FAUW Forum

eLION: PENN STATE'S SUCCESSFUL "HOME-GROWN" INFORMATION SYSTEM

Penn State's highly successful online academic advising system, eLion, has received attention from not only colleges and universities across the US but also leading information technology companies. While high-level management teams explored the possibilities of purchasing expensive commercial software systems, the initiative to develop its own system came from Penn State's user community. The success and history of eLion are summarized in two articles, beginning on Page 3.

DOCTOR OF BABYSITTING

Colleges are flooding the job market with candidates who have ever-higher degrees. Where will this "credential inflation" end? asks Randall Collins, a professor of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. (Page 6)

U of T MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT IN JEOPARDY?

The UTFA has been informed that the administration of the University of Toronto will not renew the Memorandum of Agreement unless it is amended to exclude clinical faculty. A letter from UTFA President George Luste to colleagues is reprinted, beginning on Page 8.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The FAUW Board election will be held from March 25 to April 8. Please consider joining us to help improve the academic life at the University of Waterloo. Joining the Board is a good way to find out how the campus really works and a great way to make a substantial difference to our community. A nomination form is included in this edition of the *Forum*. Nominations are due in the FAUW Office by Monday, March 10.

External Examiner at UW? (Page 11)

BOOK REVIEW

Jeanne Kay Guelke (Geography) reviews *Women in the Canadian Academic Tundra: Challenging the Chill.* (Page 10)

EDITORIAL

At its April and December General Meetings, the FAUW receives reports from its various committees, including one from the Editor on behalf of the Editorial Board of the *Forum*. In these reports, I have always thanked the members of the Editorial Board for their help and expressed special thanks and appreciation to Pat Moore for her exceptional work in the production of the *Forum*. This is usually followed by a sermon on the role of the *Forum* as a "vehicle for academic discussion and debate across the UW campus" and a plea for contributions (*not* of the monetary kind). In my report to last December's meeting, however, I decided to bypass the mission statement and to forget preaching to the converted. For it dawned on me that one doesn't need to present a status report on the *Forum*: The issues of the *Forum* serve as its status reports.

However, can we push this thought a little further? Can we say that issues of the *Forum* reflect, in some way, the status of intellectual health – the academic discussion and debate of important educational and philosophical issues – on campus? "Oh," you might think to yourself, "that's preposterous. What business is it of a faculty association newsletter to focus on academics? It should stick to employment issues. After all, appropriate venues for academic discussions already exist."

My reaction would be: OK, what are these venues? Faculty councils? Senate? And are important educational and philosophical issues really being discussed there? (A couple of years ago, I asked roughly fifty faculty senators if they thought that Senate was being useful in this regard. Their responses were published in the September 2001 issue of the *Forum*.)

Since I began as Editor in July 2000, I have sent *over two hundred and fifty* invitations to faculty members to ask for articles or opinions for the *Forum*. These include invitations to selected individuals as well as to larger groups, for example: recipients of the Distinguished Teacher Award, faculty members serving on Senate, members of the Departments of History, Philosophy and Political Science. (Currently, there is an outstanding invitation to members of the last three departments. I plan to publish their responses in the next issue of the *Forum*.) To be honest, I'm quite ambivalent about the results. On the one hand, the *Forum* has received some superb responses to

these invitations. On the other hand, the number of replies is so disappointingly low. Is this because everyone is so busy? Or are there other reasons? (For example, a junior faculty member, in response to one of my personal invitations, told me that he prefers to write for venues that pay.)

Is the *Forum* working? Or is it better to ask whether academic discussion and debate is alive and well on campus? You be the judge.

eLion: A success story at Penn State

In response to the recent discussions in the *Forum* on UW's student information system, SISP, a number of people – faculty and staff alike – have asked whether such a system could have been developed at UW at a fraction of the cost. Indeed, home-grown systems have been developed at other universities: Penn State University is a notable example. The progress at PSU is summarized in the articles on Page 3 and 4.

I thank George Freeman of E&CE for telling me about the success story at PSU and for suggesting that I contact George Kesidis, formerly of E&CE at UW and now in PSU's Electrical Engineering Department. Prof. Kesidis, in turn, directed me to some very helpful people from PSU's Information Systems Department. I especially thank Michael Belinc for taking the time and trouble to write an informative summary of the history of the eLion system.

