



Weekly Bulletin for Department & Program Heads

Number 12 – Tuesday 4 February 2008

Report from Senate meeting on 2 February

The following motions from our Faculty were approved at last Saturday's meeting of the University Senate:

- BA in prairie studies
- Hood for health studies program
- Revision to development studies concentration in the international studies program
- Creation of concentration in political science as part of the BFS program
- Creation of liberal arts certificate and diploma

Members of Senate were complimentary about the certificate/diploma initiative and the BA in prairie studies. Copies of the current issue of *Arts & Minds* were distributed to Senate members, one of whom described the magazine as "first-rate."

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### **Budget and February's meeting of DE**

The Faculty's presentation to the central Budget Committee has been rescheduled to Wednesday 13 February from 1:30 to 3:00. This overlaps with the scheduled meeting of Dean's Executive at 2:30; Lynn will therefore chair the first part of our meeting.

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Tickets available

We have purchased a table at the Cougar Athletics Fundraising Dinner (Thursday 3 April at Queensbury Centre). 8 tickets are available for students of the Faculty of Arts. We hope to enlist the services of the ASA in determining which students get tickets; any thoughts you have are welcome.

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### **CL3 renovations – update**

Upgrading of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Classroom Building will be done this spring and summer. This work will involve electrical, mechanical, and ventilation systems. Several departmental budget submissions last fall included a request for conversion of 3<sup>rd</sup> floor classrooms to "smart" status. We are pursuing this with Physical Plant and Information Services, and hope to be able to convert CL 305, 312, 313, 317, and 345 during the upgrading. These rooms will also have better acoustic treatment and – we hope – new furniture.

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Important recruitment dates: reminder

Candidate interviews and campus visits are well under way and will continue into early February. Our target dates are:

- *Friday 8 February or earlier:* Committee chairs recommend preferred candidate to Dean and (with prior permission from candidates) conduct telephone reference checks
- *11-13 February:* Dean discusses candidates with Vice-President (Academic)
- *By 13 February:* Committee chairs prepare Recruitment Report and forward it to Dean's Office
- *13-15 February:* Dean contacts candidates and negotiates offers of employment

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Dean's Research Awards competition

By the 31 January deadline, ten applications had been received. The adjudication committee met on 4 February, and applicants will be notified shortly about their success in the competition.

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On the virtues of a liberal education

The following were sent to us by Keith Fortowsky in the Office of Resource Planning.

“... And despite the fact that CS115 didn't count towards the major, all this experience writing about slightly technical topics turned out to be the most useful thing I got out of the CS department. Being able to write clearly on technical topics is the difference between being a grunt individual contributor programmer and being a leader. My first job at Microsoft was as a program manager on the Excel team, writing the technical specification for this huge programming system called Visual Basic for Applications. This document was something like 500 pages long, and every morning literally hundreds of people came into work and read my spec to figure out what to do next. That included programmers, testers, marketing people, documentation writers, and localizers around the world. I noticed that the really good program managers at Microsoft were the ones who could write really well. Microsoft flipped its corporate strategy 180 degrees based on a single compelling email that Steve Sinofsky wrote called Cornell is Wired (<http://www.cornell.edu/about/wired/>.)”

“The people who get to decide the terms of the debate are the ones who can write.”

Source: <http://www.joelonsoftware.com/items/2007/12/05.html>

“I think the solution would be to create a programming-intensive BFA in Software Development--a Julliard for programmers. Such a program would consist of a practical studio requirement developing significant works of software on teams with very experienced teachers, with a sprinkling of liberal arts classes for balance. It would be a huge magnet to the talented high school kids who love programming, but can't get excited about proving theorems.

“When I said BFA, Bachelor of Fine Arts, I meant it: software development is an art, and the existing Computer Science education, where you're expected to learn a few things about NP completeness and Quicksort is singularly inadequate to training students how to develop software.

“Imagine instead an undergraduate curriculum that consists of 1/3 liberal arts, and 2/3 software development work. The teachers are experienced software developers from industry. The studio operates like a software company. You might be able to major in Game Development and work on a significant game title, for example, and that's how you spend most of your time, just like a film student spends a lot of time actually making films and the dance students spend most of their time dancing.”

Source: <http://www.joelonsoftware.com/items/2008/01/08.html>

Focus on students

Over the next few months, you will see increased publicity about our students, both alumni/alumnae and those still in their programs. This publicity will appear in *Arts & Minds*, *prairie dog*, and other print media, as well as on displays and on our redesigned website. One of the goals of the publicity is to put to rest the hoary myth (still cherished by some, including parents) that “you can’t do much of anything with an Arts degree.” We’re looking for stories of students who have completed degree programs in our Faculty and then have gone on to do all kinds of interesting things. Here’s an example:



Shannon Williams-Stawnicky, BA, LLB

Year of Graduation: 1998 Major: Women’s Studies Current Occupation: Federal Crown Prosecutor

“I completed my Arts degree with a major in Women's Studies at the U of R in 1998. Just prior to completing my degree, I participated in an International Women's Exchange program to Trinidad and Tobago where I conducted workshops on Poverty, HIV/Aids, domestic violence and substance abuse with the employees at an International Oil Company. Upon completion of my degree I moved to Edmonton to work for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton with high risk youth. I then went on to work with the Provincial Government as a Child Welfare Worker. In 2001, I decided to return to school and completed my Law degree at the University of Alberta.

