THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA VOL 55 | NO 9 | SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

UBC REPORTS

4 Lab Learning 5 Computer Science 110 12 Aboriginal Access 13 Commuter Hostel 15 Tedx Talks

UBC, this is your first-year class

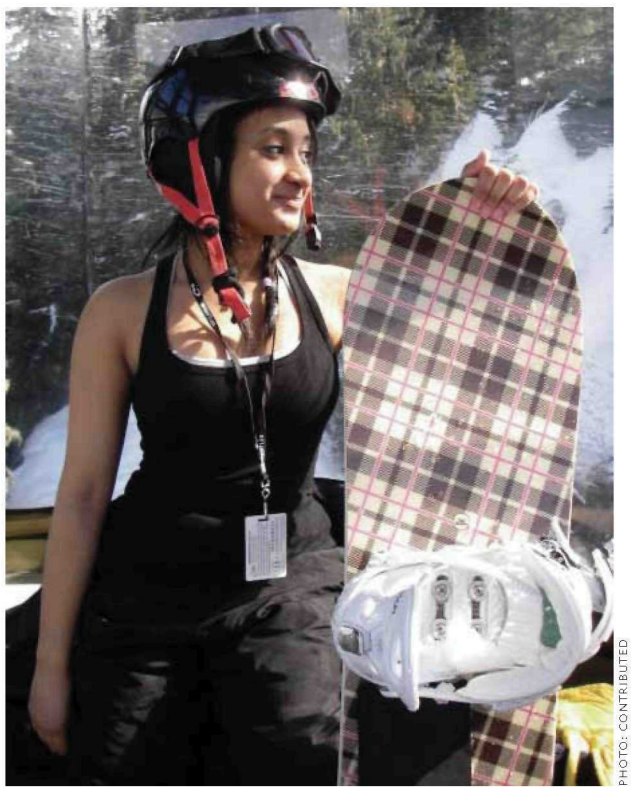

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

"The moment I attended the tour of the UBC campus I was hooked. I love the libraries, the Nitobe Memorial Garden and obviously the warmth of the environment and people."
– Anita Balakumar, first-year student from Winnipeg.

This year UBC welcomes more than 7,400 incoming first-year students to its campuses in Vancouver and Kelowna. Our incoming class is academically strong and more geographically diverse than ever before.

Here is a snapshot of these students, where they come from, and a perspective on the defining Canadian and international events that have shaped the outlook of the Class of 2013.

Vancouver campus

- Incoming class has grown by eight per cent to 5,931
- 68 per cent are from B.C., 11 per cent from the rest of Canada, 21 per cent from outside Canada
- 48 per cent are male; 52 per cent are female
- Mean entrance average is 89 per cent

Kelowna campus

- Incoming class has grown by 14 per cent to 1,502
- 68 per cent are from B.C., 20 per cent from the rest of Canada, 12 per cent from outside Canada
- 45 per cent are male; 55 per cent are female
- Mean entrance average is 82 per cent

What has shaped the Class of 2013?

Canadians born in 1991 were shaped by documentaries, Avril Lavigne and arguments over health care. They were less influenced than previous generations by ***Saturday Night Live*** and debates about national unity. *See story by Gisele Baxter.*

BY GISELE BAXTER

Most students starting post-secondary studies at UBC this September were likely born in 1991.

They postdate the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the end of apartheid in South Africa, the dismantling of the Soviet Union. They grew up with the Internet, compact discs, and mobile phones. They have come of age in a culture of activism unparalleled since the 1960s. They do not remember the Gulf War but have spent their adolescence in the post-September 11 world and the fuss over the pending millennium is a memory from childhood. Documentaries became cool in their youth, and the vivid personalities of Al Gore, Morgan Spurlock, and Michael

continued on p.14

a place of mind

What *is* UBC's story?
A brand for us . . .
see page 7

Students help design UBC learning

From designing a student learning space at the Faculty of Land and Food Systems to engineering an undergraduate curriculum at the Department of Civil Engineering, three UBC students are reaching a new high as active participants in their own higher learning.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Stephen Ford played a leading role in helping design the new Learning Commons at the Faculty of Land and Food Systems.

BY LISSA COWAN

A new Learning Commons at the Faculty of Land and Food Systems

As a child growing up with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Stephen Ford, a recent graduate at the Faculty of Land and Food Systems (LFS), understands better than most the importance of creating unique physical learning spaces for individual student needs.

"It's hard to overestimate the significance of a space to students," says Ford. "I strongly believe a study space should be designed to suit the diverse needs of individual students." He adds that he tends to learn better in a semi-private space with some background noise.

Since 2007, Ford has worked with a team to design the new Learning Commons at LFS, which will open its doors to students this fall.

The Learning Commons will serve primarily as a space for problem-based learning classes during the day, while the area becomes an informal study space after hours. Located on the third floor of the H.R. Macmillan Building, the space includes 12 study rooms called pods that have internet access, frosted glass walls and whiteboards. An interesting design feature is the western wall, which is coated with a special paint to make it a whiteboard. Sliding doors in another area allow the space to be opened up to accommodate larger groups and the entire space is open above the walls.

"I spent a lot of time listening to fellow students and discussing their visions for the new space," Ford says. He visited classrooms to gather input from students, set up a WebCT group within his classes, and presented ideas at planning committee meetings with faculty and staff. He even brought students to the space for some product testing of chairs to solicit their opinions.

"Students will identify with this space," says Ford. "It is encouraging when you feel supported in this way."

The Learning Centre also at the Faculty of Land and Food Systems has played a significant role in the project's development by creating a study space that fosters innovation through education. The centre provides

continued on p.15

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IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC media coverage in July 2009. COMPILED BY SEAN SULLIVAN

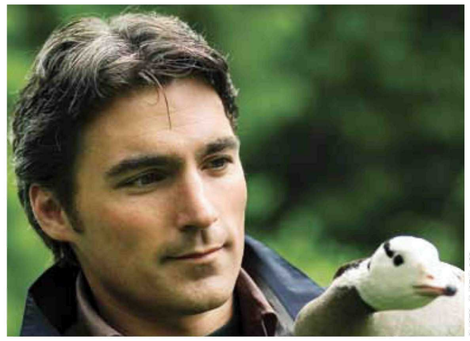

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Zoology graduate student Graham Scott is learning how bar-headed geese thrive in high altitudes.

Fido has brains

Your dog may be as smart as a toddler, says Stanley Coren, a UBC professor emeritus of psychology and leading researcher on dog behavior.

Coren garnered international attention this month for research presented at the American Psychological Association's annual convention.

Coren told the audience that the newest research strategy for understanding dogs is to use tests meant for very young children. Using such tests, psychologists have learned that average dogs can count, reason and recognize words and gestures on par with a human two-year-old.

Coren said the average dog can understand about 165 words, including signs, signals and gestures; they can count to about five; and they can intentionally deceive other dogs and people to get treats they want.

CNN, *China Daily*, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, the *Toronto Sun*, *USA Today* and the *Daily Telegraph* were among those that covered Coren's presentation.

UBC unveils DNA cleaner

A new technique developed by UBC researchers could prove revolutionary for forensic investigators and molecular biologists.

The device uses electricity to extract DNA from heavily contaminated samples that would otherwise not produce enough clean DNA for analysis, says lead researcher Andre Marziali, director of UBC's engineering physics department and spin-off company **Boreal Genomics**.

The Vancouver Sun, *CBC*, *Canwest News Service*, *CTV*, *The Canadian Press* and *Business in Vancouver* reported the findings.

Early prototypes of the instrument, called **Aurora**, have been sold to a U.S. defence company, the U.S. navy and Canadian universities.

Pierse nabs another world record

UBC swimmer Annamay Pierse set a world short-course record last month in the 200-metre breaststroke at the British Grand Prix swimming competition in Leeds, England.

It was Pierse's second world record in eight days, having just set the world long-course record at the FINA world aquatic championship in Rome.

"It feels pretty awesome to get the record again," Pierse told the *Vancouver Sun*, which joined the *Globe and Mail*, *The Canadian Press*, *CBC* and the *Calgary Herald* in reporting on her accomplishments

Geese use their pecs

A higher density of blood vessels and other unique physiological features in the flight muscles of bar-headed geese allow them to do what even the most elite of human athletes struggle to accomplish - exert energy at high altitudes, says a new UBC study.

The *New York Times* reported that researchers led by UBC doctoral student Graham R. Scott found that the bar-headed goose has more capillaries around the muscle cells than related species like barnacle geese and more of the mitochondria – which use oxygen to supply energy to the cell – within cells.

Often bred in captivity as domestic garden birds, bar-headed geese migrate annually in the wild between India and the high altitude plateaus in China and Mongolia, flying over the world's highest mountains on their way.

Hybrid programs don't work

A UBC study finds that government programs that provide rebates to hybrid vehicle buyers are not worth the investment, the CBC reported this month.

"If the intention of rebate programs is to replace gas guzzlers with hybrids, they are failing," said Ambarish Chandra, a professor in the Sauder School of Business and study co-author.

Chandra says people are choosing hybrids over similarly priced small- and medium-sized conventional cars, which are not far behind hybrids for fuel efficiency and emissions.

The multi-million-dollar rebate program becomes more inefficient as the rebate amount climbs, reported news outlets including *Xinhua*, *The Canadian Press*, the *Toronto Star* and the *Vancouver Sun*.

UBC REPORTS

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Publisher **UBC Reports** is published monthly by:
UBC Public Affairs Office
310 – 6251 Cecil Green Park Road

NEXT ISSUE: OCTOBER 1, 2009

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PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Second-year MD student Julia Isofina provided birthing support for women in the Downtown Eastside as part of a self-directed project.

Innovative course option:
Med students take on tough health issues

BY DANIEL PRESNELL

Many students dream of the day when they can close their books and trade the classroom for the streets, gaining insights only gleaned from experience.

Luckily, for Julia Isofina, a third-year MD student, such experience and knowledge isn't delayed until graduation.

Isofina is one of many students participating in the Doctor, Patient and Society (DPAS) course's innovative self-directed project option. Second-year MD students can forego the traditional DPAS class in favor of a project of their own design, where they explore public health issues by working with fellow students, community aid organizations, and government to effect change in local communities, and beyond.

Working with a multi-disciplinary team of nursing and midwifery students, Isofina and her colleagues in the Fir Square Doula Project provide birthing support for pregnant women from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, many of whom are homeless or suffer from addictions and have few support resources during their pregnancy.

"I learn more when I work hands-on and pursue my own interest," says Isofina. "I immerse myself more in a project that I'm interested in rather than sitting in a discussion group discussing proscribed topics. I like that my work actually impacts someone."

