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Chair Sharon McGowan has seen the re-birth of UBC's Film Production program after a wave of support.

Film production: Take 2

BY MEG WALKER

When a restructured Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Film Production starts up this September, UBC student Kathleen Jayme will be ready. This month she begins an animation-editing internship with the National Film Board, a position she will continue part-time during the fall semester.

For outsiders, one of the most noticeable additions to the program might be the new artist-in-residence position. Actor, writer and director Peter Howitt – Hollywood directing credits include *Sliding Doors* (1998, starring Gwyneth Paltrow) and *Antitrust* (2001, filmed partly at UBC) – will fill the position this fall.

But the most profound change is the BFA Film Production's expansion from a two-year to a three-year program. The expanded lineup now offers students a foundation year that has a focus on writing short screenplays (developed with the support of UBC Creative Writing Program), and an orientation to business practices and production planning.

The industry-related course brings members of Vancouver's influential film industry – the third largest in North America – into the classroom so students can start making connections early in their careers.

"That way students can learn who the film organizations are in their first year," says Program

Chair Sharon McGowan, "and they can use their summers more effectively to work or volunteer with players in the industry."

Jayme was hoping to enter the program earlier, but in August 2006, admissions were suspended due to UBC-wide budget constraints.

There was a strong public response to the program suspension. Amy Belling (BA 2003) and other alumni set up a press conference that presented a show of support for the program from filmmakers across North America. Directors Sturla Gunnarsson, Mina Shum and Lynne Stopkewich, plus cinematographer Greg Middleton – all UBC alumni – spoke at the event.

In early 2007, Belling, Jessica Cheung (BFA 2006), and Sidney Chiu (BA 2002) formally created the UBC Film Production Alumni Association (FPAA) and met with Dean of Arts Nancy Gallini to see what it would take to get the program reopened.

"The meeting came at an important point in the program's restructuring," says Gallini. By this time, she had compiled a list of goals or changes that would strengthen the program – from an expanded curriculum to deeper collaborations with other academic institutions such as SFU and the Emily Carr University (then-Institute of Art and Design) to a mentorship program and internship

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Canada's rising stars of research

BY CATHERINE LOIACONO

For some undergraduate students, summer means patios and beaches, but not for Shaina Lee and Carlen Fung. These two UBC students will participate in UBC's first annual national Rising Star of Research event from August 21-23.

They are among the 63 undergraduates from 27 institutions across Canada who will present findings from their recent research projects in the form of a poster competition.

Lee, a fourth-year student in UBC's Department of Microbiology and Immunology

is a co-op student who is currently working at the James Hogg iCapture Centre at St. Paul's Hospital – a UBC research centre aimed toward solving the problems of heart, lung, and blood vessel diseases.

"My research will give a better understanding of how our body controls the amount of immune response released when fighting pathogens and this could lead to new therapeutics to treat autoimmune diseases," says Lee. "Talking about my research is exciting and this competition is a great way to meet other researchers and to learn more about my own work by listening

and sharing with others."

Fung, a third-year student in UBC's Department of Biochemistry, is presenting a poster on the role of iron acquisition on the virulence of *Cryptococcus neoformans*. This pathogen can cause a form of meningitis. She is working in the Michael Smith Laboratories at UBC as an NSERC summer student. Her work is based on the 1999 outbreak of the cryptococcal pathogen that affected both immuno-competent and immuno-compromised individuals.

"My career goal is to work in cancer research and this

event is an important learning process for me," says Fung. "It is a great opportunity to present my findings and to think in a different way by having professors and students inquire about my work."

"Rising Stars of Research is an opportunity for the next generation of scientists to showcase their research accomplishments and explore their passion for innovation," says John Hepburn, UBC Vice-President, Research. "This competition demonstrates UBC's commitment to undergraduate

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PHOTO: ZMURCIUK KIRILL/ISTOCK PHOTO

IN THE NEWS

Highlights of UBC media coverage in July 2008. COMPILED BY RANDY SCHMIDT



PHOTO: EUGENE LIN

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2010 Olympic hockey arena opens ahead of schedule

UBC's new hockey arena, a venue for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic games, opened on July 7. Premier Gordon Campbell joined President Stephen Toope and federal, provincial and First Nations leaders, along with Canadian Olympian Hayley Wickenheiser and Paralympian Todd Nicholson, to celebrate the completion of the first new indoor venue in Vancouver.

The news story was carried on *Canadian Press* and *Reuters* and covered by *The Guardian*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Vancouver Sun* and *Global TV* and *CBC TV*.

Mining template not ideal for Mongolia, investors

In a story carried on *Reuters* and covered by *Forbes*, *The Guardian* and *The International Herald Tribune*, the Institute for Asian Research's Julian Dierkes commented on mining approaches for Mongolia.

The new government in Mongolia could finally pass deals to tap the coal, copper and uranium the country sits on. The idea of ownership stakes has symbolic importance among Mongolians wary of foreign investors on the make and mindful that Mongolia's mineral wealth was used to feed Russian

industry when the country was a Soviet satellite.