“I am now working as a Federal Crown Prosecutor with the Public Prosecution Services of Canada in Edmonton. I conduct general drug prosecutions, youth drug prosecutions, and work with our Drug Treatment Court project. At the beginning of 2007, I took a 3 month leave from work and traveled to South Africa to do volunteer work in a primary school doing resource utilization and development with the educators and conducted workshops on HIV/Aids with the children. My Women's Studies degree provided me with an excellent educational foundation and gave me the opportunity both locally and internationally to become involved in interesting work and volunteer experiences.”

We’re looking for a number of profiles (again, both from grads and from students still in stream). Please give this some thought, contact students/alumni/alumnae in your area, see if they will supply a good photo and a brief writeup, and seek their permission to use that material. We will be launching this publicity campaign in the next few months.

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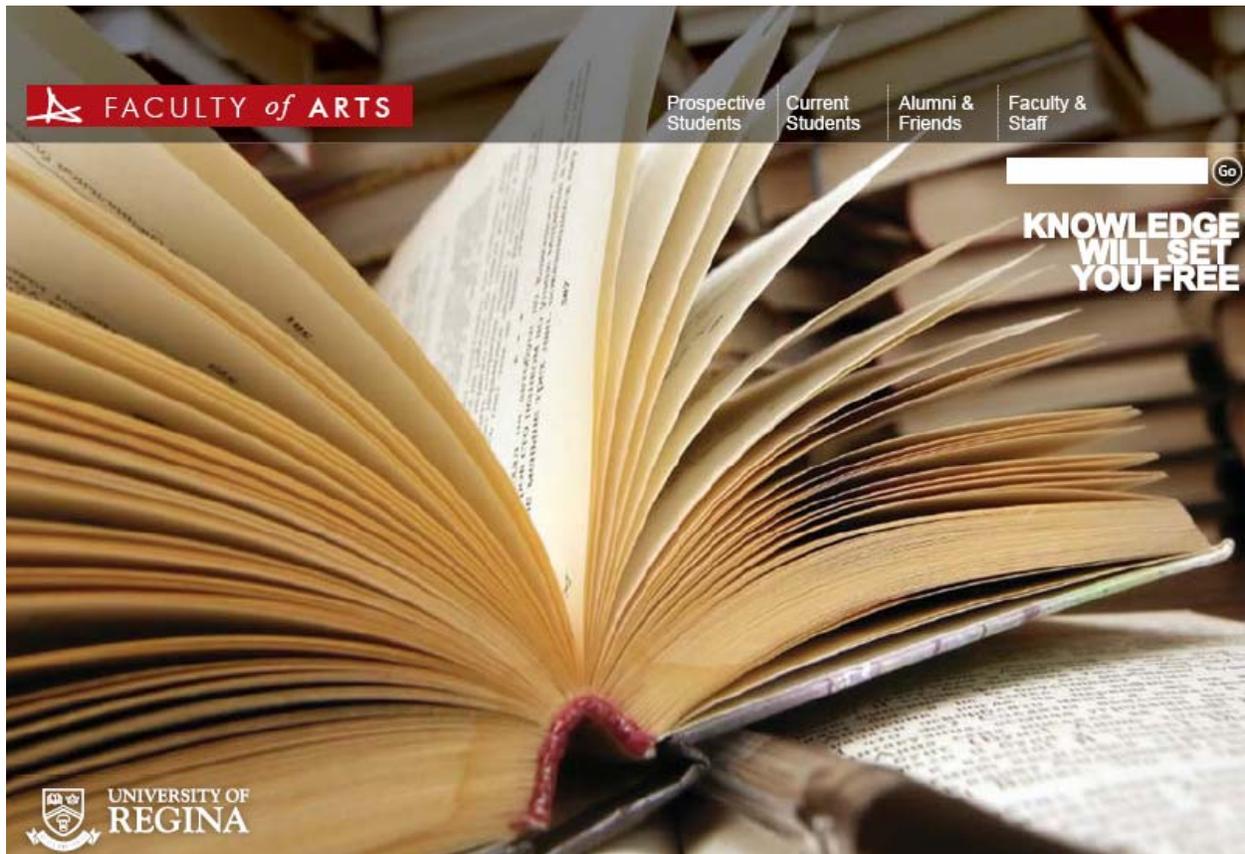
### SSHRC success

Please congratulate *Annette Desmarais* who, along with colleagues at the University of Saskatchewan, Simon Fraser University and the National Farmers Union, has won a \$25,000 award from the SSHRC Aid to Workshops Fund in support of “Food Sovereignty: Theory, Praxis and Power”, a two-day workshop to be held at U of S in November 2008.

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Website redesign

Noblet is continuing to work on the redesign of our website. Following is the latest working version of the Faculty's home page. The design is not yet final but the background image and page layout will be retained in the end product. Noblet will also be providing a series of templates for the Faculty's four main target audiences (prospective students, current students, faculty & staff, and general public) as well as for department and faculty member home pages.



Noblet has also finalized their redesign of the Faculty of Arts logo, as follows:

