

THE UBYSSEY

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Vol.LXXXVIII N°50

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TUESDAY, 3 APRIL, 2007

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Students, lobbyists and policy analysts clash on tuition hikes... big surprise.

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SPORTS AIN'T OVER YET!

Rowing, swimming and soccer! Oh my!

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Dealing with garbage profs.

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AMS rejects Student Court ruling

First time in 30 years AMS has ignored a Student Court decision

by **Brandon Adams**
NEWS EDITOR

Students in the commerce diploma, co-op, and similar programs can abandon any hope of becoming Alma Mater Society (AMS) members after AMS Council decided Wednesday to ignore a Student Court ruling that stated students who were previously not AMS members actually were.

AMS VP External Matthew Naylor said that in the fall of 2005 AMS Council decided to ask the AMS Student Court, a body composed of three UBC law students, for clarification regarding whether commerce diploma and co-op students could be considered AMS members.

Naylor said that AMS Council asked the Student Court: "Are co-op students, commerce diploma students, and others—are they AMS members and are they entitled to receive services such as the U-Pass and the

Health and Dental Plan in return for paying student fees?"

The Student Court ruled on February 27 that co-op, commerce diploma, continuing studies, and distance education students were indeed members of the AMS and thus entitled to its services and required to pay AMS student fees.

"This caused concern among us based on a number of things, not the least of which included the possibility of people who needed dental work or health care signing up for a continuing studies certificate and abusing our system," Naylor said.

He also expressed concern about the potentially prohibitive cost of tuition for continuing studies and distance education students if they were required to pay AMS student fees.

Naylor brought the Student Court's ruling before AMS Council on March 28, and recommended that it be tabled indefinitely. He made this recommendation so that Council would not be forced to "reject" the views of the court *per se*.

AMS Council has not rejected a Student Court decision since 1977 when they re-

jected a ruling that required the AMS to pay compensation to the Varsity Outdoor Club over a conflict regarding the AMS Whistler Lodge.

Indefinitely tabling the motion, explained Naylor, would allow Council to interpret AMS membership by-laws as it saw fit.

"I'm hoping that it goes away, to be honest," Naylor said when asked about the Student Court's decision. "There is no real, valid reason for bringing this up again because we have the kind of flexibility to interpret our by-law right now and, unfortunately, because of quorum requirements it's very very difficult to change our by-laws."

During the Council, meeting AMS Councillor Sam Heppell expressed concern about Naylor's recommendation to indefinitely table the Student Court's decision and instead proposed that the court's decision be tabled for a year in order to give council time to resolve the by-law issues.

"It's obvious that the status quo isn't meeting the needs of all students," said Heppell, "and I know the initial consultation with

see "Rejects" page 2.

Deficit will make classes bigger and electives fewer

by **Candice Vallantin**
NEWS STAFF

Starting next fall, UBC will be answering President Stephen Toope's cash call for \$20 million by putting a freeze on hiring new faculty, which will translate into larger class sizes and some electives being dropped entirely.

The dramatic cut announced January 29 is a short-term strategy to immediately address UBC's \$36 million deficit. Long-term plans to adapt to UBC's new spending limitations will require permanent restructuring in the University's academic focus.

VP Academic Provost pro tem George Mackie explained that the \$20 million in spending cuts were spread across faculties proportionately according to their size, with each facing between 4.4 and 5.2 per cent cuts to their total budgets.

"I don't think it's going to be painless, but it's an opportunity to develop a more rational way of allocating scarce resources," he said. "We have to do a better job of matching student demand with our academic priorities and goals," he said.

Mackie defined important academic goals as programs that benefit society such as diabetes research, cleaner energy, and programs that foster global citizenship.

The immediate result of the spending cuts in most faculties has been a hiring freeze, delaying the filling of positions left open by retirees until a long-term plan to deal with the deficit has been developed.

The Faculty of Arts—the largest faculty at the UBC with an enrolment of 11,000 students—has frozen 30 positions to deal with a \$3.2 million cut from its budget. Since the average faculty member teaches four courses, this hiring freeze will amount to the elimination of 120 sections next year. Nancy Gallini, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, said that an increase in class sizes will be inevitable, and those classes with the smallest enrolment numbers will likely be cut out entirely.

