

Missing Pieces V

AN ALTERNATIVE GUIDE TO CANADIAN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**Edited by
Denise Doherty-Delorme
and Erika Shaker**



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Missing Pieces V: An Alternative Guide to Canadian Post-secondary Education

Edited by Erika Shaker and Denise Doherty-Delorme

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Introduction

This is the fifth edition of **Missing Pieces: An alternative guide to Canadian post-secondary education**. As in previous years we continue the practice of ranking the provinces according to their level of commitment to providing and maintaining high quality, equitable, publicly accountable and accessible higher education. However, given the context of a recent federal election that saw the Liberals returned to a fourth consecutive government—albeit a minority—and the journey of Paul Martin (the architect of many of the cuts to social programs) from Finance Minister to backbencher to Prime Minister, this year’s report includes a broader federal analysis.

Canadian provinces continue to demonstrate a wide range of positions, choices and policies in providing higher education to the populace. However, while the role of the federal government is not reflected in the provincial comparisons we hope the longer article in this report will provide a useful context.

After reader feedback we have decided to again include the provincial overviews in this report along with the rankings to provide a more comprehensive picture of PSE across the country, elaborating on statistical and numerical comparisons.

Missing Pieces is not a ranking of individual institutions; it is an overview of the political, fiscal and legislative context in which those institutions operate, respond and react. It is intended to provide some illumination as to how provincial gov-

ernments are ensuring the greatest possible degree of access to universities and colleges—or, instead, pursuing degree and program fee deregulation. It exposes the increasing amount of private money and private interests entrenched in our public institutions, and the ways in which this potentially undermines public accountability. It looks at the degree to which instructors are adequately compensated for their expertise, or whether lecturers are being seen and used as a cheaper substitute for full professors in the rush to slash budgets. And it explores the steps taken to promote equity on campuses and in the wider communities—without treating diversity as a cash cow, as seen in the skyrocketing tuition fees charged to international students.

Again, all the data included in this edition is new, and we have added a number of new provincial comparisons to ensure that this snapshot of higher education in Canada is as complete as possible. And we continue to encourage readers to examine all back issues of **Missing Pieces** in order to help determine how higher education is changing across the country—and to what effect.

As in previous editions, a first place ranking is awarded to the province that comparatively speaking, has demonstrated the highest degree of commitment in any given indicator or sub-indicator. Likewise, a tenth place ranking indicates the lowest level of commitment. We should reiterate that a first place ranking by no means implies a perfect

record for PSE in any province—all provincial governments need to improve their level of commitment to higher education, although some have certainly made some deliberate decisions and taken steps in this direction. We also try to differentiate between those provinces that have improved their placement merely in comparison with other provinces whose positions and records worsened, and those that actively tried to improve an aspect of PSE. Finally, to underscore that there are no prizes for a first place ranking, since all provincial governments have a great deal to do to demonstrate a true commitment to higher education, in the case of a tie in the rankings we have assigned the lower ranking to the two or more provinces (ie. a two-way tie for 3 place would result in a fourth place for both; a three-way tie for third place would result in a fifth place).

In addition to provincial overviews and detailed ranking information, we have included a selection of longer articles by researchers, profes-

sors and students on a range of issues fundamental to higher education in Canada. They provide analysis, detail, and a broader context to the higher education debates—academic freedom, corporatization, sustainability on campus, tuition fee deregulation and accessibility, teaching and learning in a corporate hierarchy, and a closer look at higher education in Alberta—and we are indebted to the authors for their generous contributions of time and knowledge.

We have appreciated your interest in and support of this project, and continue to look forward to your responses, ideas and contributions. We also wish to thank those researchers, students and authors who gave so generously of their time and expertise in the completion of this edition of **Missing Pieces**. The higher education debates have profound significance, particularly at a time of such political and social volatility; as always, we look forward to working with you.

Overall rankings

Missing Pieces V records some consistencies in the state of higher education in Canada this year—once again Nova Scotia is in 10th place, reflecting the increasing abdication of provincial governments in providing adequately funded PSE to its populace, and instead downloading the cost of higher education onto students and their families. PEI, largely due to its economic situation and relatively low levels of public investment in PSE, tied Ontario for 9th place. Ontario, second last once again, has the second highest university tuition fees in the country (for domestic and international students), the highest additional compulsory fees, high levels of private finance, and low levels of provincial funding for higher education as a share of total provincial expenditures.

For the first year since we began this report, Manitoba gained 1st place as Quebec fell to 2nd. Manitoba demonstrates consistent commitment to higher education as a share of total provincial expenditures, in fostering high employment and in-

come parity among male and female graduates, and in limiting downloading of costs onto students (domestic and international) and their families. Quebec fell slightly in the rankings, which should perhaps serve as a warning to the Charest government, already toying with revamping the Cégeps and an end to a fee freeze that has in the past and in this edition of **Missing Pieces** ensured the highest comparative degree of accessibility in the country. Quebec charges some of the highest fees for international students, and while tuition fees for university students are the lowest in the country, additional compulsory fees are among the highest. There is also a significant difference between median incomes for male and female university grads, which damages Quebec's equity score. Comparatively high levels of public compared to student-based sources of funding result in Quebec's high score in public accountability. However, as we reiterate each year, high scores in any one category do not indicate perfection; one need only look at

Overall Rank 2003/4

| Province | MP5 Equity Rank | MP5 Quality Rank | MP5 Accountability Rank | MP5 Accessibility Rank | Overall MP5 Rank | Overall MP4 Rank |
|----------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| NF | 7 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| PEI | 9 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 5 |
| NS | 10 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 10 | 10 |
| NB | 8 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 8 |
| PQ | 5 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| ON | 6 | 4 | 10 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| MB | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| SK | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 7 |
| AB | 2 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| BC | 4 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 4 |

the full range of data to see Quebec shares the highest amount of PSE funding from private sources with Ontario—a province that ranks 10th consistently in accountability.

Newfoundland maintained 3rd place for the second year in a row, due to its commitment to accessibility in higher education—largely the result of a significant fee rollback and freeze reflecting the needs and priorities of Newfoundlanders, students and their families. New Brunswick also demonstrated significant improvement in the rankings—from 8th to 5th—particularly in the category of quality (please refer to that section for more details).

BC, it must be noted, took top spot when we began this exercise several years ago. At that time, BC reinforced its commitment to PSE by keeping

fees affordable, which worked toward a well-educated, prosperous society where employees and graduates were comparatively well compensated for their expertise. However, with the Campbell government came the end of the fee freeze and the resultant increase in the cost of PSE for university and college students both in tuition fees (the largest in the country) and in other compulsory fees. Provincial expenditure on PSE as a share of total provincial expenditures over the past year has barely remained constant; international students are charged some of the highest fees in the country; BC has eliminated many of the mechanisms in place to respond to the financial needs of students and their families, in part by eliminating needs-based grants altogether. As a result, BC continues its slide to 6th place among its provincial peers.

Access

The ranking changed only slightly for the majority of Canadian provinces in the category of accessibility—with the exception of Alberta (improved from 10th to 6th) and BC (fell from 6th to 9th). However, these changes occurred for very different reasons: while taking virtually no steps to ensure affordability of higher education, Alberta's rank improved almost exclusively in comparison to other provinces that did even less. However, BC's ranking fell significantly as a direct result of that province's deliberate political and budgetary decision to end the fee freeze and download the cost of higher education on to students.

Quebec maintained its 1st place ranking, due to consistently low tuition fees in universities and

Cégeps (free), as well as a high percentage of students returning to PSE after graduation. It should be noted, however, that Quebec, on average, does charge some of the highest additional compulsory fees in the country which must be taken into consideration when looking at access. And Saskatchewan fell from 9th to 10th, a position once held by Alberta, as that province's college fees continue to be among the highest in the country, and as fees for all educational institutions continue to rise.

(Note that although Quebec registers a freeze and not a rollback in college tuition, we have given it a 1st place ranking because Cégeps are free, although they do charge registration fees.)

Affordability, access, opportunity

| Province | Average undergrad university fees 2003/04 | Average college tuition fees 2003/04 | % yr-to-yr change in university fees | % yr-to-yr change in college fees | % change in university tuition fees 1993/94-2003/04 | % change in college tuition fees 1999/00-2003/04 | Additional compulsory university fees 2003/04 | % increase in additional compulsory fees 2002/03-2003/04 | Proportion of graduates returning to PSE after graduation | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|----------|----------|
| NF | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| PEI | 4 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 4 |
| NS | 10 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 8 |
| NB | 6 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| PQ | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| ON | 9 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 6 | 10 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| MB | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| SK | 8 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 9 |
| AB | 7 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 10 |
| BC | 5 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 3 | 9 | 6 |

Average undergraduate university tuition fees

| Province | 2003/04 | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| NF | \$2,606 | 2 | 2 |
| PEI | \$4,133 | 4 | 5 |
| NS | \$5,557 | 10 | 10 |
| NB | \$4,457 | 6 | 7 |
| PQ | \$1,862 | 1 | 1 |
| ON | \$4,923 | 9 | 9 |
| MB | \$3,155 | 3 | 4 |
| SK | \$4,644 | 8 | 8 |
| AB | \$4,487 | 7 | 6 |
| BC | \$4,140 | 5 | 3 |

The Daily, August 12, 2003

Average college tuition fees

| Province | 2003/04 | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| NF | \$1,452 | 3 | 3 |
| PEI | \$2,000 | 5 | 6 |
| NS | \$2,250 | 6 | 7 |
| NB | \$2,400 | 7 | 8 |
| PQ | \$0 | 1 | 1 |
| ON | \$1,820 | 4 | 4 |
| MB | \$1,292 | 2 | 2 |
| SK | \$2,893 | 10 | 10 |
| AB | \$2,840 | 9 | 9 |
| BC | \$2,479 | 8 | 5 |

Source: Manitoba Council on Post-Secondary Education

Percentage yr-to-yr change in university tuition fees 2002/03-2003/04

| Province | % | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| NF | -4.5% | 1 | 1 |
| PEI | 6.2% | 5 | 6 |
| NS | 6.6% | 7 | 7 |
| NB | 6.5% | 6 | 8 |
| PQ | 0.6% | 3 | 3 |
| ON | 5.5% | 4 | 4 |
| MB | 0.3% | 2 | 2 |
| SK | 8.3% | 9 | 9 |
| AB | 7.7% | 8 | 5 |
| BC | 30.4% | 10 | 10 |

The Daily, August 12, 2003

Percentage yr-to-yr change in college tuition fees 2002/03-2003/04

| Province | % | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| NF | 0.0% | 1 | 1 |
| PEI | 0.0% | 1 | 1 |
| NS | 4.7% | 7 | 9 |
| NB | 0.0% | 1 | 1 |
| PQ | 0.0% | 1 | 1 |
| ON | 1.9% | 6 | 6 |
| MB | 0.0% | 1 | 1 |
| SK | 8.9% | 9 | 8 |
| AB | 7.0% | 8 | 7 |
| BC | 38.4% | 10 | 10 |

Percentage change in university tuition fees 1993/4-2003/04

| Province | % | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|--------|----------|----------|
| NF | 30.3% | 2 | 2 |
| PEI | 64.7% | 4 | 5 |
| NS | 105.8% | 9 | 9 |
| NB | 86.9% | 6 | 6 |
| PQ | 20.2% | 1 | 1 |
| ON | 137.2% | 10 | 10 |
| MB | 38.9% | 3 | 4 |
| SK | 98.4% | 7 | 7 |
| AB | 103.1% | 8 | 8 |
| BC | 84.9% | 5 | 3 |

The Daily, August 12, 2003

Percentage change in college tuition fees

| Province | % change 1993/94-2003/04 (for reference only) | % change 1999/00-2003/04 | MP5 Rank |
|----------|---|--------------------------|----------|
| NF | 81.5% | 0.0% | 5 |
| PEI | 40.8% | 0.0% | 5 |
| NS | 193.4% | 50.0% | 9 |
| NB | 300.0% | 0.0% | 5 |
| PQ | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1 |
| ON | 98.7% | 8.1% | 6 |
| MB | 56.6% | -10% | 1 |
| SK | 172.4% | 40.8% | 8 |
| AB | 200.2% | 33.3% | 7 |
| BC | 88.5% | 85.0% | 10 |

Additional compulsory university fees

| Province | Average 2003/04 | MP5 Rank | % increase 2002/03- 2003/04 | MP5 Rank |
|----------|--------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| NF | \$450 | 3 | 0.9 | 1 |
| PEI | \$468 | 4 | 4.5 | 4 |
| NS | \$430 | 2 | 10.3 | 8 |
| NB | \$302 | 1 | 11 | 9 |
| PQ | \$685 | 9 | 4.8 | 5 |
| ON | \$694 | 10 | 8.8 | 6 |
| MB | \$541 | 6 | 2.7 | 2 |
| SK | \$554 | 7 | 9.4 | 7 |
| AB | \$530 | 5 | 3.2 | 3 |
| BC | \$584 | 8 | 35.4 | 10 |

Statistics Canada "The Daily" August 12, 2003

Proportion of graduates returning to PSE after graduation (2001)

| Province | % | MP5 Rank |
|----------|-------|----------|
| NF | 23.0% | 7 |
| PEI | 20.0% | 9 |
| NS | 25.0% | 4 |
| NB | 19.0% | 10 |
| PQ | 56.0% | 1 |
| ON | 22.0% | 8 |
| MB | 24.0% | 6 |
| SK | 24.0% | 6 |
| AB | 28.0% | 2 |
| BC | 27.0% | 3 |

Statistics Canada "Education and labour market pathways of young Canadians between age 20-22, YITS."

Accountability

With the exception of PEI (from 3rd to 7th) and Saskatchewan (from 5th to 3rd) the accountability rankings showed a certain amount of consistency when compared with last year's results. However, Newfoundland did improve its ranking, taking the overall lead in this category as the province with the greatest degree of commitment to keeping higher education accountable to the public (as opposed to private sources). Newfoundland also performs well on the needs-based ranking which indicates some of the steps the province has taken to ensure that PSE is responsive to the financial needs of its students and graduates.

Once again, Ontario is last in this category as the province that relies heavily on private sources

of funding (private/other sources and student fees) compared to public sources (government grants). Ontario also ranks 9th in the category "PSE non-governmental revenue as a percentage of education expenditures" which is an indication of education budget priorities. It should be noted that the only reason Nova Scotia does not fall below Ontario in this category is because of the comparatively low level of PSE funding it receives from private/other sources. This is an illustration of the degree to which certain provinces have access to private sources of money, reinforcing the inequitable nature of this method of funding higher education.

Accountability

| Province | % of total PSE budget received from student fees | % of total PSE budget received from gov't grants | % of total PSE budget received from private sources | Needs-based ranking | PSE nongovernmental revenue as a % of education expenditures 2002-03 | MP5 Accountability ranking | MP4 Accountability Ranking |
|----------|--|--|---|---------------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| NF | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| PEI | 7 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 3 |
| NS | 10 | 10 | 4 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| NB | 8 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 8 |
| PQ | 1 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| ON | 9 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| MB | 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| SK | 3 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| AB | 5 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| BC | 2 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 6 |

Percentage of total PSE budget received from student fees

| Province | 2002/03 | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| NF | 17.5% | 4 | 6 |
| PEI | 21.3% | 7 | 7 |
| NS | 28.3% | 10 | 10 |
| NB | 25.5% | 8 | 8 |
| PQ | 10.9% | 1 | 1 |
| ON | 26.3% | 9 | 9 |
| MB | 18.2% | 6 | 3 |
| SK | 16.3% | 3 | 2 |
| AB | 18.0% | 5 | 5 |
| BC | 16.2% | 2 | 4 |

Source: The Daily, June 11, 2003

Percentage of total PSE budget received from government grants

| Province | 2002/03 | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| NF | 64.0% | 2 | 2 |
| PEI | 52.8% | 7 | 6 |
| NS | 41.9% | 10 | 10 |
| NB | 51.2% | 8 | 7 |
| PQ | 66.0% | 1 | 1 |
| ON | 47.8% | 9 | 9 |
| MB | 58.0% | 4 | 4 |
| SK | 58.3% | 3 | 3 |
| AB | 56.3% | 6 | 8 |
| BC | 57.5% | 5 | 5 |

Source: The Daily, June 11, 2003

Percentage of total PSE budget received from private sources

| Province | 2002/03 | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| NF | 4.7% | 1 | 2 |
| PEI | 8.5% | 6 | 1 |
| NS | 7.5% | 4 | 6 |
| NB | 5.0% | 2 | 3 |
| PQ | 11.5% | 10 | 9 |
| ON | 11.5% | 10 | 10 |
| MB | 11.0% | 8 | 8 |
| SK | 7.3% | 3 | 4 |
| AB | 9.4% | 7 | 7 |
| BC | 7.6% | 5 | 4 |

Source: The Daily, June 11, 2003

PSE nongovernmental revenue as a % of education expenditures 2002-03

| Province | PSE non-government revenue 2002-03 (\$thousands) | PSE education expenditures 2002-03 (\$thousands) | % | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|--|--|-------|----------|----------|
| NF | \$159,209 | \$430,294 | 37.0% | 3 | 2 |
| PEI | \$40,936 | \$88,606 | 46.2% | 6 | 5 |
| NS | \$415,642 | \$758,471 | 54.8% | 10 | 10 |
| NB | \$177,460 | \$375,974 | 47.2% | 7 | 8 |
| PQ | \$1,757,488 | \$5,669,315 | 31.0% | 1 | 1 |
| ON | \$4,536,633 | \$8,757,979 | 51.8% | 9 | 9 |
| MB | \$336,873 | \$823,650 | 40.9% | 4 | 4 |
| SK | \$288,581 | \$782,061 | 36.9% | 2 | 3 |
| AB | \$1,134,729 | \$2,388,903 | 47.5% | 8 | 7 |
| BC | \$1,084,558 | \$2,582,280 | 42.0% | 5 | 6 |

Source: CAUT 2004 Almanac

Needs-based ranking

| Province | University freeze/rollback | College freeze/rollback | Needs-based grants | Loan remission/debt reduction | MP5 Needs-based ranking | MP4 Rank |
|----------|----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| NF | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| PEI | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| NS | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| NB | 0 | 1 | 0.5 | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| PQ | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| ON | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 8 | 10 |
| MB | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| SK | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 8 | 10 |
| AB | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 6 |
| BC | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 10 |

Author's Calculations, source HRDC January 2003

Equity

Equity is developed and maintained over time, and is the result of several years of initiatives from all levels of government. It is closely connected to accessibility and accountability, and requires a greater degree of contextualization when discussing the state of PSE in each province.

The economic situation of the province does play a significant role in this category, and the degree to which it has been mitigated or harnessed to reduce the economic burden on individuals and families. It is for this reason that we try to provide as broad a range of data as possible to put educational initiatives into perspective.