"I don't think ownership stakes are a good idea," said Julian Dierkes, a specialist in resources and public policy at UBC.

"There is a deficit in terms of communication. Ignorance makes the discussion difficult and it prepares the ground for some of the populist claims," said Dierkes.

Mapping the spinal cord

Scientists who study spinal cords often come across cells they can't identify, so when UBC scientist Jane Roskams heard that a Seattle neuroscience lab was casting around for its next project, she suggested: Create a detailed map of the spinal cord. Last month the Allen Institute for Brain Science released the first data from what will become a spinal-cord atlas, expected to be finished by early next year.

In a story reported in the *Seattle Times*, *Global National TV* and the *Toronto Star*, Roskams, who works at UBC's Brain Research Centre, said the atlas will boost research on Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS), multiple sclerosis and other disorders that attack the nervous system. It also will help efforts to treat spinal-cord injuries.

"I don't think there will be a lab in the world working on

spinal-cord injuries that does not access this as soon as it goes online," Roskams said.

Magic Tricks Reveal Inner Workings of the Brain

As told in *Wired*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and on *CTV's Canada AM*, magic tricks may look simple, but they exploit cognitive patterns that psychologists say may advance our understanding of the brain.

In a paper published in *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, UBC and Durham University researchers argue many of the techniques used in advertising and political propaganda resemble the methods of the magician.

"Although a few attempts have been made in the past to draw links between magic and human cognition, the knowledge obtained by magicians has been largely ignored by modern psychology," said UBC Professor Ronald Rensink.

Study co-authors are Gustav Kuhn from Durham University's Psychology Department and Aym Amlani, a recent BSc graduate of UBC's Cognitive Systems Program, which integrates computer science, psychology, philosophy and linguistics. Both Kuhn and Amlani are practising magicians who argue that conjurers are "miles ahead" of scientists.

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Student leader Meena Sharma will support the academic transition of first-year students through weekly small-group meetings.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

A FAACT of commuter life: New support for Arts students

BY LORRAINE CHAN

The reality for most first-year students at UBC Vancouver is the twice-daily mad dash for a bus followed by long commutes that eat up precious time and energy.

Currently, about two-thirds of first-year students live off campus. To offset these challenges, the Faculty of Arts has launched a new year-round program that will support first-year commuter students in their academic transition, while providing a way for them to plug into the rich and diverse offerings of campus life.

Next month, up to 200 first-year students will be welcomed into the Faculty of Arts Academic Commuter Transition Program (FAACT).

“We recognize that commuter students face unique challenges in adjusting to university life,” says Norma Wieland, Arts Assistant Dean, Student Services. “Compared to students who live in residence, they have more difficulty accessing resources, building relationships, and establishing connections.”

FAACT is built on the cohort model, which has proven to help students build a stronger

academic community. Already deployed in Arts One and the Coordinated Arts Program, the cohort model allows students to commence their degrees within a designated group and fosters a more intimate learning environment.

“Data tells us that students really value this sense of community,” says Wieland, “and are more academically successful when they have a strong peer support network.”

FAACT will encourage students to participate in small peer communities, with groups divided into cohorts of 20.

FAACT groups will meet weekly in a scheduled seminar with two senior student leaders who are responsible for mentoring, advising and coaching the cohort. These seminars are designed to help students enhance their academic performance and sense of community.

The FAACT student leaders will coordinate and facilitate workshops, discussions, events or activities. These will explore key themes including: selecting a major; exploring career options; getting involved in scholarly leadership such as editing a

student journal; learning about study abroad and undergraduate research opportunities; and discovering campus resources.

An additional level of support will come from Arts faculty members who will meet with FAACT groups on a monthly basis.

Along with the FAACT program, UBC is supporting commuter students through other measures. These include a commuter magazine that will be distributed to all first-year students before classes begin and the option to rent a room from the newly opened student hostel at one of the campus residences so they can take part in campus activities without needing late night travel.

UBC is also launching a new online events calendar in September. The UBCevents website will make it easier for students to navigate campus life and find the right opportunities for engagement at: www.events.ubc.ca.

Meena Sharma says she decided to work as a FAACT student leader because of her own transition when she started at UBC in 2006.

“Although my commute

wasn’t that long since I lived in the Vancouver area,” says Sharma, “it was still really hard to get to know people and feel a sense of community.”

Prior to UBC, Sharma had bounced back and forth between York University and Langara College. Without peer or faculty networks, it was difficult to put down academic and social roots at UBC, says Sharma, a fourth-year sociology and political science student.


Life blossomed, however, when Sharma experienced the support of a small academic community. Between 2007 and 2008, she headed up the Sociology Students Association (SSA) as co-president. Through that experience, Sharma gained greater confidence and new skills along with generous faculty

mentors, among them Sociology Dept. Head Neil Guppy.

Sharma also met Katherine Lyon, SSA Co-President, whom she now counts as a friend for life. “We just had this phenomenal way of working together and sharing our philosophies, which we discovered were really similar.”

Sharma says she’s eager to share with FAACT participants what she has learned through her own process of academic and personal growth.

“My message will be take the risk, don’t be shy, get involved,” says Sharma. “Do it without expectations, find something you genuinely enjoy and great things will evolve.”

To read more about the FAACT program, visit: www.arts.ubc.ca/students/faact 

RIISING STARS

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research.”

Students from a wide-range of disciplines will experience presenting and answering questions about their research in front of a large audience. Awards will be given to the top posters in health sciences, computational sciences and technology, life sciences and psychology, biochemistry and cellular biology, physical and earth sciences and natural resources and environment.

“We received an outstanding

response from more than 420 Canadian undergraduate students,” says Francois Jean, UBC associate professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology. “There is a huge appetite for undergrads to get involved and share their research.”

Part of the three-day event includes keynote addresses from researchers including Dr. Bob Hancock, UBC professor of Microbiology and Immunology; Glewn Flowers, assistant professor and Canada Research Chair in Glaciology at Simon

Fraser University and Tom Paderson, Dean of Science and professor of Earth & Ocean Sciences at the University of Victoria. Students will also participate in workshops on writing graduate school applications and scholarships and have an opportunity to tour research labs at UBC, SFU and UVic – two co-sponsors of the event. The other sponsors are the British Columbia Innovation Council and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) – Pacific Region. 

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Clients and friends employed at UBC frequently ask us for advice regarding their quarterly pension decisions. A few suggested we hold a series of forums on topical financial planning issues.

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Ecohealth: a new course, a new approach

BY CATHERINE LOIACONO

UBC is taking a more holistic approach to solving complex health and environmental issues with a first-of-its kind course in ecohealth.

The course examines the interconnected nature of ecosystems to better understand issues that affect the health of individuals and the sustainability of their environment. It is designed to foster collaborative learning about the reciprocal impact an ecosystem has on the health, sustainability and the environment of individuals and their communities.

Together professors, students, professionals, practitioners and researchers of various disciplines from seven provinces will explore ecosystem approaches to health in Vancouver through the lenses of food security, transportation and housing. This will include interactions with multiple community, academic, public and private sector stakeholders, as well as group presentations back to those involved.

The UBC farm will be used as a point of reference for learning throughout the course. “The farm is a microcosm at the rural and urban interface,” says Margot Parkes, a lead researcher for the pan-Canadian team based in the UBC Department of Family Practice and the College of Health Disciplines. “It is a great example of the interconnection between food, transportation and housing as important determinants of health in Vancouver.”

The course will also include a team project focused on the BC outbreak of *Cryptococcus gattii*, “the killer fungus” as a learning scenario.



Keltie Craig and Margot Parkes are launching a new collaborative pan-Canadian designed course in ecohealth at UBC.

“A central theme for ecohealth is that health is determined at multiple levels with the whole being more than the sum of its parts,” says Parkes. “For any individual, health and well-being is embedded with the community, region, country and global ecosystems they live in however, we tend to examine these different components in isolation. Understanding the connections between these scales encourages integrated responses to health and sustainability issues.”

According to Parkes, the emphasis of an ecosystem approach is to design preventive solutions based on ecosystem management and other non-health sector interventions, rather than independent health sector responses. “An important feature of the work will be understanding and cultivating community strengths to promote health and sustainability rather than focusing only on problems,” says Parkes.

“The goal is healthy people in healthy communities in healthy

ecosystems within a healthy planet,” says Parkes. “This is complex but is not necessarily complicated. It requires capacity to learn, research and work together to identify common ground and solutions that would not be achieved in isolation. Our course provides an opportunity for students – and our own team – to do exactly this.”

The inaugural Ecohealth course also marks the launch of the Canadian Community of Practice in Ecosystem Approaches to Health (www.copeh-canada.org).

This pan-Canadian project has nodes at UBC, the University of Guelph and Université du Québec à Montréal, and has received initial support from Canada’s International Development Research Centre. Following the UBC-hosted course in 2008, the collaboratively designed course will be hosted by University of Guelph in 2009 and Université du Québec à Montréal in 2010.

R

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Even more in year four at UBC Okanagan

BY BUD MORTENSON

September marks the beginning of UBC Okanagan’s fourth year in operation. As it has in each of the previous three years, the campus has expanded physical space, programs and course offerings in a big way to accommodate its growing student numbers.

FIPKE CENTRE A FIRST FOR UBC OKANAGAN

Opening this fall, the new Fipke Centre for Innovative Research adds 70,000 square feet of space for teaching and research. The \$32-million facility includes a computer lab, a 300-seat theatre, classrooms and lecture theatres, wet and dry labs and 65 faculty offices.

The Fipke Centre is the first brand-new building to be completed as part of UBC Okanagan’s campus master plan. It is also the first building to use the campus geoexchange groundwater energy system for heating and cooling – an

emissions-reducing and cost-saving system that will eventually provide heating and cooling to every academic building on the campus.

Charles Fipke, the Kelowna geologist who donated \$5 million to make the centre possible, has also given \$2 million to equip a new mass spectroscopy lab that will expand the university’s research capacity in geology, chemistry and other fields.

DEvised PERFORMANCE A CANADIAN FIRST

Theatre/Performance at UBC Okanagan is launching Canada’s first university degree program specifically in devised performance – an interdisciplinary and intercultural approach to artistic creativity that draws from a wide variety of world performance traditions including theatre, dance, music, visual arts, new media, circus, story-telling, folklore, and ritual.

The new Bachelor of Fine



Entering her second year of science studies at UBC Okanagan, student-athlete Kailey Buller and her teammates will don the uniform of the new UBC Okanagan Heat when the varsity volleyball season begins this fall.

PHOTO: TIM SWANKY

Arts (BFA) in Interdisciplinary Performance provides training in movement and voice, improvisation, mask, ensemble work, as well as solo and collaborative performance creation. Students select courses from a wide range of artistic media including video art, film, photography, painting, sculpture, installation, as well as various genres in creative writing.

“This program allows students to work across the conventional boundaries that still separate the arts in most university and conservatory programs,” says Neil Cadger, Assistant Professor of Performance/Theatre.

NEW MINOR IN CREATIVE WRITING

A new Bachelor of Arts minor in creative writing offers

UBC Okanagan students the opportunity to study creative writing in combination with another discipline.

Students will acquire proficiency in a variety of the genres -- from fiction, poetry, drama and non-fiction -- and will be able to specialize in at least two of these genres, says Nancy Holmes, Associate Professor of Creative Writing and Poetry.

“A minor in creative writing gives students several post-graduate options,” says Holmes. “This program provides emerging writers with enough training to become professional and, in UBC Okanagan’s interdisciplinary spirit, allows students to combine their skills and passion for other disciplines with their writing talents.”

POST-DEGREE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM LAUNCHED

A new certificate and diploma program in inclusive education has been established by UBC Okanagan’s Faculty

Students advocate for wrongfully convicted



PHOTO: EUGENE LIN

UBC Law Innocence Project Director Tamara Levy.

BY LORRAINE CHAN

The UBC Law Innocence Project is offering students a chance to dive into the deep end of criminal law by working on claims of wrongful conviction.

Launched in 2007, the Innocence Project investigates potential miscarriages of justice and aims to secure the release of people who have been wrongfully convicted.

Worldwide, Innocence Projects number about 70 and are mostly based in law schools. The only one in Western Canada, the UBC Law Innocence Project has been reviewing the cases of 20 applicants, 16 of whom are serving sentences for murder.

Open to second- and third-year Faculty of Law students, the Innocence Project provides nine course credits for the year-

long commitment. The program comprises academic seminar and clinical work that involves reviewing a case from the original investigation to the final appeal. Students are responsible for case reviews, investigations, staffing the Innocence Project office and liaising with a criminal lawyer who serves as a mentor.

Working under the direction of lawyers, the students each handle two cases. In its inaugural year, the Innocence Project started by reviewing applications and support materials – which in some cases exceeded 20 boxes.

“The demand for our service is so great that we’ve had to give priority to those applicants who are still in prison,” says Director Tamara Levy, a criminal lawyer, who along with Law Asst. Prof. Nikos Harris initiated the Innocence Project after teaching

seminars on areas of problematic evidence.

The program currently accepts 10 students, preferably people who are ready to roll up their sleeves and gain the experience they wouldn’t ordinarily get by sitting in class, says Levy. She looks for maturity, common sense and the ability to jump in and do what needs doing.

“It’s the equivalent of working in a small law firm,” says Levy. “I believe students learn a great deal more being involved in a real case.”

Third-year law student Andrea Hayes made the cut for this year’s Innocence Project. Since spring, she and two other students have been working part-time in the Innocence Project office, reviewing and managing files and looking after other general administrative tasks.

If it were possible, says Hayes, she would spend all her class time on the Innocence Project. “I find criminal law both fascinating and exciting largely due to its complexity and unpredictability.”

The students manage large files with duties that encompass interviews with prisoners and lawyers, drafting legal memoranda and conducting legal research.

Rather than be deterred by the pressures and big stakes of criminal law, Hayes says she’s challenged by it. Prior to law school, Hayes worked as a paralegal for four years focusing on human rights law with the Community Legal Assistance Society, a non-profit legal organization in Vancouver. She assisted the four human rights staff lawyers in all aspects of a

complaint.

“My desire is to be in court,” says Hayes. “I decided to study law because of my desire to help people. With the work in the Innocence Project and criminal law in general, I can advocate for people who are unable to speak on their own behalf.”

Levy says that students get to see up close what skews or resets the scales of justice. “The criminal justice system is a system run by people and people can make mistakes.”

Key to any Innocence Project is the prospect of convincing new evidence. For example, recent advances in DNA technology mean blood or semen tests can be more exact. Alternatively, a new witness or new witness statement may come to light.