The Faculty of Science, with 6,761 undergraduate students, has dealt with its share of the cuts, \$2.7 million, in a similar fashion. Dean of sciences Simon M Peacock wrote in an email that the funding cuts will be met "primarily by reducing planned capital expenditures (research start-up funding for new faculty, undergraduate lab equipment upgrades, and construction expenses) and secondarily by delaying the filling of selected faculty and staff positions."

Peacock said they will not increase class

see "Deficit" page 2.

UBC Students take Translink for a ride

Ubyssey three month experiment shows invalid passes still work

by **Eric Szeto**
CUP WESTERN BUREAU CHIEF

VANCOUVER (CUP)—A recent "Buy-and-Bust" operation by TransLink underscores the relative ease that students have when selling their U-Passes.

Over the past few months TransLink has been going onto online classified forums like Craigslist and the Buy and Sell posting ads that say, "email me if you have a [U-Pass] for sale, thanks," pretending to be interested in purchasing the popular discounted pass which can sell for as high as \$300. Students pay \$20 per month for an eight months U-Pass.

TransLink officials wouldn't provide numbers of people they've apprehended so far, but said that people caught using illegally sold U-Passes can be issued a \$346 fine.

To further curtail the illegal sale of the passes, TransLink will be adding constables to busses. "[We are] stepping up enforcement on our 99 B-Line," said Drew Snider, media relations at TransLink. "There will be some spots checks, similar to the skytrains."

UBC, whose ridership has risen from 19,000 to 47,000 people per day since the inception of the U-Pass in 2003, has been active in the campaign.

"We want to try to prevent as much U-



GOT \$20? Selling U-Passes is easy for students. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY OKER CHEN

Pass fraud as we possibly can," said Matthew Naylor, Alma Mater Society (AMS) VP External, adding that if the problem gets worse, the program could be jeopardised.

Students also face the possibility of getting a non-academic misconduct citation on their transcript if they are caught selling their passes.

The problem may lie with how easily people can sell their U-Passes, however. It takes moments to get a new replacement at a cost of \$20.

Both TransLink and UBC said that this was irrelevant because when new passes are issued, the old ones stop working.

The Ubyssey tested these claims by going to the campus U-Pass provider, claiming

that a U-Pass was stolen. Moments later, *the Ubyssey* took both passes and tried them on numerous busses. Both the old and new bus passes still worked fine.

The Ubyssey also took a U-Pass that was lost in January and it was still active.

Despite *the Ubyssey's* claims, Carol Jolly, UBC Trek Program Centre director affirmed that these old passes shouldn't work.

"If a student loses their card, we charge them a replacement fee, can get a replacement U-Pass, every time a U-Pass is replaced it nullifies U-Pass cards," said Jolly. "Technically they shouldn't."

A control number on the back of the card

see "U-pass" page 2.

Check out our spoof issue later this week!

Faculty of Science will most likely cut electives instead of increasing class sizes in the 2007-08 Winter term

"Deficit" continued from page 1.

sizes in the coming year, instead choosing to offer fewer electives to students.

Although the larger faculties seem to be rolling with the punches, smaller faculties are having a harder time dealing with the cash crunch. "Small faculties have a smaller cash call, but they are hurting the most because they have less flexibility," said Mackie.

The film production program, for example, with an enrolment of only 32 majors and nine graduate students, is in limbo.

Brian McIlroy, chair of the film program, explained that originally, new admittance was halted in December so that the curriculum could be re-organised, but as a result of the budget cuts announced in January, the Department of Theatre, Film, and Creative Writing is going through a re-structur-

ing process, leaving the fate of the production program unknown until this process is finalised. McIlroy said that students currently in the program won't be affected, but he doesn't know when or if the program will be offered to more students in the future.

McIlroy, however is hopeful things will work out, however. "Once there is a realistic plan (given the current resources) for a new production curriculum that all the stakeholders can buy into, I would expect things to turn out well," he said.

Toope's decision to deal with this deficit with an immediate one-time cash call was well received overall, but the deans are worried about the long-term effects of the deficit. Peacock warned, "A recurring budget cut of this magnitude would have a much greater negative impact."

Dean Gallini agreed. "Next year does worry me because of

this huge cut, but what really worries me is the permanent cut—are we losing these positions forever? Then we really have to re-think what we're doing in the Faculty of Arts."

"Small faculties have a smaller cash call but they are hurting the most because they have less flexibility."

George Mackie,
Vice-President UBC
Academic and Provost
pro tem

Trying to plan ahead for different circumstances, Gallini is considering of limiting the impact of increasing class sizes by adding tutorials to classes that currently don't offer them, such

as higher-level courses.

"What I'm thinking about is student interaction. From 100 [students per class] to 300, is there really a big difference? What if we add tutorials with TAs?" she said.

The Academic Steering Committee is evaluating the University's academic goals to decide how to allocate the resources available over the long-term. UBC's general purpose operating fund consists largely of provincial grant money plus tuition fees and varies from year to year. Last year this fund reached \$591 million and Mackie predicts it will total over \$600 million next year.

Despite the tough decisions ahead, Mackie is up for the challenge: "We're going to prune our garden, that's what we're going to do. We're proud of our garden, but even the best of gardens can use some pruning and weeding." he said. @

U-Passes shouldn't work after they are reported stolen, says official

"U-pass" continued from page 1.

provides detailed information about the card's activity so that as soon as TransLink gets the information of a lost card, the fare box, where a person inserts their U-Pass flags the invalid card.

U-Pass users, however, flash their cards and are rarely asked to insert their card into the fare box.

Bus drivers, said Snider, aren't obligated to enforce this. "A lot of it is the discretion of the driver," he continued. "The driver is not expected to enforce fare

collection anyways. The motto is inform don't enforce."

"The driver is not expected to enforce fare collection"

Drew Snider,
Translink PR

Snider said that there have been times when enforcement has led to violence so "if it looks like a U-Pass they'll take it."

It's the dirty little secret that

everyone knows but won't admit, said Rhys Gilkes, 24. He said he uses a counterfeit one because frankly it's cheaper...it ends up being cheaper than \$70 a month [for a regular pass]."

Gilkes, who recently bought a used U-Pass from his friend, said bus drivers don't check to verify whether the pass is actually theirs.

"The bus pass that I'm using, the person is of a different nationality," he said. "It doesn't look anything like me." @

Motion tabled indefinitely, says AMS VP External

"Rejects" continued from page 1.

the Student Court by the AMS was motivated by a recognition that the status quo wasn't meeting the needs of all students."

"It's important that we do revisit it," Heppell continued, "Amending our code and by-laws shouldn't necessarily be the AMS Council's number one priority right out of the gate, but it should be on our agenda because the status quo isn't working for everyone as well as it should be." @

'tweens

Mew

Richards on Richards (1036 Richards)
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Indie-popists from Denmark play Richards on Richards with guests Oh No! Oh My!
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One fine day George Prior and Andrew MacRae decided to scavenge down Eric Szeto Avenue to find some Brandon Adams. They stumbled over a box along the way, containing a rare Colleen Tang and Boris Korby duo. The tag on the box read Jesse Ferreras and Momoko Price Ltd., Oker Chen - President. Remembering Champagne Choquer's wise words, they packed a few Levi Barnetts and called Paul Buccì to join the hunt. Little did they know, Matthew Jewkes had already planted an Isabel Ferreras to distract them, so Christine McLaren could sneak ahead and sabotage the grand Candice Vallantin. So really, Kellan Higgins got the last laugh as Alison Bailey toiled over whether Humaira Hamid should really get to go with Michael Bround to go ambush Kasha Chang.

EDITORIAL GRAPHIC Michael Bround



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Correction:

The Ubyssy [March 22]:

"Hayden Smith: Sardonic Space Cowboy"

The author was Jason Spittel and not Hayden Smith.

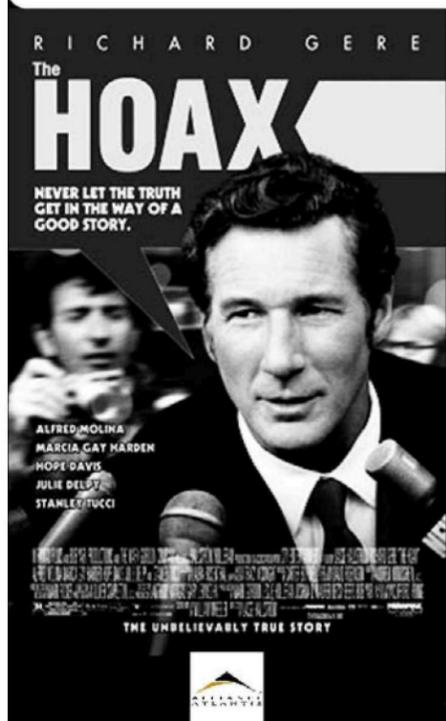
Also, 2 comics were not attributed to their artist, Geoff Webb.

The Ubyssy regrets the errors.

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Are lower tuition fees worth higher taxes?

Fee reductions lead to tax hikes, analyst says

by Kerry Wall
THE EYEOPENER
(RYERSON UNIVERSITY)

TORONTO (CUP)—The image of student activists marching on the legislature brandishing bright yellow "Reduce tuition fees" placards is one that rallies the spirits of many debt-burdened post-secondary students.

Students protesting tuition hikes are seen brandishing megaphones and wearing bitter, resigned T-shirt slogans like, "I sold my other shirt to pay for tuition." However, you'd never find a slogan that read: "Increase taxes." But some people, like Canadian policy analyst Yvan Guillemette, think they might as well.

Tuition fee reductions and freezes would lead to "obvious" tax hikes, says the analyst from the C.D. Howe Institute, an Ontario-based think-tank. As students continue to rally for freezes and tuition reductions, he suspects that proposals designed to take some of the load off of students' chequebooks will hit other citizens' pockets instead. And whether this is justifiable isn't as easy to judge as a t-shirt slogan might make it seem.

In 2003, the University of Manitoba Students' Union criticised their provincial government for funding its tuition freeze through new taxes, saying, "In the end, students saved some money through lower tuition yet ended up paying more in taxes... government has come out ahead while students and universities have lost."

But that's what students can expect from freezes and reductions, analysts like Guillemette would say.

Students "can't only expect the government to keep services high and fees low," said Neil Desai, the Ontario director of the Canadian

Taxpayers' Federation. "They have to be willing to work with them as students."

Student groups advocating lower user fees may want to be careful what they wish for, Guillemette adds. "Freezes and reductions are not an investment," he said. "When the government freezes or reduces tuition, it's not putting funding into the other aspects of post-secondary education." Those "other aspects," he says, include building maintenance and research funding.

"Education always seems to lose out to things like health care."

Yvan Guillemette,
Canadian Policy Analyst

But Amanda Aziz, national chairperson of Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), points to the fact that fees can add up, preventing some otherwise deserving students from pursuing their education.

"User fees are a barrier for low-income Canadians," she said. "We have to send the message to the provinces helping to create those barriers that this isn't good for students."

The CFS and other groups may be forgetting that the provincial government's role goes beyond this one issue, Guillemette said. "Education always seems to lose out to things like health care,"

Desai agreed. "The government has so many other things to deal with besides post-secondary education," he says. "There has to be a balance between public and individual investment. When groups are calling for a [tuition fee] freeze, they're calling for society as a whole to fund universities in a greater way."

But funding post-secondary

education is "absolutely" society's role, Aziz says. "Education has a huge societal benefit," she said. "While there are obviously individual benefits, the societal benefits are as great or even greater than those for individuals."

As an example, she cited the BC government's 2005-06 budget, which stated that "70 per cent of job opportunities will require some post-secondary education," as a reason why society needs a well-educated population.

Desai said that while he can understand students' desires to get a good education, they should be prepared to get what they pay for. "It [currently] falls to all taxpayers to fund universities," he said. "Students need to come to the realisation that they're contributing to the cost of post-secondary education, but so are other citizens."

Aziz argued that this isn't an excuse. "That's just the way our tax system works," she said. "Once you make a lot of money and can afford to pay more in taxes, you have to help to fund education for people who are faced with barriers."

Guillemette said Aziz's argument is indicative of student lobbyists' position—that post-secondary education is society's responsibility. "They're aware that society is contributing most of that money," he said, "but they think it's the right thing to do." A tuition freeze might even work against students, he added. "It would hurt them more than it would help them, I think," he said. "When you freeze tuition, you freeze it for everybody, not just those who have difficulty paying."

Desai recently finished his master's degree in England. He said that many students in Canada don't realise how lucky they are. "We are very privileged here," he said. "We have very high expectations, and expectations don't come cheap." @

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- Second to last staff meeting agenda!
1. Intros?
 2. new staff members?
 3. help with spoof?
 4. And as always, plans for world domination. Yawn. Same goals as usual (abortions for some, miniature Amer—Canadian flags for others.)
 4. Anything else?
- Staff meetings: Wednesdays at 12pm.
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KELLAN HIGGINS PHOTO



BIRD DROPPINGS

Rowing

T-Birds sunk by UVic at Brown Cup

UBC's varsity and reserve men's and women's rowing squads all fell Saturday to their rivals from Victoria in the Brown Cup, run out of the new UBC Boathouse on the Fraser River.

