FOR MANY OF US MAY SIGNALS THE END OF GRADING AND A welcome return to research projects left in limbo over the past several months. It is also a time of frustration for many as we soldier on through the NHL playoffs. This year, however, I will no doubt learn what it is like to be a Leafs fan as I brace myself for England’s performance in the World Cup.

The month is also capped by the annual Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, to be held this year at Brock. Congress is a particularly important event in my calendar. As we discovered when we hosted it here in 2012, it provides a unique opportunity not only to share ideas within and across disciplines, but it also serves to convey to wider society in a very tangible way the sheer scope of Arts research.

In our office, May normally means a chance to catch our breath, take stock, and engage in a range of planning and forecasting efforts that a somewhat quieter campus permits. Following passage of the Arts Strategic Plan, there will not be as much let up as we begin to act upon the directions we’ve set. While there are certainly ominous rumblings here and elsewhere about budget cuts which could well be compounded by shrinking enrollments, I believe our Strategic Plan will position us so we can emerge stronger and more distinctive as a choice destination for students and faculty.

Several weeks ago I attended the Canadian Council for Deans of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and the general mood in the room was very sobering: everyone there reported that enrollments were slipping, in some cases quite dramatically, and many deans find themselves without the funds necessary to address their rapidly greying professoriate. I was the only dean at the meeting who could draw some comfort from having been in the position to continue to hire. This has been and will continue to be a priority for me as ultimately our teaching and research excellence is dependent upon the caliber of faculty we attract. Yet hiring requires careful planning and close financial management in the current budgetary and enrollment climate. To that end, much of our effort this summer will be aimed at those elements in the Plan.
that will promote financial sustainability, student success and satisfaction, and greater clarity to prospective students as to what we have to offer.

Continuing to recruit excellent faculty is one critical element, so too is creating appropriate and inviting space. The Hagey atrium project addresses the most pressing need for study and social space for our students. Other Strategic Plan goals to be tackled this summer include initiating a planning process to design a new Arts building, developing advancement priority projects that align fundraising appropriately with our teaching and research, exploring new internationalization strategies that foster global awareness in our students, and beginning a detailed analysis of prospective Arts students. I look forward to sharing with you in the fall the results of these planning efforts, presenting to you identified options, and engaging in a sustained dialogue as we make progress in each of our six priority areas. For the time being, however, I wish everyone (including the England football team) a pleasant and productive summer.

Doug Peers celebrates convocation Spring 2013 with Ken McGillivray, Vice President of Advancement, and Linda Warley, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies

Inside Political Science

EMMETT MACFARLANE
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, POLITICAL SCIENCE

What should we know about Political Science at Waterloo?

I think that would have to be its exceptionally collegial nature. The political science department boasts some of the best researchers of their respective fields, incredibly prolific scholars producing first-rate research, yet every member of the department seems deeply committed to the students, cares about the program, are fully invested in their teaching, and work hard to not only keep everything running smoothly but also to improve it. Recognizing that this combination of traits among an otherwise diverse group of people is not the norm in a university setting, I certainly feel lucky to join this sort of environment as a relatively new member of the department.

What is the most popular PSci course now, and why?

One of our most popular courses appears to be PSCI 260: Canadian Government and Politics. This course has been taught recently by Prof. Anna Esselment, and will be taught by Prof. William Coleman in the fall. I think the opportunity to delve more deeply into understanding how government in Canada works – Parliament, the courts, Quebec and regionalism, political parties, elections, and issues of gender and multiculturalism – is a big attraction to Waterloo students. Once they have a good understanding of the domestic political system, students are better positioned to appreciate how other countries operate, as well as to comprehend how political leaders in Canada are able to interact effectively with other heads of government through foreign policy, international agreements and organizations, etc.

Does your department have any unique or odd traditions you can share?

I’m going to cheat on the definition of “traditions” here, but two of my favourite events held by the political science department are, I think, somewhat unique (at least compared to some other institutions I’m familiar with). The first is an annual departmental book launch. This is a brand new “tradition” which we started just last year, and is an event featuring the newly published books by members of the department. It provides an all-too-rare opportunity
for colleagues to speak about their work and the two events held so far have been a lot of fun. The second is also brand new and something I hope we will continue long into the future, and that is a “Political Science Movie Night” series hosted by the Political Science Students Association. A faculty member selects a movie with some political theme, we play the movie in our lounge and the faculty member leads a short, fun discussion with students after the movie. (Last year, I exposed students to the best Canadian film ever made, “The Rocket: The Maurice Richard Story,” a biopic of the famed Habs player that also serves as a commentary on Quebec political culture and the infamous ‘Richard riots’ which some argue served as a precursor to the Quiet Revolution).

![Sandra Burt, professor emerita, and Political Science chair Eric Helleiner celebrate 50 years of PSci at Waterloo.](image)

What do you like about living in Waterloo region?