Levy explains that students get to learn about some of the main causes of wrongful convictions. These include mistaken identity, false confessions, flawed expert or unsavoury witness testimony and “bad science.”

“For example, hair and fibre evidence have been found to be quite unreliable,” says Levy.

Since the Innocence Project is student-run project, cases that merit attention usually require a number of years to prepare. If and when lawyers find new evidence, they can then submit an application to the Federal Minister of Justice under Section 696.1 of the Criminal Code requesting a review to assess whether a miscarriage of justice has occurred.

After that, the process may still take a number of years. The Minister of Justice could dismiss the request, direct the applicant’s case to the Court of Appeal or order a new trial.

During the coming academic year, students – in consultation with their criminal lawyer mentors – will devise investigation plans for their cases. If required, the program will hire private investigators to interview witnesses and gather evidence. **R**

OKANAGAN

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of Education. With courses such as Assessment of Learning Difficulties and Literacy for Diverse Learners, the program prepares teachers to work with children and adolescents with diverse needs, establishing inclusive practices in classrooms and schools so that all students have equitable access to learning and achievement.

The Inclusive (Special) Education Certificate/Diploma program will appeal to B.C.-certified Bachelor of Education graduates who are currently employed as, or who wish to become, learning assistance teachers or resource teachers -- and to classroom teachers who wish to create inclusive environments in their instructional practice.



PHOTO: TIM SWANKY and MARGO YACHESHYN

Virginie Magnat, Assistant Professor of Performance at UBC Okanagan, will be teaching courses in the brand-new Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interdisciplinary Performance program this year.

UBC OKANAGAN’S VARSITY ATHLETICS SEEKS CIS BERTH,

UBC Okanagan wants to move into the big leagues of Canadian varsity sports. This summer, UBC Okanagan will submit its formal application for membership in the Canada West Universities Athletic Association, the Western conference of Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS).

“We’re eager to make the move to Canada West, and are looking forward to the benefits that such a high level of interuniversity competition will bring to our programs and our student-athletes,” says Rob Johnson, Director of Athletics and Recreation at UBC Okanagan.

Johnson notes that offering a varsity athletics program competing at the highest level

in Canada is important if the university hopes to retain top athletic talent from the Okanagan region, and attract outstanding athletes from other parts of Canada.

While the Canada West membership process could take a year or more, Johnson says there’s big excitement on campus right now as the UBC Okanagan Heat – the new name for varsity teams – play their first games.

ONLINE TV STATION TELLS UBC OKANAGAN NEWS

A new web-based TV service – www.ubco.tv – has been launched to keep the community up to date on a wide variety of news from UBC Okanagan. Current video features include a recent update on the Fipke Centre project and other innovative new construction on campus. **R**

New degree anticipates healthcare needs

BY CATHERINE LOIACONO

A unified interdisciplinary approach to solving population and public health issues is central to the new Master of Public Health (MPH) program offered this fall at UBC.

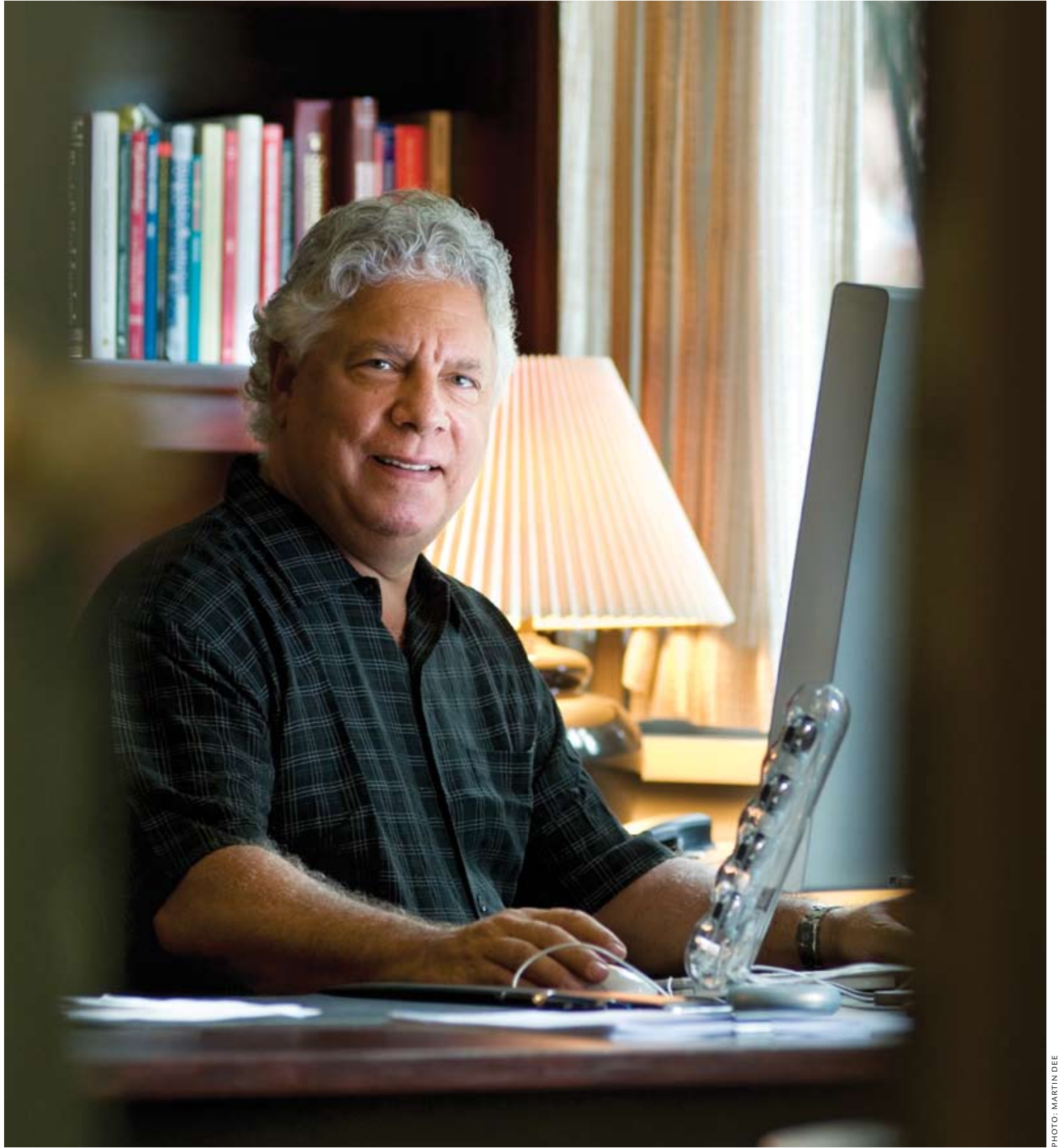
UBC is offering the MPH degree through the newly launched School of Population and Public Health.