The UBC men's varsity team will be without the trophy for the first time in three years after the loss, while the UBC women's squad is still seeking their first Cup victory in 15 years.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UBC ATHLETICS

Swimming

Current, former Thunderbirds medal at World Aquatic Championships

Fifth-year UBC swimmer Brian Johns and former Thunderbird Brent Hayden will have a little extrabaggage to bring home with them when they return from the FINA World Aquatic Championships this week.

Johns and Hayden grabbed bronze in the 4x200 relay on Friday, a day after Hayden took gold in the 100M freestyle, Canada's first world title in the pool since 1986.



Men's Soccer

T-Birds tie 'Caps

An 88th minute goal by second-year midfielder Cole Richardson was enough to give UBC a 1-1 tie with the Vancouver Whitecaps Sunday afternoon in front of over 400 fans at Thunderbird Stadium.

The Whitecaps, in the middle of a five game exhibition series in preparation of the upcoming USL season, drop to 2-0-1 after defeats of the Fraser Valley All-Stars and the University of Washington, with games against Trinity Western and UVic coming up. @

THE SMEARS

Asthenic Process
[Independent]

by Levi Barnett
CULTURE STAFF

Whatever happened to being raw? In their new album, The Smears sound too well-orchestrated, led by galloping drums that ring out as if someone is anxiously ringing church bells for a black jeans and studded-belt wedding. The blood-on-the-page heart is there,

but can all this can make the band stand out from the pack?

Since 2001, The Smears have been a live act out of Vancouver. Their appeal has been the full-throated vocal pipes of singer Rene Botha,

downtown club, it's less inspiring in its flawlessness. Hearing such a voice in person is an experience; on the album the

SMEARS' DEBUT ALBUM A 'TRANSITION'

whose powerfully appealing on-stage howl could put a smile onto anyone willing to appreciate a good old rock song. On *Asthenic Process*, the singing is graceful; but, stripped of the context of a booze-soaked

thrill isn't the same. The Smears can run with the best of them in cranking out by-the-numbers black mascara tunes about longing and broken hearts. Their musicianship is tight, with no extraneous layers clouding their sound, which rides along on a tonal

roller-coaster within each stanza without ever jumping its tracks. It's a bankable formula they stick with throughout the album.

Asthenic Process's songwriting and sound is accessible and grabs the listener by the collar. Botha relates in the track "Wake Me" that, "I threw you off the counter/ Pushed you down to the floor/ I made love to you for the first time/ Nothing felt the same as it did/ Before you came."

It's hard for a listener to ignore being welcomed like *that*, and The Smears offer enough to make you stay for at least one night. @

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AMS First Week Coordinator Required

The Firstweek Coordinator works with the AMS Events Department and other organizations to plan and implement our week-long welcome series of events from **September 2nd to 9th, 2007**

Duties and Responsibilities

- Creating and scheduling Firstweek programs and events in consultation with the AMS Events Department, Executive, and Food and Beverage department
- Coordinating all marketing and promotions for Firstweek
- Recruiting, training and supervising the Firstweek staff (who are employed for Firstweek itself)
- Managing or delegating management for all events during Firstweek
- With the AMS Events Manager, securing all necessary venues, equipment, power, artists, and special staff for Firstweek.
- Creating and managing the Firstweek budget, in consultation with Budget Committee
- Liaising with campus and AMS organizations (Imagine UBC, Housing and Conferences, Student Involvement, and many others) to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated student orientation and welcome experience

Relevant Experience/Qualifications

- Event management and programming experience an asset
- Knowledge and familiarity with student life at UBC (must be a current UBC student)
- Strong leadership skills and the ability to manage a First Week staff
- Creative promotional and marketing ideas
- The ability to work collaboratively and communicate effectively on shared projects

Time Commitment

- Minimum 30 hours per week May - September (will be much higher immediately before and during Firstweek)
- Occasional office hours during the school year, with emphasis on transitioning the 2008 Firstweek coordinator in the spring