The shape, scope and outcomes of the projects differ greatly, from those dealing directly with the healthcare community, such as the documentary film Strange Bedfellows which explores the relationships between pharmaceutical sales reps and family doctors, to implementing programs in local schools, such as Do Bugs Need Drugs, which teaches children the health benefits of clean hands.

No matter the outcomes, Dr. Gary Poole, Associate Course Director of the DPAS self-directed project option, thinks that all projects are ultimately a success.

"A project that sets out to change the world, but doesn't change the world, can still be very successful because the student in question learned a great deal. So if you use the amount that students say they have learned, and the amount that you can infer they learned based on the work they submit, then these projects are tremendously successful."

Self-directed projects increase a student's cultural sensitivity and ability to assess the health needs of a subpopulation, while also teaching the fundamental skills and ethics of healthcare research, and how to work collaboratively to effect change--lessons that they may not otherwise get in the regular curriculum.

"One of the most important things they learn is that nothing is ever straight forward," says Debby Altow, a DPAS Project Tutor. "It's a bit of a cold shower to realize that the passion you have is not necessarily shared to the same degree by those who are in place to implement or move it forward."

The self-directed option is in its seventh year, and has grown from the initial 7 students doing self-directed projects to 82.

"The thing that I am most excited about is that it is truly self directed," says Dr. Poole. "It is what happens as an educator when you look at how to get out of the way, not in the way."

"A project that sets out to change the world, but doesn't change the world, can still be very successful because the student in question learned a great deal."

Major new funding for PhDs

The message is simple – UBC wants top graduate students and will support those students by ensuring stable scholarship funding of at least $16,000 plus tuition per year for the first four years of their PhD studies. Introduced by the Faculty of Graduate Studies this fall, the new Four-Year Fellowship (4YF) program greatly enhances the ability of UBC's graduate programs to attract and retain the best doctoral students from across Canada and around the globe.

Every year, the 4YF package will be available to nearly 200 new PhD students, with approximately 800 PhD students at any given time receiving this valuable fellowship.

Open to both Canadian and international students, all students offered admission to a UBC PhD program will automatically be considered for 4YF funding. Awardees will be selected on the basis of academic excellence, upon the recommendation of their graduate program. In addition, all PhD students who are awarded scholarship funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, or the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council automatically become 4YF holders.

Four Year Fellowship holders with external scholarship support will receive 4YF support once their external scholarship funding ends.

Additional information about the 4YF program is provided at: *www.grad.ubc.ca/forms/awards/students/4YF_Guidelines.pdf*.

Lab learning goes under the microscope

BY BRIAN LIN

When delegates to the Canadian Association of Physicists' annual conference gathered recently to hear a presentation by UBC Prof. Doug Bonn, they didn't come to hear about his latest techniques in developing high-temperature superconductors. They wanted his insights into a rarely studied field: undergraduate physics lab education.

For the past two years, Bonn, one of the world's foremost experts in material science and newly appointed head of UBC's Dept. of Physics and Astronomy, has devoted considerable time and energy to overhauling undergraduate physics lab curricula with an aim to delivering quantifiable results in learning.

Lab experiments can be designed to teach students how to operate equipment, collect and interpret data, perfect technical skills and establish scientific concepts, among other things. But too often, Bonn says, these goals go unexplained and unevaluated.

"When we get students to do these lab exercises, we don't always tell them why they're doing them or what they're expected to learn from them," says Bonn. "There are so many unspoken goals in Physics Lab that, when articulated, would make you go 'Good grief! How are they supposed to learn all that?'

"And how do we know they've actually learned these skills at the end of the day?"

That question appealed to Bonn's research instincts so much that he decided to undertake something that has been little studied – scientifically measuring what students are gaining from labs.

Working with UBC's Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative (CWSEI), Bonn's first task was to identify the unspoken learning goals – and assess how realistic these expectations are.

"Using lab exercises as a way to learn scientific concepts, for example, is really hard to do," says Bonn. "Because there are so many distracters that come part and parcel to the laboratory environment and that could obscure the concept."

What makes a lab imperfect for learning concepts, however, provides the ideal training ground for some of the core skills of becoming a scientist or a science-minded citizen, according to Bonn.

"One of the key roles the laboratory plays is bridging a theory or an idea to the real world, where there are distractions and complications," says Bonn. "To that end, lab exercises should be designed to teach what can't be taught anywhere else: to help students get comfortable with uncertainty, to derive trends from numbers and ultimately, to interpret real world phenomena.

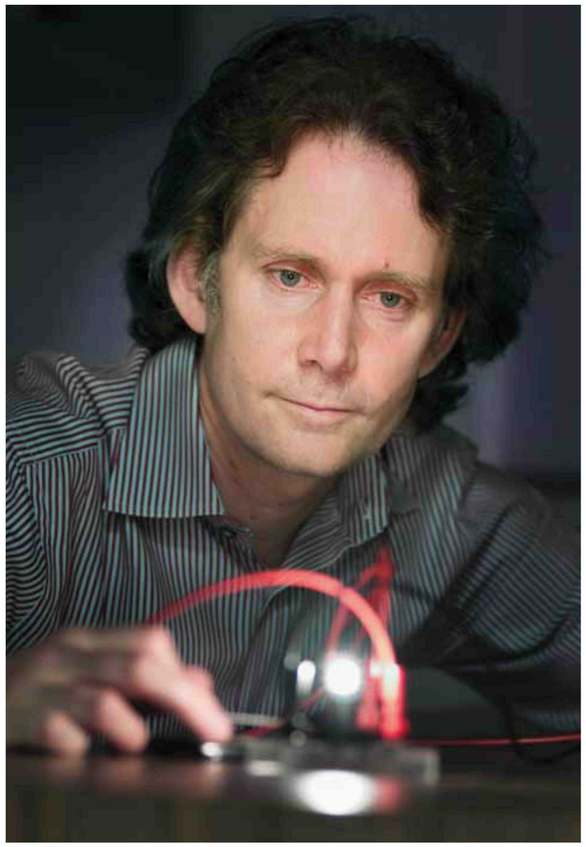


PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Prof. Doug Bonn is working to shed some light on undergrad physics lab education.

"These are the skills that help aspiring scientists – or engaged citizens, for that matter – decide how to interpret data presented to them, such as those reported in the media," says Bonn.

Last year, Bonn began developing a "laboratory diagnostic" to see what students are currently learning and retaining from lab sessions with the help of James Day, a CWSEI-funded Science Teaching and Learning Fellow (STLF).

STLFs are termed scholars with expertise in how people learn and their respective scientific disciplines who assist faculty members to adopt proven best practices in teaching and assessment.

Bonn and Day asked a large group of first-year students to write down their thought processes for solving common lab problems and then conducted interviews to further identify common misconceptions. Multiple-choice questions were then designed specifically to test these common roadblocks and given to hundreds of physics students at UBC and the University of Edinburgh.

Bonn found that regardless of the year of study, students at both universities "tripped over" the same key concepts. "Even some of my brightest students didn't do so well when evaluated this way, and that was quite discouraging," says Bonn.

The diagnostics are now being used before and after lab courses and results are being analyzed to fine tune the curriculum, including how students are tested after a lab session. New teaching labs, designed with these focused learning goals and team-learning in mind, are also being unveiled this September.

"It's all about ensuring students are actively thinking, rather than passively absorbing – or in many cases, failing to absorb – the information," says Bonn, who sees no conflict between teaching and research.

"Contrary to what some believe, I see research on effective teaching techniques as a means of freeing up more time for other research," says Bonn.

"It is a way to build up a body of knowledge and resources for teaching, both through work here at UBC and through the connections that we make to other colleagues involved in science education. This set of resources makes us more efficient with our time while significantly improving learning."

The CWSEI is a $12-million initiative that funds and advises UBC science departments to scientifically measure and systematically improve undergraduate education.

Stars are aligned for "magnificent" change in education

BY BRIAN LIN AND LISSA COWAN

Two of the world's foremost experts in institutional change and education improvement came together in Vancouver recently in support of UBC's Lasting Education, Achieved and Demonstrated (LEAD) Initiative.

John Kotter, Harvard business professor emeritus and best-selling author, and Carl Wieman, Nobel Laureate and director of the Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative (CWSEI), spoke to faculty, students and friends of UBC on June 25 about the urgency and why now is the time to make a transformative change in undergraduate education.

"Evidence shows that the university lecture hall model isn't very effective in helping students acquire a full range of skills they need to really thrive in the 21st century, and in turn provide all the benefits to society that comes from having a populace of well-educated citizens," said Wieman.

"The vision for CWSEI and LEAD is to bring about teaching that's not only effective for the students but is more meaningful and efficient use of the time for the teachers."

Kotter, a member of LEAD's International Leaders Alliance of advisors, explained why he chose to get involved with the initiative.

"I'm here because I think this could be one of those rare times in life when the stars come together to produce something that flashes in an improbable but magnificent way," said Kotter.

"The stars start with this unusual, dedicated, superb teacher who also happens to be a Nobel Laureate, colliding with a university president who is showing clear signs through his actions that he wants to do something important on university education. At the same time our knowledge about institutional change has significantly increased and our knowledge about what constitutes a better model for education comes along."

President Stephen Toope, who hosted the event with Lorne Whitehead, UBC's University Leader of Education Innovation, says in countries like India and China, where resources in university education are far less concentrated, there is a palpable sense of urgency and excitement about improving the way we learn. It's time for Canada and the rest of the Western world to step up to the plate.

"We're not currently doing what we could do to help our students succeed as they should and the implication is that our society can't succeed as it should," said Toope.

"I think LEAD is extremely ambitious but together we have an opportunity to do something that would have an impact not just here, but far beyond the borders of British Columbia and Canada."

For the complete video of ***LEADing change in education: A conversation with John Kotter and Carl Wieman***, visit *http://www.lead.ubc.ca/kotterwieman*.

Computer Science 110:
Breaking stereotypes and new ground

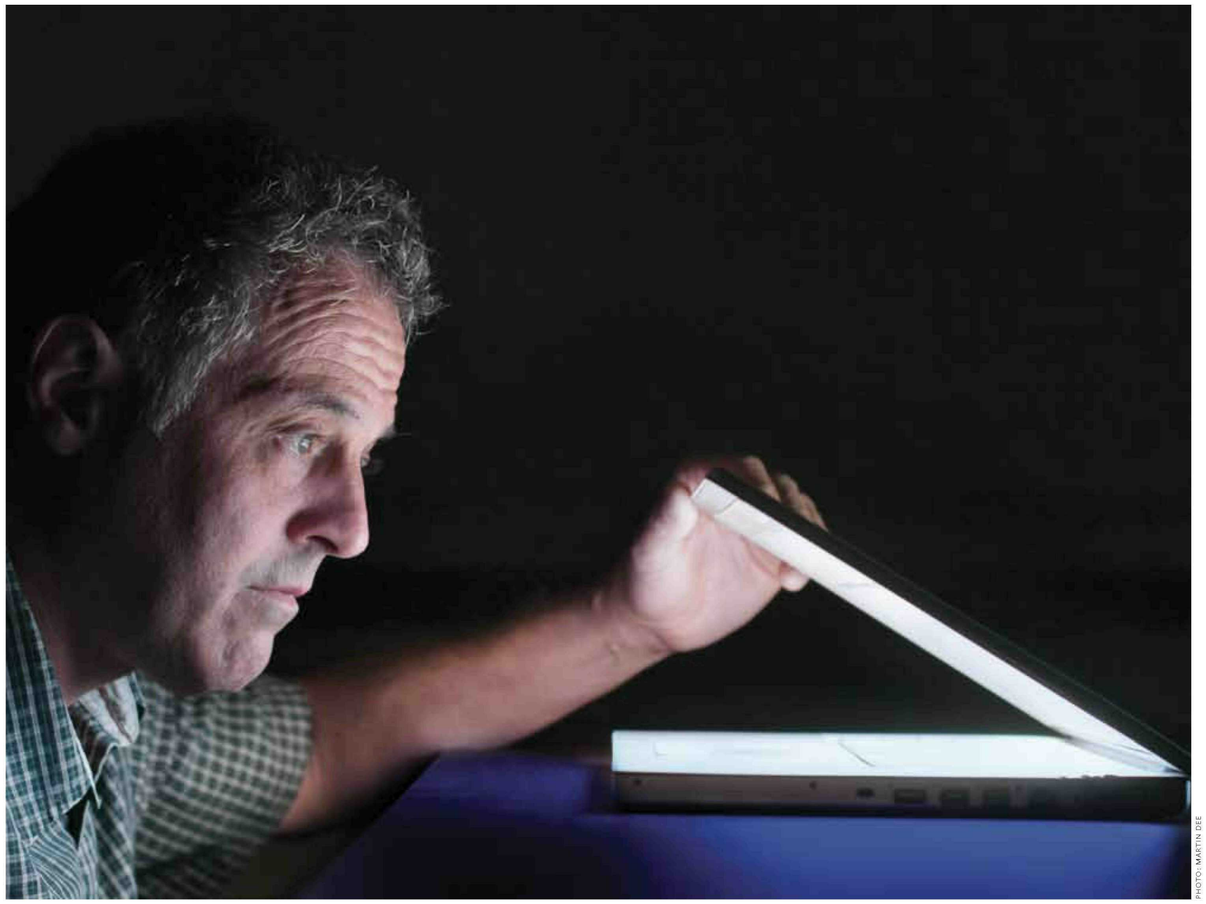


PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Prof. Gregor Kiczales uncovers the new Computer Science 110 course starting this fall.

BY LISSA COWAN

What do computers, program design, and social interaction have in common?

They're part of a new course offered this fall at the UBC Computer Science Department that challenges the way Computer Science 110 is taught to first-year students. A specific goal of the course is to be more welcoming to female students and others who might not typically choose computer science.

"Computer science is not about people who work in windowless offices and eat bags of chips all day," says Gregor Kizcales, UBC computer science professor and instructor for the new course. "It's part of everything we do nowadays, and it is increasingly being recognized as a field that crosscuts intellectual and practical disciplines."

The course is designed to be accessible to students with other majors such as physics, math, engineering, or music. Kiczales says CPSC 110 downplays details and focuses instead on the structure of design problems, which is good, he adds, because often students are turned off by the "nerds and details image of computer science."

"The new course focuses on learning a simple programming language more quickly and better than a course that uses a more complex language such as Java," says Kiczales. "Students of different academic backgrounds can more easily work with what they learned instead of shelving it and hoping to use it one day."

CPSC 110 will use DrScheme, a simple programming environment that enables students to quickly master the mechanics of the programming language, so they can instead focus on the more important skills of program design. This approach means students can design interactive programs as early as the first lecture as it reduces the time students spend struggling with details of the language. It also helps students learn to distinguish the core concepts of all programming systems from the details of any one particular approach, and in that way prepares them for a lifetime of continuous learning of new computer languages and tools.

"We believe students who take the new course will be better prepared for a career in computer science or another discipline that relies on computation because the course will have a languages core to build on that lets them learn new languages such as Python, Perl, Ruby or JavaScript," says Kiczales. The first lab will teach students how to execute a simple graphical animation. By the end of the semester, students will develop a distributed system much like the virtual worlds of The Sims or Second Life.

Breaking the stereotype of the lone programmer, CPSC 110 will incorporate pair programming, where two programmers work together at one computer station, one typing in code while the other checks the code, as it is entered. In addition to helping students learn better, pair programming fosters socialization and team problem-solving.

Today women make up 22 per cent of undergraduate students enrolled in computer science at UBC. This is double the amount found at other Canadian universities.

Anne Condon, UBC computer science professor, agrees that diversity of academic and other backgrounds should be reflected in computer science.

"Computer science is a field that is having a huge impact in our world," says Condon. "To ensure that computer technologies are well designed and can have a broad positive impact on our society, students coming to computer science must manifest a greater diversity of backgrounds and skill sets."

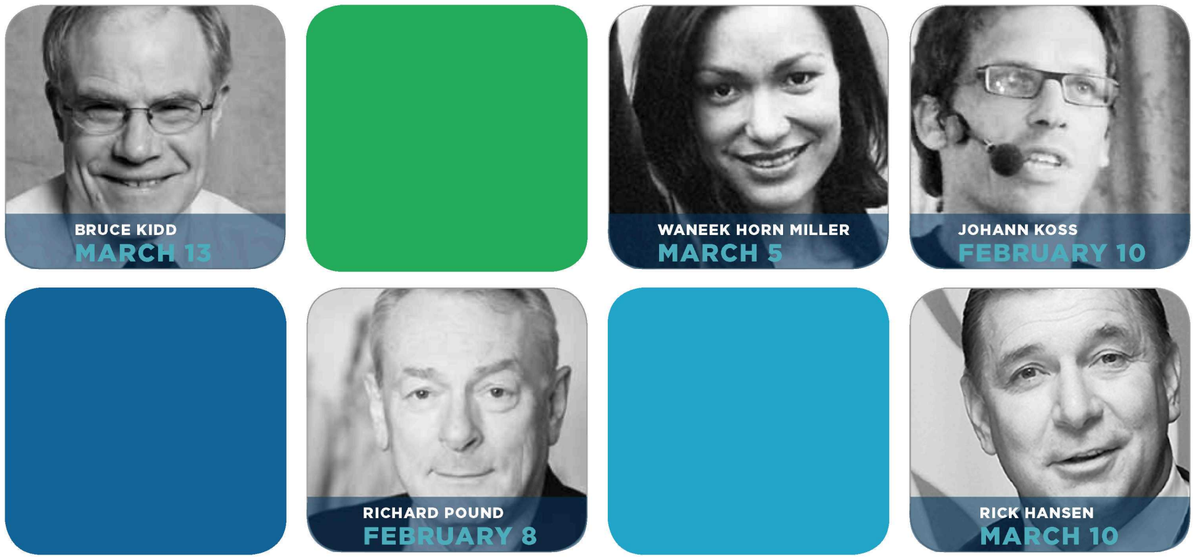
How will CPSC 110 draw more women to study computer science?

"Many women go through first-year computer science and don't continue on," says Condon. "With a new focus on design and understanding problems instead of getting caught in details, CPSC 110 will give them some computer science skills and concepts they can use for life long learning."

Today women make up 22 per cent of undergraduate students enrolled in computer science at UBC. This is double the amount found at other Canadian universities. Condon says she thinks one of the reasons UBC's figures are higher is because the department welcomes combined majors. At UBC, one third of students enrolled in the double or combined major are women.

Another reason could be an internal initiative such as Focus on Women in Computer Science, a UBC computer science departmental committee that helps to increase the participation of women in the field at all academic levels and create an academic environment where women can thrive.

"If a woman has an incredible experience taking a computer science course at the start of her academic career, then there's a great chance she will continue on in computer science," she says.



*UBC's **Sports and Society** series will foster dialogue and debate around the upcoming 2010 Games.*

Learning from the Games

BY BASIL WAUGH

As the 2010 Winter Games approach, UBC is encouraging people to ask provocative questions this fall about what Olympics and Paralympics mean to our society.

In three speaker series – UBC's ***Sport and Society*** and ***Winter Games Seminar Series*** and VANOC's UBC-led ***Intellectual Muscle*** – a diverse mix of scholars and athletes and will explore the upcoming mega-event through a variety of lens, such as gender, diversity, ethics, science and sustainability.

"There are many globally relevant questions and opinions being raised around 2010," says Sid Katz, Executive Director of UBC Community Engagement and Sports and Society creator. "Our goal is to create the broadest forum possible for dialogue and debate around the Games, as part of UBC's commitment to advancing knowledge and civil society."

To increase access, ***Sports and Society*** and ***Intellectual Muscle*** have partnered with ***the Globe and Mail***, which will create an online portal with polls, discussion forums and other interactive features.

UBC Sports and Society series

The centerpiece of a multi-faceted UBC 2010 education program will be UBC's ***Sports and Society*** speaker series, which kicks off Feb. 8, 2010 and runs through the Games.

Moderated by prominent Canadian television personalities at UBC's Chan Centre for the Performing Arts, Katz says these five events will feature Olympians and Paralympians who have made a positive impact on society in lively, respectful debate with academics and others.

- What new ethical challenges have recent scientific advances created? Richard Pound, former Olympic swimmer, McGill Chancellor and World Anti-Doping Agency chairman. Feb. 8
- Can sport and play serve as a development tool for the world's most disadvantaged children? Johann Koss, former Olympic speed-skater and president of international humanitarian organization Right To Play. Feb. 12
- Are major sporting events inclusive of First Nations and other groups? Waneek Horn Miller, former water polo Olympian and member of the Mohawk First Nation. March 5
- Rick Hansen, a former wheelchair basketball Paralympian, will discuss sports, disability and diversity. March 10
- What are Olympic legacies and are they worth the effort? Bruce Kidd, former track and field athlete and University of Toronto professor. March 13

Intellectual Muscle: University dialogues for Vancouver 2010

Intellectual Muscle is an eclectic series of thought-provoking podcasts by prominent and up-and-coming Canadian scholars on topics related to the 2010 Winter Games.

Developed by VANOC and UBC Continuing Studies in collaboration with universities across Canada, the series more than 20 public lectures will run from October 2009 through March 2010.

Hosted at UBC, University of Toronto, McGill and other Canadian institutions, speakers such as Judy Illes, UBC Canada Research Chair in Neuroethics, and Margaret Sommerville of McGill's Centre for Medicine, Ethics and Law will examine topics ranging from gender identity in men's figure skating to the politics of sport.

The program is being led by Don Black, UBC Continuing Studies' Director of Community Programs, who has been seconded to VANOC's as Director of Education Programs for the 2010 Winter Games.

"The Games may be in Vancouver, but they are Canada's Games and this is an opportunity to participate in a truly national conversation," says Black, calling ***Intellectual Muscle*** part of the first-ever online, interactive, bilingual Games education program.

Another component of VANOC's education program is an online teachers' forum moderated by UBC's Faculty of Education. Led by UBC Education Prof. David Vogt, this website helps K-12 teachers share resources and innovative ideas for Games-themed classroom lessons.

For more information about ***Intellectual Muscle*** and VANOC's education programs, visit ***vancouver2010.com/edu***.

UBC Winter Games Seminar Series

Beginning this fall, UBC lectures and symposia such as Arts Wednesdays, the Ziegler Visiting Speaker Series and the Student Olympic Conference will focus on Games-related themes as part of UBC's *Winter Games Seminar Series*.

"We will be showcasing the diverse mix of Games-related research and critical scholarship that is taking place at UBC," says Bob Sparks, Director of UBCs School of Human Kinetics and Chair of UBC's 2010 Education Committee.

Confirmed topics include the relationship between sport, art and politics, technology and the body, symbolism in sport and the historical context of the Olympic Games. "We encourage students and faculty who want to be involved or organize an event to contact us," Sparks says.

Visit ***ubc.ca/2010 and events.ubc.ca*** for information on these and other UBC 2010 learning opportunities. ■

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OPEN TO THINKING THAT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Why UBC is *a place of mind*

How does a decent provincial university of 20 years ago now find itself positioned among the elite of the world's 35 greatest universities?

Why does a Nobel Laureate choose UBC to change the teaching of science on a global scale?

Why do UBC's medical researchers rank in the North American top 10 for bringing their work to patients in the marketplace?

Why has UBC taken the national lead in Community Service Learning and sustainability?

a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Interesting questions,

but not exactly what a group of UBC communications and marketing professionals set out to answer two years ago this month.

Their question was a simpler one: If the university were to achieve consistency in telling its story in a crowded university marketplace, what would that story be? What, in short, is UBC's brand?

While, even unwittingly, most people can tell you what Nike's brand is, or that of Mercedes-Benz or Apple, how do you arrive at the brand of a wildly diverse institution like a university?

And with so many universities, how does one differentiate amongst them? The challenge is not much different for, say, Apple Inc. Just like others in their business, Apple chooses a mix of integrated circuits, stuffs them into metal and plastic boxes, and loads in software to make the machine do the same kind of work as their competitors' machines. Apple's brand, whatever else it is, is a Big Idea – cool, hip, innovative are typically conjured – that leans on emotional, not functional, attributes to differentiate itself.

In higher education, many universities can rightly claim great teaching, research and service. This hardly leads to differentiation. Many universities can go further and claim global distinction in a few areas. However, claiming greatness on the part of a few automatically excludes everyone else. Inevitably, it is the emotional thread that binds individuals together in an organization and provides their collective story.

WHERE'S THE NEW LOGO?

Many people equate brand with logo, and organizations frequently change their logos in an attempt to "rebrand" themselves. Unlike many university crests that hide identification behind ancient filigree, our logo is immediately recognizable as UBC and widely respected. The logo isn't the compelling story, however; at best it's only a symbol of the story. It can't answer the key question: what is UBC's story.

Two years later, and with the help of hundreds of UBC faculty, students, staff and alumni along the way, we are much closer to answering that question, and the ones at the beginning of this article.

The group understood that it's not easy – an understatement as things turned out – to boil down an institution the scale and scope of UBC into a single idea. Many people openly doubted that a university on two distinct campuses, let alone one with so many staunchly independent Faculties, could ever arrive at an idea of itself that would span such potential divides. Yet once it became clear that UBC needed to reveal the big emotional idea within itself, the task became more manageable.

Surveys of communications and marketing efforts in 2007 revealed a hydra-headed organization. In the absence of a simple, compelling and true story – the absence of a brand – UBC showed a bewildering array of faces to the world.

And yet focus groups with prospective students and alumni in Halifax, Toronto, Calgary, Kelowna and Vancouver showed that many people already had a sense of UBC as a special place that transcended the mixed messages of unbranded communication. They relayed a positive image of UBC as occupying a highly desired part of the world that offers unique opportunity for personal growth and opportunity.

GETTING IN POSITION

Working with a social marketing firm, the group began to distil this research into some key insights:

- UBC's high-performing and self-actualized students – in 1922, they marched to pressure government to build the Vancouver campus – are a core strength of the university
- UBC's research excellence is globally influential
- UBC's location, beyond the global most-liveable lists, appeals on a deep level that speaks to the idea of the West as a new place where people come to create, and recreate, themselves and their world.

These elements, individually, are not unique to UBC; combined, however, they create an idea that no other university in the world can claim. These insights were combined into a positioning statement:

To prospective undergraduate and graduate students, UBC is the Tier One international research-intensive university that, better than any other, offers a fresh, open environment that provides the freedom to learn, discover and contribute in one's own way.

The positioning statement links, in "learn, discover and contribute," to the university's traditional mission of teaching, research and service. In itself, however, the positioning statement is not a brand, but by the winter of 2008 it began to pave the way for one. The group put the statement to focus groups and scores of meetings with students, deans, faculty members, staff and senior administrators. People agreed: the statement was true for, and reflective of, UBC.

This agreement then led to the next question: if the positioning statement is true for UBC, how could we best communicate what it means to our many audiences, and what would that communication look like?

SKETCHING THE FUTURE

Using rough sketches of billboard ads – a medium that must quickly convey its messages with minimal words and powerful imagery– three ideas were explored in combinations of headlines, taglines and visuals. Although different in execution, they shared an attempt to convey the benefit promised by the positioning statement's fresh, open environment – the freedom to learn, discover and contribute in one's own way.

The ideas were presented in 25 meetings and a dozen formal focus groups in early summer. The dominant idea used the tagline A Place of Mind. While execution with headlines and visuals at this early stage was weak, the tagline resonated with people.

By late summer three executions were tested using the tagline A Place of Mind – this time professionally rendered in newspaper and billboard formats.

THREE STUDENTS AND A TREE – NOT

In a country where typical university advertising has been dubbed "three students and a tree," UBC is making an audacious and creative claim for attention in a crowded marketplace, and every advertisement is backed up with proof points, stories and profiles. The ads tell why Nobel Laureate Carl Wieman came to UBC to improve the teaching of science, how UBC students are participating in innovative learning experiences, how UBC medical research is a leader in commercialization, and so on.

At a higher level, the stories told in the ads reflect success derived from UBC's openness to new ideas, perspectives and ways of exploration – which is very much what the new brand is all about.

This recipe took a full year to cook. The subsequent year has been devoted to refining the idea in a variety of formats to carry a unified UBC story to the audiences that matter most: current and prospective students, faculty and staff, our quarter-million alumni worldwide, government and private supporters of the university, the people of BC and Canada who stand behind our governments, and a growing international audience that benefits from UBC student and research successes.

What does UBC have after this two-year process to define its essence? Firstly, some very important internal gains have already been made even before the brand's launch this month. There is wide acceptance of the need for a true and compelling self-definition in an organization that only a few years ago was squeamish about words like "brand" and "marketing."

There have been significant organizational development benefits as a result of this exercise, and the discussion it has evoked has had tangential positive impact on at least two other broad institutional initiatives, a renewed strategic plan and an upcoming development campaign, the university's first such engagement with our communities in more than a decade. People on both campuses responsible for marketing and communicating the university's values have rallied around the effort; even as they pursue specific business objectives, they appreciate the support of a strong brand.

At a more detailed level, UBC now has some tools to communicate a more cohesive story.

A planned three-year advertising campaign involving print, outdoor and online advertising begins this month with a focus on highlighting UBC's value to British Columbians. The campaign has been designed to move to national and international markets in the following two years. The advertisements are a refinement of the combination of the bold idea that emanates From Here, wide-open "heroic" imagery, and the tagline, a place of mind.

The tagline is now rendered in lower-case in the Whitney font, and going forward it will be associated with the UBC logo as the most elementary expression of UBC's new brand.

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Elements of the brand

Overwhelmingly, internal and external audiences, gravitated to one particular execution:

- the tagline ***a place of mind***
- a big, bold idea to show how open thought can change the world, crafted in a headline that ends in the phrase ***From Here***
- equally bold "heroic" imagery that invites viewers to see themselves as part of wide open photographic vistas that characterize the West and UBC's place in that geography

A BRAND NEW IDEA: THE TWO-YEAR JOURNEY

Fall 2007
- UBC Strategic Marketing Council: identifies need for consistent UBC-wide story.

Winter 2007
- Marketing communications review: University-wide inventory of marketing communications and publications.
- Positioning statements drafted.

Spring 2008
- Prospective student focus groups: What does UBC mean to you? (Calgary, Toronto, Halifax). First taglines drafted.

Summer 2008
- Focus groups: Tagline testing in Vancouver, Kelowna, Toronto. Internal consultation with faculty, staff, students, alumni, prospective students.
- Chosen: a place of mind

Fall 2008
- Advertising launch campaign: ideas presented through full internal consultation.
- Chosen: From Here

Winter 2008
- Budget approval and governance.
- Brand Council and Web Advisory Council formed resulting in first university-wide communications effort with central budget support.

Spring 2009
- Website redesign consultation: Web survey results in 3,500 responses. Web RFP awarded.
- 'a place of mind' and 'From Here' registered and trademarked.

Summer 2009
- Web development: full navigation and redesign of UBC main and Okanagan websites. Common Look and Feel (CLF) templates designed through internal consultation.
- Baseline poll: Ipsos Reid awareness survey.
- Brand Fund: 45 applications result in $71,000 supporting brand rollout at the unit level.
- Web 2.0 community site aplaceofmind.ca.

Fall 2009
Launch with back-to-school initiatives, including Imagine and Create rallies.
- Advertising launch: first integrated reputational campaign utilizing print, outdoor, online, search and social media.
- New signage, flags, banners.
- Newly redesigned websites and community site launched.
- Baseline poll: Ipsos Reid awareness survey.
- Brand Fund: 45 applications result in $71,000 supporting brand rollout at the unit level.
- Web 2.0 community site aplaceofmind.ca.

a place of mind.ca

What can you do From Here?

Find out at a new web site powered by the UBC community – ***www.aplaceofmind.ca***

This robust Web 2.0 platform uses social media to emphasize the university commitment to big ideas developed through open dialogue.

UBC web sites adopting a new look will use blogs and RSS feeds to provide From Here stories, profiles, video, events and photos to the community site. This will show up as a constantly changing Lifestream on the site's main page.

But the web site relies most of all on contributions from all members of the community. Comment on what you see on the Lifestream, and watch topic areas grow and ebb in a tag cloud that graphically shows which ideas are getting the most traction.

Start your own dialogue on your big ideas by using the Add Your Voice section of the main page, and ask the help of the community to realize them. Your big idea may just win you an iPod Touch.

For more information, please contact ***public.affairs@ubc.ca*** or visit ***aplaceofmind.ca***

WEB 2.0

The ubc.ca website, an amalgamation of hundreds of sub-sites that collectively receive many million visits a year from all over the world, has been redesigned to reflect the brand. Thanks to more than 3,500 people surveyed, it sports dramatically improved architecture with new navigation and search tools. As UBC units adopt the brand visual standards there will be a modern and cohesive appearance throughout what is arguably the most powerful communications medium for the university. Visual standards are also being developed for print and other applications.

Allied to the redesign is an ambitious new community web site – aplaceofmind.ca – that invites members of the UBC community, official and otherwise, to tell their own From Here stories in words, pictures or video about what makes UBC a place of mind. Visitors can comment on and extend what others have said.

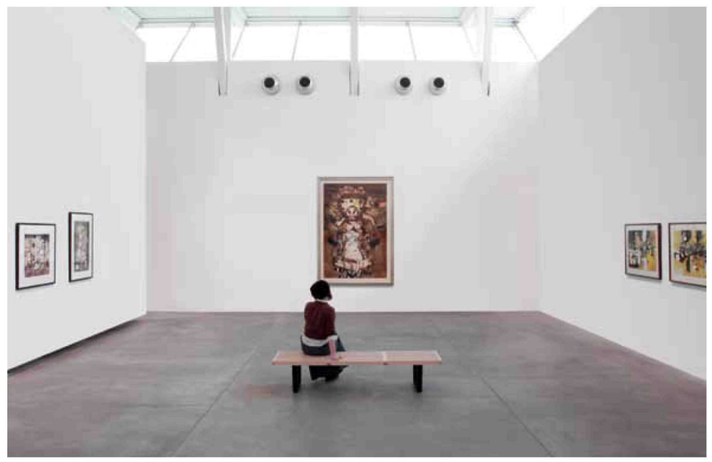
The last focus group in the two-year process happened a couple of months ago when a group of domestic and international UBC students met for a sneak preview of the advertising campaign. Some of what they said:

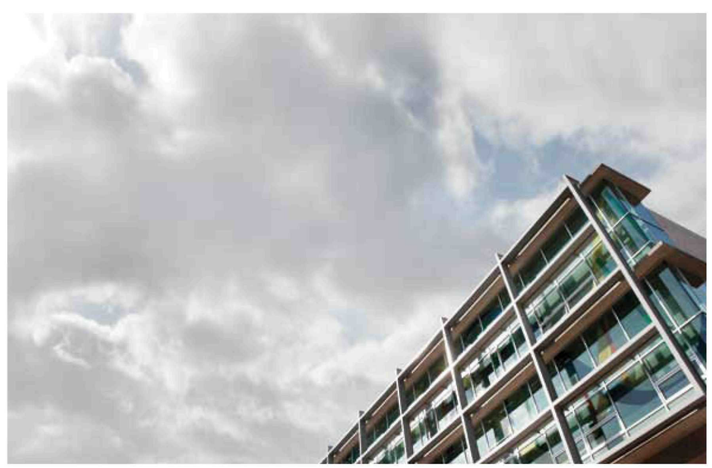
- Makes me feel that learning takes place outside of the classroom
- Echoes the excitement I have in learning at UBC
- Provides a sense that anything is possible from here
- I can put myself right in the image
- The ads challenge you to think about the issues and show UBC is thinking about these issues

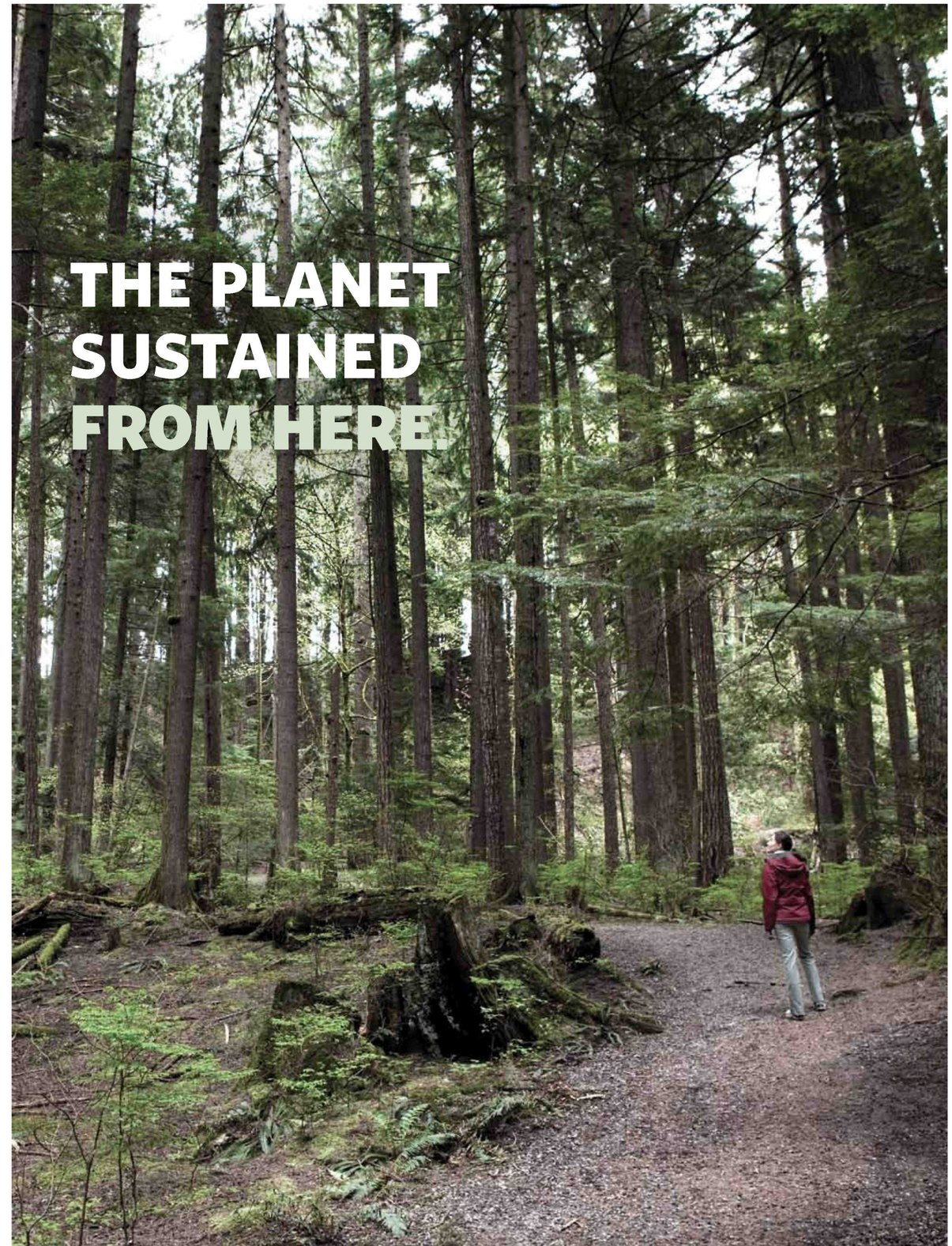
When asked for the single word to describe how they felt about the ads, the response was virtually unanimous:

Pride.

a place of mind







Surrounded by beauty, it is no wonder innovative thinkers and doers at UBC are taking on towering environmental challenges. In 1997, UBC was the first university in Canada to make a commitment to sustainability. The community has extensively reduced campus emissions to below 1990 levels. And UBC professors and students came up with the concept of "our ecological footprint," launched the carbon offset company used by the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games, and are developing what may be the greenest building on Earth. It's part of our nature.

ubc.ca

a place of mind

Medicine wheel shapes Aboriginal Access Studies

BY BUD MORTENSON

Two years ago, Chris Alexander didn't have the prerequisites to begin his UBC education. That all changed after he enrolled in the Aboriginal Access Studies initiative at UBC Okanagan. Today, the 23-year-old has completed a variety of university-level courses and plans to pursue a degree in management.

Aboriginal Access Studies is in its second year of a three-year pilot that allows Aboriginal students to take university-level courses without the need to initially register in a degree program or undergo the standard admissions process. After starting their university studies through this alternative entry, students are better equipped -- and qualified – to apply to degree programs.

"The access program gives you the requirements to get in," says Alexander. "I would have had to go to college for two years, then come here. But this got me here right away."

Aboriginal Access advisor Adrienne Vedan says key elements of the program are the extensive academic and personal support students receive from advisors and peer mentors, and the degree to which Aboriginal culture is incorporated into the entire approach.

"Students receive an Aboriginal perspective in English and math courses," Vedan says, "and most of them take Indigenous Studies, so they receive a good foundation of courses that provide an Aboriginal perspective. We base the whole initiative on the medicine wheel's teachings and the aspect of balance, stressing that the academic side is really important, but so are all the other aspects of yourself – your physical and social wellbeing."

In addition to courses at UBC Okanagan, students also have an opportunity to take an Okanagan language course offered through the En'owkin Centre, an indigenous cultural, educational and creative arts institution in Penticton.

PHOTO: BUD MORTENSON

Adrienne Vedan, left, and Dan Odenbach, right, are helping Aboriginal students like Chris Alexander through the first part of their university experience at UBC Okanagan.

The goal this year is to enroll 30 students through Access Studies. Last year, 17 students participated – some just out of high school, others returning to school as mature students.