This year there were a number of notable changes in the rankings—both in the position of a number of provinces, but also in the information we were able to include, update and add (where no more recent data was available in certain categories). For example, we were unable to update the number of international students by province, but we were able to look instead at the tuition fees charged to these students, helping determine the degree to which universities and colleges are using them as a source of fundraising. Likewise, we were unable to obtain a province-by-province break-

down of women as a percentage of tenured faculty because no more recent information was available. However, we did include income-equity data for both college and university graduates, university tuition fees compared to the median amounts saved per province (as an indication of how tuition fees reflected the financial situation of respective provinces), and the increasing reliance on Canada Student Loans as a means of financing the increasing costs of higher education.

Newfoundland's commitment to equity resulted in a move from 10th to 7th—remarkable in a province with the highest unemployment rate in the country (both in general and for class of 2000 college and university graduates). However, Newfoundland's university tuition fees correspond with median incomes and with the median amounts saved for a child's education. And, perhaps most interesting, Newfoundland's inequality index (the percent of the population with less than secondary education compared to the percent of the population with PSE) improved from 10th place to 6th.

At the other end of the scale, Nova Scotia fell from 7th to 10th with tuition fees that do not come close to reflecting median income or saving po-

Equity

| Province | International student undergrad fees (min.) | International student undergrad fees (max.) | % change in Canada Student Loan recipients 1990/91-2000/01 | Unemployment Rate | Inequality index | University fees as a percentage of median after-tax income 2002 | Women's income compared to men—college grads | Women's income compared to men—university grads | 2002 unemployment rate of college graduates (class of 2000) | 2002 unemployment rate of university graduates (class of 2000) | Median amount saved for education compared to university tuition | MP5 Equity Rank | MP4 Equity Rank |
|----------|---|---|--|-------------------|------------------|---|--|---|---|--|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| NF | 6 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 4 | 7 | 10 |
| PEI | 9 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 9 |
| NS | 7 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 10 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 7 |
| NB | 5 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 9 |
| PQ | 10 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 10 | 3 | 10 | 1 | 5 | 2 |
| ON | 4 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| MB | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 5 |
| SK | 8 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| AB | 3 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| BC | 1 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 1 |

tential of its population. Tuition fees for international students are even higher than those charged for domestic students—which are already the nation’s highest.

Manitoba moved from 5th to 1st, reflecting that province’s effort to make PSE more equitable by ensuring tuition fees are not prohibitive (reflecting median incomes), that male and female university graduates have income parity, and that international students are not treated as cash cows.

BC, on the other hand, has fallen from 1st to 4th, reflecting provincial decisions to increase the maximum fees charged for international students and high rates of unemployment for graduates. We anticipate that many of BC’s higher scores in individual indicators will soon begin to reflect the results of deliberate decisions on the part of the provincial government to reduce its commitment to and role in providing higher education at accessible, equitable levels.

Inequality index

| Province | 2001% | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| NF | 0.43% | 6 | 10 |
| PEI | 0.48% | 9 | 6 |
| NS | 0.48% | 8 | 4 |
| NB | 0.42% | 5 | 9 |
| PQ | 0.39% | 4 | 8 |
| ON | 0.37% | 3 | 3 |
| MB | 0.52% | 10 | 5 |
| SK | 0.44% | 7 | 6 |
| AB | 0.36% | 2 | 1 |
| BC | 0.35% | 1 | 2 |

Calculated with Stat Can data found in "Ed. Quarterly Review"

% of population with less than secondary compared with % of population with PSE

Median income, male and female graduates

| Province | Median income 2002, college grad (male) | Median income 2002, college grad (female) | Women's income compared to men's--college graduates (2002) | MP5 Rank | Median income 2002, university grad (male) | Median income 2002, university grad (female) | Women's income compared to men's--university graduates (2002) | MP5 Rank |
|----------|---|---|--|----------|--|--|---|----------|
| NF | \$35,000 | \$23,400 | 66.86% | 10 | \$39,000 | \$38,500 | 98.72% | 2 |
| PEI | \$31,200 | \$22,500 | 72.11% | 9 | \$33,600 | \$32,000 | 95.24% | 4 |
| NS | \$29,100 | \$21,200 | 72.85% | 8 | \$40,000 | \$34,500 | 86.25% | 9 |
| NB | \$29,400 | \$25,000 | 85.03% | 3 | \$38,000 | \$34,000 | 89.47% | 8 |
| PQ | \$32,200 | \$26,000 | 80.74% | 5 | \$44,000 | \$35,700 | 81.13% | 10 |
| ON | \$36,400 | \$31,000 | 85.16% | 2 | \$42,000 | \$38,000 | 90.48% | 7 |
| MB | \$31,200 | \$24,500 | 78.52% | 6 | \$36,400 | \$36,000 | 98.90% | 1 |
| SK | \$32,000 | \$26,500 | 82.81% | 4 | \$40,000 | \$36,600 | 91.50% | 6 |
| AB | \$39,000 | \$29,100 | 74.61% | 7 | \$40,000 | \$38,000 | 95.00% | 5 |
| BC | \$35,600 | \$31,600 | 88.76% | 1 | \$40,000 | \$38,200 | 95.50% | 3 |

Statistics Canada "National Graduates Survey" 2002

% change in Canada Student Loan recipients

| Province | 1990-91 / 2000-01 | MP5 Rank |
|----------|-------------------|----------|
| NF | 23.10% | 7 |
| PEI | 24.30% | 8 |
| NS | 13.00% | 4 |
| NB | 20.50% | 6 |
| PQ | 0.00% | 2 |
| ON | 57.30% | 9 |
| MB | -8.0% | 1 |
| SK | 6.90% | 3 |
| AB | 16.40% | 5 |
| BC | 97.30% | 10 |

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Unemployment rate

| Province | 2003 | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| NF | 16.7% | 10 | 10 |
| PEI | 11.1% | 9 | 9 |
| NS | 9.3% | 7 | 7 |
| NB | 10.6% | 8 | 8 |
| PQ | 9.1% | 6 | 6 |
| ON | 7.0% | 4 | 4 |
| MB | 5.0% | 1 | 1 |
| SK | 5.6% | 3 | 3 |
| AB | 5.1% | 2 | 2 |
| BC | 8.1% | 5 | 5 |

Statistics Canada

Median amount saved for child's education compared to university tuition fees

| Province | Money saved (2001) | Fees (2001/02) | % | MP5 Rank |
|----------|--------------------|----------------|---------|----------|
| NF | \$4,610 | \$2,970 | 64.42% | 4 |
| PEI | \$4,180 | \$3,690 | 88.27% | 8 |
| NS | \$3,880 | \$4,732 | 121.95% | 9 |
| NB | \$2,910 | \$3,779 | 129.86% | 10 |
| PQ | \$3,900 | \$1,912 | 49.02% | 1 |
| ON | \$4,970 | \$4,062 | 81.73% | 6 |
| MB | \$3,900 | \$2,795 | 71.67% | 5 |
| SK | \$5,970 | \$3,831 | 64.17% | 3 |
| AB | \$4,830 | \$3,970 | 82.19% | 7 |
| BC | \$4,890 | \$2,465 | 50.40% | 2 |

Statistics Canada "Planning and Preparation" (SAEP 2002)

2002 Unemployment rates of graduates (class of 2000)

| Province | college | MP5 Rank | university | MP5 Rank |
|----------|---------|----------|------------|----------|
| NF | 17% | 10 | 9% | 10 |
| PEI | 8% | 7 | 7% | 6 |
| NS | 10% | 9 | 7% | 6 |
| NB | 10% | 9 | 9% | 10 |
| PQ | 6% | 3 | 9% | 10 |
| ON | 7% | 6 | 6% | 4 |
| MB | 6% | 3 | 4% | 1 |
| SK | 5% | 1 | 5% | 3 |
| AB | 6% | 3 | 5% | 3 |
| BC | 7% | 6 | 9% | 10 |

Statistics Canada "National Graduates Survey" 2002

Average after-tax income of families and individuals as compared to university tuition fees (2002/03)

| Province | Average after-tax income--families (2002) | University tuition fees (2002/03) | Median income--individuals (2002) | Fees as a percentage of after-tax family income (2002) | Fees as a percentage of median income (2002) | MP5 Rank |
|----------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|----------|
| NF | \$46,800 | \$2,729 | \$17,400 | 5.83% | 15.68% | 4 |
| PEI | \$49,400 | \$3,891 | \$20,100 | 7.87% | 19.36% | 7 |
| NS | \$51,500 | \$5,214 | \$20,300 | 10.12% | 25.68% | 10 |
| NB | \$49,900 | \$4,186 | \$19,700 | 8.39% | 21.24% | 9 |
| PQ | \$53,400 | \$1,851 | \$21,600 | 3.47% | 8.57% | 1 |
| ON | \$67,100 | \$4,634 | \$25,200 | 6.90% | 18.39% | 6 |
| MB | \$55,400 | \$3,248 | \$21,800 | 5.86% | 14.90% | 3 |
| SK | \$53,000 | \$4,286 | \$21,100 | 8.09% | 20.31% | 8 |
| AB | \$64,300 | \$4,165 | \$25,100 | 6.48% | 16.59% | 5 |
| BC | \$60,800 | \$3,165 | \$22,300 | 5.21% | 14.19% | 2 |

Statistics Canada "Labour Income Profile" 2002

International students' university tuition fees

| Province | Undergraduate fees 2002/03* | Graduate tuition fees 2002/03 | MP5 undergraduate rank (based on lower figure) | MP5 undergraduate rank (based on higher figure) |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|
| NF | \$6,660 | \$1,896-\$3,549 | 6 | 2 |
| PEI | \$7,270 | \$5,947 | 9 | 3 |
| NS | \$6,882-\$11,718 | \$4,065-\$14,800 | 7 | 8 |
| NB | \$6,540-\$9,960 | \$5,230-\$8,216 | 5 | 5 |
| PQ | \$8,868-\$10,188 | \$4,961-\$20,000 | 10 | 6 |
| ON | \$6,082-\$12,666 | \$5,174-\$26,000 | 4 | 9 |
| MB | \$5,004-\$6,630 | \$5,435-\$9,685 | 2 | 1 |
| SK | \$7,170-\$9,701 | \$5,313-\$7,170 | 8 | 4 |
| AB | \$5,983-\$10,364 | \$4,416-\$19,200 | 3 | 7 |
| BC | \$4,304-\$15,480 | \$2,845-\$17,325 | 1 | 10 |

Source: AUCC

Quality

As with the previous edition of *Missing Pieces*, Statistics Canada experienced difficulties in obtaining data from institutions which is why we cannot provide up-to-date information on student/faculty ratios—a disappointment since contact with tenured faculty is one of the surest indicators of academic success. However, we have included a range of data to indicate the extent to which provinces have fostered quality in higher education through adequate per-fulltime student funding (most recently and over time), education expenditures as a share of all provincial expenditures, and the degree to which instructors are adequately compensated for their work. We have also tried to provide an indication of the extent to which teaching is being downloaded onto far poorer-paid lecturers in an attempt to deal with inadequate education funding.

This year there were some significant changes in the quality rank: While Nova Scotia (10th) and Manitoba (1st) remained constant, Alberta fell three

places to 9th, in part as a result of the discrepancy between full professors' salaries and that of lecturers, and its consistently low levels of spending on PSE (as a share of total provincial expenditures, and the decline in this category over time)—shocking in a province as wealthy as Alberta. Readers may recall that Alberta eliminated its provincial debt this year—low levels of financial commitment to PSE may help explain this.

New Brunswick's rank improved from 8th to 2^h, largely because of its increased compensation of lecturers, and its marked increase in provincial expenditure on PSE as a share of total provincial expenditures over the past year. Ontario also improved from 7th to 4th with the largest increase in provincial expenditures on PSE as a share of total provincial expenditures over the last year (insufficient to deal with the double cohort in that province, but still comparatively the largest increase in that category).

Quality

| Province | Provincial PSE expenditure per FTE student enrolment 2001/02-2002/03 | Provincial government transfers to PSE per FTE student enrolment 2002/03 | Provincial expenditure on PSE per FTE student enrolment 1992/93-2002/03 | Provincial expenditure on PSE 1992/93-2002/03 | Provincial expenditure on PSE as a share of total provincial expenditures 2002/03 | Provincial expenditure on PSE as a share of total provincial expenditures 2001/02-2002/03 | Provincial expenditure on PSE as a share of total provincial expenditures 1992/93-2002/03 | Average salary of fulltime university teachers | Ratio of salaries: lecturer / full professor | MP5 Quality Rank | MP4 Quality Rank |
|----------|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|------------------|------------------|
| NF | 4 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| PEI | 7 | 8 | 10 | 5 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 9 |
| NS | 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 10 |
| NB | 3 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| PQ | 1 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| ON | 2 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 7 |
| MB | 10 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| SK | 8 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 3 |
| AB | 5 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 10 | 9 | 6 |
| BC | 6 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 2 |

**Average Salary of Fulltime University Teachers,
2002-03**

| Province | 2002-03 | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| NF | \$74,768 | 6 | 5 |
| PEI | \$68,583 | 10 | 9 |
| NS | \$74,130 | 7 | 10 |
| NB | \$76,746 | 5 | 6 |
| PQ | \$73,883 | 8 | 7 |
| ON | \$89,160 | 2 | 2 |
| MB | \$77,768 | 4 | 4 |
| SK | \$72,207 | 9 | 8 |
| AB | \$85,464 | 3 | 3 |
| BC | \$91,001 | 1 | 1 |

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Provincial expenditure on PSE (2002 constant \$, millions)

| Province | 1992/93 | 2002/03 | % change | MP5 Rank |
|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|
| NF | \$283 | \$249 | -12.0% | 8 |
| PEI | \$50 | \$51 | 1.8% | 5 |
| NS | \$473 | \$352 | -25.5% | 10 |
| NB | \$301 | \$361 | 19.9% | 3 |
| PQ | \$3,980 | \$3,754 | -5.7% | 7 |
| ON | \$4,119 | \$3,919 | -4.9% | 6 |
| MB | \$373 | \$588 | 57.7% | 1 |
| SK | \$391 | \$470 | 20.2% | 2 |
| AB | \$1,352 | \$1,102 | -18.5% | 9 |
| BC | \$1,412 | \$1,668 | 18.1% | 4 |

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Ratio of lecturer salary to full professor salary 2002-03

| Province | Full professor | Lecturer | % | MP5 Rank | MP4 Rank |
|----------|----------------|----------|-------|----------|----------|
| NF | \$86,883 | \$47,283 | 54.4% | 6 | 5 |
| PEI | \$84,197 | \$47,477 | 56.4% | 4 | 4 |
| NS | \$94,969 | \$51,345 | 54.1% | 7 | 7 |
| NB | \$93,859 | \$53,481 | 57.0% | 2 | 10 |
| PQ | \$91,665 | \$50,228 | 54.8% | 5 | 3 |
| ON | \$108,957 | \$65,873 | 60.5% | 1 | 1 |
| MB | \$99,562 | \$50,641 | 50.9% | 8 | 6 |
| SK | \$93,710 | \$46,496 | 49.6% | 9 | 8 |
| AB | \$106,634 | \$50,188 | 47.1% | 10 | 9 |
| BC | \$108,280 | \$61,282 | 56.6% | 3 | 2 |

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Provincial expenditure on PSE as a share of total provincial expenditures

| Province | 1992/93 | 2001/02 | 2002/03 | MP5 Rank | percentage change 1992/93-2002/03 | MP5 Rank | percentage change 2001/02-2002/03 | MP5 Rank |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| NF | 6.4% | 5.2% | 5.6% | 5 | -12.5% | 7 | 7.7% | 4 |
| PEI | 5.1% | 4.6% | 4.7% | 10 | -7.8% | 6 | 2.2% | 7 |
| NS | 7.5% | 5.8% | 5.5% | 7 | -26.7% | 10 | -5.2% | 9 |
| NB | 5.6% | 5.2% | 6.1% | 4 | 8.9% | 3 | 17.3% | 2 |
| PQ | 7.6% | 6.0% | 6.2% | 3 | -18.4% | 8 | 3.3% | 6 |
| ON | 5.8% | 4.5% | 5.4% | 8 | -6.9% | 5 | 20.0% | 1 |
| MB | 4.4% | 6.3% | 6.7% | 1 | 52.3% | 1 | 6.3% | 5 |
| SK | 5.1% | 5.9% | 6.5% | 2 | 27.5% | 2 | 10.2% | 3 |
| AB | 6.4% | 5.9% | 5.2% | 9 | -18.8% | 9 | -11.9% | 10 |
| BC | 5.9% | 5.4% | 5.5% | 7 | -6.8% | 6 | 1.9% | 8 |

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Percentage change in government transfers per FTE student enrolment 1992/93-2002/03

| Province | 2001/02 | 2001/02-2002/03 | % | MP5 | MP4 2000/01-2001/02 | 1992/93 | 2002/03 | MP5 Rank | MP4 2001/02 | 1992/3-2002/03 | % | MP5 Rank | MP4 (1992/3-2001/2) |
|----------|----------|-----------------|--------|-----|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|----------------|---------|----------|---------------------|
| NF | \$9,913 | \$96 | 0.96% | 4 | 1 | \$12,331 | \$10,009 | 6 | 5 | -\$2,322 | -18.83% | 6 | 5 |
| PEI | \$7,604 | -\$328 | -4.51% | 7 | 10 | \$13,722 | \$7,276 | 8 | 7 | -\$6,446 | -46.98% | 10 | 10 |
| NS | \$6,096 | -\$398 | -6.98% | 9 | 9 | \$10,073 | \$5,698 | 10 | 9 | -\$4,375 | -43.43% | 9 | 8 |
| NB | \$6,264 | \$112 | 1.76% | 3 | 7 | \$7,221 | \$6,376 | 9 | 10 | -\$845 | -11.70% | 4 | 4 |
| PQ | \$9,948 | \$655 | 6.18% | 1 | 5 | \$10,249 | \$10,603 | 4 | 6 | \$354 | 3.45% | 3 | 3 |
| ON | \$8,082 | \$500 | 5.83% | 2 | 2 | \$10,293 | \$8,582 | 7 | 8 | -\$1,711 | -16.62% | 5 | 9 |
| MB | \$14,680 | -\$1,118 | -8.24% | 10 | 3 | \$12,791 | \$13,562 | 2 | 1 | \$771 | 6.03% | 2 | 1 |
| SK | \$15,540 | -\$947 | -6.49% | 8 | 4 | \$12,981 | \$14,593 | 1 | 2 | \$1,612 | 12.42% | 1 | 2 |
| AB | \$10,318 | -\$39 | -0.38% | 5 | 6 | \$14,274 | \$10,279 | 5 | 3 | -\$3,995 | -27.99% | 8 | 6 |
| BC | \$11,085 | -\$363 | -3.39% | 6 | 8 | \$14,339 | \$10,722 | 3 | 4 | -\$3,617 | -25.22% | 7 | 7 |

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“Accessive” policies or excessive debt: Who’s paying for higher education?

THE FIFTH EDITION OF *Missing Pieces: An alternative guide to Canadian post-secondary education* is being released in the aftermath of a federal election—an election in which debates about education took on a new resonance as society has become increasingly stratified along income lines.

The evidence and the contradictions are overwhelming in a country that has recorded an unbroken string of seven surpluses, and that has produced \$1.2 trillion in goods and services mid-way through 2003—\$480 billion more on an annual basis than a decade before. In the context of this wealth, aggressive deficit repayment and debt reduction, and a campaign of tax cuts that heavily favoured the wealthy,¹ Canada has more children living in poverty today than in 1989 (when all parties unanimously endorsed a campaign to eliminate child poverty). The depth of poverty continues to deepen among those defined as poor and is more prevalent for the single elderly, the disabled, visible minorities, Aboriginal populations and recent immigrants (and in all these groups women are the most disadvantaged). Inequality has grown more rapidly since 1995 than at any other time since records have been kept, and the basics of clean water, food, shelter are increasingly threatened.²

For a country that promotes its place in the “knowledge economy” and its “commitment to lifelong learning,” Canada’s record *vis-à-vis* post-secondary education is woefully inadequate. The creation of the CHST (Canada Health and Social Transfer) in 1995, which lumped cash transfers for health, education and social programs into one program—and then cut funding by \$10.6 billion from

1994/95-1997/98—signalled a withdrawal of federal responsibility for and leadership in fundamental national social programs. Since that time, Canadians have experienced the effects of systematic underfunding and deregulation in those key areas as the CHST weakened national standards by giving provincial and territorial governments more “flexibility” in determining how those federal dollars were to be spent.³

Where post-secondary education is concerned the numbers are striking: over the past 20 years, total university spending per student has barely increased in real terms—and any growth has come as a direct result of tuition fees, which have tripled since the late 1980s. Comparatively, while Canada has cut real public spending per student by 30% over the past 20 years, the United States has increased its funding by 20%.⁴

Consequently, as federal and provincial funding has been withdrawn from post-secondary education (PSE) and reallocated to other government priorities—notably tax cuts and debt reduction—the rhetoric of Canada’s commitment to higher learning has shifted somewhat. As tuition fees continue to rise—along with student debt loads—parents and students are told they must take “some responsibility” for saving for higher learning. The language of “rights” has become the language of

“merit,” as in “every deserving student” or “every qualified student” should have access to a post-secondary education.

Missing Pieces uses four main categories to help determine provincial commitment to higher education: 1) quality, 2) public accountability, 3) accessibility, and 4) equity. We ask a number of key questions: With average student debt loads reaching \$25,000 for a four-year undergraduate university program, and with the majority of provinces refusing to freeze or roll back tuition fees,⁵ what does this mean for students and their families, and what are the implications for equity or universal access to higher education? When more and more private funding sources are accessed—either as user fees, fundraising campaigns, or corporate “partnerships”—what impact is there on public accountability? And as public sources of funding are withdrawn, and institutions of higher learning move towards profit-making priorities, how is quality affected?

As we have mentioned in previous editions of *Missing Pieces*, this report is not another institutional ranking as we have seen with *Macleans* magazine in Canada and *U.S. News and World Report* in the United States. We have maintained throughout this exercise that straight comparisons of educational institutions and ranking them according to a list of indicators is, at the very least, simplistic—but more likely an inadequate method of understanding the culture of each institution. We are not alone in our concerns: the *U.S. News and World Report* has repeatedly come under fire in the 25+ years of its ranking exercise, and virtually each release of *Macleans* University Ranking is accompanied by a mix of critique, skepticism and outrage on the one hand, and gushing appreciation on the other—by those schools deemed worthy.

But the rankings continue—in fact, are hugely successful on newsstands—and have quite an influence on student (and parent) readers. Even the moderately critical bow to the role *Macleans* now plays in helping to determine university enrolment. “I think that we should be concerned about moving up on that reputational rank, if only because

we know that the general public does not necessarily evaluate rankings critically. They do believe that it means something,” explained University of Manitoba President Emöke Szathmáry, after her university received a particularly dismal ranking. And so, strapped for cash, the U of M is considering hiring a company to conduct a “reputation” audit to better determine and target ways in which it could be improved.

But this is mild compared to the University of British Columbia. Earlier this year, it was revealed that senior administrators at UBC pressured faculty members to manipulate course enrolments and even cap class sizes in an effort to improve the school’s standing in the *Macleans* ranking—despite warnings from professors that this could actually hurt students. Internal documents revealed that the administration suggested using sessionals to teach classes, lying to students about room capacity even if it meant denying students the opportunity to major in a discipline or graduate on time. UBC actually designed an enrolment software program to help department chairs cap enrolment at the numbers set by *Macleans*.⁶

But even *this* is mild compared to the University VP in the U.S. who forgot to update her institution’s data for the American ranking; following her institution’s plunge in score, she was summarily fired.

Since beginning this publication, we have asserted that many of the criteria used in mainstream university and college rankings present a skewed portrait of higher education, privileging larger, more established institutions better able to attract corporate “partners” and make use of a wealthy alumni base. We, along with many other stakeholders, are concerned that mainstream rankings ensure that issues of access, public accountability, equity and quality are inadequately addressed or minimized in importance. We are particularly concerned about the issue of accessibility, and the ways in which it impacts accountability, quality, and equity. It is for this reason that we focus a great deal of our attention on the costs of higher education, who bears the burden, who

reaps the rewards, and how this responsibility is being shared or shirked by elected representatives.

When Canada's undergraduate university students return to school this fall, they can expect to pay on average 7.4% more in tuition fees, the biggest increase in four years. Undergraduate students will pay an average of \$4,025 in tuition fees for the 2003/04 academic year, up from \$3,749 in 2002/03. This is more than double the average of \$1,464 in 1990/91, the result of significant increases during the 1990s.

—Statistics Canada. "University tuition fees." *The Daily*. August 12, 2003.

As indicated by Statistics Canada, tuition fees at Canadian institutions of higher learning are continuing, for the most part, to rise. In fact, in 2003/04 Newfoundland and Labrador was the only province where university tuition fees actually declined. Fees were frozen in Manitoba, and in Quebec for

in-province students. At the other end of the scale, B.C. registered the largest increase for the second year in a row (up 30.4% following last year's 25.7% rise), after the Campbell government ended the six-year undergraduate tuition fee freeze in 2002. In clear contrast to Quebec and Manitoba, average undergraduate fees for 2003/04 remain highest in Nova Scotia at \$5,557, followed by Ontario at \$4,923.

Fees for professional programs—i.e., dentistry, law and medicine—far surpass those for undergraduate students. In 2003/04, average tuition fees in dentistry increased 20.9% to \$11,733—but the largest increases range from 45.1% in Alberta to over 55% in Saskatchewan, with B.C. somewhere in the middle. The dubious honour of highest dentistry tuition fees belongs to Saskatchewan at \$30,178.

Similarly, medical students pay \$9,406 on average—an increase of 16.7%—and law students \$5,995 on average—a 19.4% increase. As in other

Average tuition fees (Current \$)

| | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | % change |
|--------------------|---------|----------|----------|
| Agriculture | \$3,301 | \$3,487 | 5.6 |
| Architecture | \$3,524 | \$3,586 | 1.8 |
| Arts | \$3,617 | \$3,810 | 5.3 |
| Commerce | \$3,743 | \$3,991 | 6.6 |
| Dentistry | \$9,703 | \$11,733 | 20.9 |
| Education | \$3,019 | \$3,216 | 6.5 |
| Engineering | \$3,865 | \$4,371 | 13.1 |
| Household Sciences | \$3,486 | \$3,669 | 5.3 |
| Law | \$5,021 | \$5,995 | 19.4 |
| Medicine | \$8,063 | \$9,406 | 16.7 |
| Music | \$3,586 | \$3,753 | 4.7 |
| Science | \$3,728 | \$3,954 | 6.1 |
| Undergraduate | \$3,749 | \$4,025 | 7.4 |
| Graduate | \$4,867 | \$5,199 | 6.8 |

—Statistics Canada. *University tuition fees. The Daily*. August 12, 2003

areas of study, Ontario and Nova Scotia claim the highest tuition fees for medicine and law.

Graduate and international students, too, are experiencing fee increases—on average 6.8% to \$5,199 this year, with the largest increases in Alberta (13.1%) and B.C. (12.9%). True to form, grad students in Ontario and Nova Scotia have the highest fees in Canada—\$8,376 and \$6,898, respectively—and Quebec students the lowest. Manitoba froze grad fees and Newfoundland and Labrador actually *decreased* fees for graduate students by 5%.

International students also face increases in tuition in all provinces (7.5% for undergraduate, 6.3% for graduate) except Manitoba, which has the lowest fees at \$5,706—strongly contrasting with B.C. (undergraduate: \$13,440) and Ontario (graduate: \$14,205).

Particularly striking is the change in university tuition fees over the past decade, before the establishment of the CHST, and since. The average/Canadian average increase is virtually 100%, with provinces like Ontario, Alberta and Nova Scotia surpassing that number. Clearly this is a matter of grave concern for a growing number of Canadians. According to a poll by the Canadian

Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and Decima Research (released November 2003), nearly 70% of Canadians believe that today's tuition fees are keeping qualified people from getting a post-secondary education. That number grew to almost 80% in the Atlantic provinces.⁷

The story is similar in B.C., especially after the election of the Campbell government and the subsequent end to the fee freeze. According to Ipsos-Reid, 80% of B.C. residents believe PSE is only for the affluent.⁸

But tuition fees are only part of the story. As fewer and fewer services are included in the price of tuition, and as inadequate provincial funding continues, universities and colleges are increasingly downloading additional costs onto students in the form of other compulsory fees, which are much more difficult to monitor because they are largely determined by the individual institution. Note particularly the compulsory fee increase in B.C. schools, which also experienced the lifting of the tuition fee freeze with the election of the Campbell government.

The effects of increased tuition fees are beginning to be realized as some provinces have taken steps to reduce fees in an effort to improve access, while others have continued to download costs onto students.

When the federal and provincial governments moved away from needs-based grants and towards student loans, eventually altering the loans system to reflect rising tuition rates, we witnessed a number of trends relating to income and PSE participation, particularly in universities where tuition fees are highest. While participation increased among low-income families (those making less than \$25,000) as student loans programs expanded, participation rates for those in the \$25,000-\$100,000 category actually dropped, suggesting that student aid is based on some unrealistic assumptions of what parents can afford to contribute to their child's education.⁹

According to Statistics Canada, children from families earning more than \$100,000 are much more likely to have attended university between 1980

Average undergraduate tuition fees— % increase 1993/4-2003/4

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Canada | 98.9 |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 30.3 |
| Prince Edward Island | 64.7 |
| Nova Scotia | 105.8 |
| New Brunswick | 86.9 |
| Quebec | 20.2 |
| Ontario | 137.2 |
| Manitoba | 38.9 |
| Saskatchewan | 98.4 |
| Alberta | 103.1 |
| British Columbia | 84.9 |

Statistics Canada

and 2000—about 40%. For those under \$25,000 participation rose from less than 10% (early 80s) to 19% by 1997. But in households with incomes in the \$50,000-\$75,000 range, participation dropped from 27% (1993) to 23% (1997) and for those in the \$75,000-\$100,000 range participation fell from 32%-24%.

There is a clear positive correlation between parental income and university attendance, and this correlation in fact became stronger during the early to mid-1990s when tuition fees began increasing significantly. This change reflected declines in participation rates of youth from middle income families, those with incomes ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000. The correlation, however, declined during the latter half of the decade reflecting rises in participation of those from the lowest income groups. This pattern is consistent with the fact that the changes in the Canada Student Loans Program raising the maximum amount of a loan occurred only after tuition fees had already begun to rise.

...[O]ur analysis offers no evidence that the correlation between family income and postsecondary participation is higher at the end of the 1990s than it was at the begin-

ning. That said, the costs of higher education have certainly increased and in part these costs have been shifted onto students, as reflected in much higher levels of borrowing and the decline in university participation rates of those from middle income families. At the same time it should be noted that the costs of post-secondary education have also become more differentiated. There is greater variation of fees across provinces, disciplines, and even institutions.

— Corak, Lipps and Zhao. *Family income and participation in postsecondary education*. Statistics Canada. October 2003.

Statistics Canada's Post-secondary Education Participation Survey¹⁰ (examining the 18-to-24-year-old cohort) determined that in 2001/02 typical full-time university students spent over \$11,000 to put themselves through an eight-month academic year. The median for college students was \$9,330 and \$4,550 for CEGEP. Not surprisingly, there was a greater likelihood of pursuing education after high school among those from families with estimated earnings of \$80,000 or more (83% of individuals aged 18-24 as of March 2002) than other income brackets. More than two-thirds (67%) of youth from families with earnings from \$55,000-\$80,000 had taken some post-secondary education, dropping to 55% for families with earnings of less than \$55,000.

The inadequacy of the loans system to finance PSE was detailed by—of all organizations—the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation in March 2004. Their research indicated that the “unmet need” (i.e., the difference between the cost of attending university and the amount of the loan actually allocated for students either living at home or away from home) was sig-

Average additional compulsory fees (current \$)

| | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | % increase |
|--------|---------|---------|------------|
| Canada | 571 | 623 | 9.0 |
| NL | 446 | 450 | 0.9 |
| PE | 448 | 468 | 4.5 |
| NS | 390 | 430 | 10.3 |
| NB | 272 | 302 | 11.0 |
| PQ | 654 | 685 | 4.8 |
| ON | 638 | 694 | 8.8 |
| MB | 527 | 541 | 2.7 |
| SK | 507 | 554 | 9.4 |
| AB | 513 | 530 | 3.2 |
| BC | 432 | 584 | 35.4 |

Statistics Canada

nificant in most provinces. In fact, for Ontario students living away from home the unmet need was determined to be almost \$10,000. However, instead of critiquing the current level of tuition fees, the CMSF calls for:

Work [to] be conducted on defining *reasonable debt levels* in relation to programs of study in terms of ability to repay loans. In the U.S., loan payments equal to eight per cent of projected income after graduation are seen as the upper limit of debt levels that can be serviced by graduates. (pg. 31) (Emphasis added.)¹¹

And, while the CMSF includes an increase in the amount of student assistance (equal to academic and living costs) to mitigate the expense of PSE for low income, single university undergraduates who must move away to study (pg. 10 of their report), the Foundation also appears to suggest that parents need to be educated as to the actual costs of education, presumably so that they can pick up more of the slack: “A lack of savings dedicated to

post-secondary education and declining family net worth are indirect evidence that parents may not be contributing the amount they’re expected to.” (pg. 11 of their report)

Clearly, the thrust of the CMSF argument is that, so long as adequate levels of student aid are available, the *kind* of aid (whether grant or loan) is immaterial. And so long as the length of repayment time is flexible, no one has any reason to complain or feel unjustly targeted.

But financing an education through loans is simply the downloading of debt onto those who can least afford it—and income contingent loan repayment (ICLR), as we have seen in New Zealand, has been used as an excuse to pull out more public funding and download the entire cost of the education onto students, with devastating results particularly for women and people of colour. Disappointingly, Quebec—a province cited for its public support for post-secondary education and its dedication to ensuring accessibility—announced this spring that the provincial government will be pursuing income-contingent loan repay-

Excess of university student expenditures over assistance limits—selected CSL categories¹²

| Province | Assistance Limits | | Total Expenditures | | Unmet need | |
|----------|-------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|------------|----------|
| | SDA | SIA | SDA | SIA | SDA | SIA |
| NF | \$10,744 | \$10,744 | \$10,760 | \$13,240 | \$16 | \$ 2,496 |
| NS/PEI | \$10,710 | \$10,710 | \$9,840 | \$15,260 | -- | \$4,550 |
| NB | \$11,050 | \$11,050 | \$11,836 | \$12,048 | \$786 | \$998 |
| PQ | \$16,619 | \$16,619 | \$11,541 | \$12,982 | 0 | 0 |
| ON | \$9,350 | \$9,350 | \$12,228 | \$19,167 | \$2,878 | \$9,817 |
| MB | \$10,710 | \$10,710 | \$10,538 | \$12,503 | -- | \$1,793 |
| SK | \$9,350 | \$9,350 | \$10,833 | \$12,169 | \$1,483 | \$2,819 |
| AB | \$12,700 | \$12,700 | \$14,038 | \$15,769 | \$1,338 | \$3,069 |
| BC | \$8,840 | \$8,840 | \$13,963 | \$13,527 | \$5,123 | \$4,687 |

SDA: single dependent adult (living at home)

SIA: single independent adult (living away from home)

Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation. **Making Ends Meet**. March 2004. Pg. 9.

ment possibly as soon as fall 2004. True to form, this measure was announced as part of a proposed plan “to help students manage the higher debt load they will be required to carry as a result of. . . [a \$64 million] government cutback in the student loan and bursary program.”¹³ And, while the Liberal government has promised to maintain the tuition fee freeze—for now—it does not preclude “radically changing the way universities are funded” or even lifting the freeze in the future. Currently, as a direct result of low tuition fees, the average debt load for Quebec students is \$13,100, compared to \$22,700 in Ontario and \$20,300 in Western provinces. Furthermore, the new advisory panel on PSE in Ontario, headed by former NDP Premier Bob Ray, is also floating the ICLR trial balloon.

The difference in average student debt loads between provinces is exacerbated as tuition fees continue to increase and as grants are replaced by loans. Indeed, it appears that, while “generous” loan programs in Canada have not noticeably affected the *percentage* of students graduating with loans (about half of college and university grads from classes of 1995 and 2000 carried student debt, and just over 40% owed money to government student loan programs), the *average debt sizes* for 2000 grads were significantly higher than for 1995 college and university grads,¹⁴ suggesting that, for those student who already see PSE as a financial hardship, the burden has become significantly heavier.

The National Graduates Survey 2000 goes into much greater detail and specifies the kind of debt—public or private—as well as average amounts for students who owe to one or both sources:

At the college level, graduates with only government student loans owed an average of \$12,500 at graduation, compared with just \$7,100 for those owing money only to non-government sources. College students who owed to both sources had an average of \$19,200 in total student debt.

The figures were much higher for bachelor graduates. Those with only government student loans owed on average \$19,300 in 2000, and those with only private loans owed \$9,500. However, bachelor graduates who owed to both sources were in debt to the tune of \$32,200 on average.