Compensation

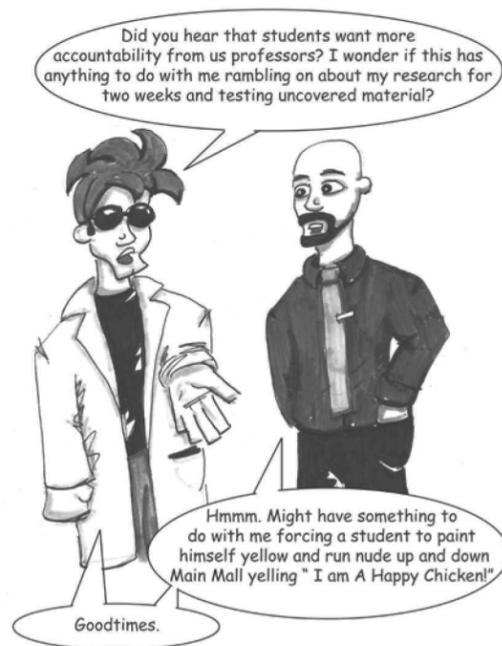
\$7,000

Applications should be e-mailed to applications@ams.ubc.ca with the job title included in the subject heading or hand delivered by **April 13th, 2007 to:**

Shea Dahl - Programming & Events Manager
c/o Alma Mater Society
Room 238 - 6138 Student Union Boulevard
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Teachers, tenure, and student torment

It's unlikely that any student at UBC gets through their undergraduate career without clashing at least once with a faculty member whose teaching methods don't make the grade. Running into a bad instructor seems to be a rite of passage for students. It's one that we all struggle through, curse about to the heavens, and then...end up submitting a small, bitter evaluation form before moving onto our next class and, hopefully, a better instructor.

The National Surveys of Student Engagement (NSSE) of 2004 and 2006, in which students' overall experience at major Canadian universities was weighed against US schools, have shown that UBC has consistently lagged behind other institutions when it comes to student-faculty interaction. According to these surveys, UBC students have relatively little motivation to approach their instructors with regards to their education, despite the fact that we also seem to lag behind in other areas of academic engagement. From personal experience, we guess that one factor contributing to student ambivalence towards their instructors is a sense of impotence when stuck with a prof who just doesn't deliver.

What avenues are in place at UBC to prioritise, evaluate, and enforce high teaching standards within our departments? According to basic economic principles, one would assume that three things should be in place to make this happen: incentives to encourage good teaching; enforceable policies to discourage poor teaching; and a reliable way to assess which is which. Ideally, these elements

should also provide reasonably fast returns. Since the release of NSSE's results, the University has acknowledged its need to further address these issues and we at *the Ubyssy* would like to add our two cents.

The first question that comes to mind is, do we have sufficient incentives available to encourage strong teaching efforts at UBC versus research efforts? While the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive, one cannot ignore the fact that good, relevant research brings in money, industry connections, and professional prestige, while good, relevant teaching usually brings in little more than a set of informal, albeit generous student evaluations or, at best, the odd nomination for a Killam prize. When one brings money and prestige and the other brings student popularity, we can't help but suspect which gets priority within the administration when assigning tenure—the holy grail of academic incentives. While some might ask how to make profs prioritise teaching as well as research, one could take it a step further up the ladder and ask, how do we ensure that the *administration* prioritises effective teaching?

According to the UBC Faculty Association and University human resources policy, teaching quality among the faculty is assessed primarily by student and peer evaluations, and are employed regularly when considering promotion or re-appointment. But student evaluations shouldn't be the only standard by which our education is evaluated. Students are under no obligation to praise or even

recognise *effective* teaching as opposed to entertaining or easy teaching. Furthermore, should there not be some kind of enforceable policy to address less-than-effective teaching year-round, not just at the end of a contract or in consideration of a raise?

Lastly, students at UBC have virtually no avenues by which to make their instructors accountable to them *while* they're in their classes. Altruism and vengeance aside, there's little point in providing a thorough end-of-term evaluation of a crappy course when you've already paid for it and suffered through it. Mid-term evaluations might help both students and faculty work together to improve the learning process as it's happening. As painful as it is, randomly assigned in-class audits, not just for tenure-track instructors but as a standard measure of teaching quality, could also help the University figure out exactly where its weaknesses lie. And they hopefully, create a system that would remove them.

To realise the problems that face teaching evaluations, just think about the last day of one of your classes. It's the end of the year, and you want to get through those pesky evaluations as fast as possible. Much of your judgment is often affected by your tiredness and your eagerness to get the hell out of there. Many of us haven't often been in the right state of mind to give a fair evaluation of your teachers. But just remember that the quality of your educators relies almost completely on the fives you fill in for professors who give you those B pluses you don't really deserve. @

LETTERS

Story missed facts on UBC-UAEM

While I was pleased to see the access to medicines issue receive some media exposure ("UBC takes steps towards accessible medicines, research on neglected diseases" [March 20]), I was disappointed to note a number of factual errors and otherwise misleading statements in the article. In the interest of brevity, I will only make a few clarifications.