"This program is for a variety of students," says Vedan. "A range of barriers might not have allowed them to attend post-secondary education – high school grades, not having their Grade 11 and 12 prerequisites, or even mature students who haven't been in school for a long time and whose high school records don't meet admission requirements. This opens up a number of doorways.

Jordan Coble was out of high school for five years before he decided to go back to school.

"I graduated in 2001, and didn't really have any long-term goals," Coble says, describing how when he was ready for post-secondary education he enrolled in regional college courses intent on completing prerequisites for university. A week into those classes, he learned about the new pilot at UBC Okanagan and made the move.

"The best part of the program was having a place to go, having someone to talk to, and learning how to study," he says. "That made it a lot easier. Now I'm more focused on my career path."

Taking first-year courses at UBC Okanagan, Coble has considered a future as a teacher or an editor. But lately his career thoughts are closer to home: filmmaking and video production.

"My dad has been in the movie business for years," says Coble. "That's where I want to go." And so Coble is enrolling in media studies and English courses on the path to a Bachelor of Arts in English.

"The access program gave me a nice transition to the Arts program, and the courses I've chosen so far have opened doors for me," says Coble.

Most of the 17 students in the program last year are applying to degree programs this year, but success isn't entirely about students choosing this path.

"Maybe they come for a year and say it's not for them, so they pursue education in a different manner," says Dan Odenbach, Aboriginal program administrator. "We would consider that a success because these are students who may have never thought post-secondary was an option.

"We send the message that, no matter what, there are always options and the more education you have the more options you have. If this isn't for them, we'll work with them to find what is."

"Let's face it, whether you are Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, starting at university can be a pretty scary experience – it's almost an overload, you're inundated with a flood of information," says Odenbach. "We want to assist students in getting over their initial fears so they can get on with their education." R

New MBA House inspired by Harvard

BY DEREK MOSCATO

For the Robert H. Lee Graduate School at UBC's Sauder School of Business, the new MBA House represents a key part of the school's rebuilding effort, and the culmination of a major effort to provide graduate business students with an exceptional learning environment.

The residence, located at Wesbrook Place in UBC's South Campus, will give Master of Business Administration and Master of Management students an uncommon ability to interface with each other, with the school's faculty and alumni, and with visiting business leaders and entrepreneurs.

For inspiration, Sauder needed look no further than alumnus John McArthur, for whom a residence at Harvard Business School was named.

McArthur, who graduated from UBC with a bachelor of commerce degree in forestry in 1957, served as dean of the Harvard Business School (HBS) from 1980 through 1995. Since then, he has been the George F. Baker Professor of Business Administration Emeritus and Dean Emeritus at Harvard.

McArthur Hall was dedicated at HBS in 1999 in recognition of his contributions to the university. The residence for MBA students is widely recognized – along with Schwab Residential Center at Stanford University's business school – for delivering an exceptional MBA experience for students.

Both residences provided ideas for for Kevin Mahon, the president of Adera Development Corp, and a 1982 UBC BCom graduate, who helped lead the MBA House development effort.

Pre-construction, Mahon met with McArthur who underscored the benefit of an student residence to graduate students at his institution.

"It's a total experience they're going through – and where they live is part of that whole experience," said McArthur. "The students do learn from each other." R

PHOTO: DEREK MOSCATO

UBC's new MBA House gives graduate business students a space to learn and connect.

UBC launches one-of-a-kind commuter hostel

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Life can be tough for commuter students.

Hours can be lost during cramped cross-city bus rides and sitting in traffic jams, and getting to campus for an early-morning class means some students leave home before 6 a.m.

Recognizing the challenges faced by commuter students, UBC has launched a bevy of new programs aimed at helping alleviate the stress of commuting to and from campus.

At UBC's Vancouver campus, students who want to stay on campus into the wee hours of the night – or get a fresh start in the morning -- can get a room on the cheap at the new commuter student hostel at Walter Gage Residence.

Beginning Sept. 21, commuter students can book a private room between Sunday and Thursday for $30 per night. Each single-gender unit is made up of eight private rooms that share a lounge, kitchenette and two bathrooms.

"Students may have a late-night study group, an early morning test, or want to participate in club activities organized in the evening," says Janice Robinson, director of residence life in Vancouver. "With this hostel they're able to get up refreshed and start their day on campus."

The hostel opened last fall to little fanfare, and Robinson says the pilot was a great success.

More than half of the students stay at the hostel because of early-morning academic commitments, Robinson says, with the rest involved in evening events or courses. Students who stay the night are welcome to attend residence events.

During exam season the hostel is available on Friday nights to accommodate Saturday morning exams. Students must book before 5 pm., and can stay a maximum of two nights per week.

At UBC Okanagan, the new University Centre was built with commuter students in mind. Three collegia are meant to provide a home away from home for students who commute.

Each collegium has a relaxing lounge-style atmosphere and is outfitted with comfortable furniture, individual and group workspaces, and kitchen facilities. They serve as places to hang out, eat lunch, spend time with classmates, and do school work.

While the transition to university can be tough on students, they're not the only ones who need help adjusting.

On Sept. 19, UBC's Vancouver campus will host Commuter Student Parent Orientation, for parents and guardians of new students to learn more about resources, programs, and student life.

The three-hour orientation session, presented in both Mandarin and English, will suggest strategies for parents to support their child's transition from high school to university.

Parents of a commuter student face different issues than those of a residence student, says Chad Hyson, associate director of student development.

"In most cases students are still living at home, and there are added tensions around family responsibilities," Hyson says. "They're a student, but they still have a role within the family and it can be difficult to negotiate the two."

The university has also launched a commuter magazine, Connections, which touches on student life, wellness and campus culture from the perspective of a commuter student. R

UBC students, faculty, staff and alumni are invited to attend the first annual

President's Campus Town Halls

Please join Professor Stephen J. Toope for an update on the UBC Strategic Plan and other major initiatives.

VANCOUVER CAMPUS
Friday, September 18
11:30 am – 1:00 pm
TELUS Studio Theatre
The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

OKANAGAN CAMPUS
Wednesday, September 23
11:30 am – 1:00 pm
University Centre Ballroom (UC 200)

The Town Halls are a forum for dialogue and a new way for our campus communities to learn about strategic initiatives at the University.

The Town Halls, along with the President's Blue and Gold Review in December, replace the Annual General Meeting.

Questions? Contact UBC Public Affairs:
public.affairs@ubc.ca

a place of mind

Women were first to earn UBC grad degrees: First 100 theses project

BY GLENN DREXHAGE

Have a hankering to peruse UBC's first-ever thesis in Arts and Science, ***A study of the estimation of iron and the separation of manganese from iron by phenyl-nitroso-hydroxylamine ammonium (cupferron), by Ruth Vivian Fulton, 1919?*** What about the first Applied Science thesis, Preparation of manganates and permanganates of metals of alkali and alkaline earth groups, by Charles A.H. Wright, 1920? What about the first Applied Science thesis, ***Preparation of manganates and permanganates of metals of alkali and alkaline earth groups,*** by Charles A.H. Wright, 1920?

If so, then you're in luck – because University Archives has digitized UBC's first 100 theses. Although the University opened its doors in 1915, it wasn't until four years later that the first graduate degrees were awarded, both of them to women. Indeed, women earned six out of the first 10 masters degrees granted by UBC (the first PhDs were awarded in 1950).

This fascinating collection, organized to celebrate UBC's centenary in 2008, includes theses from some prominent UBC figures, such as future UBC President Walter Henry Gage and Alma Mater Society founding member Evelyn Sykes Story (who became Evelyn Lett upon marrying).

This initiative is part of a much larger effort entitled the UBC Retrospective Theses Digitization Project, which involves the digitization of all theses from the 1920s on –33,500 theses and nearly five million pages. Currently, Archives is digitizing theses published between 1992 and 2007; about 9,000 titles are available in cIRcle, UBC Library's online repository, and more are being added daily.
You can view the first 100 theses at *www.library.ubc.ca/archives/first100*. R

Uncommon learning opportunities

BY GLENN DREXHAGE

As a new school year gets underway, the Chapman Learning Commons (CLC) is introducing a raft of initiatives to serve its users better.
The CLC, located on level three of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, brings together technology and learning support for students, faculty, staff and community members.

New offerings this year include:
– Student assistants based at the CLC help desk offer specialized help with learning technology and multimedia software, including support with blogs, wikis, iClickers and new iMac multimedia workstations (which include scanners).
– A new "academic coaching corner" that features well-established peer coaching programs on campus. Help will be offered by upper-level students for issues ranging from study techniques to academic resources.
– The Student to Scholar program, a student-led initiative, pulls together a suite of workshops on academic learning, library research, technology and lifestyle balance to help students develop well-rounded skills.
For more information, please visit *www.library.ubc.ca/clc*. R

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Institute for Computing, Information and Cognitive Systems

DIRECTOR

The University of British Columbia seeks outstanding internal UBC candidates for the position of Director of the Institute for Computing, Information and Cognitive Systems (ICICS). The successful candidate must hold an appointment at the rank of Professor or Associate Professor, and must be a current active member of ICICS. The new Director will be expected to serve for a five year term. He/she is a dynamic, visionary and collaborative leader, who will bring people together and build on ICICS' strengths in education, research and professional practice as it manages its growth trajectory. The successful candidate must have proven leadership and administrative experience or have demonstrated the potential for such skills in other ways. Nominations and applications are now invited.

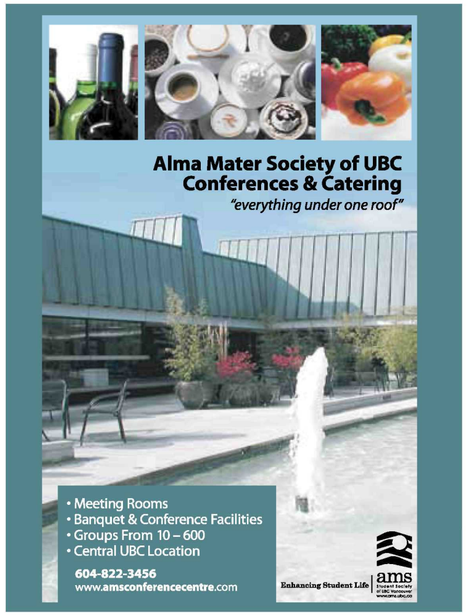
General information about ICICS is available at www.icics.ubc.ca. ICICS was originally established in 1986 as the Centre for Integrated Computer Systems Research (CICSR), with a mandate to advance collaborative research in computer systems that have industrial and manufacturing applications. In 2000, CICSR was transformed to ICICS. While the primary mandate of ICICS is to be at the forefront of research in information and communication technology, it has moved decisively towards inter-disciplinary research that extends well beyond traditional boundaries. ICICS is a world-class, multi-disciplinary organization that is unique in Canada in its breadth of expertise. ICICS underwent an external review in April 2006. The review report is available at www.icics.ubc.ca/2006review.

