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UBC REPORTS

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Cancer and Sex

The Unspoken Harm BY HILARY THOMSON

When Linda Mercer underwent a radical hysterectomy to treat her cancer, she found herself and her husband struggling to regain a satisfying sex life.

It's not often discussed, but it's a fact: surgery that can save a cancer patient's life often robs her of sexual arousal and satisfaction.

Cervical cancer is the third most common cancer among women aged 20-49 years. In Canada, about 1,450 women are diagnosed and 420 die of cervical cancer each year.

At least 40 per cent of women who have had a radical hysterectomy to treat cervical cancer or endometrial cancer, like Mercer had, develop significant cancer-induced dysfunction related to genital arousal, says psychologist Lori Brotto, an assistant professor in UBC's department of obstetrics and gynecology.

In January 2005, Brotto will launch North America's first study to explore a psychoeducational treatment aimed at helping cancer survivors treated with radical hysterectomy regain their sexual health. The treatment integrates psychological counseling with exercises and information to help patients gain insights about feelings, thoughts and behaviour.

"This is an area that is virtually unstudied," says the 29-year-old Brotto. "Women's sexuality research in general is about 20 years behind similar investigations of men's sexuality because of taboos and an assumption that male and female responses are the same."

When Mercer was asked to participate in a pilot of the study, she jumped at the chance.

"The program offered me hope and being with a group of other women with cancer made me feel that I wasn't alone," says the 55-year old. "I got help in understanding both the positive and negative patterns of thoughts and ideas that affected my feelings – it was very concrete advice. Cancer is such a dark time, but you can enjoy having sex after cancer, there are treatments available – there's a light out there, and it's getting brighter."

Working with colleagues at BC Cancer Agency (BCCA), Brotto will recruit 66 women, aged 19-50 years old, with a history of cervical cancer treated by radical hysterectomy within the last five years. The research team, located at Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI) will work with survivors to offer counseling and record feedback about sexual function. These psychoeducational aspects of the program will be supplemented with treatment with sildenafil citrate, known commercially as Viagra ®.

Participants' progress will be followed for six months after their final session.

Cervical cancer affects the cervix or lower part of the uterus leading into the vagina. Early stage cervical cancer and endometrial (uterus lining) cancer is commonly treated by radical hysterectomy – removal of the entire uterus, adjacent lymph nodes as well as the upper one-third of the vagina.

Many women also have both ovaries and fallopian tubes removed, and some receive radiation/chemotherapy which may further impair sexual function. Estrogen production stops with removal of the ovaries, resulting in reduced elasticity of the vaginal wall, making intercourse painful.

In addition, surgery often damages the autonomic nerves that supply sensation to the genital area.

The psychological effects of hysterectomy can be numerous and complex and depression is common, says Brotto. Many survivors no longer feel like women because their genitalia have been altered. There is often the emotional loss of being unable to bear children. Survivors may have a different body image, seeing themselves as

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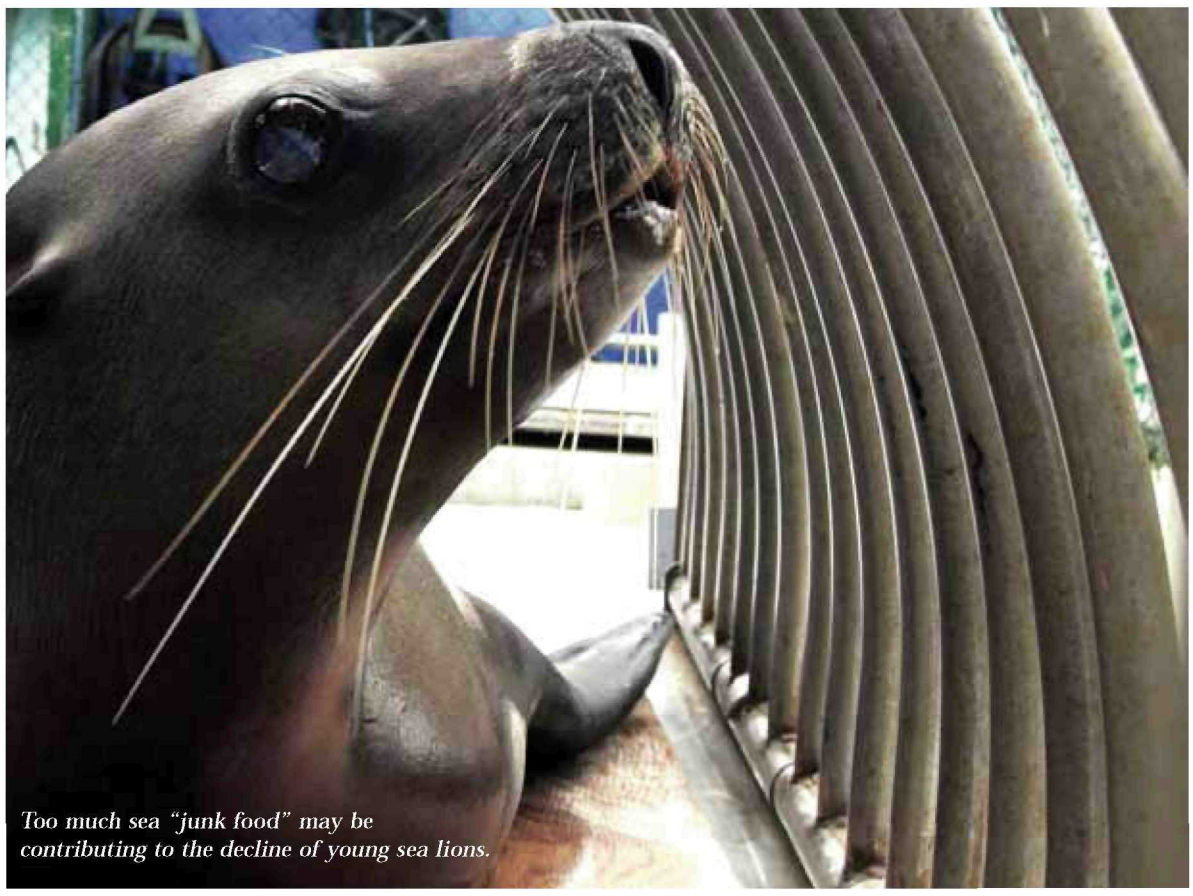
Couples often have difficulty regaining a satisfying sex life following hysterectomy for cancer.

PHOTO: MEL CURTIS



Too much sea "junk food" may be contributing to the decline of young sea lions.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ANDREW TRITES

A Less than Steller Diet

BY MICHELLE COOK

Adolescent Steller sea lions may not be consuming enough prey to satisfy their nutritional needs. But, unlike some young humans, it's not due to bad eating habits, and it could be contributing to their declining numbers in the wild, according to a recent study by two UBC researchers.

The number of Stellers has declined drastically in recent years with their worldwide population reduced by an estimated 85 percent since 1970. Although the exact cause is unknown, a change in their food sources, either due to fishing or environmental reasons, is thought to be a factor in the decline.

The study focused on whether young sea lions could physically adjust to eating lower quality prey when the high-energy fish, such as herring, that normally make up their diet are not available or in limited supply.

"There were questions about whether the quality and abundance of fish were affecting the population of young Steller sea lions in the wild," says David Rosen, a research associate who co-authored the study for the North Pacific Universities Marine Mammal Research Consortium with zoology professor Andrew Trites.

"As a physiologist, a logical question for me seemed to be that even if they had the behavioural instinct to change their food intake, was that limited by a physical capacity to process the food?" says Rosen.

The year-long study, done with five captive yearling Stellers at the Vancouver Aquarium, was designed to determine the physiological – not behavioural – factors that influence the amount of fish that young sea lions can eat. The goal was to understand how changes in the availability and type of fish affect their total food intake. The study was done with young animals because they are thought to be the portion of the Steller population most at risk, and they have high energy requirements.

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IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC Media Coverage in November 2004. COMPILED BY BRIAN LIN

The World Comes to Canada to Learn

The number of Americans studying at Canadian universities jumped 29 per cent last year, contributing to a staggering 145 per cent increase since 1997/98, according to a survey conducted by the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C.

UBC saw a 28 per cent jump in American undergraduates this fall, to 420 students, reports ***CanWest News Service.*** That's a 166 per cent increase since 2001 and a 303 per cent jump in five years.

Canada is also one of the most popular destinations for British students seeking education abroad. UBC currently has 72 Brits on Master or PhD programs, including fisheries PhD student **Louisa Wood**, from Cheshire.

Wood told ***The Independent*** that her UBC experience has underlined the virtues of moving outside the UK. "I believe that successfully graduating from different educational systems greatly enhances employability, research skills and academic networking," she said.

Just Say No

There has been a backlash against the cost, risk and side effects of medication. UBC pharmacologist **James Wright** warns against the over-dependence on prescription drugs.

"We have this idea that we can pop a pill and solve everything. It is craziness," Wright told ***Forbes.com.*** "People are dying from taking too many drugs at too high doses for mild conditions where they have little chance of benefit"

Wright also raised concerns over Statins, a top-selling drug sold under

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

UBC VP Research Indira Samarasekera has been selected as the University of Alberta's first female president.

names such as Lipitor and Zocor, saying its side effects have not received adequate scrutiny.

"The enzyme these drugs block is critical for lots of activities in the body," Wright told ***BusinessWeek.*** "So to think that it is going to be all for the good is very naïve."

To Touch a Coelacanth

UBC fisheries scientist **Scott McKinley** will come face to face with some real live dinosaurs next spring when he boards a Canadian-built submarine shaped like a bubble, 200 metres below the surface of the Indian Ocean.

McKinley, who leads the first-ever scientific venture to track the elusive coelacanth, an ancient fish that's been swimming in the deep, dark waters off the African coast for about 400 million years, unveiled his plans last month at the Vancouver Aquarium.

"I wish I could touch one," McKinley told ***The Globe and Mail.*** The five-year research project is estimated to cost $5 million.

VP Research in a Class by Herself

UBC VP Research **Indira Samarasekera** has been chosen to be President of the University of Alberta.

In a ***Globe and Mail*** profile, UBC President **Martha Piper** was quoted saying that Samarasekera "has had 'president' written all over her for some time."

UBC microbiologist **Brett Finlay** was shocked back in 2000 when Samarasekera took the job as VP Research. "Everybody wondered why the hell she took an administrative job as vice president when she was such a good researcher," Finlay told ***The Globe and Mail.*** "She's a superstar in the engineering world."

Directors Education Program launched

UBC's Sauder School of Business joined forces with SFU Business School and the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management last month in launching the first **Directors Education Program** (DEP) in the province.

The program is designed to give people who have completed the Executive MBA program an additional boost, reports ***Ming Pao Daily.*** Originally established last November at the Rotman School of Business in partnership with ICD Corporate Governance College, the program offers important resources for regulators, investors, directors and government officials. □

UBC United Way Campaign Update

As the 2004 UBC United Way campaign wraps up this month, volunteers and donors continue to support this growing campaign.

"With over $370,000 raised we have achieved 70 per cent of our fundraising goal to support social programs and services in the Lower Mainland," Stan Auerbach, this year's campaign chair, says. "With one month left we are confident that we will reach our goal!"

A number of events both on and off campus have contributed to raising awareness about this year's campaign.

"For the third year in a row, UBC volunteers participated in United Way's 'Days of Caring' program for a day. A group of us visited Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society for a day of painting, power-washing and learning more about one of the agencies that receives core funding from United Way," Auerbach says.

"Combine this outing with on-campus events like bake sales, silent auctions, United Way presentations and visits from agency speakers – and we've been very successful at raising awareness of both the campaign this year and the needs of communities across the Lower Mainland.

"Our campaign would not be as successful as it is without the tremendous hard work and support of the volunteers on campus. They deserve a huge thank you!" adds Auerbach.

Community members still interested in supporting this year's campaign are encouraged to donate before December 9 – the deadline for final prize draws, including a draw for two flight tickets on Air Canada. Donations will be accepted until the end of the tax year, December 31. For more information on the campaign, visit www.unitedway.ubc.ca or phone 604-822-8929. □

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Bridging Troubled Waters

UBC law professor examines how the creative arts can resolve cross-cultural conflicts. BY ERICA SMISHEK

Music may soothe the savage beast. But can it help warring ethnic youth gangs avoid violence?

UBC law professor Michelle LeBaron thinks so and will spend the next three years exploring ways in which creative arts-based practices can be used to bridge differences and resolve cross-cultural conflicts in Vancouver.

LeBaron anticipates the study could build connections among community agencies, arts organizations, educators and conflict resolution practitioners and go a long way to address local intercultural conflicts. This could include assisting relations between Quebecois Canadian street youth and the police and business communities; the established Chinese-Canadian community and more recent Chinese-Canadian immigrants; First Nations youth and police; Muslim-Canadians and other communities post-9/11; or street youth culture, club culture and the more affluent businesses and residents of "new neighbourhoods" like Yaletown.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Michelle LeBaron's dispute resolution research will build new community partnerships in Vancouver.

Supported by a $145,000 research grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), it's the first Canadian study of its kind and LeBaron says "just the beginning of the wave" of research on creativity and conflict resolution.

"So much of law and dispute resolution puts tremendous faith in the ability of adversaries to talk together in reasonable, calm ways," says LeBaron, director of the UBC program on dispute resolution. "But when the problem stems from part of our identity, our world view, our meaning-making systems, you can have all the 'rational' discussions in the world but you won't reach common ground because people have different systems of rationality. We need ways to move through conflicts that recognize and work with our cultural differences.

"Different people have different ways of conceptualizing what conflict is and how it should be addressed."

LeBaron has spent more than 20 years researching, teaching and consulting around the world in dispute resolution. A graduate of the UBC Faculty of Law in 1980, she joined the faculty in 2003 after 12 years at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution and the Women's Studies program at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

In the early 1990s, she directed the Multiculturalism and Dispute Resolution Project at the University of Victoria, and has practised as a family law and commercial mediator. She continues to consult on organizational and intergroup conflict, and to help people design dispute resolution systems to address difficult conflicts.

A poet and creative non-fiction writer who began her undergraduate studies as a music major, LeBaron believes the arts can help people get beyond just the analytic and intellectual to use more of themselves in addressing conflict.

"[The arts] loosen us up from ruts we get into. They invoke our imagination, our emotional intelligence, our spirituality, even our physical selves. We have to get out of our heads and recognize we need our entire bodies to resolve conflict."

LeBaron explains that turning points in conflict resolution, those moments that relax the stalemate, often come from people experiencing each other's humanity.

LeBaron points to "Peace it Together," a project organized by Vancouver activist Reena Lazar that brought 10 Jewish and Palestinian teenagers to Vancouver for a 17-day camp this past summer. The teens participated in workshops using art, music and theatre as conflict resolution and also spent five days at a wilderness retreat on Indian Arm. LeBaron helped design the project and led some of the workshops.

"Through drawing, sculpting, mime and other activities, we helped them relax and talk about their vision for the process. Later, we used art to help them reflect on what they'd learned, on how they intended to integrate these new relationships in their lives when they got back home to the Middle East. One of the sculptures had people with hands blocking them, resisting them.

"For many of these youths, there were internal dilemmas – grappling with how to integrate the friendships they developed here amidst family, religious and social pressures back home."

Though not an official part of her study, LeBaron says the project was an opportunity to put creativity to work with youth from two diverse communities mired in a long history of conflict.

Her research will include two pilot projects – one involving photography and videography, the other participatory theatre – to map community issues, help people learn more about these issues and recognize common ground. Following each pilot, reflection sessions will identify outcomes, strengths and weaknesses of the selected arts-based approaches.

An eventual published project manual and pilot project reports will highlight achievements and help identify future initiatives and funding needs to support ongoing arts-based initiatives in Vancouver communities.

"It would be great if the project could help bring artistic, community development, intercultural relations and mediation practitioners closer together and spark some creative synergies and partnerships," says Steven Dang, a PhD student at UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning and member of the research team.

Dang believes such collaborations could help create "stronger, healthier and more inclusive communities." □

Cancer and Sex

continued from page 1

dehumanized and just a medical object. Many avoid looking in the mirror because their own body now repels them.

In addition to anxiety over their own and partners' response or lack of it, women are also fearful about a recurrence of cancer. Many women believe that intercourse can cause cancer to recur or that they can pass cancerous cells to their partner, says Brotto.

Her new study will expand on the pilot which tested the effectiveness of a treatment manual that contains information and exercises to help restore healthy sexual functioning. Brotto hopes to develop the manual so it can be used by both women and health-care providers.

"The link between sexual health and quality of life is well established," says Brotto, a Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research Scholar. "I hope this treatment can improve women's sexual well-being which in turn can lead to a better quality of life for cancer survivors."

The project has been funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Government of Canada's agency for health research. CIHR provides leadership and support to more than 8,000 researchers and research teams in every province in Canada.

BCCA, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, provides cancer care across the province.

VCHRI is a joint venture between UBC and Vancouver Coastal Health that promotes development of new researchers and research activity. □

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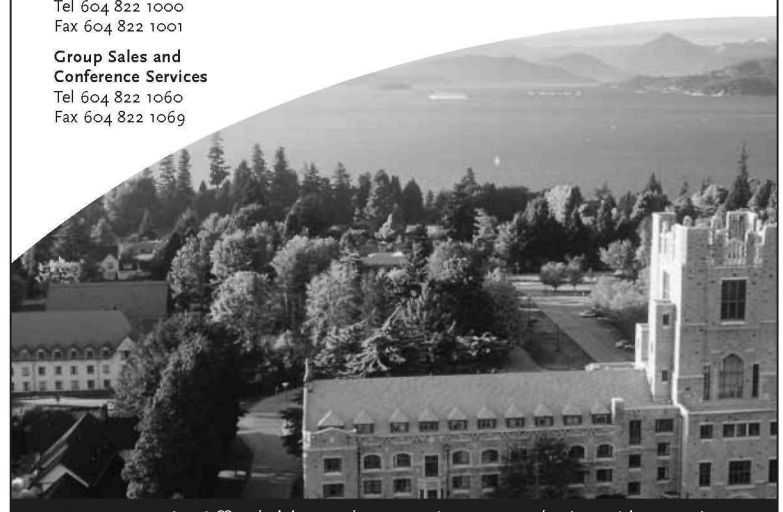

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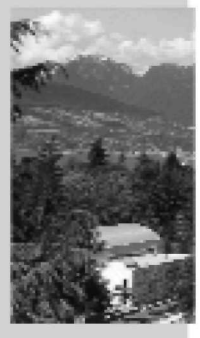

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UBC Program is Helping War Victims be Heard

BY MICHELLE COOK

PHOTO: ALISON LAWTON

Erin Baines (centre) walks with some of northern Uganda's "night commuters" to better understand their experience of living in a war-torn region.