When UBC-developed technologies are licensed to companies for further development and manufacturing—that is, when UBC rents out or sells its intellectual property—the licensing agreement can in principle contain any provision imaginable. We believe that licensing agreements, especially for health-related technologies, should prioritise global access; what's more, we believe this can be accomplished without sacrificing profits, either for the university or for the company seeking the license.

When it comes to neglected disease research, universities are somewhat restrained by their funding sources: since most biomedical research funding comes from Canadian government sources such as the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (and not the "Canadian Research Institute" named in the article), it is quite difficult to get funding to study diseases which affect very few Canadians, even though they affect millions of people elsewhere in the world. UBC-UAEM is therefore expanding its scope to advocate at the federal level for increased funding for global health research, but as university students our primary focus remains on universities. We are very excited about the positive response we have had from UBC administration so far, but our work here is by no means complete.

Our next meeting with administration will be at the end of April—seven weeks from the date of publication (not two, as the article suggested). The first meeting was attended not only by Dr. Toope, Dr. Hepburn, legal counsel, and representatives of UBC-UAEM and the AMS, but also by Angus Livingstone, Director of the University-Industry Liaison Office, as well as student members of the Board of Governors.

Media attention is a valuable component of our campaign, and we are looking forward to an ongoing relationship with the *Ubyssy* in the future.

—Andrew Gray is a member of the UBC Chapter of Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UBC-UAEM)

streeters

What do you think about the quality of teaching at UBC?



—Brad Davis
Commerce, 3

"I think that within Commerce, it's excellent. I think that there is interaction between the teachers and the students at many levels."



—Caroline Walker
Science, 4

"Variable. It's a range. Some of it is really great, and excellent. But I've had some bad experiences."



—Brittany Skinner
Law, 2

"I'm in the Faculty of Law, and I'm really proud to go to UBC, and think it's first-class."



—Callum Kerr
Science, 1

"It's fine."

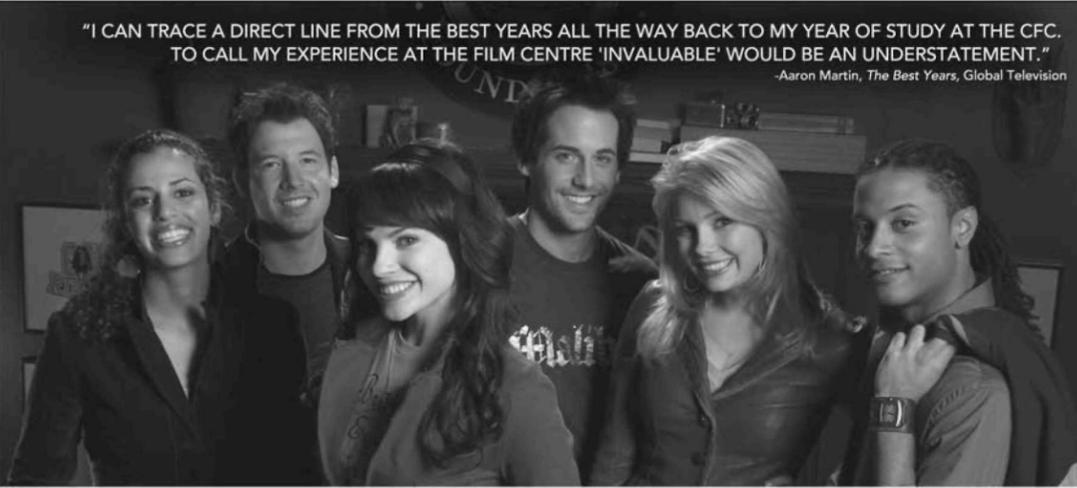


—Bonnie Wong
Science, 2

"There are a select few good profs. Some are boring. It's not really relevant all the time, and doesn't cater toward the students."



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 -Aaron Martin, *The Best Years*, Global Television



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Why I believe in God

by Steven Green

Lately, I have been considering why I believe in God, and I have discovered that I can't credit any amount of philosophy with bringing this belief on me. In fact, as far as my initial belief in God, I can only credit my upbringing, as I have believed in God for as long as I can remember. The question I am prepared to answer, then, is not, "Why did I start to believe in God?" but rather "Why do I still believe in God?"