— Statistics Canada. “National Graduates Survey 2000.” *The Daily*. Monday, April 26, 2004.

This study is particularly significant because it recognizes the extent to which government loans are insufficient, or perhaps too difficult for many students to qualify for (the previous Harris-Eves government in Ontario made it much more difficult for student to access government loans). According to the Education Policy Institute, of the federal government programs that do exist to alleviate the financial pressures of higher education such as tax credits and Canada Education Savings Grants, 62% goes to students from families with incomes above the average.¹⁵

This reinforces a 2002 study by Kevin Milligan for the C.D. Howe Institute that found families in the top income quartile are four times more likely to have RESPs (with contributions at 2.4% higher rates) than those with the lowest incomes. Because of this, the federal grant portion of RESPs (the CESG) goes disproportionately to families in the highest income bracket—families who are already in a position to contribute to the cost of their child’s education.¹⁶

Easily the most celebrated method by which the federal government has “confronted” the issue of student debt has been Jean Chrétien’s \$2.5 billion Canadian Millennium Scholarship Fund, created in 1998 to improve access to higher education. According to then-Finance Minister Paul Martin, who made the Fund part of his so-called 1998 “legacy budget,” students receiving a scholarship over four years would see their debt load cut by \$12,000—“half of what it otherwise would have been.”¹⁷

However, an independent review of the Fund (conducted in November 2003) found that the haste with which the program was established resulted in some provinces diverting money into provincial coffers rather than using it to enhance student aid programs—or used the funds to simply replace existing student aid programs. In cases where the funds built on existing programs, the money predominantly went towards debt reduction: sort of an attempt to improve access after the fact. Furthermore, once the money was handed out, there was no oversight system in place to track how and where it was spent.

But what of those students who do find themselves in a debt-situation? Earlier this year, details emerged on some of the tactics used by the nine loan collection agencies contracted by the federal government to pursue late payments of student loans.¹⁸ While the federal government sets out rules for those companies, an Ontario agent explains how those rules were frequently broken:

It's not unusual for agents to threaten immediate legal action if the entire debt isn't paid at once. Some even pose as staff from the "legal department" to add extra alarm, said the agent. . . Verbal bullying, also clearly against federal rules, is a favourite tactic. (Bailey)

Currently \$1.3 billion in student loans remains unpaid—although 80% of federal student loans are paid on time and in full, according to government statistics. Collectors earn higher commissions for higher payments, which might account for some of the high-pressure tactics, including demands for full payment and neglecting to mention payment plan options.

In the lead-up to the federal election, there was some—not enough—discussion about access to and affordability of higher education. The Canadian Federation of Students provided an analysis of the Liberal, Conservative and NDP platforms to try and determine the degree to which higher education is in fact a priority.¹⁹ In the face of con-

tinually rising student debt loads, only the NDP called for a tuition fee reduction and freeze. The Liberals focused on their past initiatives—most of which, as we have seen and as have been documented in past editions of *Missing Pieces*, have been inadequate at addressing the issue of student debt. And the Conservatives claimed that they will increase accessibility by raising loan limits and exploring—you guessed it—income contingent loan repayment.

No, really, it's about equity!

Since it's difficult to call students "the most important investment a nation can make in its own future" while simultaneously downloading more and more of the costs of higher education onto them, virtually ensuring years of debt, a rhetorical strategy had to be implemented by proponents of higher tuition fees. It goes something like this: when tuition fees are kept low, rich kids get to go to university and college for a fraction of what they can actually afford to pay. Therefore, low tuition fees discriminate against the poor because it amounts to poor families subsidizing rich kids to pursue higher education. Bingo!—public investment in higher education benefits the rich, not the poor! It's a matter of justice.

It's not just lobby groups like the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation that are making this absurd claim; it's think-tanks like the Fraser Institute, and politicians like Mike Harris (former Conservative Ontario Premier), and university administrators like Roger Martin, Dean of the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto.²⁰ For a more detailed analysis of the private financing used to establish the Rotman School, along with the fees charged for exclusive programs of this type, readers may want to refer back to the analysis we provided in the first edition of *Missing Pieces*. A visit to the school web site demonstrates that tuition fees for Canadian students attending the Rotman School in 2003 for a full-time MBA pro-

gram were \$51,250 (\$59,450 for international students).

But apparently this hefty price tag is not evidence of exclusivity or a lack of commitment to accessibility. Dean Martin explains that U of T's superior policy of admitting "the best students, regardless of financial means, and guaranteeing them the financial support necessary to attend university" is much more fair and equitable than keeping fees low for all students because this policy would limit the number of spaces available! (Addressing this as a separate issue and investing in infrastructure doesn't seem to occur to him.)

The Rotman School strives to admit only the best candidates to its Full-Time MBA Program, and is working to remove the financial barriers that qualified applicants may face in making this serious investment over the next two years. We are committed to helping you find a way to finance your MBA by providing you with a broad range of options in three categories: loans, entrance scholarships and fellowships, and part-time employment opportunities. All are aimed at meeting the varied financial needs of Rotman students for the duration of their MBA program.

(<http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/mba/financialaid.htm>)

Rotman, the website explains, in addition to the five full scholarships now available to students entering the program in September, "provides a wide variety of entrance scholarships and fellowships offered on the basis of exceptional merit, and a few on the combination of both merit and need." Scotiabank provides loans, the federal and provincial government loans are highlighted, and Rotman has a "limited number of School of Graduate Studies (SGS) Emergency Bursaries." In other words, once private and government loan limits are exhausted, students *may* be eligible for a university bursary for the remaining amount.

We know the gains of higher education are profound and far-reaching. This is not new: nor is it a domestic phenomenon. According to a study commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in 2003, graduates are less depressed, healthier, more likely to vote in elections and help with their children's education than non-graduates. The study, which was conducted by researchers at the Institute of Education, University of London, indicates that, along with better jobs and higher pay, graduates also enjoy a number of other social and personal benefits.

But in addition to having generally healthier lifestyles which cost society much less in security benefits and health care, and a higher sense of well-being, graduates are more likely to be involved in their child's education (both in and out of school), have more tolerant attitudes, and volunteer in their communities more frequently. These benefits are evident across gender, age and social class, and involve the collection of data from two major longitudinal studies.

Clearly there are financial justifications for having a highly educated society: graduates of university and college programs have enhanced earning potential and therefore spend more and pay more in taxes. In fact, evidence indicates that graduates pay several times over for the "cost" incurred by society in having educated them in a public system. But there are other benefits which are tangentially financial, and still others that speak far more to broader social progression and the kind of society in which we wish to live.

While the public overwhelmingly supports higher education, it is clearly concerned about the impact of rising tuition fees on access. And as fees continue to rise, this concern is becoming more entrenched in provinces where post-secondary education does not appear to be a significant government priority. In the days following to a federal election that was very much about how we as Canadians perceive our rights—the right to education, to health care, to live in a just and equitable

society—we must ensure that all potential students have the opportunity to pursue higher education if, when, and where they choose. In a country as wealthy as Canada, it is a fundamental betrayal of our citizens, our future, and our potential if we let bank managers make this choice for us.

Endnotes

- ¹ In 2000-01 Paul Martin as Finance Minister announced \$100 billion in tax cuts over the next five years.
- ² Yalnizyan, Armine. *Paul Martin's permanent revolution*. Published in **Hell and High Water: An assessment of Paul Martin's record and implications for the future**. (Ed. Todd Scarth). CCPA. 2004.
- ³ Anderson, John. *Paul Martin and the Liberal social policy record*. Published in **Hell and High Water: An assessment of Paul Martin's record and implications for the future**. (Ed. Todd Scarth). CCPA. 2004.
- ⁴ Daw, James. *Federal student aid helps rich, economists say*. **Toronto Star**. Mar. 16, 2004. http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&call_pageid=971358637177&c=Article&cid=1079392211597
- ⁵ Quebec (domestic students), Manitoba and Newfoundland are notable exceptions.
- ⁶ Schmidt, Sarah. *Students 'hurt' when schools try to impress Maclean's*. **The Ottawa Citizen**. February 02, 2004. <http://www.canada.com/ottawa/ottawacitizen/soundoff/story.html?id=f56e6818-0554-4eca-95e6-5cb0a481797b>
- ⁷ Canadian Association of University Teachers. **CAUT-Decima Poll Shows Tuition Fees Deter Student Access**. December 2003. http://www.caut.ca/english/bulletin/2003_dec/news/poll.asp.
- ⁸ Fournier, Suzanne. *Poll ties university to wealth*. **Vancouver Province**. Apr. 15, 2004. Food bank use on campus has also increased, according to a report released by the Canadian Association of Food Banks and the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations: more than 3,100 Canadian PSE students rely on campus food banks every month.
- ⁹ Schmidt, Sarah. *Middle class kids now less likely to go to university*. **CanWest News Service**. Oct. 3. 2003.
- ¹⁰ **The Daily**. *Postsecondary Education Participation Survey 2002*. **Statistics Canada**. September 10, 2003
- ¹¹ For a much more detailed analysis of the CMSF's not-so-veiled endorsement of income contingent loan repayment, please refer to "Debt Toll" in **Missing Pieces IV**.
- ¹² The EKOS survey captured baseline data on 1,543 students as they began the 2001–2002 school year, as well as information on their income and expenditures through the school year.
- ¹³ Séguin, Rhéal. *Quebec ties loan repayment to students' future earnings*. **Globe and Mail**. April 2, 2004. <http://www.globeandmail.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/TPStory/LAC/20040402/LOANS02/Education/Idx>
- ¹⁴ Allen, Mary and Chantal Vaillancourt. *Class of 2000: Profiles of postsecondary graduates and student debt*. **Statistics Canada**. 2004. Pg. 22.
- ¹⁵ Alphonso, Caroline. *Student assistance not properly targeted to neediest, studies say*. **Globe and Mail**. May 7, 2004. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/ArticleNews/TPStory/LAC/20040507/SCHOOL07/TPEducation/>
- ¹⁶ Daw, James. *Federal student aid helps rich, economists say*. **Toronto Star**. Mar. 16, 2004. http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&call_pageid=971358637177&c=Article&cid=1079392211597 Statistics Canada reported that almost half of all parents are unaware of the CESG—and those who are have higher incomes, are better educated and more likely to be home-owners. (StatsCan, Friday, January 23, 2004.)
- ¹⁷ Schmidt, Sarah. *Scholarship fails to live up to PM's billing*. **CanWest News Service**. Nov. 6, 2003
- ¹⁸ Bailey, Sue. *Student loan collectors blasted*. **Canadian Press**. January 10, 2004. <http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2004/01/10/309866-cp.html>
- ¹⁹ For more information please visit <http://www.cfs-fcee.ca>.
- ²⁰ Martin, Roger. *A bright light on a bad strategy*. **Globe and Mail**. May 18, 2004. <http://www.globeandmail.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/TPStory/LAC/20040518/COROGER18//?query=tuition>

Provincial overviews

Newfoundland and Labrador

By Jen Anthony

Tuition fees

Since 1999-2000, tuition fees in Newfoundland and Labrador have been frozen for public college students and some university students. For the remainder of students, specifically Canadian undergraduate and graduate students, tuition fees have been reduced by 25%. As a result, a trend towards declining enrolment at Memorial University has halted and greater numbers of students are attending university each year.

Student financial assistance

From the creation of the provincial student aid program until 1994, all provincial student financial assistance was provided in the form of a grant. However, in September 1994, the grant system was eliminated and replaced with a loan program. At that time, a loan remission program was created which proved to be overly restrictive and, as a result, very few students actually availed themselves of the program. In August 2002, this program was itself replaced by a system of debt reduction grants. Unlike loan remission grants, the debt reduction grants are applied automatically against students' debts. Provided a student enrolls in at least 80% of a full course load in a given semester, she is eligible to receive a grant. If she successfully completes 100% of a full course load, she receives a grant equal to 100% of the amount borrowed greater than \$165 per week (the maximum Canada Student Loan available). By successfully completing 80%, she receives a grant of 50%.

As the new debt reduction grants are applied against student loans only when a student graduates, it is unclear how many students will take advantage of the new program. However, the number of students who have been deemed eligible to date is significantly greater than the number who were eligible under the previous plan. Further, on average, students are eligible for larger debt remission than they were under the old system.

University and college funding

Since 1999, when tuition fees were frozen in the province for the first time, the provincial government has steadily increased core funding to College of the North Atlantic and Memorial University. After years of funding cuts, these increases have augmented funding so that both institutions now receive virtually identical funding to that which they did at the beginning of the 1990s, in constant dollars.

Throughout this period, the university and college have actively sought funding from private sector sources to build infrastructure, fund research, and subsidize classes. As a result of these private contributions, students have raised concerns about the integrity of research that may be influenced by the companies providing resources. Students have begun to fear that their school is simply being sold to the highest bidder and their education will suffer as a result.

Programs

In the mid-1990s, the provincial government closed four public college campuses. Shortly afterward, in 1997, the remaining 18 campuses were amalgamated to create the College of the North Atlantic, which provides diploma and certificate programs throughout the province. Increasingly, trades programs have been underfunded and in some cases eliminated. Due to a declining population in Newfoundland and Labrador, the enrolment at many rural campuses has steadily declined in the last three years and campus closures are widely anticipated as a likely policy route for the provincial government to follow.

Conclusion

Since 1999, after years of funding cuts, program closures and skyrocketing tuition fees, access to and

quality of post-secondary education have greatly improved in Newfoundland and Labrador. Freezing and reducing tuition fees, improving student financial aid, and increasing funding to the province's two post-secondary institutions have resulted in increased enrolment. Even in this environment, however, Memorial University and the College of the North Atlantic have turned increasingly to private funding in the form of corporate donations or short-term training contracts. Students concerned about the growing trend to privatisation have reason for concern: the Progressive Conservative government that was elected in October 2003 has already made clear that its agenda for post-secondary education will differ significantly from that of the previous government by reducing spending for the coming year and undertaking a complete review of spending on post-secondary education.

PSE in PEI

By Darcy Knoll

It was just after 10 a.m. when the P.E.I. legislators took their seats for the day's business. Above them sat a collection of students and teachers – a Grade 8 social studies class and a Grade 10 Canadian history class – all gathered to watch Question Period the morning after the 2003 budget was released. In an opening greeting, Premier Pat Binns made sure to welcome the young audience. He told them that his government had prepared a budget with students in mind.

“I think most would agree that it's a budget that's focused heavily on education,” he said. “[W]e believe very firmly that the number one tool in terms of economic development is a well-educated populace.”

Two initiatives were announced for post-secondary education. First, \$1 million was added to the operating budgets of both the University of Prince Edward Island and Holland College, and \$500,000 to the Atlantic Veterinary College. Second, the provincial student loan limit was increased by 20%, from \$9,300 to \$11,200. In addition, the amount students were allowed to earn in study before loan deductions was increased from \$600 to \$1,700.

Despite this new funding, students were not relieved from their tuition burden. Although the Minister of the Treasury said the money was meant to ease these costs, she acknowledged that the government was leaving this decision up to the university.

For the 2003-2004 school year, undergraduate tuition at UPEI rose by more than 6%, with additional compulsory fees going up 4.5%. On average, students would be paying \$4,601.

“[R]elative to some of the increases in tuition that we've heard about, it may not be too bad,” said then Provincial Treasurer Pat Mella. “That's not much consolation to students who are looking to pay their bills, but ultimately that's the decision of the university,”

With an election campaign heating up into the early fall, the Tories outlined a platform with a focus on education.

“Education is the greatest investment we can make in the future of our young people,” said Binns in an interview in the *Summerside Journal-Pioneer*, Sept. 10, 2003.

He then unveiled a plan that included increasing funding to Holland and UPEI by \$1 million each over the next year.

He also stated that the Island Student Award would get a boost.

“It was a \$600-per-year bursary for certain course years at UPEI and graduating students at Holland College. We are going to increase that to \$1,000,” he said.

The Progressive Conservatives won a strong majority in the provincial election and delivered their 2004 budget the following March. Additional funding to both UPEI and Holland dropped to \$750,000 and the Island Student Award remained stagnant at \$600.

Shortly following this, the UPEI board of governors voted on a 6% tuition increase for the 2004-2005 year. It was also decided that returning students would face an annual technology charge of \$30 and a 50% increase in parking fees.

These increases were largely the result of three factors, according to Brandon MacKenzie, then

UPEI student union president in a posting on the student union website. First, a 10% rise was expected in utility rates. Second, the university was committed to paying another \$2.2 million as a result of new positions and negotiated wage and benefit settlements after narrowly averting a faculty strike. Finally, the university was facing a government decision to cut a quarter of a million dollars from promised funding.

Students in the province are currently faced with mounting fees and no alternative to incurring higher debt. According to Mella on April 11, 2003, this is a reality that they need to understand. “Talk to the students. They’re not happy with the fact that they have to take on debts, but they know

how important education is, and we put the [loan] limit up so that students would be able to stay at university and end up taking the programs they really want,” she said.

This is the student reality in PEI because there is no real effort to fund post-secondary education adequately, said MacKenzie.

“Despite all calls for help, it appears that both provincial and national authorities have no intention to make education a true priority. As a result, it is only a matter of time before this debt burden becomes insurmountable, ensuring only limited access to education while guaranteeing our youth a debt-ridden future.”

Nova Scotia

By Dave Hare

Over the past decade, Nova Scotia has seen government funding cuts increasingly shift the burden of funding post-secondary education away from government and towards individuals and their families. 2003/2004 was no exception as the Conservative government of Nova Scotia continued to underfund post-secondary education, demonstrating a clear lack of commitment to higher education.

Despite reversing some previously-implemented tax cuts, the Conservative government's 2004 provincial budget announced no new commitments to post-secondary education for the upcoming year, and gave no indication of a change in direction in the upcoming year.

Funding and tuition fees

In the spring of 2003, the Government of Nova Scotia tabled a budget that increased university funding from \$201 million to \$205 million. Despite this slight increase the government is still providing less for university operating grants than in 1992, when the transfer was \$211 million. Government grants cover only 41.9 % of university operating costs in 2001-2002, the lowest proportion of any Canadian province.

This underfunding has caused tuition fees in Nova Scotia to more than double over the past decade. Average undergraduate tuition fees rose to \$5,557 for 2003-2004 up from \$2,701 in 1993-1994. As a result, students in Nova Scotia pay the highest average tuition fees in Canada. In Nova

Scotia, user fees account for a higher proportion of university operating budgets than in any other province.

There is a disturbing trend developing in the budgeting practices of the Government of Nova Scotia. Prior to the 2003 provincial budget, the government announced a one-time \$6 million allocation for Nova Scotia's universities. This money came at the end of the fiscal year and was not included as part of the base funding for the 2003-2004 fiscal year. In November 2003, the government announced that it was cutting \$1 million from the funding to universities that had been budgeted in the spring. However, this cutback was followed by an announcement in the lead up to the 2004 budget that another one-time \$8 million would be given to Nova Scotia's universities for the current fiscal year and, once again, would not be in the base funding for the following fiscal year.