Erin Baines was walking with some of Uganda's "night commuters" in the town of Kitgum when she got the call about the deadly ambush.

Night commuters are the estimated 40,000 children who stream into towns near the country's northern border every evening at sunset seeking refuge from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a rebel group notorious for abducting young people and killing unarmed citizens in its brutal 18-year war against the Ugandan government.

Members of Baines' research team told her they had been riding in a convoy on the outskirts of town when they came across a group of civilians who had been attacked by rebels while trying to transport food to market.

"This is the risk people take when they try to have a livelihood," says Baines, the academic director of UBC's conflict and development program at the Liu Institute for Global Issues. "One man – a father with small children and the sole provider for his extended family – was killed. Several others had been beaten by rebels. One 16-year-old girl was shot in the stomach."

Baines rushed to the local hospital to meet the group, and sat with the wounded girl during her 24-hour wait for medical attention. Back in her office in Vancouver, Baines reflects on the incident that occurred in August this year.

"I held her hand for a long time and she just moaned and whimpered and you could see how much pain she was in. I still don't know whether she lived or not," Baines says.

All this was happening, she adds, at the same time the Ugandan government was saying it was close to defeating the LRA.

The anomaly between the official version of events and the actual experiences of the millions of people living in war-torn regions like northern Uganda lies at the heart of what Baines, 35, is trying to achieve with the conflict and development program.

Established in 2000, the program's goal is to partner with civil society organizations (CSOs) worldwide to conduct hands-on research and advocacy work on how governments and the United Nations respond to violent internal state conflicts and their aftermath. CSOs are non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that include charities, trade unions, faith-based organizations, indigenous peoples' movements and foundations.

"In any conflict situation, there are always many versions of the truth but the one that is always the most dominant is the government's," Baines explains. "So, if it's possible to listen to those most affected by the conflict – whether that's the widow or orphan or human rights worker in the conflict zone – what our program is doing is giving these people a space in which to reflect on their experiences, gathering that local knowledge and information together, and then working with them to write it down so that it can be used to document that they actually exist.

"For these people, just being able to say, 'this happened on this day or that day' is very important to counter the massive amount of information that's out there that attracts attention away from what is really going on."

The program, currently operating only in Africa, gathers and disseminates documentation in several ways. These include workshops like one held in Vancouver last month to honour the reconciliation and re-building work being done by survivors of Rwandan genocide. It also includes reports co-written by program researchers and CSO partners, advocacy work, visits to affected areas and even documentary films.

"'. . . a couple of older women just threw up their hands and said 'what can we say to you? We're poor. We're hungry....Our orphans will never go to school. There's reprisals and violence. How can we move on?'"

The information is then shared with other CSOs and Canadian and foreign governments with the goal of informing their policy decisions on humanitarian issues and approaches.

"In a way, we are bridging local-level knowledge from those most affected by conflicts with the international actors and hoping there's a two-way exchange of information," Baines says.

Although it's too early to tell whether the work is influencing high-level decision makers, the program's African partners are already seeing results.

Michael Otim is the program co-ordinator for the Gulu District NGO Forum, an umbrella organization supporting the work of several CSOs in northern Uganda. The Forum has partnered with the conflict and development program on several initiatives including a documentary film, two reports on the situation in the region and an international advocacy trip to several countries to increase awareness of Uganda's internal conflict.

Otim says the program has helped to raise the Forum's profile internationally and nationally, establish it as a resource for visitors and researchers to the region, and strengthen the network of northern Ugandan CSOs.

The result is an "increased awareness about the problems of the conflict in northern Uganda as well as increased humanitarian assistance by the international community," Otim says. "In addition, it has strengthened the position of the CSOs as 'watch dogs' in the north by exposing certain ills that communities are faced with as a result of the ongoing conflict."

Despite a history of tensions between countries in the region, Baines hopes to further develop regional networks of CSOs to share information and exchange experiences common to all.

One partner who welcomes the approach is Harriet N. Musoke, who works with ISIS-Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange in Kampala, Uganda. She attended the Rwanda genocide survivors workshop in Vancouver and found the lessons learned from another nation's conflict very useful for her organization's efforts.

"There was a lot to learn, especially of how people from one country can look at the same conflict or war differently," Musoke says. "Creating space for people to heal, retell their stories and learn what others are doing in other countries to maintain peace was a useful forum."

It was a trip to Rwanda that changed the course of Baines' work.

Originally from Halifax, Baines' doctorate at Dalhousie University focused on humanitarian emergencies and refugee populations in Central America and the Balkans. Then she was asked to go to Rwanda, post-genocide, to conduct a study.

"Everything I had learned up to that point wasn't helpful in understanding what had happened in Rwanda and the aftermath and effects. It was a UN community that had failed miserably to protect these people and continued to fail 10 years after."

On the trip, Baines met a group of women and orphans in a village hard hit by the genocide. During a discussion about their lives and the assistance they'd received from aid programs, Baines felt them becoming increasingly exasperated by her questions.

"Finally, a couple of older women just threw up their hands and said 'what can we say to you? We're poor. We're hungry. We have AIDS. Our kids are never going to go to school. Not that they're our kids. Our orphans will never go to school. There's reprisals and violence. How can we move on?'"

The reality of the survivors' living conditions sent Baines "into a little bit of shock" and had a profound effect on her academically and personally. She no longer wanted to do research that "sat on a shelf." She made a shift to more hands-on academic work and took on a personal commitment to engage with and exchange ideas to support women and children like those she met in Rwanda.

Baines, who arrived at UBC in 2001, thinks solutions to humanitarian crises like the ones she witnessed in central Africa are possible but not without radical structural change at the international level. She is critical of the big UN agencies responsible for humanitarian work as well as national governments in Africa and abroad for approaches she says are reactive, ineffective and institutionalized. As a result, program designs often miss the most critical dynamics of the peace process at the local level.

She cites the current situation in northern Uganda as a classic example of the international community's flawed approach. Ninety per cent of the population there lives in displacement camps without basic rights, but there is a movement by traditional leaders in the camps to re-introduce traditional justice, counselling and cleansing ceremonies for returning fighters. They feel this local response is effective, yet the International Criminal Court (ICC) recently indicated it wants to try LRA leader Joseph Kony and others for crimes according to its guidelines.

"The traditional leaders have very set ideas of what justice and reconciliation is that is very different from the international community's ideas," Baines explains. "In Uganda, they worked hard to get an amnesty agreement [that would allow re-introduction of traditional justice], they feel it's working and feel it's the only path to reconciliation but the ICC, if it doesn't exercise sensitivity to these local initiatives, may very well undermine the peace process.

"Local leaders fear the timing of the ICC will scare away commanders from returning under the amnesty act. That's why we need to listen more and do a major re-think about applying universal principles."

What would work, Baines says, is listening to what people at the centre of conflict are saying. Based on findings from workshops and ground work done last year, Baines found that when the State or international community is unwilling or unable to protect citizens, they find ways to protect themselves.

"There's all sorts of coping mechanisms and people are amazing in their will to survive, and not just survive but keep their culture and their dignity," she says.

This was best summed up for her at the funeral for the man killed in the ambush outside Kitgum. The next day, the entire community was mobilized and well organized to hold it.

"People told us 'this happens so much we're ready for it. As a community we pull together, it's the only way we can cope and pull through it,'" Baines recalls.

"We have to stop talking amongst each other and start listening vastly more to them, and design our programs and interventions around their existing coping mechanisms, encourage them to come up with their own solutions and carry them out." □

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Call for Comments

Proposed revisions to Policy #85, entitled "Scholarly Integrity" were presented to the Board of Governors for information and review on November 23, 2004.

Policy #85 was approved in 1995 and last revised in 2001. The changes made in 2001 were de minimus revisions to respond to recently introduced requirements from federal research funding agencies. Over the last three years, the Scholarly Integrity Investigative Committee and the administration have identified areas of the Policy where further changes are warranted. In general, the proposed changes bring the Policy closer to actual practice and attempt to simplify and clarify the wording in the Policy.

The next stage in this process is to seek advice, guidance and comments from the University community. Please submit feedback to the Office of the University Counsel at **university.counsel@ubc.ca**. All feedback should be submitted by **4:30 pm on Thursday, December 16, 2004.**

Subject to feedback from this public consultation process, these proposed documents will be submitted to the Board of Governors with a request for final approval at its regularly scheduled meeting in January of 2005.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Policy No: **85**

Approval Date: January 1995

Last Revision: January 2005 [Anticipated]

Responsible Executive: Vice-President, Research

TITLE: SCHOLARLY INTEGRITY

Background & Purposes:

The University community has always recognized the necessity for maintaining the highest ethical standards in the conduct of Scholarly Activities. Individuals are expected to assume direct responsibility for the intellectual and ethical quality of their work. The University of British Columbia has developed this Policy to communicate expectations, increase awareness of integrity issues, and encourage scholars (be they students or members of faculty and staff) to assume personal responsibility.