As someone who grew up in Markham and subsequently lived in somewhat distinctive places like Kingston, Boston, and Victoria, I was worried that Waterloo might be a bland “suburban hell.” I’m very happy to say I have really enjoyed living here. The town boasts some great restaurants, the region has a surprising number of nice parks and trails (Waterloo Park, Bechtel Park, Kiwanis Park), and K-W has most of the amenities of a big city without a lot of the drawbacks. The growth and prosperity of the region – particularly when compared to much of southwestern Ontario – makes it an exciting place to plan a future as well.

What should we know about Germanic and Slavic Studies?

It’s a department with a lot of energy and a lot of ideas for research, teaching, outreach. And what’s really special about that is that they are good at putting those ideas into practice. A good example is our international collaboration: In the past 5 years, we have not only started a unique and very successful joint MA degree with the University of Mannheim in Germany (preceded by a veritable mountain of paperwork), but also a Cotutelle PhD with the same university. Another exciting initiative is our new undergraduate summer study abroad for beginning language students, the Waterloo Summer School in Mannheim, running this year for the first time. Our strong connection to the University of Mannheim also includes research collaboration and faculty exchange, and we’re really proud that we can bridge the two cultures on so many levels. It’s also a department very skilled at discussion and collaborative decision-making – across disciplinary boundaries and across languages (Croatian, Dutch, German, Russian) within the department, with undergrad and grad students, and this makes for an excellent working atmosphere in Germanic and Slavic Studies!

What is the most popular GSS course and why?

That would have to be German 100 “Zeitgeist and Popular Culture”, our largest course and for many students the first contact with the department. It’s an intro to history, politics, culture of post-war German-speaking countries – a lot of material, but the access for students to all of this is fun and unexpected: through police dramas, pop music, sports, soap operas, comics, conversation patterns – in short, a trip through the (sometimes surprising) features of German popular culture. The course is open to all students and draws a variety of them, many of them first-years, and often this is the only course they can take with us. So there’s lots of pressure for us to make this as enjoyable and informative as possible! It’s a relatively new course, and my colleague Paul Malone has been doing a great job keeping students in this class
engaged. I will teach it this coming Fall. I am a bit scared, since this class, with around 75 students, is easily three times the size of what I'm used to, but also excited, since the class will allow me to connect my research (which is in conversation analysis) and my teaching in new ways.

What special GSS traditions can you tell us about?
You can always find something delicious to eat: There's always chocolate in our department office in ML 220 if you need a pick-me-up (thanks to Janet Vaughan), my colleague Skid (James Skidmore) bakes criminally good cakes, and my colleague Michael Boehringer regularly treats us to amazing pretzels and bread from his home bakery! On the serious side, a tradition in the department is its strong connection to the community via the Waterloo Centre for German Studies. Two recent exciting projects that illustrate this engagement: the K-W German Walk, a mobile app that allows you to go on a virtual journey through K-W, on the trail of German-Canadian history; and the Oral History Project, an ambitious interview project that will tell about the local German-Canadian community in a historical context by focusing on personal experiences.

What do you like about living in Waterloo region?
When I moved here after 11 years in the American Midwest, it felt just a little bit like moving back home – the German heritage here is really noticeable, not least in the food available in the region (the bakeries, for example). I am a bit food-obsessed, so my favourite places in K-W are the Kitchener market (what a wonderful mix of different languages and cultures!) and Vincenzo's. I feel like I could pay my rent with the money I leave at the Vincenzo cheese counter!

An astonishingly diverse culture of research excellence

TIM KENYON, ASSOCIATE DEAN, RESEARCH

In July 2012 I was appointed Associate Dean of Arts for Research (ADR). Since then, I've been privileged to work closely with excellent new-to-me colleagues in Arts administration, from whom I've learned a great deal. This especially includes Dr Angela Roorda, the Arts Research Development Officer. With my forthcoming sabbatical, beginning July 1, here are some midterm reflections on the past two years.

The position of ADR was a new one to the Faculty of Arts in 2012, as the Research portfolio previously fell within the mandate of the Associate Dean of Arts for Graduate Studies. Among other things, the expansion of Arts graduate programs and the increasing need for research-specific planning and outreach meant that it was no longer feasible for a single AD to perform both roles.

The big picture that has occupied us in the Arts Research Office (ARO) over this time largely springs from the need for transparency, consistency, and planning. Once upon a time, requests for matching funds and special support for research grants from Arts scholars were relatively rare. This has been changing for years now, with increased funding opportunities, complexity of grant arrangements, and institutional obligations to contribute to them. Dealing with these needs in a planned and principled way is one of the key priorities of the Arts Strategic Plan.

On the other hand, most ongoing activity in the ARO bears on the overlapping annual rounds of grant applications, award nominations, research data analysis, and the outreach or advocacy arising from these. Arts is ahead of the curve in this respect, and has been since before I joined up, mostly due to Angela's groundwork in setting up sensible processes and facilitating them in detail.