While increased funding to universities is desperately needed in Nova Scotia, the "windfall/cutback" approach is not the solution. This method does not allow for institutions to accurately budget for the year ahead. Consequently, university administrators argue that a "cushion" generated from increased tuition fees needs to be built into university budgets. In addition, since the money is delivered near the end of the fiscal year instead of being included in the base funding for the year ahead, there is no guarantee that the funding will exist in the future nor that it will prevent any increases in user fees.

Student aid and Millennium Scholarships

In 2000, the Government of Nova Scotia eliminated its loan remission program following the creation of the Millennium Scholarship Foundation, making Nova Scotia the only province without a non-repayable student financial assistance program. The provincial government has also refused to re-invest monies saved because of the implementation of the Foundation. These monies included bank payments to administer the loan program as well as the interest paid by the province on student loans for students in school. Pocketing the savings violated the spirit of the agreement made with the Foundation that Millennium funding would be used to create additional student aid, not simply replace a provincial program or be re-directed to general provincial revenues.

In response to continued pressure by the Canadian Federation of Students, the spring 2003 provincial budget contained \$5.1 million for a new student Debt Reduction Program. This amount is approximately half the value of the loan remission program scrapped in 2000 and does not take into account the money saved by the province since the creation of the Millennium Scholarships. The Program is only available to students who graduate and varies in the amount of debt reduction provided depending on the number of years the student received loans. There is an additional reduction for those who stay and work in Nova Scotia, and for students who make twelve payments on their loan in a three-year period.

The Debt Reduction Program is cumbersome and does nothing to reduce the financial barriers to post-secondary education. It fails to assist students who are struggling financially to complete their education and requires students to apply at three different times to receive the various reductions. Furthermore, the criteria for additional debt reduction excludes students who cannot make

regular payments because of their financial/employment situation, or those who need to leave the province.

De-designation

Students are eligible to receive public financial assistance if their institution is on the list of “designated” institutions. In Nova Scotia all public and several private institutions are currently designated. For the last three years the Government of Nova Scotia has been considering a de-designation policy that ties an institution’s designation status to student loan default rates. Therefore, institutions will be struck from the list (de-designated) if their graduates have higher than average default rates. Students attending de-designated institutions will be ineligible for student financial aid such as student loans.

De-designation does not address the “problem” of student loan default rates, namely massive unmanageable debt caused by continually increasing tuition fees. Furthermore, this policy does not acknowledge the economic disparities that exist in different regions the province and will compromise access to post-secondary education for students who depend on financial assistance.

The Government of Nova Scotia’s de-designation policy uses default rates to judge quality of education. However, public institutions (unlike private training shops) already have public accountability mechanisms in place to ensure that a high-quality education is being provided. If de-designation truly were an attempt to increase the regulation of private institutions, the policy would explicitly exclude public institutions.

Despite widespread opposition by students, faculty, and several university boards of governors, the Government of Nova Scotia announced in early 2004 that it would be implementing a federal framework that includes default rates as a criterion of de-designation for fall 2004.

PSE in New Brunswick

By Darcy Knoll

When it comes to post secondary education in New Brunswick the Progressive Conservative government demonstrated a marginally stronger commitment to the funding of colleges and universities than its Liberal predecessor. In their 2003 Budget, the Tories unveiled a strategy to increase financing of post secondary education by 10% over three years, roughly \$6.1 million per year—a considerable improvement over the Liberals' 6.12% three-year subsidy. Beyond that, \$2.1 million was directed to student bursaries.

With a successful 2003 provincial election behind them, the Conservatives released their 2004 Budget which contained several tidbits for post secondary education, namely a four year commitment to increase base funding by 13%. Universities also received the final \$5 million of an ongoing \$15 million project to improve infrastructure.

However, despite these additions, students have not thrown out their placard signs and started dancing in the streets.

Over the past decade the post secondary situation in the province really has not improved, according to the Federation of New Brunswick Faculty Associations:

- Provincial government funding per full-time student for New Brunswick's universities has fallen overall, by more than 10% in the last decade - even after taking into account the 3.4% increase in 2002.
- New Brunswick now spends 16.7% less of its gross domestic product on post-secondary education that it did ten years ago.

- Average university tuition fees in New Brunswick have more than doubled in only the last decade.
- In New Brunswick 2002-2003 university tuition fees alone were, on average, 10% higher than students' earnings from summer employment.
- University enrolments in New Brunswick recently fell while they increased, overall, by 6.6% in the rest of Canada.
- Since 1991-92, the number of students attending New Brunswick universities part-time has fallen by almost 30%.

Basically, the provincial government has simply tried to apply a bandage to a problem requiring drastic surgery. A solid investment now in post secondary education could ultimately lead to a substantial improvement in the faltering New Brunswick economy in the future. According to 2003 Census data, 25% of the 1.3 million jobs created nationally between 1991 and 2001 needed only a high school diploma while almost half needed a university degree. Yet in 2001, 62% of New Brunswick's population did not have anything above a high school degree, leaving it with a population of post-secondary graduates below the national average. With a rising number of skilled workers leaving the province and a massive baby boom retirement approaching, New Brunswick will need to invest heavily to raise its number of post secondary graduates in the work force.

As students look at the second highest tuition increases in the country for the 2004-2005 school

year (6.7%), a lack of strong commitment from both the federal and provincial governments and

rising debt seen as the “best solution,” things show no sign of improving.

Quebec

By Nick Vikander

Jean Charest's first year as Premier of Quebec has been tumultuous on many fronts, including in the realm of higher education. Soon after his Liberal Party was elected in April 2003, Charest began a process of "re-engineering" the Quebec state to cut down on government intervention and to rely more on private sector involvement. Despite stating throughout the election campaign that education was a high priority, his government's actions since coming to power have been worrying in many respects.

University funding

Quebec universities continue to suffer from serious underfunding, largely because they have never fully recovered from the massive government budget cuts in the mid 1990s. In early 2003, the Quebec Ministry of Education (MEQ) and the Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec (CREPUQ) released a joint report concluding that the Quebec university network was underfunded by \$375 million compared to universities in the rest of Canada.

While Quebec invests an important percentage of its GDP in higher education, this funding gap makes it increasingly difficult for Quebec universities to offer high quality education. For example, universities will need to hire a large number of new professors in the coming years but do not have sufficient resources to do so. The Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation puts the absolute hiring need at 3,100 new professors by 2008, while 1,000 new professors would have to be hired each year

until 2012 simply to achieve the same student-teacher ratio as in 1995.

The government has not given positive signs that it will address the university funding shortage. One of its first pieces of legislation, the 2003-2004 provincial budget, did not include any new money for university education. The government stated publicly that it would carry out a re-investment in the coming years, but that it would be modest in scope: a maximum of \$60 million in new, recurrent funding. This statement has caused many groups to wonder why the government insisted on holding a Parliamentary Commission to examine the issue of university funding when it had already determined the maximum level of any new financial contribution. The Charest government's reluctance to fully fund universities comes amid its plan to cut income tax by \$4 billion over the course of its mandate. A lone bright spot is that it will probably abandon the idea of performance-based funding, exemplified in the previous government's "Performance Contracts" between the MEQ and universities.

Tuition and ancillary fees

The underfunding of universities continues to put an upward pressure on tuition fee levels. The Liberal government committed itself to maintaining the tuition fee freeze for the entire mandate, a promise it continues to repeat on numerous occasions. However, the Liberals' refusal to adequately fund universities may set the stage for large tuition hikes at the start of a second mandate, as they

did in their previous time in office and as their Youth Wing has already proposed. Out-of province Canadian and International Students see their fees increase on a yearly basis, with students from other provinces paying the Canadian average.

Obligatory ancillary fees continue to rise, and have increased by 174% in the last 10 years. The Liberals made an electoral commitment to pass a law on accessibility that would regulate these fees that universities currently increase to circumvent the tuition fee freeze. They have not introduced any legislation of this sort one year into their mandate, and have instead formed a tripartite committee with students and university principals to work out the content of a possible bill.

At the same time, the government's decision to allow ancillary fees to increase this year in half of Quebec's CEGEPs (colleges) casts doubt on how committed they are to capping ancillary fees in universities. The Parti Québécois government put in place measures that froze most CEGEP ancillary fees, but allowed institutions to increase loosely defined *Toute Autre Nature* (TAN or All Other Type) fees, contingent on the approval of the Ministry of Education. In his first months in office, the new Liberal Education Minister, Pierre Reid, gave his approval to these back-door tuition fee hikes in 23 CEGEPs.

Student financial aid and university research

The Quebec financial aid system remains one of the most generous in Canada, but it still does not offer a level of aid that reflects the real cost of living in Quebec. Rather than injecting new funds

into the system, the Quebec government regrettably neglected to index it to the cost of living for the first time in years and cancelled the program offering guaranteed loans for personal computers. The government also made cosmetic changes that altered the mechanisms of delivery, but did not increase the amount of aid offered to students. Furthermore, the government has shifted the percentage of student aid—down for grants, up for loans—making much more of the allotment of student aid repayable upon graduation.

Quebec has three research-granting organizations that complement the federal granting councils to support research in the province. The presence of these granting organizations has made Quebec one of the leaders for university research in Canada. Unfortunately, the government slashed the funding of the research-granting organisations by \$7 million in the 2003-2004 budget and cut fiscal incentives for research and development.

Looking towards the future

The last year's developments do not bode well for the future of higher education in Quebec. A general rightward shift in the political climate, a very limited re-investment scenario, and a Parliamentary Commission on Universities that seems to be designed to prepare public opinion for future tuition hikes are all worrying developments that could compromise Quebec's position as a leader in accessible and high-quality education. The level of social conflict and the government's ability to recover from a serious drop in the polls will determine what the future holds for post-secondary education in Quebec under the watch of Jean Charest.

The state of higher education in Ontario: Turning a new page?

By Mark Rosenfeld and Amy Dickieson Kaufman

Introduction

On October 2, 2003, Ontario voters “chose change” to end eight years of Harris-Eves Conservative government and elected Dalton McGuinty and his Liberal Party to the provincial legislature with a resounding majority government. Years of disregard by the Conservatives had severely strained Ontario’s higher education system, and the election of a new government presents an opportunity for renewal.

With the first wave of the “double cohort” fighting for space in lecture halls and residence rooms, the greatest challenge currently facing Ontario universities and colleges is the constant pressure of increasing enrolment. The double cohort represented the largest increase in first-year students since their Baby-Boom parents enrolled in higher education, and has placed unprecedented pressure on institutions. The Liberal government has pledged to address concerns about quality, opportunity and affordability in higher education. The degree to which the new government addresses these concerns will be a measure of its success.

Ontario Liberal government position on higher education

During the 2003 provincial election campaign, the Liberals recognized the importance of higher education in their platform document, *Choose Change*. In the section on the economy, they linked higher education with improved productivity and stressed

its importance to the future prosperity of Ontario and its citizens. The platform outlined a number of initiatives related to post-secondary education, including: freezing tuition fees for two years with compensation for lost revenues; the creation of 50,000 more spaces at public institutions; reducing student/faculty ratios by providing funds to allow institutions to hire more academic staff; a 50% increase in graduate scholarships; improving the student financial aid system by expanding eligibility and increasing loan amounts; providing tuition waivers for the neediest 10% of students; establishing a faculty recruitment fund to attract “star” faculty; and establishing a tuition savings program. In addition to these promises, during the 1999 election campaign Dalton McGuinty, now Premier, signed a pledge to bring university funding up to the national average during his first mandate as Premier.

Now that the Liberals have taken control at Queen’s Park and had the former Provincial Auditor examine the books, the fate of Liberal election promises is in jeopardy due to a \$5.6 billion deficit left by the outgoing Conservatives. In the face of restricted finances and, at present, an unwillingness to augment revenue through income tax increases, the government has already been forced to delay several of its campaign promises. However, the new Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, Mary Anne Chambers, has announced that the government will go ahead with the promised tuition freeze. While there has been much conjecture, she has yet to announce details of compensatory funding for institutions. With the

Liberals struggling against an early reputation of backtracking on election promises, it will be a challenge for the Ministry and stakeholders in the higher education sector to ensure that Ontario's post-secondary institutions are not left behind.

The Tory legacy

When they were first elected on the platform known as the *Common Sense Revolution* in 1995, the Conservatives quickly set out to alter the structure of both government and government services. The Tory drive to cut provincial income taxes and reduce the size of government resulted in a desperately underfunded post-secondary education system. In their first provincial budget in 1996, funding for post-secondary education was cut by \$400 million, with \$272.4 million of that taken from the budgets of Ontario's universities. Between 1995 and 1998, the Conservatives reduced university budgets by \$329.1 million, with the cumulative impact of these cuts reaching \$2.3 billion by 2003. While they restored \$258.8 million to university budgets between 1998 and 2003, the cumulative impact of these increases was just \$518.3 million, which means that Ontario university budgets suffered a cumulative loss of approximately \$1.8 billion during the Harris/Eves governments.

The Common Sense Revolution dictated that deregulating some tuition fees was a way for universities to recoup lost provincial grant revenues. When the government gave universities permission to deregulate certain programs in 1998, they announced that 30% of all tuition increases must be set aside to be used for scholarships and bursaries. Ontario's students are not only paying more for their education, they are self-funding their assistance packages.

The Conservative government also allowed significant tuition fee increases for regulated programs. Between 1995 and 1999, tuition fees increased from an average of \$2,451 to \$3,812, an increase of 55.5%. Beginning in 2000, the gov-

ernment mandated that regulated tuition fees could increase by no more than 2% of the 1999 base each year for four years. Again, 30% of all tuition increases were set aside for student assistance. This arrangement, in conjunction with inadequate provincial grants, proved to further erode the financial position of Ontario's public universities.

The Conservative government's decision to eliminate Ontario Academic Credits (OACs) in secondary schools presented universities and colleges with the "double cohort" of high school graduates that is currently in its first year of post-secondary education. More than 76,000 high school students entered university in Ontario in September of 2003, representing a 42% increase over 2002. While application statistics for Fall 2004 are some 30% lower than for the double cohort in 2003, they are still almost 5% higher than 2002 and almost 20% higher than 2001. Enrolment continues to increase, and universities face the constant pressure of accommodating ever larger numbers of people who want to pursue higher education.

Increase in enrolment

The enrolment increase currently experienced by higher education in the form of the double cohort is not a temporary phenomenon. In addition to the double cohort, demographic factors such as the baby-boom "echo" generation have increased the population of 18-to-24-year-olds, and the percentage of young people choosing to pursue post-secondary education has increased steadily. Total full-time university student enrolment is expected to increase by 5% in the fall of 2004 compared to the previous year, or by almost 30% over 2001. By the end of the decade, the enrolment increase from these other factors will surpass the peak of the double cohort. There will be no return to "normal" enrolment levels. By 2015, it is expected that there will be more than 100,000 additional students at universities compared to 2001, the equivalent of two institutions the size of the University of To-

ronto. In the college sector, enrolment is expected to gain an extra 37,000 students by the end of the decade.

The new Liberal government has pledged to increase the number of post-secondary spaces by 50,000 and to provide adequate faculty to meet the need. However, universities are still coping with unfunded students, inflationary costs, deferred maintenance costs, and other pressures. Additionally, many universities have faced serious space issues as they attempt to find enough room for students in lecture halls and residences.

Many of the SuperBuild capital funding projects initiated by the previous government were not completed in time for the double cohort in September 2003 and others are not scheduled for completion until later in 2004 or 2005. Several universities have had to arrange for emergency residence space, including the University of Toronto, which purchased a downtown hotel to house incoming students. Still others, such as Wilfrid Laurier University, resorted to offering incentives such as laptop computers, food and bookstore credits to students if they chose not to live in residence.

While universities and colleges were facing the space and funding crunch, the students applying for acceptance in record numbers were acutely aware of the heightened competition. Ontario newspapers and other media were full of reports that high school students were “stressed” about the increased competition for higher education slots. Traditional acceptance grades are no longer good enough, and even the formerly respected designation as an Ontario Scholar, which requires an average of 80%, no longer guarantees a student his or her first choice of program. For example, at McMaster University, average entrance grades rose from 82.6% in 2002 to 85.3% in 2003. All of its current first-year students had an incoming average of at least 75%. Competition increased significantly, and despite the Conservative government’s rhetoric that there would be space for every “willing and qualified student,” many young people with B averages didn’t make the cut. It wasn’t just high school applicants who suffered. Because

of the increased demand, fewer places were offered to non-traditional students such as mature students returning to education later in life.

Operating grants

Cutbacks to university funding by the previous Conservative government significantly exceeded cutbacks in any other province. Operating grants per capita and per student for universities in Ontario are the lowest of any province in the country. Ontario, Canada’s richest province, spends 41% *less* per person than the province of Newfoundland and Labrador on university operating grants, and 24% below the national average, according to the most recent data available.

In the March 2003 Ontario Budget, which was infamously presented at a car parts factory rather than the provincial legislature, the previous government promised to make available an additional \$75 million in funding for both colleges of applied arts and technology and universities. If the traditional distribution method is followed, this would result in an addition of approximately \$50 million to the base operating grant of universities. The Budget also pledged to create two Quality Assurance Funds, one for colleges and one for universities. The university fund would consist of \$75 million in 2003-04, rising to \$200 million in 2006-07. The government stated that the purpose of the fund was to invest in new learning resources, upgrade equipment and student services, and expand the number of faculty and graduate teaching assistants. Access to the full funding was to be based on government-driven performance measures. In early discussion with the new Liberal government, higher education stakeholders have been assuming that budget announcements made by the former government will be honoured, as institutions have based budgets and planning priorities on these dollar figures. They have also argued that this money would be better used if rolled into base funding for institutions to use as need dictates.

The 2003 budget also announced a further investment of \$400 million for Phase 2 of the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund (OSOTF). While increased investment in student assistance is welcome, OSOTF presents a series of problems. Because the funding is distributed through a process of matching, there are built-in inequities within the fund that disadvantage some institutions and favour others.

Targeted envelopes and matched private sector funding

Targeted funding has been a major concern for the higher education sector over the last eight years. The Conservative government made extensive use of targeted university funding with provisions for matched private sector contributions during the eight years it was in power, with the intention to align universities more closely with their economic development agenda. While the Liberal government has not made any statements on the issue of targeted funding, they have been made aware of the inequities encouraged by such inappropriate funding arrangements.