The purposes of this Policy are:
- to promote scholarly integrity among scholars, in order to maintain and enhance the value of impartiality that universities offer society;
- to proscribe activities which breach generally acceptable standards of scholarly conduct; and
- to provide a process for dealing with allegations of Scholarly Misconduct quickly.

1. SCOPE

1.1. This Policy applies to all full-time and part-time faculty, staff and students of the University.

2. GENERAL

2.1. Individuals are personally responsible for the intellectual and ethical quality of their work and must ensure that their Scholarly Activities meet University standards.

2.2. Members involved in Scholarly Activities must not commit Scholarly Misconduct, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, must:
- evaluate the work of students in a fair manner;
- give appropriate recognition, including authorship, to those who have made a material intellectual contribution to the contents of the publication or research project, and only those people;
- fairly allocate interest of inventorship in proportion to the intellectual contribution of the contributors;
- use unpublished work of other researchers and scholars only with permission and with due acknowledgement;
- use archival material in accordance with the rules of the archives;
- obtain the permission of the author before using new information, concepts or data originally obtained through access to confidential manuscripts or applications for funds for research or training as a result of processes such as peer review;
- conform to the University's policies and procedures on research including those involving working with humans, animals, biohazards, radioisotopes and environmental compliance;
- use scholarly and scientific rigour and integrity in obtaining and analyzing data, and in reporting and publishing results;
- use research funds in accordance with the terms and conditions under which those funds were received, including terms related to confidentiality, publication and intellectual property;
- disclose to the University, journals, sponsors, funding agencies or those requesting opinions, any conflict of interest, financial or other, that might influence their decisions on whether the individual should be asked to review manuscripts or applications, test products or be permitted to undertake work sponsored from outside sources; and
- respect the intellectual property rights of others in the conduct of research, the development of academic materials, and the dissemination of results.

2.3. The University will investigate allegations of Scholarly Misconduct in a timely, impartial and accountable manner and take appropriate action, including any necessary steps to preserve evidence, when it becomes aware of allegations of Scholarly Misconduct.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. "Fabrication" means invention or forgery of research data or citations.

3.2. "Falsification" means alteration, selective omission or misrepresentation of research data or citations.

3.3. "Investigative Committee" means a committee appointed by the Vice-President for the purpose of investigating a particular allegation.

3.4. "Plagiarism" means the presentation of the thoughts, writings or inventions of another as one's own without scholarly attribution.

3.5. "Principal Investigator" means the person who has primary responsibility for a research project. In the case of a project funded by an external or internal grant, this will normally be the holder of the grant. In the case of a project that is not funded, this will normally be the initiator of the project. The Principal Investigator is usually the supervisor of the research team (which may include other researchers) and is usually a faculty member.

3.6. "Scholarly Activity" means teaching, research, scholarship or artistic/creative activity in the course of a faculty, staff or student body member's work or studies at the University and includes activities that would be appropriate for inclusion on a curriculum vitae or in an Annual Report to a Department Head.

3.7. "Scholarly Misconduct" means conduct that deviates significantly from that which is acceptable within the relevant scholarly community and includes without limitation:
- Plagiarism;
- Fabrication or Falsification of research data;
- conflict of scholarly interest, such as suppressing the publication of the work of another scholar;
- the unfair evaluation of a student's work;
- failure to obtain approvals for research involving animal and human subjects, biohazards, radioisotopes, environmental effects, or failure to conduct such research in accordance with the protocols prescribed;
- conduct that contravenes guidelines or procedures on scholarly integrity that are adopted by a faculty for scholarly communities within that faculty;

but does not include any matter involving only an honest difference of opinion, mistake or an honest error of judgment.

3.8. "Vice President" means either the Vice-President, Research or the Vice President Academic who is the central point of contact for a particular allegation.

PROCEDURES

Approved: May 2001
Revised: January 2005 (Anticipated)

Pursuant to Policy #1, "Procedures may be amended by the President, provided the new procedures conform to the approved policy. Such amendments are reported at the next meeting of the Board of Governors and are incorporated in the next publication of the UBC Policy and Procedure Handbook."

1. GENERAL

1.1. Acts of Scholarly Misconduct may be committed with varying degrees of wilfulness. It is recognized that the borderline between scholarly incompetence, carelessness and negligence, on the one hand, and intentional dishonesty, on the other, may be very narrow. The result is objectionable in any case, even if different degrees of discipline are appropriate.

1.2. Careful supervision of new members of faculty and staff by their supervisors and Department Heads is in the best interest of the University, the supervisor, the new member and the scholarly/scientific community. The complexity of scholarly and scientific methods, the necessity for caution in interpreting possibly ambiguous data, the need for advanced analysis, and the variety of protocols for reporting research data all require an active role for the supervisor in the guidance of new members of faculty and staff.

1.3. Principal Investigators and co-investigators who have failed to exercise reasonable care in directing and supervising researchers who have committed Scholarly Misconduct may share in the blame and be subject to discipline accordingly.

1.4. Research conditions for all involved in a research team should be outlined in a letter from the Principal Investigator before team members become engaged. Entitlement to ownership of primary data, software, and other products of research can vary according to the circumstances under which research is conducted. A shared understanding about ownership should be reached among collaborators, especially between supervisors and their graduate students, before research is undertaken. To assist Principal Investigators in documenting these understandings, sample letters to colleagues, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students about such issues as compensation, supervision, authorship, records of data, ownership and/or use of data, publication rights, and commercialization, are available from the Office of Research Services. The Faculty of Graduate Studies will send notices about this requirement to all students accepted for graduate studies and their supervisors at the time of admission. These notices and a copy of the letter from the supervisor to the graduate student detailing the terms above are filed in the student file in the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

1.5. A factor in many cases of alleged Scholarly Misconduct has been the absence of a complete set of verifiable data. The retention by the University of accurately recorded and retrievable results is of utmost importance. All primary data must be recorded in clear, adequate, original and chronological form. In scientific departments, a record of the primary data, regardless of ownership, must be maintained in the laboratory and cannot be removed. Original data for any given study must be retained in the unit of origin for at least five years after the work is published or otherwise presented (if the form of the data permits this, and if assurances have not been given that data would be destroyed to assure anonymity). Supervisors and collaborators will have unrestricted access to all data and products of their collaborative research (if assurances have not been given that access to the data and/or products would be restricted to assure anonymity).

1.6. All authors listed in a publication should have been involved in the research. Each is expected to have made a significant intellectual or practical contribution, understand the significance of the conclusions, and be able to share responsibility for the content and reliability of the reported data. The concept of "honorary authorship" is unacceptable. In the event that a researcher involved in the research disagrees with the content or conclusions of a publication, the Principal Investigator may proceed to publish the results and the dissenting researcher may elect to have his or her name removed from the list of authors of that publication. The dissenting researcher may independently write his or her own publication (so long as the data has not been destroyed nor assurances given that access to the data and/or products would be restricted, to assure anonymity).

1.7. A gradual diffusion of responsibility for multi-authored or collaborative studies could lead to the publication of papers for which no single author is prepared to take full responsibility. Two safeguards in the publication of accurate reports are the active participation of each co-author in ascertaining which part of a manuscript falls within his/her specialty area and the designation of one author who takes responsibility through due diligence for the validity of the entire manuscript.

1.8. All inventors listed on a patent application must have made an inventive contribution to the invention. Each is expected to have made a significant intellectual contribution.

2. ALLEGATIONS

2.1. The initial report of alleged Scholarly Misconduct may come from various sources inside or outside the University. For example, the allegation may come from a member of faculty or staff, a University administrator, a granting source, a student, a member of the general public, a media report or an anonymous source. The ability of the University to investigate an allegation may be hampered if it is from an anonymous or uncooperative source and investigations are always subject to principles of natural justice.

2.2. Allegations of Scholarly Misconduct received by the University are forwarded to the Vice-President, Research. The Vice-President, Research is the central point of contact for receiving allegations, as he/she is normally sufficiently at arm's length so as to be viewed as impartial and free of personal conflicts of interest. If the Vice-President, Research feels it would be inappropriate to receive a particular allegation for whatever reason, he/she may refer the allegation to the Vice President Academic.

3. RESPONSE TO ALLEGATION

3.1. Upon receipt and review of an allegation, the Vice-President may:
- request that the relevant unit of the University review the matter and report to the Vice-President; or
- appoint an individual to review the matter and report to the Vice-President.

3.2. After receipt of any report regarding an allegation, the Vice-President may:
- dismiss the allegation;
- request additional information or investigation prior to making a determination on the matter; or
- inform the person(s) named in the allegation in writing of the allegation and appoint an Investigative Committee, if in the judgement of the Vice-President the allegation has sufficient substance to warrant an investigation.

4. INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE

4.1. When the Vice-President has determined that an Investigative Committee is warranted, he or she will form an Investigative Committee by appointing three experienced academics, which may include emeritus academics or academics external to the University. One of the members will be appointed as the Chair of the Investigative Committee. A maximum of one member of the Investigative Committee may be external to the University. The members of the Investigative Committee must be at arms length from both the individual(s) alleged to have committed the Scholarly Misconduct and those making the allegation.

4.2. The mandate of the Investigative Committee is to find on a balance of probabilities whether Scholarly Misconduct has occurred, and if so, its extent and seriousness.