Why, indeed? I spent seven years of my life in Africa. There, I saw many who were affected by malaria, tuberculosis, and AIDS, not to mention corruption and civil war. What kind of god can look upon that and say nothing?

Why believe in God in a world that is falling apart? Why believe when so many of my prayers seem to fall on deaf ears? Why believe when there is no real irrefutable proof that a god exists in the first place?

It's hard to describe, really. It's difficult to satisfy the demands of all who are looking for concrete evidence to cement their philosophical positions. I can't offer that. All I can offer is my own experience, tainted by my own subjective interpretations.

And this experience could best be summed up in the following sentence: without God, I would not be who I am today. I would be more oriented towards success, and I would care less about relationships. I would care more about myself than about the world around me. I would view women more as sexual objects and care less about experiencing real intimacy. I would be less inclined to help people connect and more likely to remain cliquy. I would be without meaning, without help, without love, without hope.

I believe all that because I have,

in each of those areas, seen a shift in the opposite direction which I can only credit to God. And I believe that without God, I am not that much different from those who have made the world the mess that it is. In fact, I know that I am at least partly responsible. I know that I've hated people; I know that I've deceived people; I know that I've neglected others' needs while living in affluence; I know that I've treated some women better just because they were good-looking; I know that I've been jealous of those who are more successful than me; I know that I've treated people like dirt. But I believe that God can help me change, if I let him. God can enable me to stop pretending I am good and really be good. And this gradual change that I am experiencing towards genuine goodness is probably the biggest reason why I can believe in God.

And for me, this change is how I view a good, powerful God acting in the midst of suffering. Rather than simply watching as the world destroys itself, God is intent on helping fix the real problem: people. Rather than simply relieving the symptom, God is treating the disease. God's not giving us morphine; instead, God is doing surgery. But like any good doctor, God wants our consent first. I have given mine, and the operations are not yet over. But the effects are already evident, and they're looking positive.

With that in mind, I will close this off and say that any discussion and sharing of experiences about a God or lack thereof should not simply be separate monologues but a vibrant dialog between authentic people.

—Steven Green is a third-year Psychology student

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Finding lost goods made easy



PROPERTY COP: Police now have other means to recover property. **PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY OKER CHEN**

by Colleen Tang
NEWS EDITOR

An RCMP officer is making it easier for students and other community members to recover lost property through the use of the Internet.

Officer David Brierley is the project co-ordinator and founder of the PropertyCop.org website. PropertyCop, a non-profit program based out of Victoria which officially launched in mid-February, allows users to create a free account to register their property in a private database.

Brierley started thinking about the idea of PropertyCop two years ago because of an on-going problem RCMP officers face: "I'd be out on the road with my squad and we'd spot some fellas, people I knew from the neighbourhood that [were] homeless with no fixed address, trying to sell cameras, for example, or...bicycles that were well beyond their means because they were very expensive," he said, "and you know as a police officer they were stolen but there was no way to get it back."

The only programs previously available for police officers were databases of reported stolen property.

According to Brierley, PropertyCop has already generated significant attention, with thousands of items registered so far. Using a call centre supported by Intercon Security Services and launched on March 7, police can call in with their queries using an access code, he said.

Suresh Bhindi of Campus Security and the university liaison for PropertyCop said that the new da-

tabase will be helpful for UBC Campus Security due to the amount of unidentified property that is recovered.

"We're not going to stop people from stealing," he said, but added that at least they now have a means of returning stolen property.

Bhindi said that UBC students have already started registering their property.

Brierley assures that the database is secure—only the police and the user have access to registration information.

"All the information there is encrypted," he said. "First of all it is password protected. Second of all we have an encryption for all the data. The next thing is that it has SSL protection which basically means all of the transactions that happen between the user and the database stay within a conduit; they don't go across the net."

Hasan Cavusoglu, a professor at the Sauder School of Business, said that with any website there are security risks including the potential modification of information.

"It's not only a problem of websites, it's applicable to any other databases through online [hacking]," he said. "There are privacy concerns...any information may be breached."

"Top-notch security takes a lot of money. Security doesn't come free. As a result I don't know to what extent they can secure the website."

Despite potential security concerns, not all UBC students are opposed to PropertyCop.

"If it can't do any harm...why not?" said Spencer Harwood, Arts student. "It's hard to recover lost property." @

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