Not all institutions in Ontario have equal ability to attract private sector investment. Public sector investment in higher education needs to be equitable and based on need rather than an institution's ability to fundraise within the business community. The Conservatives used the levers of targeted funding to steer the direction of university education towards a greater emphasis on vocational training and away from the concept of higher education providing students with the ability to think critically and acquire broad-based knowledge which has both social and economic value. This direction has eroded university autonomy and the ability to plan academic programs on a rational basis. University funding tied too closely to industry and business interests and short-term labour market trends can distort the goals of university research and teaching and undermine academic freedom.

Capital

With the creation of a new Ministry for Public Infrastructure Renewal, the Liberal government has signalled an interest in building, improving, and maintaining the capital assets at Ontario's post-secondary education institutions. The former SuperBuild Growth Fund was the Conservative government's primary method of capital investment, and, while some of the projects are ongoing and slated for completion within the next two years, the Liberals have yet to unveil a plan for investment in infrastructure.

In the same matched funding vein, the premise of SuperBuild was that universities had to obtain private sector and other non-governmental funding to support approved projects. It has become apparent, anecdotally, that some of this funding has failed to materialize, and there are concerns that some projects may be halted for lack of funds. A major concern with the former SuperBuild program was that, because projects were approved that could secure adequate non-governmental funding, many of the new projects were buildings for applied technology, health sciences and engineering schools, even though for each of the last 10 years, more than 40% of students enrolled at university study in the arts.

Tuition

One of the first actions of the new Liberal government was the announcement by the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities that it would honour its election promise to freeze tuition fees for two years and provide compensatory funding to university administrations. While there has been much conjecture about how that funding will be calculated and distributed, there has been no official announcement to date.

What is evident is that the Tory legacy for students in Ontario is one of higher tuition fees and higher student debt. The Conservative government allowed average regulated university tuition fees

to increase from \$2,451 in 1995-96 to \$4,184 in 2003-04. Regulated college tuition fees have increased from \$1,109 in 1995-96 to \$1,820 in 2003-04.

In 1997, the government allowed the deregulation of fees for graduate and certain professional programs, and medical school tuition fees for 2003-04 are upwards of \$16,000 per year. The Liberal government has announced an immediate tuition fee freeze, and the Liberals have stated that the freeze will apply to regulated and deregulated programs. Tuition fees as a proportion of university revenue are at an historically high level. This has important implications for the accessibility and affordability of higher education. In 2001-02 (most recent figures), university income from tuition represented 41% of university revenue (52% came from operating grants). The proportion of university revenue represented by tuition is even higher at some individual universities. In comparison, in 1995-96, tuition represented 29% of university revenue and government grants 67%.

Student assistance and accessibility

In recent years, the Conservative government's student assistance policy placed greater emphasis on matched private sector funding, and increased university spending on student assistance and discipline-specific scholarships. While there have been no announcements from the Liberal government on student assistance, they have pledged to undertake an extensive review of the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP). The higher education sector in Ontario hopes that the review will take place in a manner supportive of consultation with affected stakeholders.

In 1998, the Conservatives made changes to OSAP which made it more restrictive. The results have been telling. The total value of assistance for Ontario Student Loans dropped in real dollars by 42%, or by \$340 million between 1997-98 and 2002-03. The number of student loan recipients

in Ontario dropped by 10% or 15,000 between 1999 and 2003.

The impact of the changes to OSAP and the Conservative government's preferred assistance fund, OSOTF, has been that average student debt load has more than doubled since 1995. A study released by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation in October 2002 found that the average debt load for a four-year BA graduate in Ontario who took out student loans was \$22,700, and higher than the national average of \$21,200. Post-secondary education polling results have consistently shown that access to higher education and to the institution of choice is a very important issue to Ontario voters who are also parents. Results released in March 2002 showed that 75% of Ontario voters are concerned that their children will be unable to attend a publicly-funded university in Ontario. More than half of the respondents, 52%, mentioned higher tuition fees as their main concern, and 81% would support expansion of the government-sponsored student grant program.

Faculty and staff shortages

The number of full-time, tenured faculty in Ontario has declined by almost 1,000 or 8% over the past decade. Universities in Ontario and other jurisdictions in North America are facing a dramatic shortage of faculty at the same time as unprecedented enrolment growth. Before the end of this decade, close to one-third of university faculty will retire. OCUFA research has shown that almost 7,000 additional faculty will be required within that time frame simply to replace retirees. A PriceWaterhouseCoopers study commissioned by the Council of Ontario Universities found that between 11,000 and 13,000 new and additional faculty will need to be hired to keep pace with enrolment growth, replace the large number of faculty who will be retiring, and reduce the student faculty ratio to the national average.

The projected loss of faculty and staff has very serious implications for the quality of education

university students receive, as well as for the research capacity of Ontario universities. Even prior to the double cohort, classes were overcrowded. When faculty have more students to advise, there is less contact with individuals. This is a major problem in the academic world, where it is obvious that contact with professors is one of the major components of an excellent post-secondary education.

Despite claims that universities are hiring faculty to address the shortage, the student/faculty ratio in Ontario was 23.8:1 in 2002-03, which is the highest student/faculty ratio in the country. The student-faculty ratio in Great Lakes state universities is 30% better than Ontario's, and peer jurisdictions in general have a ratio that is 35% more favourable than Ontario's. One of the Liberal campaign pledges is to provide funding to hire faculty, and post-secondary institutions are eagerly awaiting the Spring 2004 budget to learn if there is specific funding set aside for hiring. Amid the concern about having enough professors are worries about the impact on faculty of increasing workload, and the loss of faculty to other jurisdictions.

Conclusion

The higher education community has known for many years that the double cohort would represent a particular challenge, and that the dramatic increase in enrolment is a long-term trend. The province's universities and colleges are facing enormous enrolment pressures and the damaging funding legacy of the previous government. The policies of the former government seriously compromised the quality, opportunity, and affordability of these institutions. The Liberal government has made hopeful statements about higher education, but it is yet too early to evaluate the response of the new government to the evident requirements of the higher education sector. More funding, better planning mechanisms, and an appropriate and effective system of student assistance are necessary to ensure that the province can accommodate the enrolment surge with a higher education system which meets the needs of Ontarians.

Manitoba

By Elizabeth Carlyle

In June 2003, the Manitoba NDP was elected for a second term. The government's record on education and youth figured prominently in the campaign, and pledges from 1999 were repeated.

Although federal support to the provinces is inadequate, the NDP has continued to provide modest core funding increases annually, fulfil commitments for capital funding, provide needs-based provincial bursaries and other financial aid to students, and offset the costs to the institutions of the tuition fee reduction and subsequent freeze, now in its fourth year. The NDP has continued to work towards its goal of doubling college enrolment. Enrolments continue to rise, but the challenges of system-wide underfunding and stubbornly low participation rates by non-traditional groups of students persist. In spite of tough budget choices (the result of several economic crises and inadequate federal support) and an increasingly vociferous campaign by university administrators for the elimination of the tuition fee freeze, a tuition fee freeze is expected for the 2004-2005 year.

According to government figures, full and part-time enrolment at universities has increased by a stunning 11,865 students (30.5%) and by more than 25% at the college level since the NDP took office in 1999. Although enrolment has been increasing across Canada, these increases outpace those in other provinces. According to Statistics Canada, provincial funding for universities and colleges seems to have reached a plateau in the vicinity of \$400-\$450 million per year. A large part of annual provincial funding increases flow directly to students, and when inflation is taken into account, operating grants have effectively been fro-

zen. The pressure on institutions' ability to provide good quality programming grows as long as this situation remains in place.

The NDP has maintained its policies against the neo-conservative agenda involving competition and the marketization of public education. With the appointment of former Liberal MP and federal minister Lloyd Axworthy as President of the University of Winnipeg, new challenges in this area may emerge, especially with respect to private funding for institutions, an area in which the NDP has been increasing its support.

Notwithstanding its overall commitment to improving access to and funding of education, the NDP has borrowed from the policy pages of the previous Ontario conservative government. The NDP has allowed tuition fees to rise by 91% over three years in the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba, approved other fee increases in professional faculties and even the Faculty of Science, and failed to intervene against ultimately unsuccessful efforts by the Faculty of Management to increase tuition fees by 112%. Ninety percent of the estimated \$3.4 million gain in annual revenue was to be used to hire 20 new faculty members and increase the salaries of existing faculty members, excluding sessional instructors. Only 10% would have gone towards some form of student financial aid. In the Faculty of Law, tuition fee increases have already begun to compromise the diversity of the student population.

Tuition fees for international students have been deregulated, resulting in the announcement of a 25% fee increase for 2004-2005 at the University of Manitoba, meaning that the tuition fee

differential for international students compared to Canadians is now 100%. In cooperation with the federal government, a pilot program permitting international students to work off campus, under certain conditions, has been established.

Planning in the sector has been weak, largely because the NDP fails to consult on an ongoing basis. The NDP continues to avoid addressing recommendations from faculty and student organizations calling for reforms or the elimination of the Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE), an arms-length body that replaced the University Grants Commission and the college funding mechanism in 1998. A consultation about how COPSE relates to groups in the post-secondary education sector is currently underway.

The NDP has accelerated the establishment of the University College of the North, but seems

to be proceeding without approving any capital expenditure, ignoring the advice of the Action Plan it commissioned. Concerns about academic freedom at the institution remain.

There has been a call for the establishment of a new, larger campus for the Assiniboine Community College, currently housed in cramped quarters in Brandon. The site proposed is the existing Brandon Mental Health Institute, now vacated.

One in four children in Manitoba is Aboriginal. As the young Aboriginal population grows, Aboriginal education and low-income access continues to be a priority. The NDP has maintained its commitment to programs such as the acclaimed Access program and Prior Learning Assessment, as well as more general measures to improve access.

Provincial support for PSE in Saskatchewan

By Anna Rosenbluth

Introduction

Changes to post-secondary education in Saskatchewan over 2002-3 indicate a blend of promising and discouraging trends. While provincial efforts at increasing equity in post-secondary education have been commendable, provincial funding of post-secondary institutions has been insufficient to cover the costs of expanding research activity, and tuition fees have risen accordingly. With tuitions increasing rapidly at both universities and at the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST), the need for a provincial commitment to meeting the costs of universities and institutions remains very important if Saskatchewan post-secondary education is to stay accessible, publicly accountable, equitable, and of high quality.

Funding to universities and institutions

Provincial support for post-secondary education continues to measure favourably in comparison with other provinces. Total transfers from the province made up 54.6% of the Saskatchewan university and college revenue in 2002-03, compared to the national average of only 48.5%. Furthermore, tuition revenue accounted for 14.4% of total revenue for post-secondary education bodies in the province, whereas the national average is 19.2%.

Of the total provincial contribution, \$204.6 million went to the universities in operating grants

(\$54.3 million to the University of Regina and \$150.3 million to the University of Saskatchewan). This marks an overall decrease in operating grant funding of 3.6% from 2001-02, the year of highest provincial funding to post-secondary education following a period of deep cuts in university funding over the 1990s. However, with research activity expanding rapidly at both the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan, provincial contributions will have to increase to keep pace with increasing operating expenses.

The year 2002 brought significant increases in the research conducted at both universities: \$19.4 million was invested in research at the University of Regina, marking a 67.4% increase over four years, and \$120.6 million was invested in University of Saskatchewan research, marking a 69.6% four-year increase. While the increase in research activity at the universities is exciting, there is cause for concern without a provincial commitment to covering the indirect costs of research. Broad academic and equity needs could be put at risk if a lack of provincial funding to meet increasing research costs results in a redirection of funding from other programs and services.

The effect of stretched budgets can currently be seen in rapidly increasing tuition fees at the universities and at SIAST. During the five years between 1997-98 and 2002-03, tuition increased significantly at all three institutions. At the University of Regina, arts undergraduate tuition went from \$1,593 to \$3,916, a 146% increase; University of Saskatchewan arts undergraduate tuition

went from \$2,832 to \$4,182, a 46% increase; and SIAST tuition has increased 45% over the past five years as part of an eight-year plan to increase tuition by 9% each year.

At the University of Saskatchewan, this increase marks the final phase of a three-year plan to bring tuition fees to a level comparable with universities nationwide. However, while this additional revenue may be necessary to make the university more nationally competitive, seeking this income through tuition fees masks the need for increased provincial funding while making post-secondary education less accessible.

Student loans and aid

With post-secondary tuition across the province higher than ever before, investment in student loans and aid is extremely important. The average debt load of a graduating Saskatchewan undergraduate student is currently at \$25,000, and the province has taken steps towards student debt reduction. The province authorized \$125 million in student financial aid over 2002-03. However, the bulk of this went to student loans, which must be repaid. Only \$2 million went to grants and scholarships, and \$38 million went to debt reduction services.

The provincial student loan program was revamped in 2001 with the implementation of the Canada-Saskatchewan Integrated Student Loans Program. For Saskatchewan students, this means repayments to only one body and improved interest relief and debt reduction provisions. Sixteen thousand Canada-Saskatchewan Integrated Student Loans were authorized in the province over 2002-03, making a provincial contribution of \$56 million and a federal contribution of \$69 million.

Equity

The large Aboriginal and rural populations in Saskatchewan mean that making post-secondary education accessible to these groups must be a high

priority. The 2001 Census reported that 13.5% of Saskatchewan residents are Aboriginal, compared to 2.8% of Canadians, and 35.7% of Saskatchewan residents are rural dwellers, compared to 20% of Canadians. Over 2002-03, the province took significant steps to increasing post-secondary education access and support for both groups.

In 2002-03, the province implemented the Post-Secondary Aboriginal Education and Training Action plan to make post-secondary education more accessible to Aboriginal students. The plan resulted in the creation of Aboriginal Student Activity Centres at both universities and at SIAST. The centres provide study space, counselling services, tutorial support, and information on employment opportunities and scholarships for Aboriginal students. This investment appears to be particularly paying off at SIAST, where 18.4% of registered students are Aboriginal.

The year 2002-03 also marked the official implementation of Campus Saskatchewan, a partnership between provincial universities and institutions to provide courses in alternative formats more accessible to rural students. Through Campus Saskatchewan, courses are televised, provided online, through independent study, and by off-campus face-to-face contact with instructors. In June 2003, campus Saskatchewan offered 60 courses and another 100 were under development. While these alternative course formats lack many learning experiences available in a campus community, it is nonetheless important to provide this alternative if post-secondary education is to be accessible to Saskatchewan's rural population.

Conclusion

While Saskatchewan's progress in post-secondary education equity is noteworthy and provincial increases in funding to post-secondary education since the 1990s are encouraging, the major increase in tuition fees at Saskatchewan's universities and institutions is worrisome. Provincial contributions to post-secondary education must continue to in-

crease or public accountability of Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions may be threatened. The province must protect its role in post-secondary education to ensure that financial need does not

bar Saskatchewan residents from a post-secondary education, and that institutions retain their autonomy in the face of increases in private funding nationwide.

Alberta's higher education in 2003

By Elizabeth Ocampo Gomez and Dean Neu

Alberta's Higher Education in 2003 underwent several changes, some that came quietly, others that drew both fire and praise from various advocacy groups and organizations in Alberta. At the very heart of the changes is Bill 43, dubbed the "Post-Secondary Learning Act," which was introduced to the legislative assembly of Alberta by the Learning Minister, Dr. Lyle Oberg. We will briefly look at some of the changes brought about by Bill 43, and, following that, we will perform a cursory examination of some other changes that happened in 2003.

University governance

With the introduction in May 2003 of Bill 43, the Alberta Tories were set to shake up the way that post-secondary education is dealt with in Alberta. The bill was passed and serves to enable the following:

1. It united each of the Post-Secondary Institution's acts into one law.
2. It allows government to audit, investigate and dissolve elected student councils if it detects financial irregularities. The first two are not new regulations since the student councils were already accountable to the government and to the universities; the third one is new and its main objective is to broaden the power of the government.
3. Bill 43 also removed the official role stated in the past legislation with regards the student union. Now, instead of being the "official medium of communication" between the students of a public post-secondary institution and the post-secondary institution's board, it is just responsible for maintaining "appropriate communications" between the students and the board. While the difference might be merely semantic, one should remember the potential that the new wording permits.
4. Bill 43 removed the "tuition cap" from legislation and placed it within the realm of regulation. "This means that changes to the tuition policy can be made by order-in-council—without public debate or input from stakeholders. The democratic process is thus conveniently circumvented when changes to the tuition policy are deemed necessary." The tuition cap was held in place by a law that dictated that post-secondary institutions may not collect more than 30% of their general operating expenditures from tuition. It is important to remember that the 30% cap had already replaced the 20% cap operating from 1991, and that the 20% cap replaced the 12% cap that had been in place through the 1980s.
5. It eliminated the right to strike for academics, staff, and members of the graduate students' association.

Bill 43 was considered by those aware of it to be another policy shot fired at the already mortally wounded independence of the universities in Alberta. It prohibits any member of the universities to promote, consent to, or participate in strikes

and lockouts. Concerned students and staff from the various institutions organized a series of protests and activities to direct public awareness and anger toward Bill 43, but to no avail. Bill 43 was approved in December of 2003.

Finances: Funding and tuition

Concerned about the rising tuition rates, and increasing student debt and insolvency, the Progressive Conservative grassroots membership passed two resolutions in March, 2003, calling for the government to address the issue of rising tuition fees, hoping to ensure that a university education remains accessible to all Albertans, from all backgrounds, and of all financial situations.

The government responded by increasing operating grants for post-secondary education by approximately \$104 million, resulting in total spending of \$1.3 billion. As government promotion material stated, “the government of Alberta currently devotes 5.9% of its total funding to post-secondary education,” which is slightly above the national average.

Despite the increase in funding, which universities claimed to be grossly inadequate for a variety of reasons, the two major universities in Alberta both increased tuition levels for the 2003/2004 academic year. The University of Calgary increased its tuition for graduate programs 4%, while the University of Alberta imposed a general increase of 6.9% across all faculties and programs, with some faculties experiencing even higher tuition increases. The University of Alberta already has particular fees for the careers of medicine and law.

The spread of the “tuition differentiation” policies, which means that students will pay different tuition amounts depending on their faculty or program, will likely continue. Following the example of the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary is planning on having differential fees for Law and the Business, and is considering broadening the scope of this policy to include more programs. It must be remembered that these tuition

increases occurred in September of 2003, before the aforementioned approval of Bill 43 and the changes to the tuition cap legislation.

University accessibility

The GPAs for university admission continue to rise. For example, the University of Alberta requires that high school applicants have a 73% grade to get into the arts program, 76% for science, 80% for engineering, and 85% for medicine and dentistry.