4.3. The Investigative Committee may review any Scholarly Activity relevant to the allegation, including any abstracts, papers or other methods of scholarly communication. A special audit of accounts may also be performed on the sponsored research accounts of the involved individual(s). Individual(s) may be required to prove credentials.

4.4. The Investigative Committee has the right to see any University documents and question any student or member of faculty and staff during its investigation. All members of faculty, staff and students must cooperate fully with the Investigative Committee and make available any documents requested by the Investigative Committee in the course of its investigation.

4.5. The Investigative Committee must ensure that it is cognizant of all real or apparent conflicts of interest on the part of those involved in the inquiry, including both the individual(s) alleged to have committed the Scholarly Misconduct and those making the allegation.

4.6. The Investigative Committee may seek impartial expert opinions, as it deems necessary or appropriate, to ensure the investigation is thorough and authoritative.

4.7. In the investigation process, the individual(s) alleged to have committed the Scholarly Misconduct have the right to know the allegations under investigation and to respond fully.

5. REPORT OF THE INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE

5.1. Upon completion of its review of the evidence gathered in the investigation, the Investigative Committee will prepare a written report addressed to the Vice-President on its finding and recommendations. The report will contain:
- the full allegation;
- a list of the witness(es) who gave evidence;
- a summary of relevant evidence;
- a determination of whether or not Scholarly Misconduct occurred;
- if Scholarly Misconduct has occurred, its extent and seriousness; and
- recommendations on any disciplinary or remedial action to be taken in the matter in question and/or changes to procedures or practices to avoid similar situations in the future.

5.2. Recommendations of the Investigative Committee may include, without limitation:
- withdrawing all pending relevant publications;
- notifying publications in which the involved research was reported;
- redefining the status of the involved individuals;
- ensuring that the units involved are informed of appropriate practices for promoting the proper conduct of research;
- informing any outside funding agency of the results of the inquiry and of actions to be taken;
- recommending any disciplinary action to be taken.

5.3. Prior to completing its final report, the Investigative Committee will provide the individual(s) alleged to have committed the Scholarly Misconduct and those making the allegation with an opportunity to review and comment on a draft report.

5.4. The Investigative Committee will normally deliver its final report to the University within four months of the Vice-President instructing the Investigative Committee to investigate.

6. AUTHORITY OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT

6.1. In cases of collaborative research involving other institutions, the Vice-President may modify these Procedures to facilitate the conduct of parallel or joint investigations.

6.2. The Vice-President has the authority to:
- close down and declare "off limits" facilities used for research;
- protect the administration of University and outside funds involved in the research;
- obtain and retain relevant documentation (e.g. lab notes, computer disks, hard drives, proof of credentials) related to an investigation; and
- request that members of the University community appear before an Investigative Committee and answer the Investigative Committee's questions or supply materials to it.

7. DECISION OF VICE-PRESIDENT

7.1. If the Investigative Committee determines that Scholarly Misconduct has not occurred, the Vice-President will make a final determination on what action, if any, is necessary in light of the Investigative Committee's report and will communicate that decision to the President, the individual alleged to have committed the Scholarly Misconduct, and the Dean(s) and Department Head(s) of the individual(s) named in the allegation. In such instances, every effort will be made by the Vice-President to protect the reputations of the individual(s) alleged to have committed the Scholarly Misconduct from undue harm.

7.2. If the Investigative Committee determines that Scholarly Misconduct has occurred, the Vice-President will forward the Investigative Committee's report:
- in the case of a student, to the President. The President will make a final determination of what discipline or other action, if any, is appropriate and will communicate that decision in writing to the student and the Vice-President.
- in the case of a faculty member, to the President and the relevant Dean and/or Department Head. The Dean, Department Head or the President (consistent with the provisions of any relevant collective agreement) will make a final determination of what discipline or other action, if any, is appropriate and will communicate that decision in writing to the faculty member and the Vice-President.
- in the case of a member of staff, to the relevant Director or Department Head. The Director or Department Head (consistent with the provisions of any relevant collective agreement) will make a final determination of what discipline or other action, if any, is appropriate and will communicate that decision in writing to the member of staff and the Vice-President.

7.3. In all cases the Vice-President will send copies of the Investigative Committee's report and the final decision within seven days of receipt of the final decision to the President and the relevant Department Heads, Deans or Directors of those involved in the allegation.

7.4. Where Scholarly Misconduct is found to have occurred, the Vice-President will send copies of the Investigative Committee's report and the final decision within thirty days of receipt of the final decision to any organization that has funded the research.

7.5. The Office of the Vice-President, Research will periodically prepare and publish anonymized summaries of decisions for the purpose of educating University members on acceptable practices for scholarly integrity and research ethics.

8. APPEAL OF DISCIPLINE

8.1. Discipline imposed for Scholarly Misconduct may be appealed:
- by faculty members in a union, through the grievance procedure outlined in the relevant collective agreement(s);
- by staff members in a union, through the grievance procedure outlined in the relevant collective agreement(s);
- by students, through the Senate Committee on Student Appeals on Student Discipline.

9. GOOD FAITH

9.1. In all proceedings and subsequent to a final decision, the University will make every effort to protect those making an allegation in good faith from reprisals or harassment.

9.2. The University will take disciplinary action against individuals found to have purposefully made false allegations.

Call for Comments

Proposed revisions to Policy #90, entitled "Over-Expenditure on Research and Specific Purpose Trust Project/Grants" were presented to the Board of Governors for information and review on November 23, 2004.

The current policy has been in force since November 1991. In the light of significant increases in research volumes at UBC over the last several years, greater clarification of the Policy and the roles and responsibilities of various university personnel is required to ensure that UBC exercises prudent fiscal management over research funds. Over-expenditures have grown in conjunction with increasing research volumes and it was seen as both necessary and desirable to ensure that there is an appropriate mechanism in place for handling over-expenditures that are not resolved on a timely basis.

The proposed revisions have been drafted as a result of a lengthy process of discussion by a committee of 11 members, drawn from a broad cross-section of the University community.

In addition to the above committee members, Research and Trust Accounting, the Office of Research Services and the University Industry Liaison Office have provided input to the draft. Following the work of the committee, the draft was distributed to the Associate Deans of Research, and was discussed at a meeting of Department Heads within the Faculty of Medicine and at the Committee of Deans. Incorporating feedback from the above actions, discussions then took place between the responsible Vice-Presidents to ensure that the Policy meets the needs of UBC as a whole.

The next stage in this process is to seek advice, guidance and comments from the University community. Please submit feedback to the Office of the University Counsel at **university.counsel@ubc.ca**. All feedback should be submitted by **4:30 pm on Thursday, December 16, 2004**.

Subject to feedback from this public consultation process, these proposed documents will be submitted to the Board of Governors with a request for final approval at its regularly scheduled meeting in January of 2005.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Policy No: **90**

Approval Date: November 1991

Last Revision: January 2005 [Anticipated]

Responsible Executive: Vice President Academic and Provost
Vice-President, Administration and Finance
Vice-President, Research

TITLE: OVER-EXPENDITURE ON RESEARCH AND SPECIFIC PURPOSE TRUST PROJECT/GRANTS

Background & Purposes:

The University administers large volumes of funds for research and other University purposes. Over-expenditures can result in potential loss of University funds, administrative effort to resolve issues and risk of non-compliance with external funding source requirements. Over-expenditures are not permitted unless prior approval is obtained. For example, temporary Over-expenditures may be approved to accommodate timing of payments for new, multi-year grants or renewal grants).

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the responsibilities for effective fiscal management of funds administered by the University and to outline the procedures relating to Over-expenditure on research and specific purpose trust project/grant accounts.

1. RESEARCHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Researchers are accountable for all PG's for which they have been granted signing authority. Researchers are not permitted to overspend such PGs unless they have obtained prior approval pursuant to Section 2.2.

1.2 Researchers must designate an alternative PG for Committed Payroll Expenses. Notwithstanding Section 1.1, where a Committed Payroll Expense would cause an Over-expenditure in a PG and the Researcher has not designated an alternative PG with sufficient funds to meet the Committed Payroll Expense, RTA will transfer to the PG an amount equal to the Committed Payroll Expense from the GPOF PG of the relevant Head of Unit so that the Committed Payroll Expense can be met from the PG.

1.3 Where funds have been transferred from the GPOF PG of a Researcher's Head of Unit to pay for a Researcher's Committed Payroll Expense, the Researcher must reimburse the GPOF PG of his or her Head of Unit on a timely basis and in any event no later than 90 days from the date of transfer, unless the Head of Unit has approved a longer period for reimbursement.

1.4 Researchers shall:

1.4.1 ensure that all expenditures charged to the PG are eligible costs in accordance with the requirements set forth in a grant or contract signed by the sponsor;

1.4.2 review their monthly PG reports on a timely basis;

1.4.3 advise Financial Services of any errors, omissions or duplications in expenses or budget on a timely basis; and

1.4.4 request inactivation of the PG upon completion of the research project.

1.5 Where a Researcher anticipates a renewal or other source of funding beyond the designated "end date" of the PG, the Researcher shall notify the Office of Research Services, the University-Industry Liaison Office and RTA prior to such end date.