By the way, how much did UW pay for SISP? And how much must it continue to pay in the future? Whatever the cost, things could be worse: As Florence Olsen has written in a recent issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the California State University is probably going to spend a whopping US $400 million for the installation of a new PeopleSoft management software system for the entire state-wide university complex. ("Giant Cal State Computing Project Leaves Professors and Students Asking, Why?" in the January 17, 2003 issue of the *Chronicle Review*.) On the other hand, proponents of InfoTech, chanting the mantra of "broadband," may be able to convince the Ontario government that a PxxxxxSxxx-type provincewide university administration system is now essential for "efficiency" and "mobility."

ERV

Reprinted with permission from the Penn State Intercom*, dated April 11, 2002*

eLION SYSTEM WINS NATIONAL ACCOLADES

by Allison Kessler
Department of Public Information
Penn State University

Colleges and universities across the country attempt to mirror Penn State's highly successful online academic advising system. But eLion certainly has managed to turn more than the heads of academia. Now, eLion has attracted the attention of the Computerworld Honors Program, as it formally became part of the Computerworld Honors Archive at ceremonies April 7 in San Francisco.

Each year, the Computerworld Honors Program identifies and honors organizations worldwide whose visionary use of information technology produces and promotes positive social change. These innovators, true revolutionaries in their respective fields, are nominated by chief executive officers of the world's leading information-technology companies. Thomas Nies, president and chief executive officer of Cincom Systems, nominated Penn State's eLion in the education and academia category for the ease with which it allows students to navigate their academic schedules.

"Academic advising is a critical factor in enabling students with on-time, successful completion of graduation requirements. Through the application of technology, Penn State's advising process has been measurably improved and the delivery of student academic services also have been enhanced," said James Wager, assistant vice provost for enrollment management and University registrar.

Special functions of eLion include:

* academic and advising references, which include links to information such as advising procedures, University programs and courses, career assistance, continuing and distance education, administrative offices, and policies and rules;

* student services, which provide students with access to their own administrative records, an ability to take academic actions and receive quality academic advice in the process;

* faculty services, which enable faculty members to receive class lists online; and

* adviser services, which provide pertinent information

on students' academic activities and achievement to advisers only.

eLion was not created to replace face-to-face contact with academic advisers.

"The system is designed to be a tool that will supplement and enhance the current advising model. It has not been designed to replace the existing system," said Eric White, executive director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies. "Rather, through the use of current technology and networking capabilities, the system has been structured to assist both the academic adviser and the student as they work through the academic advising process at Penn State."

eLion is a collaborative project at the University among three administrative areas – Enrollment Management and Administration, Information Technology Services and Undergraduate Education. The eLion Web-based services are housed and maintained by Administrative Information Services, a unit of ITS@Penn State.

Allison Kessler can be reached at akessler@psu.edu.

The Forum *thanks Ms. Kessler and the Department of Public Information, Penn State University, for permission to reprint this article.*

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF eLION

by Michael F. Belinc
Information Technology Systems
Penn State University

As promised, I am enclosing some information about Penn State University's information system, originally called OASIS. Historically, this set of applications has evolved through four name changes and a host of added functionalities during its ten years of existence. In name, OASIS became CAAS which, in turn, became CAAIS. The system has been renamed "eLion" (https://elion.oas.psu.edu/).

While it is true that some high-level management teams explored the possibilities of outsourcing this functionality (e.g. to PeopleSoft, SAP, etc.), the initiative for OASIS came from within the Penn State user community. Demand for giving students access to their Administrative data led to the search for technology to provide the desired access. (This technology search was actually initiated from within our Administrative Computing Department). Via close contacts with Cornell University (Ithaca, NY), we learned of their "Project Mandarin". The early Mandarin technology was developed jointly by Cornell, MIT and Apple. Cornell provided the impetus for the project by their own needs to provide access to Administrative data for their students. MIT provided Kerberos, which Cornell adopted as its security mechanism and Apple provided funding. Mandarin was initially developed – for obvious reasons – for the Apple Macintosh platform. On the mainframe side, Cornell used the VM operating system and ADABAS was their "legacy" database. When we joined the "Mandarin Consortium", we ported the Mandarin architecture to MVS and the Windows platform.

OASIS was our first Penn State "Mandarin Project". We were already using ADABAS on the mainframe and Kerberos security was already an integral part of our Academic Center's core services for students, so this was (technically) all a very nice fit for us! We initially deployed Mandarin only on the Apple Macintosh platform. It took us an additional year or so to complete the port to Windows. As you can see in the historical reference below, we rolled this architecture out rather slowly. This was necessary for a number of reasons, including the fact that Mandarin was a "client-based" system and "client distribution" (and management thereof) was difficult at best.

Soon after we completed the port of Mandarin to Windows, along came the World Wide Web. Obviously, we scrambled to bring Mandarin to the Web. The Web provided the momentum to allow OASIS to grow more rapidly and it quickly became very popular. eLion is now one of the most recognized Administrative Information Systems at Penn State. However, eLion is not the only suite of applications that uses this technology. We have integrated the technology into *all* of our Web-based applications and we continue to convert legacy mainframe applications to also provide Web access via this technology.

Last May we completed a three-year project to essentially replace the original Mandarin architecture. Dubbed "Project Hydra", the essence of our effort was to replace the old version of Kerberos security. We have now fully integrated the Distributed Computing Environment (DCE) security into our application development suite. DCE is based on Kerberos Version 5 (and the Mandarin architecture was based on Kerberos Version 4). Along with new, upgraded security, Project Hydra has also afforded us the opportunity to completely modularize our middleware infrastructure. Key components that were once tightly integrated in the old Mandarin architecture are now more loosely coupled, hopefully making it much easier to make architectural changes in the future. Finally, Project Hydra has removed all but a smidgeon of the single-threaded code that was inherent to Mandarin. This has manifested itself very nicely as a tenfold increase in performance.

One other historical factor that may have played a role in deciding to take on this endeavor ourselves: In the early '80s, we did enlist the services of an outsource agent to develop our original mainframe online Integrated Student Information System (ISIS). In short, this co-development effort went sour – and I am sure left a bad taste with respect to such business practices. We ended up completing the work ourselves. On the good side: In comparison to some of the money being spent by our peer institutions in the Big Ten for PeopleSoft, we got off very cheap back then! In summary, it has been an extremely successful endeavour.

SOME MAJOR HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

eLion Phase I

12/1992 The Office of Administrative Systems (OAS) initiated the OASIS (Open Access to Student Information Systems) Project, with a goal of providing students direct access to their own administrative data – OASIS was a client/server system that required software distribution to each microcomputer that desired access – the initial applications, security infrastructure, communications infrastructure, and customized techniques for coding Natural Glue and Action routines formed the foundation for OASIS to grow into CAAS, then into CAAIS, and finally into eLion

12/1993 The first production release of OASIS was made on 6 kiosks in the HUB

02/1994 OASIS access was expanded to computer labs throughout University Park and on to the majority of the other Penn State campuses

eLion Phase II

02/1994 The Division of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) joined the OASIS development effort with a goal of providing academic advising tools to students

06/1994 Planning commenced to change the presentation of OASIS from a client/server application to a web-accessible application

01/1995 The first academic advising components of OASIS were placed into production

eLion Phase III

03/1994 Independent of OASIS, a new project called CAAS *Comprehensive Academic Advising System* was formed to deliver extensive academic advising services to students – the CAAS Team consisted of representatives from the Registrar's Office, the College of Business, the commonwealth campuses, OAS, and DUS

05/1995 Recognizing an overlap in academic advising services, a common delivery vehicle (the web), and the value of providing more than academic advising in CAAS, it was decided that the OASIS and CAAS projects should be combined into a single effort – at the same time, in recognition of the changed focus, the project name was changed to CAAIS *Comprehensive Academic Advising and Information System*

03/1997 The first production deployment of CAAIS was completed, with original OASIS applications now being accessible from the web, in combination with new applications developed under the CAAIS umbrella

eLion Phase IV

10/1999 Recognizing a need for more consistency between various CAAIS web pages and a need for better navigation within the CAAIS system, a major redesign of CAAIS was undertaken

08/2000 To achieve better name recognition and to usher in the planned presentation and navigation changes, the CAAIS system was renamed to eLion

10/2000 The new-look of eLion was unveiled, which provided much improved system navigation, along with an improved and consistent graphical presentation

The Forum *thanks Mr. Belinc for kindly providing the above information.*

THE DIRTY LITTLE SECRET OF CREDENTIAL INFLATION

by Randall Collins
Department of Sociology
University of Pennsylvania

College degrees, once the possession of a tiny elite of professional and wealthy individuals, are now held by more than a fourth of the American population. But as educational attainment has expanded, the social distinctiveness of the bachelor's degree and its value on the marketplace have declined – in turn, increasing the demand for still higher levels of education. In fact, most problems of contemporary universities are connected to "credential inflation."

In 1910, less than 10 percent of the population obtained, at most, high-school degrees. They were badges of substantial middle-class respectability, until midcentury, conferring access even to the managerial jobs. Now, a high-school degree is little more than a ticket to a lottery in which one can buy a chance at a college degree – which itself is becoming a ticket to a yet higher-stakes lottery.

Such credential inflation is driven largely by the expansion of schooling – like a government's printing more paper money – rather than by economic demand for an increasingly educated labor force. Our educational system, as it widens access to each successive degree, has been able to flood the market for educated labor at virtually any level.

For example, in the 1960s and '70s, as competition for managerial positions grew among those who held bachelor's degrees, M.B.A.'s became increasingly popular and eventually the new standard for access to corporate jobs. Holders of such degrees have attempted to justify the credential by introducing new techniques of management – often faddish, yet distinct enough to give a technical veneer to their activities. Similarly, credentialed workers in other occupations have redefined their positions and eliminated noncredentialed jobs around them. Thus, the spiral of competition for education and the rising credential requirements for jobs have tended to be irreversible.

In principle, credential inflation could go on endlessly, until janitors need Ph.D.'s, and baby sitters are required to hold advanced degrees in child care. People could stay in college up through their 30s and 40s, or perhaps even longer.

Many people believe that our high-tech era requires massive educational expansion. Yet the skills of cutting-edge industries are generally learned on the job or through experience rather than in high school or college. Compare the financial success of the youthful founders of Apple or Microsoft, some of them college dropouts, with the more modest careers of graduates of computer schools.

Furthermore, a high-tech society does not mean that a high proportion of the labor force consists of experts. A more likely pattern – and the one we see emerging today – is a bifurcation of the labor force into an "expert" sector – perhaps 20 percent – and a much larger range of those with routine or even menial service jobs. With continuing computerization and automation, typical middle-class jobs may gradually disappear, leaving an even bigger gap between a small elite of technical, managerial, and financial experts, and everyone else.

In fact, credential inflation is the dirty secret of modern education. If we admitted it publicly, and it became a topic for political discussion, it would force us to face head-on the issue of our growing class inequality. The continual expansion of an inflationary educational-credentialing system palliates the problem of class conflict in the United States by holding out the prospect of upward mobility somewhere down the line, while making the connection remote enough to cover the system's failure to deliver.

Credentialing spills over into careers within academe. As colleges expanded with the massive enrollment increases of the 20th century, scholars have had a favorable environment in which to differentiate new departments and specialties within them. The guild of scholars began by controlling admission to teaching through possession of its own credential, the research dissertation. Now, as colleges compete with each other over prestige in innovative areas of research, credential inflation has developed into heightened pressure for publication, not just at the outset, but throughout one's career. As large institutions have developed elaborate internal rankings and salary-step systems, faculty members have experienced C.V. inflation.

Many professors prefer to concentrate their energies and derive their prestige from their research and the kind of teaching that is closest to it: apprenticing graduate students. But even many of the most successful graduate assistants will primarily teach undergraduates. Similarly, part of each professor's work time is devoted to shepherding undergraduates through the process that will get them job credentials or intermediate credentials in the academic progression. Undergraduate enrollments are needed to support graduate students. And even though they may complain of the intellectual unworthiness of undergraduates, research professors count on academic credentials' having enough value in nonacademic job markets – those pursued by most undergraduates – for their own jobs to exist.

Our current period of credential inflation has been accompanied by grade inflation and recommendation inflation. The prevailing ethos is for faculty members to treat students sympathetically, to try to get them through what the professors recognize as a competitive grind. That ethos fits within the educational structure of self-reinforcing inflation.

The top of the research elite does rather well – both materially and intellectually – under the current conditions of credential inflation. Yet at the other end of the professoriate, there is a growing and increasingly beleaguered teaching proletariat. The material conditions of their lives are poor, and their career tracks are highly uncertain. Between the top and bottom is a mass of faculty members who must cope with the publication pressures that go along with increased competition for a declining proportion of research and teaching jobs. Proposals for greater accountability, or even for the abolition of tenure, strike mainly at this middle group. It is entirely possible for the intellectual condition of the system, determined by what is done by the research elite, to flourish while pressure, alienation, and misery prevail at the levels below.

Will there be a revolt of the professorial proletariat? While it seems at least hypothetically possible, social-conflict theory suggests that it is not very likely. Mobilization of an unprivileged stratum depends upon the formulation of a self-conscious ideology of group identity. Moreover, mobilization by the bottom stratum alone does not change a system of power. Such changes start at the top, with a breakdown and struggle among competing elites over how to fix it.

All this is very remote from conditions of academic life today. Professors still define themselves primarily in terms of the intellectual content of their disciplines, giving enormous implicit power to the research elite. The strains that are palpable today for many scholars lower in the hierarchy will probably remain merely localized, personal troubles.

Meanwhile, colleges are under pressure to credential more students at lower cost. If the fundamental versus applied character of the disciplines is at issue in today's university, along with the growing distance between a highly paid elite of noted researchers and an underclass of temporary lecturers, then the causes are in the economic strains of a system whose mass production of educational credentials for employment has become very expensive. Institutions may increasingly choose to cut back on faculty and staff members and to eliminate "superfluous" activities, concentrating instead on the allegedly practical content that is supposed to give students negotiable credentials.

That would be a false solution. Even turning over the entire education system to narrowly job-related courses would not stop credential inflation, which can occur with any kind of academic content.

In fact, it is doubtful that we could stop credential inflation

if we wanted to. The mainspring is students' desire to get credentials that will give them some edge in the job market. As long as a free market of education providers exists, institutions have the incentive to keep offering higher credentials. Draconian measures might include drastically curtailing admissions or raising standards to levels that flunk out all but small elite. But such standards would be impossible to enforce without a centralized, authoritarian system incompatible with modern democracy. The late Chinese dynasties put such a measure into effect in exams for government office, setting a quota for passing at below 1 percent. But that did not stop many in the Chinese gentry from spending decades of their lives seeking credentials.

Nevertheless, a control upon credential inflation is built into the structure of our economy. Expanding the number of degrees may be analogous to printing money, but there is one crucial difference: Printing money is cheap, while the cost of minting degrees is high. It is implausible that the system will keep on inflating through the postdocs-for-janitors phase, because an upper limit is set by the amount that can be spent on education while leaving room for private and government budgetary expenditures. At crunch points, costs become too high, enrollments fall, dropouts increase, government assistance declines, and many educational institutions fail and are challenged by new ones.

Eventually, the inflationary trend gets going again. As a society grows richer, it can afford to allow more people to spend time competing in the education marketplace instead of directly in the workplace. But credential inflation and economic growth are not perfectly synchronized. In an era of poor job prospects, the educational system plays an important role in warehousing people and keeping them temporarily off the job market – thus holding down unemployment. It may even serve as a hidden welfare system, doling out support in the form of student loans and subsidizing work-study programs.

Such results occur whether government budget-makers are aware of what they are doing or not. In that sense, we may have entered a period in which we can't politically afford to stop the processes that feed credential inflation. The issue boils down to whether we want to manage credential inflation, manipulating policy to smooth out peaks and valleys, or let it take its own bumpy course.

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The following two letters are reprinted with permission from the January 9, 2003 newsletter of the University of Toronto Faculty Association. The full text of the newsletter can be read at www.utfa.utoronto.ca.

Certification?

Dear UTFA Colleague:

An extremely grave situation has resulted from the Provost's letter to UTFA giving notice that the Memorandum of Agreement[1] will not be renewed by the Administration after June 30, 2003 unless we agree to her terms.

Late yesterday afternoon, at an emergency meeting of UTFA Council, after lengthy discussions, UTFA Council, in order to protect its members from the possibility of otherwise disastrous consequences, passed a motion establishing a Committee of Council to advise Council on what it must do to certify as a union before the expiry date of the Memorandum. The motion passed unanimously, without dissent.

I urge you to read the rest of this newsletter carefully so you may fully understand the circumstances and consequences of what is happening.

A Chronology of Events:

1. On December 20, 2002, the Provost, Shirley Neuman, handed me a letter, dated December 19, 2002. It is reproduced in full in this newsletter. In the third to last paragraph the Provost writes:

   I am hereby giving notice pursuant to Article 21[2] of the Memorandum of Agreement. Our intention is to amend the Memorandum of Agreement so that clinical faculty are excluded from its application.

   These statements mean the Memorandum as we know it will not be automatically renewed and would cease after June 30, 2003.