Fallout of the foregoing

Keeping in mind the previously mentioned March resolutions passed by the Tory grassroots membership, it must be pointed out that, while raising the entrance requirements at the universities will hopefully ensure that students entering university will be able to excel, there is some research indicating that students from poorer income brackets tend not to do as well in primary and secondary school as their wealthier peers, and some advocacy groups are concerned that the rising admission requirements will work to increase the gap in education and finance, condemning the students to get by without a university education because not only can they not afford the tuition, but, due to circumstances largely beyond their control, they are also unable to meet the admission requirements. The argument from the universities is that the increased academic admission requirements will ensure the overall success of their students because those admitted will have the discipline and academic capability to succeed.

Conclusion

It seems that, through Bill 43, the Tory regime has laid the foundation for future educational reform, which will likely not be convenient either for the universities or their students. However, due to the

clauses forbidding strikes and other such protests or resistance strategies by faculty and graduate students, there will be little that the institutions can do to stop the changes. As seen by the protests

against Bill 43 in 2003, the government is not interested in listening to the schools, the faculty, or the students. They have an agenda; Bill 43 is the first step.

British Columbia

By Roseanne Moran

2003 was a year of deregulating and dismantling in B.C.'s post-secondary education system. As the B.C. Liberal government's education agenda unfolded, we saw: the first year of rapidly rising tuition fees; the elimination of grants for first-year students; the introduction of block funding for all post-secondary institutions; new initiatives to support privatization; and the beginning of the overhaul of the trades training system.

Funding

The year began with the now trademark three-year service plan showcasing the B.C. government's vision for ministries and organizations. That plan forecast that the overall budget for the Advanced Education Ministry would remain at its level of \$1.9 billion over the three years. However, during this time, spending within that overall envelope would shift significantly. In the 2002-03 year, funding for post-secondary education institutions would increase to \$1.4 billion—by \$25.4 million or 1.8% over the previous year. Government expected an increase of 2,500—or about 1.6%—in student spaces in 2002-03.

The three-year plan featured a decline in funding for institutions from \$1.408 billion in 2002-03 to \$1.39 billion in 2003-04, and finally to \$1.36 billion in 2004-05. Despite shrinking budgets, government expected student numbers to grow from 155,000 to 167,346 over the life of the three-year plan.

2002-03 also saw the introduction of block funding for colleges, university colleges and insti-

tutes, giving them greater autonomy in meeting student enrolment targets set by government. Many important programs, services and supports were no longer specifically funded and have since been eliminated as institutions redirected funding to higher priority areas. Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs were very hard hit, with enrolment declining in nine out of 19 institutions.

While overall enrolment has increased across the entire post-secondary system, growing disparities between institutions are surfacing. A review by the College InSTITUTE Educators' Association of B.C. found that enrolment declined in eight of the 22 institutions in the college system in 2002-03, with declines disproportionately in institutions that serve less populated areas. The combination of underfunding, higher tuition fees, and the loss of student grants are likely all factors at play.

Deregulation of tuition fees

Since deregulation of tuition fees in February 2002, fees in British Columbia have increased astronomically. In the first two years of deregulation, tuition fees have more than doubled in many post-secondary institutions, particularly university colleges. Some programs areas—those where “market forces” (private sector institutions) are at play—have been targeted for disproportionately high fees, including hairdressing, health-care, and business programs. In the first year of deregulation, 70% of all new revenue for college sector institutions in B.C. came from increases in student fees. Of note is that some institutions moved to introduce fees for ABE

students who already had high school equivalency—a very regressive step and no doubt partly the explanation for the declining college enrolments.

Student debt climbs

Beginning August 1, 2002, the first-year grant portion of the B.C. student assistance program was eliminated. This closely followed the extension of grants to students in private institutions, which began in 2000-01. Prior to the elimination of the first-year grant, government estimated that one-third of all B.C. grant funding was going to students in private institutions, even though they accounted for only about one-sixth of all students receiving student assistance. The B.C. government has now finished the job—announcing its intention to eliminate all up-front B.C. student grants in 2004. B.C.'s Ministry of Advanced Education has estimated that the elimination of all grants will add an average \$14,000 of debt for the approximately 23,000 students receiving grants (16,000 of whom are in public institutions).

Following the elimination of the first-year grant, government made some enhancements to its interest relief program, brought in changes to its Debt Reduction Program, and extended principal deferment and amortization options for repayment. No new options accompanied the 2004 elimination of all grants, although the B.C. government has indicated that it intends to work with students and education institutions to discuss options such as enhanced loan remission.

Making privatization a priority

The B.C. government has become bolder in its support for private post-secondary education. Leg-

islation to allow the B.C. government to recognize private universities and private degree programs is in the implementation stage, albeit more slowly than government's initial timelines. In May 2003—almost a year after the *Degree Authorization Act* was passed—the government appointed a degree quality assessment board. The board has one student and no faculty representation; it is dominated by business people and senior management of public and private post-secondary institutions. No private institutions have yet received approval, although a number of applications are pending.

The government has also passed legislation to substantially deregulate the private career training sector. B.C. currently has approximately 1,100 private training institutions that must register in order to offer post-secondary programs. Under new legislation, many of these institutions will no longer be required to register in order to operate.

Future directions

The B.C. government continues to develop its accountability framework and currently has 25 measures against which the post-secondary system is assessed. With the disbanding of the Standing Committee on Evaluation and Accountability in April 2003, faculty, staff and students no longer have a formal role in the development and review of the accountability framework. In 2003, the government began a review of the mandates, roles, and responsibilities in the B.C. post-secondary system—including an assessment of governance structures. The review appears to be stalled, and many are concerned that important issues about the future of the certain institutions within the B.C. post-secondary education system will be made without a broader discussion of the system as a whole.

A closer look at higher education in Canada

Reclaiming the teaching profession:

From corporate hierarchy to the authority of learning

By John McMurtry

PROFESSIONALISM IS IN DANGER of becoming an empty rhetoric. This is not to say that invocations of profession and professionalism are to be disregarded. It is to say, rather, that the concept must have a precise meaning if it is to be a standard to which to appeal effectively.

Yet I do not know anywhere where the concept is rigorously defined as a regulative norm so that it does not just stand as a mantra or an incantation.

So I am going to come to the cusp right away. I am going to specify a criterion of “professional” by an exact *definiens*. In this way its meaning is not left impressionistic, question-begging or presupposed—as in virtually all the educational discourse that I have read.

If my criterion is neither too broad nor too narrow, then it is sound. If it is also clear as a guide to thought and action, then it is a standard one can rely on in standing for the profession against what endangers it. One cannot stand for what one does not understand. In the current political field of fear and reaction within which the dominant culture is held, teachers too seem to have lost their anchor of meaning. Even the title of this conference hides the vocation of its actors in anonymous acronyms. The steering concepts of “education” and “teacher” disappear. The Deans of Education of Ontario and the Ontario Teachers Federation—colours you should be proud to nail to the mast—have been reduced to a cluster of initials which might as well represent insurance brokers or tire salesmen. A true profession is a calling that serves

the world and knows what its bearers stand for. To be precise:

A professional is a self-governing knower of a field of understanding and practice whose work is sought by others as of value.

There are many professions which meet this criterion, and doctors, lawyers, scientists, engineers, and so on clearly qualify (although not the so-called “first profession”). The field of understanding and practice that distinguishes the teaching profession is *learning*. I will say much about learning ahead, including what it means. This may seem unnecessary with a professional educator audience. But again, I have come across no defining principle of learning in the educationese I have read, including endless documents from ministries of education and teacher federations. That is the problem, I think. Educators have lost the bearings of their profession, the meaning of learning and education itself.

The result of these lost bearings of meaning is that we now have a government that seeks re-election by declaring that passing secret-content tests stands for “better student reading, writing and math,” and gets away with it. No one in the oppo-

sition or the press or even teacher organizations points out that dubious tests which an ad hoc bureaucratic apparatus has minted have no proven learning value whatever. They also merely echo private U.S. testing agencies which have made their testing schemes a very profitable business in places like Texas—the home state of the current dyslexic “education President.”

That there is no evident learning by these costly and time-consuming tests has not, however, inhibited their expanding imposition. That their content is kept closed from all independent examination by students, teachers and researchers so they cannot be critically scrutinized indicates a massive indoctrination apparatus—but who has noticed? That these tests hide behind an absolute prohibition of reflective examination or interrogation of them by teachers and students reveals an anti-learning project in principle, but who has not acquiesced? How can any set of questions and answers be education, as distinguished from coercive programming, when classroom review of their meaning and students’ responses to them are totally forbidden? Yet no teaching professional organization has yet confronted this regime.

The extraordinary fact that these tests have not even an available model to study and rule out all specific learning feedback to the students writing them demonstrates as plainly as possible their bias *against* learning in the very regulating structure of the enterprise. For exact and open corrective feedback on performances is the basis of all learning.

The question arises: How could all this get past any true profession whose vocation is education? There have been complaints from the profession about their high-handed imposition by government and the fear they cause in children. But these complaints miss the much more basic fact that this regime is, in principle, an attack on the nature of learning itself.

More evident to critics, this regime also undermines what is most needed in schools: the essential motivation of all learning, the curiosity and interest of the learner, and the vocation of teachers

to bridge to it in all they do. Rule by generalized fear and anonymous forces is, instead, the terror-button that this regime pushes at every step, which is revealingly in keeping with the culture of fear now politically ascendant in the U.S. and its sphere of influence. But the deeper structure of attack on learning itself has been so overlooked by even teacher critics that one wonders what is left that the profession stands for.

A profoundly disturbing meaning emerges here. There has been little or no notice of the complete confusion between programmed form-testing *and* education itself. More precisely, there has been no distinction between the consciousness of students and the lock-step of machines, or between assigned numbers to performance of mechanical sequences and the life of the young mind learning about the world and expressing independently literate responses.

Yet, if these tests undermine rather than enable the learning process, if an anti-educational logic is built into every level of their prescription and processing, how can professionals actively collaborate in enforcing them? For the regime is structured to *prevent* learning and education. It abolishes the first demand of all learning and scholarly excellence: openness to the criticism and question of the educational community. It rules out the very structure of all true learning advancement: learning by exactly known mistakes. And it shields the incompetence of the tests and their capacity to teach from all academic accountability to learning standards.

There is a second-order failure in responding to these testing mechanisms which is perhaps most disquieting of all. I have not seen one criticism of these tests—and there are many—that exposes the contradictions between their secretive mechanical apparatus and the nature of learning. Instead, criticism forms behind market-style opinion polls of teachers that do not reveal anything about learning. In this way, the profession imitates the devices of politics instead of standing up for the vocation of learning itself. It pains me to say this to

the audience that has invited me to speak. But teaching federations and colleges of education, as well as the ministry of education, appear not to have been professional about learning. If they were, they would have stood from the start and in every classroom against a regime which prohibits the learning process in the name of public education. The question arises: Why is there not a strike for public education instead of higher teacher salaries? Such a stand would resonate at a new level.

There is a lot of talk about basics. But it seems as if no one in the education system has gotten down to the basics of what learning is, so that they can distinguish it from a ritual of instant reactions to closed-door questions with added number aggregates substituting for the advance of knowing itself.

How has this happened? I will come to the point on a very profound matter as directly as I can. There is a mechanism of mass indoctrination and reduction of the mind to observable uniform sequences which has long been at work in the for-profit factory and office, and which now seeks to rule “the educational industry” within the classroom itself. But, because we do not comprehend the inner logic of this corporate method, we do not recognize its pseudo-scientific meaning: to abolish the conditions of learning and teaching so as to substitute for them the logic of industrial mechanics and the predictable functions of servo-mechanisms.

This unseen mega-project has masqueraded under legislative titles like “Educational Quality Improvement Act” and “Educational Accountability Act.” The Orwellian language within which it is dressed expresses a general malaise. It was, perhaps, no accident that in recent months the earliest history of human civilization was systematically destroyed by the same transnational forces with no public outcry at the war-machine crime.¹

There is a life-blind mechanics now ruling by force across the world, and its regulating form runs deeper than we have seen in increasingly locked and pre-conscious assumptions.

The inner logic of deprofessionalization and the anti-educational machine

Scientific method in itself is the most useful instrument in the history of human evolution. But, like any set of dominant ideas which is applied beyond its proper domain, scientific method can become a dangerous metaphysic if it locks the mind within a total program of thought. The total program of thought that seeks to regulate all that exists on the face of the Earth is, as we know, “the money sequence of value”—a sequence in which inputs of money demand become outputs of maximally more money demand for money investors.²

Scientific method as a means of such a program mutates into a system that disaggregates and re-aggregates the world as a vast money-making machine for rich stockholders—“the soulless megamachine,” to use Lewis Mumford’s apt phrase.

The first principle of scientific method is that *only externally observable, quantifiable data count as information*. This principle is beneficial as long as it is not believed to be the ground of all knowledge. But if it is believed that *only* what is externally observable and quantifiable is real, then a momentous implication follows: Whatever is *not* externally observable and quantifiable is ruled out as false or illusory.

B.F. Skinner went so far as to assert that the inner lives of humans and their freedom to think are illusions. This followed from his assumption that only what scientific method validates is true. Here we see a principle of scientific method turned into a metaphysic.

This reduction of all reality to what is external and countable leads to “management technology”—a scientific regime for controlling people in every economic role. According to the doctrine, all behavioral outputs are determined by conditioning inputs, and that is all there is to know. A scientific schedule of behavioral re-enforcements—such as mass-conditioning advertising or human

resource management—is imposed on all systematically, and anyone who deviates is conceived as “non-cooperative.”

Contemporary economics exemplifies this lockstep of thought. Its “scientific method” presupposes an engineering model of understanding in which life requirements have no place in any equation, and only self-maximizing profit and consumer functions remain. Money prices and exchanges are the sole medium of meaning. In consequence, human and environmental life are ruled out of view as “externalities.”

The second principle of this scientific method concerns the order which externally observable and quantifiable data must take. The underlying principle here is that *nothing counts as scientifically valid except invariant sequences which are reproducible by others*. For example, any life experience which cannot be made exactly the same elsewhere is invalid because it is “not replicatable.” A personal transformation of view which is not verifiable by others cannot register as meaningful. Such uniformity of behaviour may apply to inanimate particles and protoplasm, but to think that such predictable redundancy sets *the bounds of truth and reality* is perfectly deranged.

Yet this mega-machine view is now so dominant that education is assumed to be programmable, predictable, and testable, with whatever does not fit the programming system or the uniform testing mechanisms being ruled out as subversive or invalid. Hence the perpetual call for “uniform standards” really means reducing the world of learning to a one-size-fits-all which is assumed by the unthinking group-mind to be a good thing. When the meta-program’s demands are idealized as Science, Technology and Competitive Efficiency all at once, a very sinister pattern comes to rule. The living mind is reconstructed as non-living software and non-thinking behavioural repertoires are programmed into students “just like a computer”—to use Ross Perot’s battle-cry for the promised “education Presidency” of George Bush Jr. Students now are made, at best, to succeed in “making the grade” of the globally homogenizing mas-

ter system, or becoming social refuse. The life of the mind of the next generation is thus effectively pithed, which is in fact precisely the pre-conscious function of this ruling paradigm: to produce mind-obedient cogs of the corporate money-sequence system.

What above all does *not* fit into this homogenizing reduction system is thinking life itself. It is precisely individuated and creative and *not* the same across places and times. But everywhere we find corporations, governments and academics calculating all that exists in the terms only of formulae of predictable repetition, which come back in the end to making money into more money for those with more money than they need. The assembly-line method of industrial production is the most famous and universalized form of this program—a lock-step regime which most students must eventually fit into in some form to survive in “the brutal global market competition.” To achieve ever greater economies of time and motion, the successive phases of what is still called “education” are made to mimic uniform assembly-line sequences which are prescriptively broken into ever more controlled steps of detail-function—from Grade 1 curriculum and testing onto employment as scripted telemarketers and servo-mechanism functions after graduation.

Every manufacturing system follows the rules of this economic paradigm of “efficiency.” The “education industry” is no different. As “business methods” increasingly penetrate education, life everywhere is rapidly and “inevitably” made to conform as service and consumption functions of the Global Machine. We see now the movement of this universal mechanization moving into speed-up to condition obedient routine at every level of thought with no time for anything else. Although the compulsive conversion of the organic into the inorganic was analyzed by Sigmund Freud as “the death instinct,” in education it is now sold as “raising standards.” The life of learning itself is thus systematically reduced to the logic of a centrally programmed hierarchy of multiple, graded assem-

bly lines ever more ubiquitously tested for controlled and prescribed outcomes.

There is the underlying master principle of rule. Every form of production and reproduction is analyzed into its constituent phases, and every step is cost-reduced and fixed into controlled moments of money-producing circuits. The factory assembly-line is the master plan of this program, itself derived from the military system for total control by top-down command and hierarchy presiding over exactly detailed and lock-stepped sequences of mass training.

The public's schools in this way become, as they have been structured from the beginning to be, conditioning systems to produce graduate employees who efficiently serve the system goal of maximizing profits for private business. But "the education industry" is new insofar as it expropriates the teaching functions of the classroom itself from professional educators to mechanize their operations in accordance with an imposed central plan which exactly follows the inner logic explained above.

Already the textbook industry dominated by transnational U.S. corporations had turned curriculum into a system-wide homogenization of mind by central curriculum prescriptions providing a quasi-monopoly marketing site for their mass-products designed and manufactured for the purpose of mass sales by no-controversy pap. The teaching profession never complained about that, paving the way for future corporate control. Elite teachers, instead, tailor-made manuscripts to sell to branch-plant offices as government-prescribed texts (as I once did myself). Such a regime inexorably homogenizes and dumbs down the teaching and learning process as a mass-conditioning operation within which one fits to succeed because the academic freedom to challenge, criticize, or choose alternatives does not exist.

Next came the political scheme to save public money on texts by mass government purchase and hand-me-down books on the prescribed lists. Now students couldn't even underline or annotate their books for dialogue and question on the mind

scripts. Preventing this independent interaction of students with books unintentionally disables their learning, intellectual engagement and long-term reflection on their contents almost as effectively as burning them. So there has been a long history to the externally dictated dumb-down of public education which has preceded the full-court press on learning today by the edu-business model.

What is new today is that public school systems have been invaded at other levels as their boundlessly lucrative markets, training and consumer-conditioning opportunities have become clear. Accordingly, a lot more of the school system has been occupied—mass markets for computers in every classroom, corporate sugar beverages in the halls, commercial ads on class-TV monitors, and so on. Government defunding of public education paves the way for corporate takeover of it. The entire vast budgets of public education are now the target for takeover, as leaders of edu-commerce make very clear.

There are two main steps to the corporate occupation of the public schools: first, to reduce the teacher to programmable command functions enforced by ever more detailed and uniform curricula sequences and mass-test mechanisms to ensure system-wide compliance; and second, to replace the teacher by new electronic commodities and centrally prescribed contents for every step of the market conditioning process. In the end, all public education funding going straight to corporations to build, equip and manage schools is the pure-type ideal. This formula is already being implemented in U.S. for-profit schools and Blair-Britain charter schools. Ontario is on the same road now, and all of its recent "education reforms" can be explained in the light of the master logic I have spelled out above.