“The MPH degree is a globally recognized professional credential for leadership in population and public health,” says Martin Schechter, a UBC professor in the Faculty of Medicine and director of the School of Population and Public Health. “By bringing together our outstanding UBC and Health Authority-based community health science professionals, academic researchers and learners, we will create one of the most advanced and integrated Schools of Population and Public Health in the world.”

The new school will develop public health leaders who are trained to work in local, regional, national and international settings. The MPH program fosters creative and critical thinking by incorporating analyses of complex systems, ethical debates and interdisciplinary perspectives. Students will have an opportunity to apply their learning through a comprehensive practicum experience in a community, laboratory or clinical setting.

“Career opportunities in this emerging field are numerous and rewarding,” says Schechter, who is also a Canada Research Chair in HIV/AIDS and Urban Population Health. “With an MPH degree, a graduate could pursue a career with the World Health Organization to eradicate polio, help design an HIV prevention program in Tanzania, help prepare Canadian cities for a potential pandemic or work with First Nations to help improve the overall health of their communities.”

Program studies include epidemiology, biostatistics, social, biological and environmental determinants of health, population health, disease prevention, and health systems management. The program will



Dr. Martin Schechter is director of the newly launched School of Population and Public Health.

also be accessible through a two-year distributed learning format, which will provide several on-campus days per semester supplemented by an on-line program.

“The B.C.-wide collaboration will also enable students and researchers in the School to engage with communities throughout the province,” says Schechter. “We envision the

ability of students to undertake work experiences in all six Health Authorities, across the country and abroad, thus providing exposure to the complex health challenges facing our society and the world.”

Kathryn Berry, a prospective public health professional is considering pursuing the UBC MPH. “The UBC MPH program offers a variety of elective

courses that cover a range of subjects that I am interested in, namely health promotion, social determinants of health, and Aboriginal health,” says Berry. “I love the fact that students have the opportunity to essentially create their own degree from the wide variety of electives.”

“The program structure and course selection are relevant to the current issues in public

health,” says Berry. “I like the fact that the School has designed a program that anticipates the future need of health care in Canada.”

The School of Population and Public Health, housed within the Faculty of Medicine, draws participation from seven faculties and two colleges at UBC. **R**

TAKE 2 continued from page 1

opportunities for students to new space on campus for faculty, staff and students.

One of these changes was well underway. A committee chaired by McGowan had consulted with program alumni, industry players and faculty from other film programs across Canada including York, SFU and Emily Carr to develop a comprehensive plan for changes.

In particular, a partnership was developed with Emily Carr in key areas where each

institution wants to enhance its program. UBC students will benefit from Emily Carr’s expertise in sound design and animation, and Emily Carr students will be able to join courses in business practices and producing for film and television, as UBC develops those.

So when the FPAA came to ask how they could help, the timing was ripe for them to tackle two items on Gallini’s list.

First, working with UBC’s Tri-mentorship Program, they organized a mentorship program for students with alumni who are now established professionals

in the industry – pairing student writers with professional writers, student producers with professional producers and so on.

Secondly the FPAA is creating an internship program for students from UBC, SFU and Emily Carr. The goal: “an internship program that is rich in the long term – one that extends beyond just UBC to the rest of the film-makers’ community that we belong to,” as Belling puts it.