   The Provost's letter goes on to say the following:

   I am also giving notice that we are presently committed to a renewed Memorandum on otherwise identical terms.

   In short, we are being told that if we agree to abandon one aspect of the Memorandum, we can keep the rest intact (for the time being). The implication of this unilateral approach to resolving differences is totally unacceptable to me and to your Council. It signals the end of the Memorandum as we know it.

2. I responded in a letter dated January 7, 2003. In it I challenge the Provost's authority to give notice. (My letter is also reproduced in full in this newsletter.) If upheld, this challenge would only have the effect of delaying the intended cessation of the current Memorandum for one additional year, to June 30, 2004.

   The Memorandum explicitly states in Article 20 that

   All formal notices between the parties arising out of this Agreement or incidental thereto shall pass to and from the Chairman of the Governing Council and the President of the Association.

3. After informing President Birgeneau of the breach of Article 20 on January 5, I received a letter (dated January 6) from the Chair of Governing Council stating that

   The Provost was duly authorized to give notice contained in her letter to you of December 19, 2002.

Timing becomes critical. If the Memorandum were to cease, UTFA members would lose all rights defined by the document, including salary and benefit negotiations (article 6), grievance procedures (article 7), academic freedom and responsibilities (article 5). This includes the frozen policies (article 2), and thus without the Memorandum unilateral changes could occur in basic policies and practices regarding academic appointments, tenure, procedures on promotions etc The whole works goes out the window. However, if we were to file for certification prior to June 30, 2003, the terms of the Memorandum would continue in force under the freeze provisions of the Ontario Labour Relations Act and would stay in force during the bargaining process for a collective agreement. But if we were to file after June 30, or not to file, the terms of the Memorandum would not be protected.

The Administration's actions are unprecedented.

(1) To our knowledge, neither Governing Council nor any of its Committees has considered the very serious matter of giving notice to terminate the Memorandum. The University's Senior Administration, through the Provost, seems to have acted unilaterally.

(2) Prior to the Provost's December 19 notice, the matter of altering or terminating the Memorandum of Agreement was never raised at the Joint Committee meetings of UTFA and the Administration. Under the Memorandum, the Joint Committee (article 12) is intended to provide a forum for such discussion.

The Provost's letter of December 19, in citing the reasons for the giving of notice, refers to the Report of the Clinical Faculty Task Force. UTFA has serious reservations about the Task Force report. In the HSC/Olivieri settlement (November, 2002), as part of the agreement, the Administration and UTFA agreed to a joint working group to examine the broader issues relating to conflict of interest and restrictions on publication. The Provost's letter ignores this important agreement.

On the last page of this newsletter is text excerpted from a lecture by President Emeritus John Evans. This lecture was brought to my attention by Stefan Dupré, who is also an UTFA nominee on the UT/ UTFA joint working group that is mandated to address the issues articulated by Dr. Evans.

I urge you to consider the issues and the implications of this Newsletter most carefully. Western and Queens certified not that long ago - a direct result of unilateral actions taken by their Administration and Governing Board.

As always, I welcome your comments.

George Luste
President
416-978-4676, luste@utfa.utoronto.ca

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[1] The Memorandum of Agreement was instituted in 1977 and has had a number of mutually agreed upon changes since that date. Up to now, Article 21 has never been invoked by either party. Professor Emeritus Nelson provides a brief introduction to the Memorandum and provides some perspective on the page 3. The full Memorandum can be found on the web at http://www.utoronto.ca/hrhome/memoagr.pdf

[2] Article 21: Term of Agreement
This Agreement shall continue in full force and effect until June 30, 1983, and thereafter automatically renew itself for periods of one (1) year unless either party notifies the other in writing, in the period from December 1 to December 31 inclusive, prior to any expiry date, that it desires to terminate this Agreement.

The Memorandum of Agreement

For twenty-five years formal relations between the University administration and the faculty have been governed by the Memorandum of Agreement. The Memorandum is a contract between the Governing Council of the University of Toronto and the University of Toronto Faculty Association dealing with matters of faculty employment that are now in most other Canadian universities embodied in union contracts.

The Memorandum guarantees academic freedom and lays out policy and procedure in negotiating salary and benefits, handling grievances, and defining workload and leave policy. It also provides that a range of University policies regarding tenure, appointments, promotions and other matters may not be changed without the Faculty Association's agreement.

The Memorandum has some obvious weaknesses if compared to the contracts of certified unions at most other Canadian universities. It does not require the University administration to "bargain in good faith" – that is, there is no recourse when, as has frequently happened, the University administration is negligent, evasive, intimidating, or arbitrary in negotiation. The cumbersome system of "semi-binding" arbitration does not work to the faculty's advantage in salary and benefit settlements. There is no external arbitration or other provision for impasse resolution in grievance procedures.

But, on the other hand, the Memorandum has some strengths. It has, in the view of many faculty members at least, prevented the starkest kind of employer-employee nexus from dominating relations between the faculty and the administration. And it has prevented the damaging split between anti- and pro-union faculty that has occurred at some other universities.

It has always been clear that the only alternative to the continuance of the Memorandum is union certification. On several occasions, in 1976, 1981, 1984 and 1997, at moments of apparent impasse in relations with the administration, the Faculty Association has seriously considered certification. But on each of these occasions compromise has allowed the Memorandum to survive. To the credit of both the Faculty Association and the University Administration (until now) neither side has ever invoked Article 21, terminating the agreement without discussion.

William H. Nelson
Professor of History (Emeritus)

BOOK REVIEW

by Jeanne Kay Guelke
Department of Geography

***Women in the Canadian Academic Tundra:
Challenging the Chill.*** **Elena Hannah, Linda Paul and
Swani Vethamany-Globus, eds. Montreal and
Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.**

This book is a collection of personal narratives on their
career paths by female academics, mostly from the
university under-class of part-time faculty; and mostly by
middle-age or older women. The book is commendably
multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural. Three of the
contributors are or were University of Waterloo faculty:
Swani Vethamany-Globus, Harriet Lyons, and Anne
Morgan.

The title of this book indicates that there is a lot of pain
on its pages. Only two of the authors, both regular
professors, strongly expressed that the academy and their
colleagues had been truly supportive: one of these is the
lone younger scholar; the other, a francophone professor
in Québec.

One might be tempted to ascribe the "chill" of the title to
bitter older feminists who cannot let go of the past and
acknowledge that gender discrimination has largely
vanished from the groves of academe. But one admission
by the editors in their introduction (p. 4) suggests that
gender discrimination is still present, if less visible.
"Some women were counseled by their peers not to
submit their promised narratives for fear of reprisals.
Some submitted their stories with a brave heart only to
withdraw them later for fear of backlash within their
universities. Some authors consulted their lawyers to
clear up the possibility of liability suits." In 2002?!
Reprisal against honest women is a form of discrimina-
tion, even if it is less vulgar than the sexual overtures of
the past or less material than the smaller pay cheques that
women once received for equal work. (Or for *more*
work, as some part-timers indicated.)

Some authors described specific women's issues: raising
children while managing a demanding job, dealing with
tensions within dual-career couples, endorsing feminine
management styles, recalling the Bad Old Days when
gender discrimination was legal. Some authors intrigu-
ingly reported drawing upon the traditions of their non-
Anglo cultures to cope with difficulties.

Larger events in Canadian university life suggest that
older female academics have some legitimate concerns

that are not addressed simply by reassuring them that
times are good now for female faculty.   For example,
women are still disproportionately under-represented in
senior regular faculty ranks, and over-represented among
the part-time, temporary, and sessional teaching staff.
Their cost of commitment to an academic life is low pay,
no job security, limited pension and benefits, and weak
protection under university policy. The widely publicized
protest of Ursula Franklin and her female peers who
retired from the University of Toronto with pathetically
low pensions underscores the long-term effects that years
of salary discrimination can have upon the professor
emerita in the here-and-now.

Most senior faculty women could tell similar stories.
Mixed in with their tales of trials, however, would be
another theme that emerges from this volume: women's
resilience, persistence, and even humour in the face of
tough odds.

During my preparation of this review, I also happened to
read "Welcoming Women Faculty: the Report of the
Provost's Task Force on Female Faculty Recruitment"
recently discussed at Senate and available from the
Secretariat or at:
*www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/OfficialDocuments/ffr.fin
alreport.10june02.pdf*
The contrast between the two documents is remarkable,
even though their topics are similar. The task force report
is prudent, abstract, restrained, and conservative. The
Academic Tundra book brims with first-person accounts
of both the joys and the hardships of academic life for
women. The Provost's task force did commendably
convene a focus group of UW graduate students, who
tellingly concluded that they viewed their female
professors as over-stressed and under-valued.

Anyone who would like to view a "happy face" review of
the status of faculty women on campus should read the
task force report. Readers who prefer real life experiences
are encouraged to read *Women in the Canadian
Academic Tundra.* I understand that it is available at
Chapters book stores.

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An earlier version of this review appeared in the CAG
Newsletter, V*olume 10, Issue 1, 2003.*

FORUM QUIZ

The following photo was recently taken at UW. What event was captured?

(Photo courtesy of Klatu)

1. Preparing for the "double cohort".

2. A Co-op interviewer from Mars Airways for students in the Mechatronics program. (There is a special interplanetary landing pad between the new Co-op Ed and Career Services building and the Grad House.)

3. A lecture in the new cross-listed course RS/PHIL (Religious Studies/Philosophy) 499, "Zen and the Art of Warp-Drive Maintenance."

4. An example of one of the E&CE Honours term projects recently demonstrated at the Davis Centre. Title of project: "A low bit-rate (10^{20} bps) wireless subspace communication system with fractal quantum compression."

5. A faculty dean preparing for an advisory meeting with departmental chairs.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Catherine Schryer
Department of English Language and Literature

Greetings and Salutations

Year End Reviews

In this *Forum* I would like to take the opportunity to raise with you an issue that we are currently discussing in the Faculty Relations Committee (FRC). At the request of several Chairs, the administration has raised with us the issue of year end reviews. In the interests of saving time, the administration has asked what we thought of a two year, rather than a one year, cycle of year end evaluations. In this message, I will investigate the pros and cons of this proposal and then invite you to send us your views on this issue.

First, it should be clear that this proposal does not extend to pre-tenure faculty. All members of the FRC acknowledged that probationary faculty require yearly evaluations so that they have a year-by-year sense of where they stand with regards to tenure and promotion.

Furthermore, there is no question that the year end evaluation is a valuable exercise. As a group, we have to be accountable for our time because (at least to outsiders) it seems as if we have a great deal of uncommitted time. We might teach for only six hours or nine hours a week. The general public might well ask what we do with the rest of our time. Much less visible are the hours we spend assisting students, often by email, or the time spent collecting and analyzing data, or writing proposals, or consulting on manuscripts, or just generally trying to keep up with and contribute to our fields. Simply because we have more opportunity than most professional groups to organize and manage our own time, we have to be accountable for it.

However, it is reasonable to ask whether we should account for our time every year or whether we should convert to a two year cycle.

Pros for a two year cycle

The most important argument in support of the proposal is that a two year cycle would save faculty and administrative time. Constructing the year end reviews consumes a fair chunk of faculty time each year. Piecing together all the grant proposals, manuscripts and journal articles in their various stages can be a couple of days of work. Remembering and documenting instances of student mentoring, committee work and professional service can also be frustrating. And, of course, evaluating the files eats up a great deal of Chairs', Deans' and departmental committee time. Several Chairs have reported that the year end reviews constitute one of the most time consuming activities of their office.

Another important argument in favour of the proposal is that many of us work in larger cycles than the one year time frame. Book projects and large scale research projects typically take longer than one year to complete. Furthermore, the one year cycle might be encouraging some faculty to produce shorter, quicker pieces of work rather than the more substantive work that they might prefer to do.

Finally, other universities have converted to this system and have suffered no serious consequences. In fact, successful models for the two year cycle exist that we could emulate.

Cons for a two year cycle

However, a change to such an evaluation system also has some drawbacks.

When a faculty member does complete a major piece of work – a successful grant, a published book – he or she would presumably want recognition for that accomplishment in that same year. Certainly, a delay in merit pay would not please many faculty members although it could be argued that a one year delay does not constitute a substantial long term effect on salary.

Some administrators have also argued that collecting statistics with respect to faculty performance is an ongoing requirement for Departments and the University and that the Year End system is an efficient way to conduct this accounting.

Other administrators argue that some faculty really need the mentoring involved in the year end evaluation in order to alert them to potential problems in their career trajectories. However, some faculty and administrators observed that once a faculty member has an established research and teaching program such "mentoring" might not be welcomed and could be viewed as a waste of time.

Decision?

As the FAUW Board and the Faculty Relations Committee discuss and debate this issue, we would really like to hear the views of individual faculty members. What do you think? Which system would be more beneficial to you? Please send us a note – especially to the *Forum* – or an email to Pat Moore (facassoc@uwaterloo.ca), and let us know what you think.