2. HEAD OF UNIT RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 A Head of Unit:

2.1.1 is responsible on an overall basis for investigating and monitoring Over-expenditures within his or her unit;

2.1.2 may refuse a request from a Researcher in his or her unit for approval for the establishment of new PGs if a Researcher has an unresolved Over-expenditure;

2.1.3 shall review his or her monthly unit roll-up reports and investigate temporary Over-expenditures and transfers of Committed Payroll Expenses;

2.1.4 shall review with Researchers in his or her unit any PGs included on the Over-expenditure Listing to encourage a timely resolution of the Over-expenditure; and

2.1.5 is responsible for controlling and reconciling all aspects of his or her GPOF PG.

2.2 A Head of Unit may grant approval for temporary Over-expenditures in Non-Contract Research PGs within his or her unit where future budget will be allocated to that PG (e.g. new, multi-year, or renewal grants).

2.3 Any decision on whether to approve a temporary Over-expenditure pursuant to Section 2.2 is entirely at the discretion of the Head of Unit. If a Head of Unit approves a temporary Over-expenditure, the Head of Unit becomes responsible for resolving the temporary Over-expenditure with the Researcher, failing which the temporary Over-expenditure will be resolved by RTA pursuant to Section 3.2.

3. RESEARCH AND TRUST ACCOUNTING RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 RTA shall:

3.1.1 provide PG reports to Researchers and unit roll-up reports to Heads of Unit on a timely basis and in any event not less than monthly;

3.1.2 provide timely notice to a Researcher when his or her expenditures and commitments approach a $0 balance;

3.1.3 inform Researchers and Heads of Unit when sponsor funding becomes questionable;

3.1.4 provide Over-expenditure Listings to Heads of Unit on a timely basis and in any event not less than quarterly;

3.1.5 provide timely customer service to Researchers and Heads of Unit to assist them in resolving queries raised in respect of their PGs;

3.1.6 reject/disallow new commitments or expenditures (other than Committed Payroll Expenses) that would result in an Over-expenditure in a PG;

3.1.7 inactivating any over-expended PGs that are not resolved within 60 days after notification of Over-expenditure to the responsible Researcher; and

3.1.8 inactivate expired PGs on a timely basis where there is inactivity for a specified period and where the final balance is insignificant.

3.2 Where a temporary Over-expenditure that has been approved pursuant to Section 2.2 has not been resolved within 90 days of the date of the Over-expenditure Listing, RTA shall transfer the Over-expenditure to the GPOF PG of the Head of Unit who approved the Over-expenditure.

4. DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Unrealised cash – Sponsor obligations not met: Provided that a grant or contract signed by the sponsor is in place, researchers are not responsible for ensuring that funding is received from the sponsor. An under-realisation of cash may result from a sponsor experiencing financial difficulties or refusing to pay. Provided that expenditures up to that time were within the originally allocated budget, and further provided that the research deliverables required by that date have been met under the contract, Researchers and Heads of Unit will only be held responsible for expenses incurred after the Head of Unit or Researcher has been notified that future funding is in doubt.

4.2 Unrealised cash – Researcher obligations not met: An under-realisation of cash may also result when funding is withheld due to Researchers failing to meet their obligations. Specific situations include non-submission (or late submission) of progress or final reports, and unsatisfactory deliverables. A further example in this category would be costs incurred by a Researcher that are subsequently rejected by the sponsor as being ineligible costs under that award. Budgets may be reduced in line with the actual amount received and the Researcher is responsible for resolving any Over-expenditure that may be caused by such budget reductions.

4.3 Death of a Researcher: Where a Researcher is deceased, the responsibility for resolving Over-expenditures is assumed by his or her Head of Unit. The financial burden of any under-realised cash resulting from an inability to deliver a final report will be resolved on a case-by-case basis. Deans must liaise with RTA in such cases to negotiate a settlement from the sponsor.

4.4 Correction of errors: If a PG is erroneously credited with revenue, cost reductions or budget allocation, or erroneous charged, the error can be corrected at any time.

4.5 Extraordinary Expenses: Refer to Policy #86 for details on the treatment of extraordinary salary and benefit costs related to grant and contract-funded employees. Note that the insurance fund contemplated under Policy #86 will not cover a shortfall in salary and benefit costs where the Over-expenditure is a result of excessive spending in other cost categories.

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 "Committed Payroll Expense" means an expenditure that must be made to satisfy a salary or other payroll commitment that has already been entered into and that would, if not made, expose the University to legal liability.

5.2 "Head of Unit" means a Dean of a faculty, Director of a centre, institute or school, Head of a department, Chair of a division or the equivalent.

5.3 "GPOF PG" means the PG over which a Head of Unit has authority and which contains monies from the General Purpose Operating Fund.

5.4 "Over-expenditure" means when commitments and actual expenditures exceed the budget available for the PG in question.

5.5 "Over-expenditure Listing" means a report containing details of PGs: (1) to which amounts have been transferred to cover Committed Payroll Expenses pursuant to Section 1.2 unless such amounts have been reimbursed pursuant to Section 1.3; or (2) that are in an over-expended position.

5.6 "PG" means a trust account administered by RTA.

5.7 "Research PG" means a PG (designated with the fund code Rxxxx) for a research purpose. Research PGs can be classified into Contract Research PGs and Non-contract Research PGs. "Contract Research PGs" are typically funded by industry while "Non-contract Research PGs" are typically funded by government agencies and related organizations.

5.8 "Researcher" means the individual responsible for each PG (usually the lead principal investigator in the case of Research PGs, or other named individual in the case of Specific Purpose Trust PGs).

5.9 "RTA" means Research and Trust Accounting.

5.10 "Specific Purpose Trust PG" means a PG (designated with the fund code Sxxxx) for all purposes not related to research.

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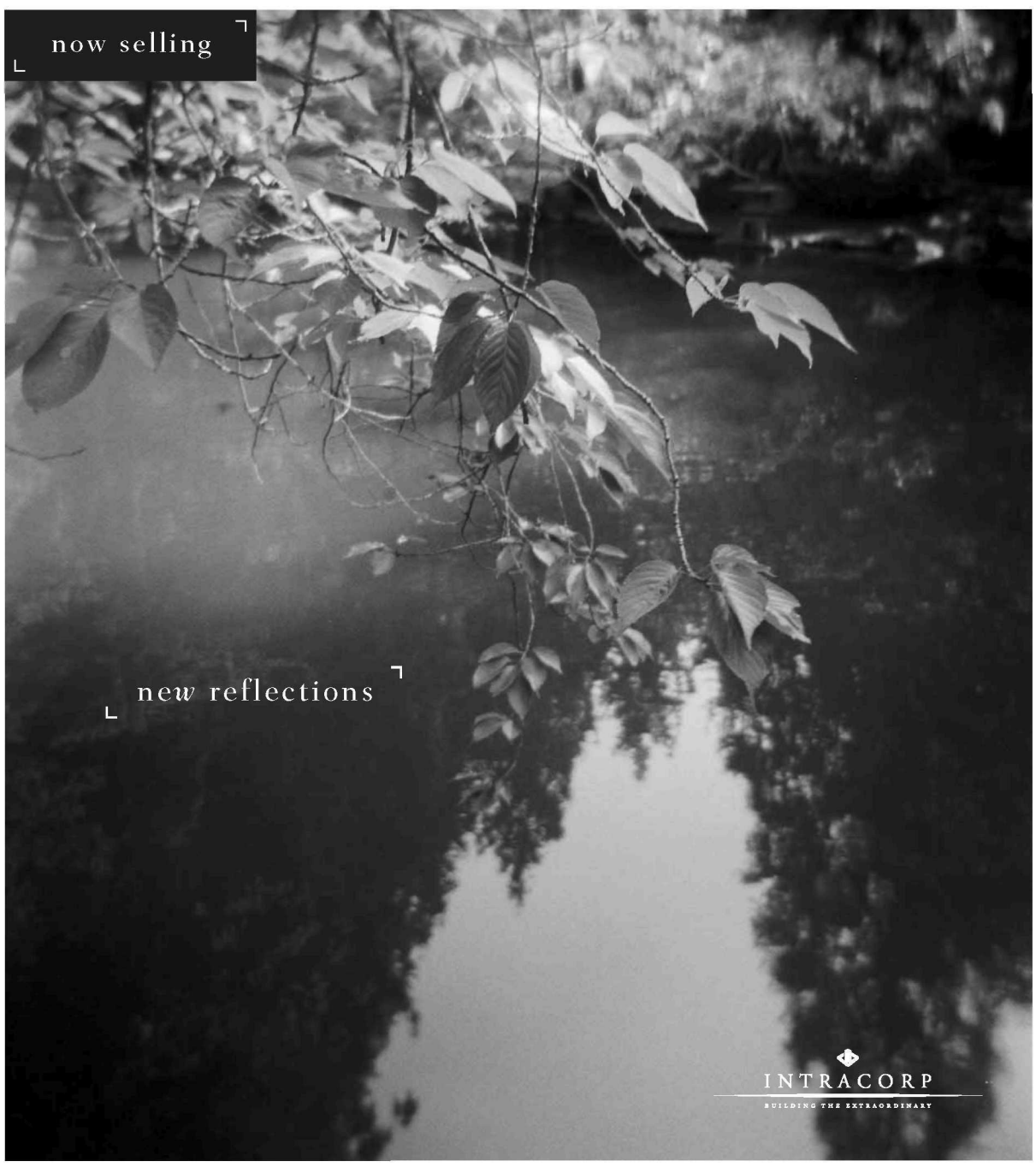

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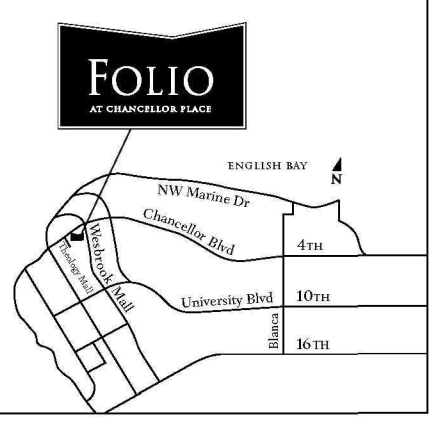

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Can We Trust the Drug Companies?

The Therapeutics Initiative is working to get reliable data to doctors and patients

BY HILARY THOMSON

Imagine you are a 75-year-old woman who has been taking a daily drug to relieve arthritis pain. You're shocked to learn the drug just got pulled off the market worldwide and you wonder if you can trust your doctor to know what's safe.

With the recall in September 2004 of Vioxx®, a top-selling arthritis pain medication that was found to increase cardiovascular problems, and a U.S. Congressional hearing into how the drug's safety was evaluated, a UBC initiative dedicated to disseminating evidence about drug therapies couldn't be more relevant.

Under the direction of Jim Wright, a professor in the departments of pharmacology & therapeutics, and medicine, the Therapeutics Initiative (TI) has been providing physicians and pharmacists with up-to-date evidence on the effectiveness of prescription drugs for 10 years.

In fact, the current issue of the group's newsletter, *Therapeutics Letter*, (which has a circulation of 10,000) addresses the storm of uncertainty surrounding the class of drugs called COX-2s. Used to treat inflammation, the class includes Vioxx® and Celebrex®.

The newsletter focuses on COX-2's product monographs – legal documents written by drug companies to list pertinent data, including potential benefits and harms. The newsletter reported that the monographs do not adequately inform of harms and that they provide insufficient information as to whether COX-2s increase myocardial infarction or other cardiovascular events.

"We've been looking at this class of drugs for several years now," says Wright, a faculty member since 1977. "Our work nearly always surrounds medications, like these ones, that are widely prescribed but which have uncertain therapeutic value. Our efforts frequently put us at odds with drug companies."

Started in 1994 with a five-year annual grant of $540,000 from B.C.'s Ministry of Health (MOH), the TI is now operating on a three-year, $1 million per annum grant from MOH. The group reviews evidence of effectiveness for drugs prescribed for everything from male pattern baldness to depression in children and adolescents, and is one of only a handful of such groups in Canada.

In addition to provincial work, TI members also complete one-quarter to one-third of the federal government's common drug reviews, a year-old process overseen by the Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment.

"The main challenge in our work is getting to the truth," says Wright. "It's been estimated that about 90 per cent of the published literature is biased by economic interests."

Dr. Warren Bell, a general practitioner in Salmon Arm, B.C., says he uses the newsletter "for clarifying and interpreting the relentless propaganda of the drug industry" and adds that he has formed a number of prescribing practices directly out of the pages of the letter.

The largest working group in the TI is the drug assessment group, headed by Ken Bassett, a faculty member in the department of family practice and the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at UBC.

Some of the 30 assessments completed annually are triggered by new drug submissions to PharmaCare, the province's drug subsidy program. TI researchers review the submissions, evaluate evidence of the drug's therapeutic advantage and report back to government and, in a summarized fashion, to practitioners via the newsletter. Physicians and pharmacists also learn of critically appraised evidence through annual drug therapy courses and numerous interactive seminars.

The TI's evaluation group measures the impact of these education efforts on prescribing patterns and assesses how drugs are being used. It also uses provincial health databases to learn the impact of drug prescribing patterns on patient health outcomes.

"The main challenge in our work is getting to the truth," says Wright. "It's been estimated that about 90 per cent of the published literature is biased by economic interests."

A challenge for the group is a perception that the TI may not be independent from the provincial government's interest in decreasing costs of PharmaCare. Wright counters by saying that TI reviews and reports to government don't include cost data and are limited to evidence of drug benefits and harms derived from clinical trials. PharmaCare includes TI reports as just one of the pieces of information it uses to make funding decisions, he adds.

Internationally, many TI members are actively involved in the Cochrane Collaboration. Named for Archie Cochrane, a British medical researcher, epidemiologist and advocate of rigorous reviews of health intervention evidence, the collaboration is an international organization dedicated to making available reviews of the effects of health-care treatments and therapies.

Wright says it's currently not possible for groups like the TI and the Cochrane Collaboration to get complete data from all clinical trials conducted worldwide. However, he does have a vision for greater access to reliable and unbiased data.

"What's needed is to get more people involved in Cochrane, better access to data from all clinical trials, more systematic reviews published and more countries providing universal free access to the Cochrane resource," he says.

Many countries, such as Australia, Finland, Ireland and England, make the Cochrane Library's resources available without charge. In Canada, however, only one province – Saskatchewan – has paid for the licence. The federal government has balked at a $500,000 annual fee that would make the library freely accessible to all Canadians, says Wright.

For more information on the TI, visit www.ti.ubc.ca. ☐

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

UBC researchers assess effectiveness of a myriad of medications.

Media regularly seek the expertise of Therapeutics Initiative director Jim Wright. The following are some of the media outlets where he has been quoted recently.

Business Week • CBC TV • Forbes.com National Post • Newsday • Toronto Star

Building a Better Mouse

BY MICHELLE COOK

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

UBC forestry faculty have produced a modern version (above) of Engelbart's original wood mouse (right)

Consider the computer mouse. Most of us spend hours each day holding one, yet we rarely give a second thought to how it feels or looks.

We can thank Stanford engineer Douglas Engelbart for coming up with the idea, in 1963, for the user-friendly little fellow and its interactive point-and-click feature that revolutionized computer use. But, as the ultimate human/machine interface, forestry professor Philip Evans found the device lacking, and set out to design a better mouse.

The problem, says Evans, director of UBC's Centre for Advanced Wood Processing, is that the mouse is made of plastic and plastics, while wonderfully versatile, aren't very tactile.

Wood, on the other hand, begs to be touched. Its grain and surface texture, warmth, resilience and characteristic smell makes it what an interface is supposed to be, compatible with the components or materials it links. Throughout history, wood has been the material of choice for many products, and despite the availability of other more modern, synthetic materials, it is still preferred in many applications – banisters, pro-league baseball bats, sailboat tillers, canoe paddles just to name a few. Why not the computer mouse too?

Evans did a little digging and was delighted to learn that the first prototype of Engelbart's groundbreaking device was, in fact, hewed out of wood. Albeit ergonomically challenged by today's standards, it was a sturdy little block with two metal wheels and the electrical wire "tail" that would soon earn it its name.

Evans and colleague Zbigniew Krupowicz set out to update the wood mouse by designing a fully functional ergonomic optical model with great tactile and visual appeal.

Since today's computer-numerically controlled multi-axis wood processing centres can rapidly machine wood into virtually any shape, they weren't limited to any particular form.

The result is four mice that look very much like their plastic cousins but are made from teak, ebony, purpleheart, and cocobolo sanded to a super smooth finish. All are fully functional and plug into a USB port.

Evans says the wood models are pleasant and restful to use, and the universal response from everyone who cops a feel is that they want one. But don't expect to find one of these caress-able little devices in your Christmas stocking. Evans has no plans to mass-produce them and the prototypes are not for sale. ☐

Steller Sea Lions

continued from page 1

For the study, the sea lions were allowed to eat as much as they wanted. Researchers tried to remove any behavioural constraints to getting fish so the sea lions didn't have to work for their food. Using different feeding schedules, the Stellers were offered either high-energy herring or low-energy capelin (a small silvery fish and a relative of the freshwater smelt) daily or every other day.

Researchers quickly found out their study participants were not picky eaters. Rosen says the sea lions only took one to two days to adapt to changes in their food supply.

"We didn't expect the sea lions to eat much. We thought if they were used to eating seven kilograms of fish, they would eat seven kilograms of fish. But they were able to adapt much more quickly to changes in their food supply," Rosen says.

The sea lions increased their intake of herring when herring was only available every other day. When low-energy capelin was on the menu every other day, the sea lions consumed more compared to when they ate herring or when they ate capelin every day.

The problem was the sea lions appeared to reach a limit on how much fish they could consume and process. In order to get a similar energy intake with the lower quality food, they had to gorge themselves, eating up to 80 per cent more. That left them stuffed and lethargic.

Rosen says these results suggest that, in the wild, younger Stellers may be having physical difficulty eating enough quantities of lower energy prey, particularly when they're not eating on a daily basis. This limitation of food intake may be an important clue to understanding how changes in fish availability and species might have contributed to the decline of Stellers in the north Pacific. ☐

Sea Lion Research Wins Award

It's not a stretch to say the Steller Sea Lion Open Ocean Research Project is making waves. The world's first-ever open water study of Stellers earned UBC trainers from the North Pacific Universities Marine Mammal Research Consortium the top prize at the International Marine Animal Trainers Association in Sweden earlier this year.

The study involves training Sitka and Bonilla, two Stellers raised at the Vancouver Aquarium, to dive in the wild and return to the surface in order to measure the energy they expend. The goal is to figure out how much energy Stellers need to swim, forage for food and capture prey.

This is the first time Stellers have been successfully trained in open water. Researchers hope to see consistent results in a wild setting that will help them to better understand the animals' biology and behaviour, and increase the chances of conserving the dwindling numbers of Sitka and Bonilla's counterparts in the wild.

For more in project visit www.marinemammal.org. ☐

KUDOS

U.S. National Parks Service Awards

Emily Gonzales, a PhD candidate in UBC's Biodiversity Research Centre, is one of eight students in North America to be named a Canon National Parks Science Scholar by the U.S. National Parks Service. The US$78,000 scholarship is designed to support the next generation of scientists working in the fields of conservation, environmental science and national park management, and provide them with the resources to conduct research critical to conserving national parks in the Americas.

Gonzales, from Victoria, B.C., is studying the relative influence of exotic grass competition in Garry oak ecosystems. For her research project, she will be developing baseline data for Canada's newest park, the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve, located on Mayne, Saturna, the Pender Islands and others in the Strait of Georgia, to help preserve and restore Garry oak ecosystems in the park.

Another UBC student, Joleen Timko, a PhD candidate in the Resource Management and Environmental Studies Graduate Program, received an honourable mention award of $1,000 from the National Parks Service. ☐

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UBC Team to Compete in U.S. Defense Department Robotic Challenge

BY MICHELLE COOK

UBC's Centre for Environmental Research in Minerals, Metals and Materials (CERM3) will participate in a U.S. Defense Department competition designed to accelerate research and development in autonomous ground vehicle technology to help save lives on the battlefield.

The UBC team is comprised of students and professors from the Faculty of Applied Science with a multidisciplinary set of skills in mechanical, electrical, computing, engineering physics, materials science, and mining engineering technologies. Several students from the Sauder School of Business have also volunteered their time to help run the financing end of the initiative. The team has already attracted some sponsorship but, in order to fully develop the vehicle, it needs to raise an additional $300,000.

Mining engineering professor John Meech says the team's base in the Mining Engineering department gives it an edge. Robots are already being used successfully in several underground and open-pit mines to load, haul, and dump ore. If the race were run at night, Meech says, Team Thunderbird would have an advantage given its knowledge of robotic operations conducted in the dark.

DARPA's mission is to pursue R&D technology in areas where the payoff is very high and where success can provide dramatic advances in both civilian and military capabilities. The agency's DARPANet computer network in the 1970s was the forerunner to the Internet.

"...Whether the application is military or civilian such as mining, forestry, search and rescue, or fire-fighting, robotics can help prevent human injury or death."

The DARPA Grand Challenge 2005 will take place in the Mojave Desert on October 8, 2005. The Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) is offering a $2 million prize to the vehicle that completes the course in the fastest time within a 10-hour period.

Called Team Thunderbird, the UBC group is expected to be the only Canadian competitor in next year's challenge. The team expects to have its robot, an SUV covered in maple leaves, ready for hardware testing by mid-December, with a fully autonomous system in place by mid-February.

"Someday soon, robotics technology will allow us to accomplish tasks that today place humans at risk," says team leader Andrew Lyon. "Whether the application is military or civilian such as mining, forestry, search and rescue, or fire-fighting, robotics can help prevent human injury or death. Team Thunderbird is excited to be able to put together a Canadian team that can contribute to this effort and develop the technical innovations that will help us win the prize."

The 2005 event will be the second DARPA Grand Challenge. In March 2004, 15 robotic vehicles attempted to navigate a challenging 142-mile route along desert tracks between Barstow, California and Las Vegas, Nevada. The farthest distance any team got on the course was 11.3 kilometres. ☐

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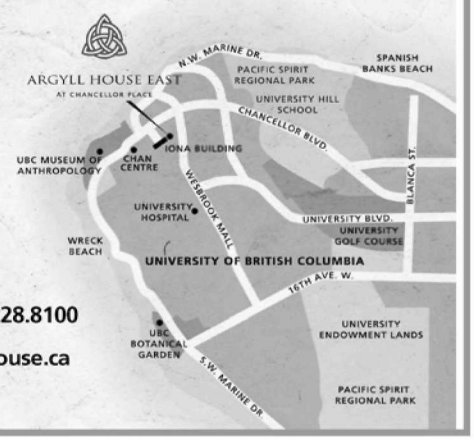

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Key punch room and card reader at the Computer Centre in the Klink Bldg. Circa 1970.

Transformation of a Lifetime BY BRIAN LIN

When computer science professor Richard Rosenberg (left) arrived at UBC from the University of Michigan in 1968, long hair, massive beards and wild ties were high fashion while mainframes – not personal computers – were the standard.

The soon-to-be-retired Rosenberg, currently acting director of the dept. of computer science, has witnessed an incredible transformation. The department that started small, in a space converted from a parking structure, is now a hotbed of research noted for its graphics, visualization, computational intelligence and robotics groups. There are now approximately 55 faculty members.

In fact, the only things faster than the department's computers these days may be the human brains working and studying there.

Just last month, two of three teams of student programmers took first and third place in the Pacific Northwest Division at the annual Association for Computing Machinery Programming Competition. The first place team beat out powerhouse teams from Stanford and Berkeley and will compete in the World Finals in Shanghai in April. ☐

Writing 101 Strikes a Chord in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside

BY LEAH MARCHUK

A unique Canadian university outreach program that makes liberal arts education accessible to inner-city residents is expanding in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES). Growing out of the successful Humanities 101 program, which was started seven years ago and boasts 150 graduates to date, UBC will begin offering residents a new writing course in January.

Humanities 101 was started by two UBC students who hoped that, by offering low-income people access to education in the humanities, they could correct some of the educational imbalances that exist between economically polarized groups. Students pay no fees for resources, including books, materials, meals, bus transportation, fieldtrips and childcare. The course seems to have struck a chord. Many graduates have gone on to further studies and full-time employment.

Now Writing 101, an intensive, hands-on course teaching the principles of academic, business and creative writing, has just completed a successful pilot with 15 area residents, to favourable reviews.

"Learning the basics, getting a foundation after 40 something years – it was nice to have that opportunity," says Bruce Alexander, a graduate of the UBC Humanities 101 program.

Alexander, who currently works for a Vancouver auto parts manufacturer, says he struggled with English grammar his entire life before taking Writing 101.

"I've read a number of books on how to improve my writing, and it just never really took," says Alexander, who says the course made the difference. "It's like if you put a boat in a tub of water and it sinks, well you need to know where the holes are before you can fix it."

"It's even improved my ability to communicate with fellow employees," he says.

PHOTO: FRIDA SALTIEL

Graduates of the 2003-04 Humanities 101 program.

Professor Peter Babiak, academic director of Humanities 101, which covers a broad range of disciplines, says the chance to learn how to write well resonates in a particular way with DTES residents.

"Creative writing means more to them than to average university students," says Babiak. "It's not just a form of expression, it's a way of being heard."

"There are stories that you want to tell, that you want people to hear, that are important for people to hear," says Alexander.

Writing 101 assignments were designed to reflect the interests and concerns of students. Students were required, for example, to conduct library research on British Columbia's Safe Streets Act, which will impose fines on panhandlers.

By encouraging feedback on the course – both in class and at student-attended steering committees – Babiak hopes students will have a voice in the direction of Writing 101. "If it weren't for the fact that we have the support of our graduates, the course wouldn't be nearly as successful."

From the perspective of Ramona Montagnes, who not only co-developed Writing 101 but also teaches it, the course is beneficial for everyone involved.

"The students are lively, intelligent, and highly motivated. I believe I have learned more from [them] than they have from me. I was unaware of many of the social issues that form their lives and found this to be quite humbling."

Babiak says the innovative Vancouver outreach program is gaining international attention.

"We have anywhere from 40 to 60 calls per year from Canada, the US, and abroad who'd like to create an imitation program," says Babiak. "It's not only innovative, it's cutting edge. This stuff is just not done at other universities."

The program's web site, http://humanities101.arts.ubc.ca, features the work of some of its graduates. ☐

Leah Marchuk is a third-year student in the international relations program, and working as a research assistant at the Dean of Arts Office.

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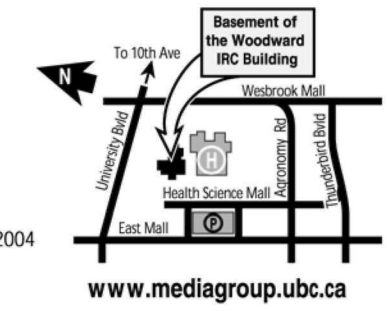

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Co-development housing is a key sustainability strategy in UBC's University Town. It addresses UBC's commitment that 50 percent of new residential market and non-market housing is for people who work or study on campus.

Co-development housing involves a group of future homeowners applying to lease land from UBC to create new townhouses or apartment condominiums. Because the co-developers are ultimately the owners, savings can be realized through the elimination of builders' profit and marketing costs.

On behalf of the co-developers, UBC Properties Trust, UBC's property managment arm, arranges for:

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Hawthorn Green is UBC's first co-development and the first of its kind in a North American university. Construction is underway on the second 61-unit Logan Lane project and a third project will be launched in January 2005.

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