The months of hard work and collaboration led to a surprise announcement at a FPAA event during the Vancouver

International Film Festival in early October 2007. Gallini had been invited to provide an update on the status of the Film Production Program, and she did – stating that the program would reopen in 2008.

“The best part is that this was truly a collaborative effort with other academic institutions like Emily Carr, our supportive industry partners and, of course, the new and energetic UBC Film Production Alumni Association,” Gallini said at the FPAA event. “I believe that together we will be able to sustain and build upon the tremendous strengths of our

film industry in B.C.”

Back to Jayme’s story. Last year, she took a course in Film Directing with McGowan. “Sharon would encourage us by saying that meetings were going on [to reinstate the program] so keep thinking about applying, and make sure you do a movie that means something to you,” Jayme says.

Jayme made a documentary film about the basketball team of a close friend who has been diagnosed with brain cancer. The result, a short film called True Player, was shown on Shaw Television earlier this year. **R**



Teaching Creative Writing student John Mavin couldn't resist an opportunity to continue volunteering in the Downtown Eastside.

PHOTO: MARTIN DEE

Writing it downtown: a word and heart primer

BY MEG WALKER

Before he taught a creative writing workshop in the Downtown Eastside, John Mavin admits he was a little scared of the neighbourhood.

"My experience with the Downtown Eastside before this was driving through that part of town and never getting out of my car," he says. "But spending time and meeting people there, I got way more comfortable with the area."

As a first-year Masters of Fine Arts student last fall, Mavin decided to take the pilot Teaching Creative Writing course so that he will have an additional income-earning skill besides writing stage plays. The year-long course offers a theory-based semester and an experience-based one that incorporates a community service learning (CSL) component. The CSL aspect of the course was organized in collaboration with the Community Learning Initiative, a unit within the Learning Exchange. It aims to equip MFA students with the ability to teach creative writing and build community simultaneously.

The impulse for the Teaching Creative Writing course, now CRWR 522, came about through a chance meeting of minds. "I had been interested in the inherent learning opportunities of the Learning Exchange for a while," says then-Creative Writing Program Chair Linda Svendsen, noting that Margo

Fryer, Director of the Learning Exchange had studied non-fiction in the Creative Writing program.

"Margo and I met back in spring 2007 to discuss the idea of a pilot course in Creative Writing pedagogy and the Learning Exchange," Svendsen continues. "I had Alison Acheson in mind for the course as she had studied pedagogical techniques at Antioch College and was a highly rated and popular Creative Writing faculty member."

For their CSL projects, the UBC students taught workshops in fiction, poetry, life-writing (also known as creative non-fiction), and even blogging. They worked with small groups of new writers in several community settings including the Learning Exchange storefront, the Dr Peter Centre, the Kettle Friendship Centre, the Canadian Mental Health Association the YWCA Crabtree Corner's single moms group, and some East Vancouver schools – all placements chosen to nurture the community-minded component of the course.

Mavin says the community-building aspect of the course reaffirmed his basic belief that "no matter where you are, people are people and should be treated with respect." He met surprises, too: "The people I'm teaching are the most open I've ever taught," he says. Where many creative writing students, including himself, usually start by being nervous and hold back

their work, the writers at the Learning Exchange were eager to jump in and share openly.

In terms of learning to teach, Mavin and fellow MFA student Grant Barr learned to develop a syllabus as well as how to teach it. Their course focused on how to revise a piece of fiction. Students edited their own work and also got to see the revising process of some published writers.

"The six-hour workshop experience with UBC was fantastic," Mavin says, "but all of those taking it thought – this isn't enough, we want more. And I thought the same thing." When Learning Exchange Storefront Coordinator Dionne Pelan asked if any of the MFA students wanted to continue the workshops, Mavin said a big yes.

As Mavin volunteer-teaches for 12 weeks this summer, he's excited for several reasons. For one, Acheson had asked her students to create a "dream syllabus" – in Mavin's case, a workshop that moves in stages from the blank page to a polished, potentially publishable draft – and he has already had a chance to use it.

But the relationship part of the Teaching Creative Writing course drew Mavin back, too. By returning to teach fiction writing again, he's responding to the new community he is now part of – a group of enthused writers who don't want to let him go, not just yet. **R**

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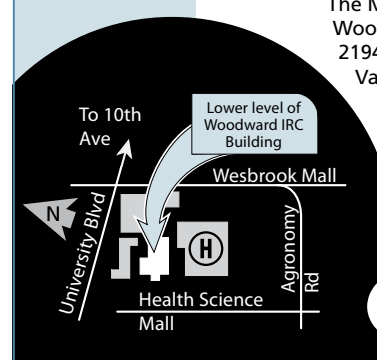
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Undergraduate pathways to sustainability

With UBC recognized as a leader in sustainability, UBC Reports charts how two hypothetical new students, Jack and Jill, might learn about the topic in their academic journey that begins this fall. BY MEG WALKER

YEAR 1

Jack (commuter) and Jill (in residence) meet at UBC Vancouver's Orientation week, IMAGINE. They learn about campus sustainability programs: recycling, the reusable food container program and more. All students receive a travel mug that gives 15 cents off at all Food Services outlets. New UBC Okanagan students at the CREATE orientation hear about recycling, composting and other eco-options. Students at both campuses are eligible for the U-Pass, the universal transit access pass.

