to Saudi Arabian academics.

When foreign teachers sign up for one of the courses, classroom learning is only part of the package. The courses comprise a wide range of cultural events to round out their experience.

This past May, the Mexican teachers did a walking tour of Chinatown, visited both the McCord Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts, ate at Ben's, took in a performance by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens and an Expos game, dashed to Ottawa for a day, and toured the Botanical Gardens.

"It was very exciting," said student Manual Ramirez enthusiastically. "It was so enriching, both inside the class and out."

Ramirez was fascinated by the teaching technique he learned called "Reader's Theatre," where students both read and act out a chosen text, sometimes wearing costume and using props. Outside the classroom, Ste. Catherine Street was his favourite place. "It's incredible. You find people from all parts of the world – there are different ways of dressing, different ways of living, and it seems as though everyone is accepted."

The faculty's international office is working to expand its market to Japan, China, Korea and Pakistan.

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