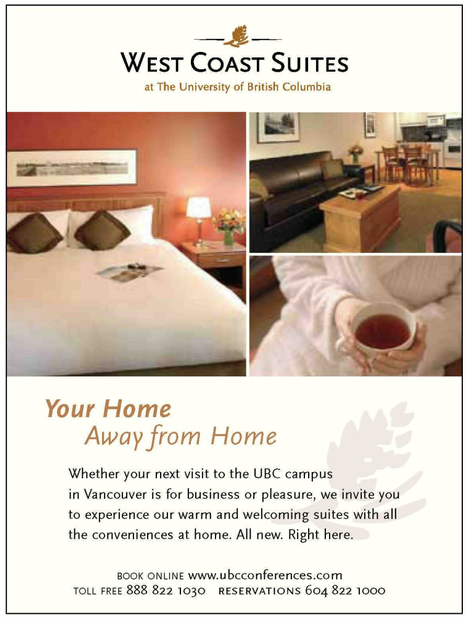
ICICS has three affiliated departments, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering; it has 154 faculty members from across the UBC campus as members of ICICS; and has over 800 graduate students. ICICS is supported through the University's base operating budget. The Director acts as primary academic and administrative officer of the Institute, coordinating and leading the Institute's various programs, activities and initiatives. The Director reports to a Steering Committee chaired by the Dean of Applied Science and comprised of the Deans of Applied Science and Science and the Principal of the College for Interdisciplinary Studies.

The position will be available on January 1, 2010 or soon after depending on the completion of the selection process. Please visit www.apsc.ubc.ca/prospective_faculty/ for updates on the status of the position. Interested candidates are invited to submit an application package that consists of a brief statement expressing what interests them in the leadership of ICICS, their experience relevant to this responsibility and their perspective on where ICICS should be going and how to get there. The package must also include a current curriculum vita, a portfolio of professional/academic accomplishment including research and teaching as well as the names and addresses of two referees external to ICICS/UBC from academia or industry who are able to provide an objective assessment of the candidate's suitability for this leadership position.

Nominations and applications should be submitted in confidence to:
Dean Tyseer Aboulnasr, Chair
ICICS Director Search Committee
Faculty of Applied Science
5000 - 2332 Main Mall
UBC Campus

The package must be sent by e-mail only to syee@apsc.ubc.ca, and any attachments should only be Word or pdf files, set for printing on letter-size paper.
Nominators must include a one page description of why they consider the nominee to be a highly desirable candidate. After consulting with the committee, the Chair will invite some nominees to apply as deemed appropriate.
The deadline for nominations is September 11, 2009, and the deadline for applications is October 2, 2009.
The University of British Columbia hires on the basis of merit and is committed to employment equity. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply.





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MARCH 1, 2009
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Major Thematic Grant, Letter of Intent

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For more information, please visit our website at www.pwias.ubc.ca or call us at (604) 822-4782.

FIRST-YEAR CLASS *continued from page 1*

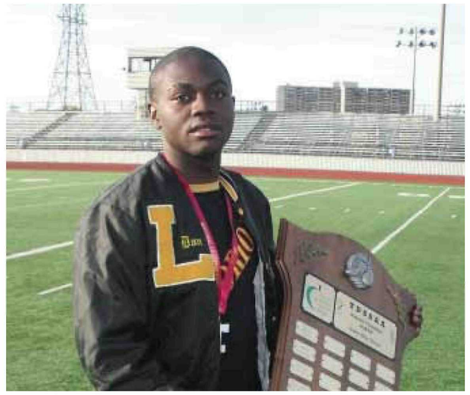

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

David Yesaya, first-year student from Toronto, enjoys soccer and poetry.

Moore have introduced them to some inconvenient truths and unsettling perspectives. Peter Jackson introduced them to Tolkien's Middle Earth, and Christopher Nolan to Batman.

The Canada of the 1991 generation is not so much concerned with old arguments over national unity as with new ones over education, health care, privacy, copyright, and Canada's role on the world stage. Jon Stewart and Steve Colbert, South Park and The Simpsons are more likely to be their satirical filters of American culture than Saturday Night Live, and George Stromboulopolous and Douglas Coupland have provided a gentler, but still cool glimpse into the post-Web 2.0 world through a Canadian filter. Canadian teen pop music in their childhood and early adolescence spawned not a Lizzie McGuire or Hannah Montana analog, but bouncy, heavily eyelinered, punk-pop princess Avril Lavigne. While they were in middle school and high school, social networking exploded into being, and YouTube became the place to make, and catch, rising viral videos.

It is impossible to generalize about this generation. They have not necessarily contributed to the development of such pop culture juggernauts as the Harry Potter and Twilight phenomena, social networking, and reality TV, nor on the other hand are they necessarily enthusiastic about acoustic emo music, independent films, and skateboarding culture.

One of the most interesting phenomena I have observed is the way many approach retro culture: retro for them often means the 1970s or '80s; too young to be nostalgic, they mine the artifacts of an age they never knew, and stare with fresh eyes at its TV shows, music videos and arcade games, refunctioning them as a rejection of the mass culture currently mass-produced for them.

While many embrace and quickly master a broad range of current communications technologies, many are deeply suspicious of over-reliance on technology and mass media. Indeed, they are often more apt to be an amalgamation of various passions, and after all, they have more ways of finding out about the larger world and participating in it than virtually all preceding generations of young adults.

Gisele Baxter is a lecturer in the Dept. of English who has met many first-year students in her 25-year teaching career. She comments regularly on popular culture and maintains her own online cultural commentary at www3.telus.net/gmbaxter/zone.html.

From Winnipeg: Anita Balakumar

Q Why did you choose UBC?
The moment I attended the tour of the UBC campus I was hooked. I love the libraries, the Nitobe Memorial Garden and obviously the warmth of the environment and people. Since I was interested in science, the Coordinated Science Program also looked like a very rewarding option for me.

Q What extracurricular activity do you enjoy?
I have always had a love for gymnastics and dance. I have participated in heavily competitive gymnastics and have found the sport invigorating. Dance, all kinds from salsa to jazz, has also been a simple pleasure of mine.

Q What is your favourite book and music?
The entire Harry Potter collection is undoubtedly my favourite. My favourite band is Our Lady Peace.

Q Do you have a favourite technology device?
I think my cellphone has been my savior most often in my life. While I adore my iPod and laptop, I would be lost without my cellphone (as cliché as that may sound for an 18-year-old girl).

Q What social networking site do you use the most, if any?
Very simple: Facebook. I have tried exploring other networking sites like Twitter and MySpace but neither appeal to me.

Q Where do you get your news?
My debate teacher has always recommended BBC News so that is usually my number one resource. I will also look through the Winnipeg Free Press and Globe and Mail on occasion.

Q How many text messages do you send/receive each day?
Since my cellphone makes text messaging painfully difficult, I would say from 20-100 a day.

From Toronto: David Yesaya

Q Why did you choose UBC?
First of all, it's one of the best universities in Canada, as well as in the world. Second, UBC has a strong varsity soccer team. The last reason is because the university is located just by the Pacific Ocean.

Q What extracurricular activity do

continued on back cover

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Tedx Talks

BY SHAGUFTA PASTA

Give UBC students a challenge, and they'll more than exceed your expectations. That's what happened at ***Terry talks 2008***, a day-long event where students took centre stage to share their academic knowledge, personal experience and passion to bring about positive change both locally and globally. Due to the campus response, organizers have scheduled the next event for October 3.

Terry talks is an outgrowth of the Terry Project, an initiative to engage the UBC community on global issues (*www.terry.ubc.ca*). Modeled on the popular global TED conferences—held each year in California and Oxford and devoted to discussing big ideas for our world – speakers are given 18 minutes to give the talk of their young lives. ***Terry talks 2008*** showcased eight student speakers and one alumnus discussing topics that ranged from community outreach to the importance of access to essential medicines.

With participants describing ***Terry talks 2008*** as an inspiring day that had "speakers of a phenomenal TED-like quality" who "stimulated not only great conversation but hopefully actions too" the project has joined forces with the non-profit TED as part of the TEDx independently organized TED event initiative to call this year's event the ***TEDx Terry talks 2009***.

Speaker applications are open till September 15. For more information, contact The Terry Project at *terrytalks@gmail.com*. All talks can be viewed at: *www.terry.ubc.ca/terrytalks*.

Mix it up

Excerpted from Tapestry, the newsletter for the office of Teaching and Academic Growth

As part of the selection process for Terry talks 2008, each speaker was asked to make a wish, of which one was chosen for the campus to develop. The 2008 wish was from Integrated Science and Political Science student Geoff Costeloe and called UBC MIX to create interdisciplinary classroom partnerships, exposing students to new ideas and experiences.

UBC MIX develops cross-discipline and cross-faculty partnerships between courses already taught at UBC. It helps two faculty members make small adjustments to their class curricula that can bring together students from two courses. The partnership could involve one or two joint lectures, electronic 'pen-pal' communication between the classes, a mixed-group project, or anything else the faculty members think would be valuable to the students. The idea is to compliment the curricula of both classes by exploring the links between them, exposing the students to new ideas.

Celeste Leander, who teaches Science One Biology, and Carla Paterson from HIST 104 will be giving UBC MIX a shot in September. They will be using a variety of classroom activities that will draw on major themes from both classes. One activity is a project looking at trees around campus. Students from each class will be partnered together. They will have to find and identify trees in the UBC community, take a photo of themselves in front of it, then give a short presentation on the tree and it historical uses in B.C. aboriginal communities. It is a chance for students to learn from each other and put the skills and knowledge they take from class and put them into practice.

UBC MIX is currently looking for interested faculty members to form partnerships for December.

For more information visit: *www.terrry.ubc.ca/mix*.

STUDENTS HELP DESIGN *continued from page 1*

the faculty with cutting edge teaching and learning tools such as WebCT, problem-based learning, ePortfolios, along with video, graphics and new-technology support.

"Traditional classrooms often impede face-to-face contact," says Brent Skura, associate professor at LFS and program director, Global Resource Systems. "The Learning Commons will facilitate problem-based learning and students teaching each other as it encompasses areas for small and large groups." He says the space is part of a longstanding initiative at the faculty to create an active community of learners, faculty, teaching assistants and others.