Jack takes the Nature and Society course (Coordinated Arts Program) on how sustainable societies have been imagined over time. It starts with a 100 Mile Diet lunch.

Jack volunteers at Sprouts. This student-run café in the SUB (also home to the UBC Natural Foods co-op) serves local and organic foods (www.ams.ubc.ca/clubs/nfc).

Jack and Jill meet for fish and chips. Having read Prof. Daniel Pauly's research about decline in global fish stocks (www.fisheries.ubc.ca/members/dpauly) they're relieved that UBC Food Services's Sustainable Seafood Project works to procure appropriate fish such as snapper (www.food.ubc.ca/about/initiatives.html).

Jack and Jill prep for 2nd year and beyond by choosing from UBC's 400+ eco-conscious courses (www.sustain.ubc.ca/reports/curriculum/)

Jill takes Earth and Ocean Sciences 110 and learns about climate change by studying natural processes that shape the earth.

Jill joins the Student Environment Centre, an Alma Mater Society resource group where people can learn about environmental and sustainability topics.

YEAR 2

Jack does a Community Service Learning project at UBC Farm during Reading Week. He learns about the UBC Food System project, which aims to give students a solid understanding of the ecological, social and economic sustainability of food systems.

Jack and Jill evaluate a stormwater management system as part of SEEDS, Western Canada's only program that allows students to earn academic credit by working with faculty to solve real-life sustainability issues on campus (sustain.ubc.ca/seeds).

Jack writes for a UBC blog called Terry (www.terry.ubc.ca), a site that cross-fertilizes science and arts students' understanding of each others' fields in relation to global issues.

Jack does Arts Co-Op with a company that has an eco-focus. Examples of summer 2008 placements: research for City of Vancouver water conservation project; and promoting B.C. Hydro's PowerSmart program.

Jill's microbiology course is in the Life Sciences Building, which is LEED (Leadership in Energy and Design) Gold certified. Curious about green buildings, she reads www.sustain.ubc.ca/greenbuilding.html and tracks energy use of select buildings at dashboard.smallenergygroup.com.

Jill becomes a Resident Sustainability Advisor. She sets up info nights and coordinates with the Sustainability Office to create fun projects like a contest to see which residence can compost the most.

Jill takes a term in Mexico through the UBC-wide Go Global program (www.students.ubc.ca/goglobal). Eco-focused placements in many disciplines are available.

YEAR 3

Jack and Jill meet for fair trade coffee (available at every Food Services location at UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan). Jack has heard Prof. Bill Rees (School of Regional and Community Planning) talk about the ecological footprint concept. He tells Jill how this framework describes the amount of productive land needed to support a given population.

Since Jill flew to her Go Global placement, she uses Offsetters, a project for carbon offset investments created by UBC profs James Tansey and Hadi Dowlatabadi (www.offsetters.ca)

At the Trek Program Centre, which promotes sustainable transportation, Jack reserves a community co-op Zip Car for a date (www.trek.ubc.ca).

Jack and Jill carpool to UBC Okanagan in late March for the annual Urban Forum conference organized by Prof. Bernard Momer (2009 theme: cities and creativity). UBC Okanagan is the second location in B.C. to use "warm-mix" asphalt, a paving method that uses lower temperatures, takes less energy to apply and makes less smoke.

Jack tours the Faculty of Education's Learning Garden, which promotes the principles of sustainable environmental practice, stewardship of nature and eco-literacy.

Jill visits the Fipke Centre for Innovative Research – a building fitted with a geexchange groundwater energy system for heating and cooling. In time, every academic building at UBC Okanagan will use geothermic exchange.

YEAR 4

Jack and Jill hear John Robinson (Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability professor and co-winner of the Nobel Peace prize with Al Gore in 2007) speak about "Issue-driven Interdisciplinarity in the Service of Sustainability."

After, Jack and Jill discuss "green" graduate degree options like the IRES Resource Management studies and the Sauder School of Business' Sustainability and Business MBA.

In the First Nations Studies Program 320 Seminar, Jack learns about cultural sustainability – understanding how cultural groups create their social history.

Jill's chemistry lab uses the Chemical Exchange. This free service identifies unopened, unneeded chemicals on campus and markets them to other potential users on campus. In 2005, more than 400 kg of chemicals were exchanged.

Jack and Jill graduate and take the Sustainability Pledge (www.sustain.ubc.ca/sustainable_u).

In 1997, UBC became Canada's first university to develop a sustainability policy. UBC's Sustainability Office has helped guide efforts that have made UBC a leader. See www.sustain.ubc.ca