One of our organizational goals has been to institute collegial decision-making or committee review of some research funding allocations in Arts, in accordance with clear principles for funding priorities. (A simple example of such a principle would be: Contribute funding to conferences that take place at Waterloo
over those that take place elsewhere.) We are working toward this, with principles now in draft form. Another goal is to contribute planning and advising on the promotion of interdisciplinary research projects that function equitably, are sustainable, and do not impinge on the capacity of departments to deliver programs.

On this front, Arts General Group has reviewed draft guidelines on how to prepare and create a successful research centre or institute. I anticipate that the forthcoming university-level policy on research centres and institutes will complement these guidelines.

In the past two years, I've learned that Arts has an astonishingly diverse culture of research excellence. As sometimes happens with promotional rhetoric, this is a mantra that surprises by turning out to be a simple unvarnished truth. Every week – and during grant application seasons, every day – I have learned something new and delightful about our colleagues’ breadth of interest and their richness of method. Being surrounded by people gifted at finding the wonder in absolutely everything is a great perk of academic life; the role of ADR puts this virtue front and centre for me.

I've also learned that research in the social sciences, humanities, and creative and performing arts is understood unevenly both within the university and beyond. Many people across the uWaterloo campus, both faculty and staff, have sophisticated and nuanced understandings of the characteristics of Arts-based scholarship. At the same time, ours is just one of many universities disposed to deference toward widely-publicized university ranking exercises that include nonsensical research measures, or the unsound use of otherwise meaningful metrics, on which Arts research is particularly ill-represented. My experience suggests that, at Waterloo, cautious optimism and continued advocacy are a reasonable admixture on this front.

Arts is very fortunate to have Professor Jennifer Simpson, erstwhile Chair of Drama and Speech Communication, stepping into the ADR role for the coming year. I will close by thanking Jennifer for taking this on, and by wishing her as great an experience as I've had.

Faculty and staff members are well aware that students need more than excellent teaching; they need resources and facilities that support all aspects of university life. The strategic planning consultations made it abundantly clear: we need more and better space in the Arts areas of campus, especially a welcoming gathering place for students to study, socialize, or refuel with a decent cup of java or chai.

In October 2013 the Board of Governors’ Building and Properties Committee approved the plan to renovate (or ‘infill’) the courtyard area of Hagey Hall to create that important place. Working with Masri O Inc. Architects, the design has evolved to a beautiful multi-level atrium will be a light and bright space with flexible social and study areas on the upper levels and an open ground floor with food services. This is a very good news story.

Students led this one

And here’s a bit of the backstory if you have not heard: In 2012 the Arts Student Union conducted a survey of the student body on space needs. The results from 1,455 student respondents were unanimous: students will benefit substantially with additional study, social and meeting space.

This spring Arts students stepped up again when they voted resoundingly in favour of using 200K from the Arts Endowment Fund (AEF) for the Hagey renovation – with annual allocation of additional AEF funds for space/service needs as identified in consultation with students.
Breaking ground and moving sculptures

Although construction schedules can be a moving target, the atrium project leads anticipate the ground breaking will take place by the end August (2014). Before that happens, the four iconic sculptures must be relocated. Called ‘Fountains’, the Hagey courtyard sculptures were created by artist Ron Baird in 1971. Stay tuned for the solution, but rest assured the artist will be consulted and the Faculty is working with Plant Ops to identify a suitable new location.

Living with construction at the epicenter of Arts

Universities are kind of like airports and highways: there is always construction happening somewhere. It is impossible to gain the space this Faculty needs without a certain amount of pain or inconvenience. Of course those with offices facing the Hagey courtyard will be most affected. During more disruptive periods of construction, windows facing the courtyard will be boarded over (as is currently the case on some Biology 2 windows facing the new Science building site). The atrium project leads will implement a regular notification system for stages of the construction, and are preparing plans for alternative temporary work spaces if necessary. More construction information and contact details will be shared with the Arts community as soon as possible.

Foyer

Enter the Hagey atrium through a welcoming 2,614 sq ft foyer, featuring a three story interior glass wall and a wave-like exterior wall

Atrium

Bright with natural light, this is the 5,798 sq ft common area for students to meet, relax, catch up on homework and grab a coffee

2nd floor project room

A glass-walled 950 sq ft ‘treehouse’ for project and group work situated above the activity of the ground floor atrium

3rd floor study space

A 1,400 sq ft area well above the activity of the ground floor atrium provides a quiet study space with flexible seating for group or individual work
2014 Arts Awards
for Service, Teaching, Research

Recognize and celebrate contributions of outstanding students, staff and faculty by nominating them!

Deadline for nominations: September 12, 2014.

Click below for award details.

Feedback, please
We publish five issues of Inside Arts per year. We’d love to receive your feedback. Send comments and ideas to wphilpott@uwaterloo.ca.