Engineering curriculum

In December 2008 as Chris Bazett finished up his undergraduate coursework in civil engineering, he heard his department would be redeveloping its curriculum the following month. "I told them this was a subject that fascinated me and I was soon hired to administer the revamp," he says.

But not just any revamp. Bazett's task was to engage the entire department in the redevelopment, while also seeking collaboration from the student body. He describes his full-time role as "bridging the gap" between students and faculty. "This level of activity, and support at the faculty level, has not been seen before," he says. He adds past redevelopment activities were driven from the sides of people's desks with no sustained focus.

"Students are really happy we are doing this," says Barb Lence, Bazett's supervisor, civil engineering professor and associate head of undergraduate programs who has been given a temporary release from teaching to oversee the revamp. Lence was instrumental, along with Reza Vaziri, department head, in recognizing the importance of the curriculum reform and in creating an opportunity for Bazett to help out. "We are so fortunate to have him as the middleman between faculty and students because he can see outside the box and bring a deeper level to our discussions," adds Lence.

Other duties Bazett is engaged in include making recommendations about the curriculum redevelopment process, and facilitating coordination and communication among committee members.

Part of the restructuring is focused on filling in the gaps by offering more electives for students and more integrative design courses at second, third and fourth years. These courses will allow students to draw on what they learned from other courses, see interrelationships between courses, and understand their relevance to real-world engineering problems.

This focus was echoed by students at the end of last term, when they filled out a detailed survey developed by Bazett. The survey sought to capture their experience and generate ideas about ways to make the program's curriculum more student-centred, so there is a shift from a traditional emphasis on the subject matter itself to what is being learned.

"Students like coming to me because although I am no longer a student, the student experience is still fresh in my mind," he says. "The students can relate to me and feel comfortable relaying their views, anecdotes, and sometimes they express a concern about things that worked or didn't."

In May, the department conducted its annual two-day retreat. This year the focus was on curriculum redevelopment. "I had at hand ready examples to share with faculty during the retreat," says Bazett. "These real-life experiences help professors to better understand the student perspective."

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UBC FOOD SERVICES

Pharmacy residency puts students in community

BY LISSA COWAN

If you thought the role of pharmacists was solely to prepare prescriptions, and dispense drugs to patients, well, think again.

In 2006, Karen Trotter was approaching the end of her pharmacy degree at the UBC Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences and wasn't sure what career focus to pursue. She knew she wanted to work in a community setting, but only knew about the residency programs available in hospitals. Then a pharmacy colleague suggested she look into the UBC Community Pharmacy Residency Program.

The first of its kind in Canada and initiated at UBC, the Community Pharmacy Residency Program allows students to learn about healthcare issues such as palliative care, diabetes, smoking cessation and chronic disease management in a community pharmacy. The community focus is unique as most pharmacy residency programs only offer training opportunities in hospitals. Past residents are working in pain clinics as medication management pharmacists, as pharmacy instructors at colleges and universities, and as geriatric pharmacists with B.C. health authorities. A number have gone on to deepen their learning through further study in a Doctor of Pharmacy program.

"Entering this one-year program was a great first step to deciding what direction I should take," says Trotter.

During her 2006-2007 community residency, she worked with pharmacist mentors called preceptors at a handful of the 12 B.C. community practice sites available to program residents.

One of her favourite rotations included home visits with seniors who were recently discharged from Peace Arch Hospital. "It was an amazing opportunity to connect with a patient group that often benefits from more time, and personal contact than a busy dispensary allows," says Trotter. "At a different site, I also discovered how much I love doing long-term care, partly because the interdisciplinary teams and patient information are more readily accessible." She adds working as part of a group of healthcare professionals taught her that a pharmacist is a valued member of any team.

"We have the educational background and expertise that allows us to pick up the additional skills and knowledge to support a varied population with diverse needs," she says. During her residency, the BC Pharmacy Association recognized her with a New Horizons award, given to recent graduates that make a significant contribution to the pharmacy profession.

Trotter used her contacts with pharmacy mentors to land her first appointment at St. Anthony's Clinic Pharmacy in Victoria, working closely with other healthcare professionals at long-term care facilities.

"Overall, the UBC Community Pharmacy Residency Program broadened my vision of the practice of community pharmacy and helped me to see building lasting and trusting relationships with patients as an integral part of patient care," she says.

"Health care delivery patterns are changing rapidly," says Penny Miller, program director, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences. "The community pharmacy residency provides new pharmacists with the advanced training required to deliver clinical pharmacy services to communities in these fluctuating times." She adds mentors are a big part of the program's continued success.

"Preceptors have incredible knowledge and skills that students are able to draw on during their two-to-four week rotations," she says. In turn, the students help preceptors keep up to date on clinical issues and share their accumulated knowledge and passion.

Miller developed the Community Pharmacy Residency Program in 1981 with fellow colleagues Mark Levine and Lynn Pollock to respond to a need for more advanced training in clinical services and pharmacotherapy for community pharmacy practitioners. To this day there are only a handful of similar programs, mostly in the U.S. The program is sponsored by the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia and the BC Pharmacy Association. R

FIRST-YEAR CLASS *continued from page 14*

you enjoy most?
I love playing soccer; it's a good way to release my energy and to socialize with people. The other extracurricular activity that I love after soccer is poetry--all kinds of poetry, but especially spoken word because it permits me to free my mind and to reach others.

Q What is your favourite book, and favourite music?
It's the Bible, and not just because of my personal beliefs but because everybody agrees that it's one of the most well-written books, with many literary devices and figures of speech. I have learned to appreciate all kinds of music. Right now I listen to lots of reggae.

Q Do you have a favourite technology device?
My favourite technology device is definitely my laptop. I can't go anywhere without it.

Q What social networking site do you use the most, if any?
I like using Facebook. It's an economical way to stay in touch. However, I am strongly conscious that it doesn't replace physical contact.

Q Where do you get your news?
If it's not on the Internet, it's on my way to school by picking up the Metro newspaper on the bus.

Q How many text messages do you send/receive each day?
10.

From Scotts Valley, California: Josh Nicholson

Q Why did you choose UBC?
I chose to come to UBC because of the academic excellence and the opportunity to play baseball.

Q What extracurricular activity do you enjoy?
baseball, basketball, football, and snowboarding.

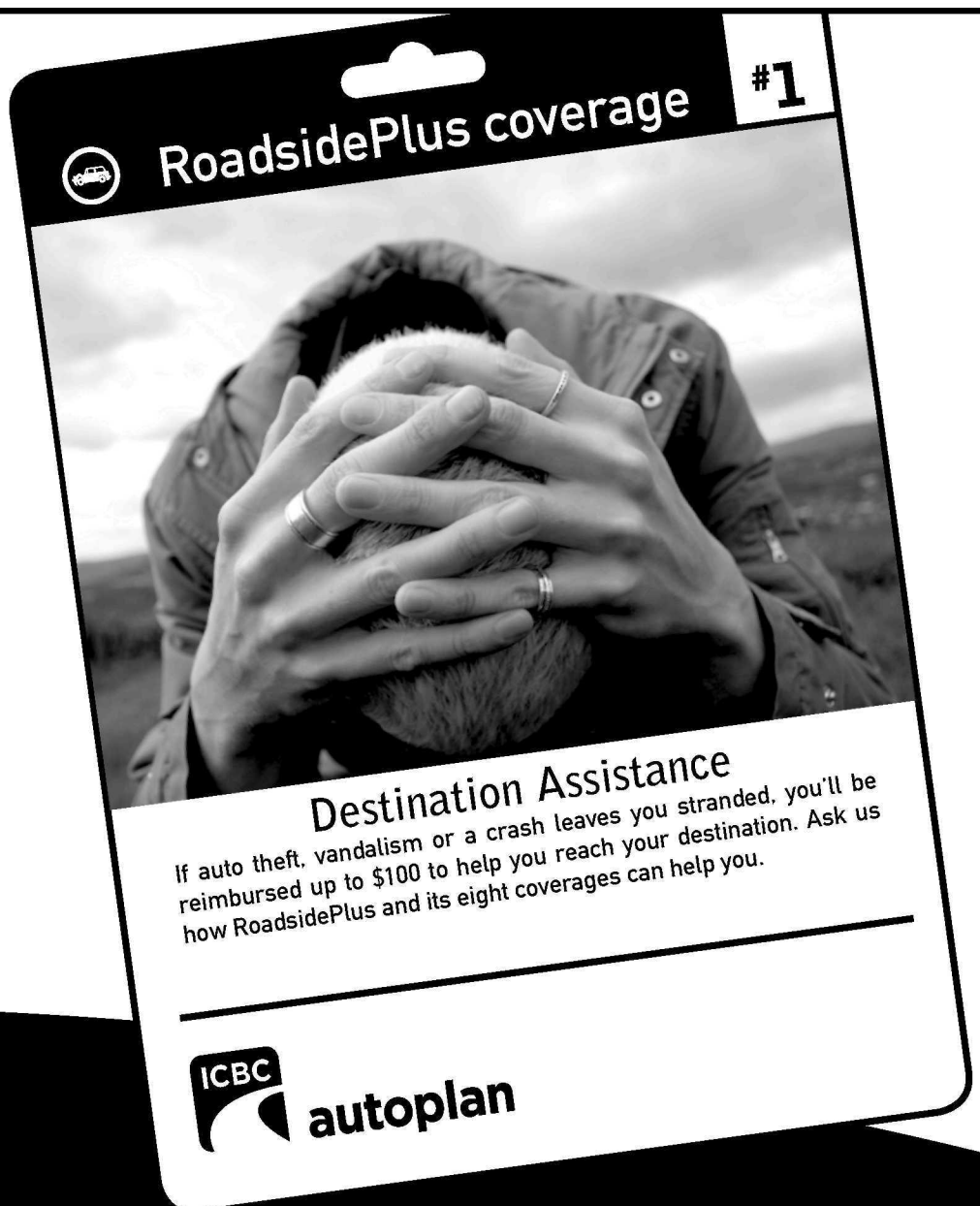
Q What is your favourite book and music?
My favorite book is ***Eragon*** by Christopher Paolini. I enjoy listening to hip hop/rap music from the 1980s and 90s.

Q Do you have a favourite technology device?
I like my iPod the most but also have a laptop and cellphone that I use frequently.

Q What social networking activity do you use the most?
Texting.

Q Where do you get your news?
On the Internet and I read the sports section of the newspaper.

Q How many text messages do you send/receive each day?
I probably send around 30 a day and receive about 30 a day. R



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