But listen to the leaders of the "education industry" themselves. They express the underlying pattern as true believers, although with no understanding of the regulating syntax of invasion of which they are symptoms.

The goal of the new "educational maintenance organizations" was put starkly by the October 7,

1998 “Canadian Education Industry Summit.” Its conference news release glowed at the prospect of the public riches to be unlocked and appropriated. “Last year’s summit introduced the \$700 billion education growth industry” of North America, it enthused. “This education for profit industry will continue to grow.” The conference featured sessions with titles like “Bandwidth—Very Soon to Replace the Classroom.” Sessions made it clear that technology was to be the justification to speed up privatization. Advice was given on how to circumvent regulations and how to attack critics in seizing this “fruit ripe for the picking.”³

Not mentioned were the places most needing education resources whose governments had already been looted. As the major British NGO, Volunteer Overseas Services has put it, lack of educational resources where they are most needed in the Third World is “the most virulent epidemic of modern times.” For-profit education seeks public funds to appropriate, not schools without funds.

Backing the corporate takeover of the public and university education system is the World Bank. On the opening of its coincidentally timed domination of the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, October 5-9, 1998, it issued a privatization manifesto on “world-wide education reform” of universities. The World Bank paper spelled out its program of “radical restructuring” in systematic detail. Education decision-making, it says, must “shift not only from government, but from higher education institutions—and especially from faculty [teachers]—[and from] inappropriate curricula. . . . Performance budgeting will undoubtedly [be tied]. . . . to acceptance of principles of rational [i.e., self-maximizing] actors who respond to [monetary] incentives.”⁴

Review these words from the World Bank education planners. They advocate a complete takeover of learning institutions and the teaching profession by the corporate agenda—all decision-making, the disciplinary curricula, and the educational vocation itself, which is to be replaced by monetary self-seeking as the overriding goal. Note, too, that these demands for market totalization are pre-

scribed in your face with no critical reflection, as with a fanatic cult program.

Students, the Report states with serene incompetence, are “consumers” (p.3) and should pay “the full cost” of their service, and borrow at “market-set bank rates.” “Entrepreneurship on the part of institutions, departments and individual faculty,” it concludes, “is [already] growing almost everywhere, adding revenue to institutions and benefit to society.”⁵

Note, again, the stupefying ignorance of the nature of education, and of the conditions required to enable learning. This is an openly totalitarian program.

Local functionaries of the corporate agenda are seldom so frank in their declarations. They prefer the discourse of *edu-speak* which saturates schools and universities with endless slogans of “innovation,” “new challenges,” “the need to adapt to change,” “required efficiencies,” “new freedoms,” “choice,” “entrepreneurship,” “learner centredness,” “on-line education,” “integration with the workplace,” “skills development,” “performance indicators,” “accountability,” and an inexhaustible babble-flow of ideological spin words which the record shows mean only one thing: to turn education into a set of services for profitable corporate functions.

The defining assumption of the educationally incompetent marketeers who demand the corporatization of public and higher education is that *all knowledge can be turned into a commodity with a one-way process of delivery*. The president of Educom, a transnational corporate consortium, expresses this ruling assumption very clearly. The depth of market enthusiasm married to ignorance should not be underestimated in its will to rule for self-advantage. “The potential,” this ed-com leader proclaims, “to *remove all human mediation* [teachers and dialogue] and replace it with automation is tremendous. Its gotta [*sic*] happen.”⁶

The Canadian federal government actively promotes this transnational privatization of public education, while denying they are doing so. One year after the World Bank privatization manifesto,

the monthly business relations organ for Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade pushed the stakes higher, enthusing at the opportunities of "the \$2 trillion global education market," which it approvingly termed "an academic gold rush."⁷

Observe that the corporate agenda is here declared from the tax-paid podium of the national government itself. Having slashed educational funding for years with its junior partners, the neo-liberal state calls for a business feeding frenzy on the public educational funds that remain elsewhere, thereby promoting a reciprocal raid on Canada's education budgets by the same transnational corporate forces as required by the new regime of "free trade in services." "Educational accountability" means, in fact, accountability to the global corporate agenda at every level of its "control and delivery." But first public learning institutions themselves must be re-engineered to fit the program, as the public school and university systems have been for over 10 years. Every step of the long arc of crisis travels a trajectory of "education reform" towards an inconceivably rich prize: the restructuring of all public and higher education into a vastly lucrative and permanent for-profit market, with ongoing mass outputs of publicly-financed trainees to serve it.

Ontario's own ministry of education was at the forefront of abject collaboration of educational bureaucrats with the corporate takeover of public schools and universities. To his everlasting shame, the Deputy Minister of Colleges and Universities, Dr. Tom Brzutowski, said over a decade ago: "I contend that the one global object of education must be for the people of Ontario to create wealth [*sic*], export products in which our knowledge and skills provide the value added [i.e., profit margins] to develop new services which we can offer in trade in the world market."⁸

As in any occupation by an alien power, Quislings are necessary to proclaim the invasion as the national purpose.

The invasion does not spare publicly-funded research. The Canadian government has distrib-

uted the following instruction to university Research Offices across the country (emphases added): "Increasing competition for research funding. . . will *demand* that Canada identifies its research strengths and capabilities *to focus on those areas with highest value and return on investment... Priorities for applied research are set by the marketplace via partnerships, e.g., industry funds research that fits their priorities...* Augmented private sector participation in research priority setting will... ensure scientists have access to the *appropriate market signals*, are aware of the *technology requirements of industry*, and can *focus their research appropriately*."⁹

Reflect on the regulating principles at work here beneath these many different assertions of government and corporate policy. Public education and research is to be:

- (1) increasingly appropriated by "the private sector" to maximize corporate private profit; thereby also
- (2) making schools and universities increasingly "accountable" to corporate demands; and thus
- (3) ensuring the production of student graduates who are trained to serve private corporate requirements "to make Canada competitive in the global market."

This is what the code phrases of "private-sector partnerships," "accountability," and "outcome-based education" mean beneath the rhetorical resonance. An historically unprecedented expropriation and colonization of trillions of dollars of public wealth and of populations trained from childhood on to serve the corporate agenda can be *locked in*, bit by bit, as each terrain, function and service of the schooling system becomes subordinated to the corporate agenda with the collaboration of the educational profession. The consequence of irreversibility is prescribed by transnational trade regulations which effectively prohibit government recovery of any privatized-for-profit sector.

All of this has been accomplished in under 10 years. Administrators ape corporate managerial methods, researchers are afraid of speaking out lest they jeopardize their funding or corporate publishers, and—in clearest exhibition of the anti-educational agenda—scientific results are repressed if they are contra-indicative of what corporate funders want.

What we are seeing, in short, is the step-by-step fulfilment of a many-sided corporate plan to convert public and higher education to its permanent and guaranteed profitable exploitation, with the unstated *terminus ad quem* of this process the reproduction of all present and future students as consumers and employees whose desires for commodities and willingness to compete for corporate functions are imprinted reliably into their neuronal processes from the moment they enter school to their graduation.

The contradictions between corporate and educational principles

The response from public authority has been by and large to abandon the public interest as indistinguishable from the needs of market corporations. This collapse of mind-set is selected for by the structural fact that party leaderships are constrained to compete for the favour of the corporate press and the financial support of those who advertise in them so as to gain public recognition. Sustaining this political surrender of governments to corporate control is an ideological assumption that has been pervasively dinned into the public mind: the metaphysical belief that the market works by an “invisible hand” which by the laws of supply and demand automatically translates corporate self-maximization into fulfilment of the common interest. All that is required is for educators and the public in general to “work harder” to help national corporations compete.

This metaphysic is the ruling superstition of our era, as I explain in my recent books. But it is programmed into students by *teachers themselves* as an unexamined assumption of their teaching and

their curricula. Educators in this way mis-educate students into unquestioning belief in the very external forces that are invading public education systems for anti-educational purposes. It has been convenient for opportunist careerists at all levels of the system to become true believers in the proposition that education’s primary function is to “enable students to compete in the global marketplace.”

While critics have objected to such a reductionist goal for public education, they have failed to discern a much deeper problem: *the contradictions in principle between the market paradigm and sound education*. Let us consider these concealed contradictions which reveal the corporate agenda for education as not only invasive and incompetent, but absurd.

(1) The *impartiality* of good reasoning and research in education requires educators to address problems independent of their money payoff, to penetrate behind conventional and conditioned beliefs, and to permit no external interest to deter learned inquiry from the quest for knowledge and truth. In contradiction to this principle, the ruling principle of the market is *interest-biased by definition*—seeking to maximize private money returns as a regulating principle of thought, and selecting against any knowledge or advance of knowledge which does not fulfill or which conflicts with this goal.¹⁰

Thus its entailments for education are:

- Do not address any problem which does not promise opportunity for financial returns.
- Reject all evidence which is contra-indicative to profitable results.
- Reduce the cost of work input to the minimum possible.
- Always represent your product as unique and without flaw.
- The consumer is always right.

Do you recognize these very patterns of market values already at work in your students?

(2) The *free dissemination of knowledge* required by education repudiates the demanding of a money price for the knowledge communicated to students or exchanged with colleagues, and the best educators and students work extra hard hours without expectation of monetary returns for the sake of the education itself. In direct opposition to this regulating value of public education, private patent and copyright control of every piece of knowledge and information that a corporation can legally monopolize is enforced, and the maximum price people are willing and able to pay is imposed on every service which can be identified, with no service to anyone if it is not money-profitable.¹¹

Consider, then, a place of education operated in accordance with this market principle. It would price all learning transactions, require its agents to do no more than required by commercial contract with student buyers, and marketize the school's and library's information for its profit. Even if the price system is set aside, dissemination in the market is by conditioning and soliciting appetites, as opposed to disseminating what can be substantiated by evidence and reason.

(3) *Independent literacy and problem-solving capabilities* are required of teachers and students for recognition of either's educational attainment, and the value of recognized education corresponds to what each knows and can do *autonomously*. In profound contradiction, the agent in the competitive market requires only money demand—which establishes all market value—to claim right to the good. Thus, at the macro level, the corporate market develops more and more products and services *to do people's thinking and acting for them*. This increasing dependency is formally recognized by neo-classical doctrine's foundational principle of "non-satiety," or unlimited consumer wants for services and commodities.

Yet, if a student or a teacher voluntarily exchanged for any price that he or she could get for the goods—course essays, tests and assignments—he or she as a student would be expelled as a cheat.

Are commercial services for passing secret-content tests the lawful new edu-market to come?

(4) In any educational institution worthy of the concept, *problems of evidence or reason are discovered, opened to question and critically discussed* to educate understanding, with no top-down interference permitted. In contradiction to this defining method of education, the corporate institution commands from the top what is and is not to be communicated by its agents, rules out any question in even its research divisions which does not comply with these orders, and repudiates any who transgress this chain of command.

It is exactly with (4), however, that school administrators have joined external corporate interests in militating against the essential conditions of learning and discovery within the schools themselves by imposing a corporate managerial model which undermines the authority of the essential educational standards of critical inquiry and academic freedom. The schools in this way have become structured as places of conditioned obedience and indoctrination rather than learning—as we may see from their anti-intellectual atmosphere and culture of commandism.

Even professional education researchers do not see these ultimate conflicts between the principles of the market and public education. Thus the conclusion of the Peel University Partnership Study (a multi-year investigation, 1996-2001, involving the Peel Board of Education-York University and OISE) concludes under the heading, "Moving Forward," with the question: "What kinds of curriculum and ways of bringing it to life in the classroom can we create that will energize and stimulate *a creative and competitive economy*?" Insofar as educators so assume the global market agenda for education as the prime reason of education, they effectively assist the corporate occupation of our schools and universities. Our deepest problem may be the internalization of the global corporate agenda by teachers and administrators as their higher goal, an engineering of the soul proclaimed by the profession's leaders themselves. Is it because they have lost the meaning of education itself, and thus offer a vacuum for the agenda to occupy?

Since educators are, in fact, obliged to teach from a standpoint of education, and not the private demands of external interests whose regulating concern is money gain, it follows that anyone in any educator position who advocates or serves this anti-educational goal should be recognized and identified as a violator of education's standards and integrity. Yet, in the face of this obligation of public educators, the new Ontario College of Teachers has served up an official *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession* which is a normative document without principled substance. An aimless list of mostly feel-good phrases, its diffuse coordinates provide no footing of defined educational standard which would prevent the corporate agenda from subjugating public education.

Only at page 6 do we get any mention of knowledge or a subject matter. The most basic values and capabilities of any education—*reading, writing, and reasoning in one or other form*—are never mentioned. The lifeblood liberty of reasoned thought and imagination in any field of learning and discovery that we know, *academic freedom*, is kept out of the statement of standards altogether. Education that could stand up to an external power seeking to subvert learning and inquiry to its educationally incompetent demands is not available to self-understanding. These “standards of practice for the teaching profession,” in short, could have been cobbled by a corporate edu-server.¹²

Again I ask: has the profession lost its soul: to advance the learning of the next generation in the codes of meaning won over centuries against tyrannies of the mind? Has the profession forgotten what it stands for: the life of the mind and imagination educated to the best that has ever been thought and said?

Regrounding in the meaning of education

No educational standard now protects the free pursuit of learning and question in the schools. Not even the standards of critically disciplined in-

quiry in established subject fields trump principals and pressure groups' right to repress. The authority of learning has been inverted into its opposite. It is for this reason that the adventure of learning-why, which young people yearn for from the age of speech, now confronts us instead as student boredom and stupefaction. This inverted regime has not yet been self-understood. The public education system itself appears to have lost the bearings of public education.

The objection may be: Who knows how to *define* educational standards? Or, who in the end can teach anyone anything? Or, knowledge is all relative to contingent world views. And so on. Post-modernism and relativism are the doctrinal leaders here, and have deceived a lot of people with an incoherent jargon of plurality which represents itself as the moving line of freedom and novel thought. Yet, ironically, they are merely theoretical correlatives of the consumer market in which desire and bizarre difference rule out integrity of meaning. All these variations on the loss of moral compass symptomize a deeper problem. The corporate market culture has ceased to be instrumental to material human well-being, but has come instead to rule the mind itself as a closed program—the program of monetary value-adding as the ultimate meaning of life.

In truth, the guiding principle of education *is* definable. It has been lost, however, by an organizational drift to serve market demand as the final purpose of life. But genuine education, as we will see below, is opposite in principle to commodity sale to others for maximum revenue returns to oneself. Whatever form it takes, all genuine education—as its Latin root “*educare*” suggests—*causes its students to gain a better comprehension of the world by codes of meaning which bear the best that has yet been discovered*. Whatever interferes with the mission of education and the life-value it bears on any other ground than education does not belong in a place of education—whether it be the corporate agenda, the school principal's use of power, or inertia of mind. The student is there to internalize this vocation of education that distinguishes civi-

lized humanity, and to advance this *true value adding*: extending and deepening life capabilities of understanding.

Unfortunately, schools have long been rather anti-intellectual places, promoting authoritarians as administrators and graduating a teacher and premier whose favorite book was *Mr. Silly*. Yet the contradictions between education's open pursuit of knowledge and learning, on the one hand, and of dominant external interests seeking to impose their monetary agenda, on the other, is not a lost cause. On a legal level, "commercial solicitations" in schools can be argued as contrary to the mission of the school and provincial Education Acts. More securely, rules protecting learning and knowledge advance can be enshrined (as they are in universities) in collective agreements and in the institution's calendars, and be effectively appealed to against *any* interference with teaching or learning on other than academic grounds. The baseline of the institution is uplifted, and its instructors and students are released from the corporate bureaucracy's chain of command in educational matters. Instead, *truth and knowledge are recognized as the educational authority*. Now the obligation to respect the historically won rules of reasoning, evidence and their free expression before all else is prescribed as the condition of acceptable behaviour in a place of education. None may obstruct or repress inquiry without being in recognised violation of the constitutional objective of the learning institution. Learning is the authority, not the administration, or consumers' desires, or the corporate agenda.

The norm of free inquiry is the very basis of authentic education and learning, and has been won over centuries of the human mind struggling to achieve shared understanding not imprisoned by dominant special interests and powers to harm those who disagree. How can such an educational norm be enforced? The standard definition of the right to academic freedom in university constitutions and university-faculty contracts states: "The University is committed to the pursuit of truth, the advancement of learning, and the dissemination of knowledge. Academic freedom is the free-

dom to examine, question, teach, and learn, and it involves the right to investigate, speculate, and comment without deference to prescribed doctrine, as well as the right to criticize the University and society at large."

The current executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, James Turk, further spells out this meaning as follows: ". . . there can be critical appraisals of ideas, actions, policies, products, processes and theories unconstrained by conventional wisdom, powerful interests, accepted knowledge, dominant paradigms, custom, habit, or tradition. . . without fear of retribution, discipline, discrimination, or eventual termination of employment because of exercise of this right."¹³

The effective norm of free speech and inquiry is not only the difference between a dictatorship and a democracy. It is also the difference between an institutional structure of indoctrination and a place of education. The experience I first had as a teenager going to university—the sense of being let out of a kind of prison—remains vivid in my mind today. The experience occurred at a new level and in a new way when I left my work as a secondary school teacher to qualify for university teaching. I can testify from many years of experience at both that codified protection of academic freedom makes a decisive difference in the learning situation every moment—in the classroom, out of the classroom, and in preparation for the classroom. Because the pursuit of knowledge and learning are freed from external repression, accountability shifts from serving a bureaucratic hierarchy to serving the advancement of learning and knowledge as ends-in-themselves.

The culture of free inquiry makes the difference between going-through-the-motions in an anti-intellectual routine and being able to question and investigate at a progressively deeper level of learning engagement—in my judgment, starting at the age of speech. My experience over almost 40 years of teaching at all levels is that even the students who have not yet chosen the demands of thinking-through soon stop kicking up and be-

ing bored when they see how interesting the action of free inquiry is.

The authority of learning is borne by three champions: the learned, the learning process, and the learner joining in one life-field of advancing understanding which cannot be trumped by any other demand. Humanity has taken its entire evolution and history to get this far, and not even the principal or the director of education should have the right to stand in the way, any more than the police may break up a seminar because it is perceived to be “uncooperative with authority.” The sole ground for intervention has to be the violation in some way of truth or the pursuit of truth. Only with this freedom of cooperative inquiry and the advance of learning as the determining authority will the schools be educational, and the learning process alive.

In approaching this basic task of public education, there is a very deep fact that needs to be recognized to comprehend fully its importance in our global society today. *Corporate culture is structured against the advancement of knowledge and learning because the lines of corporate command and market competition have no criteria of knowledge, truth or literacy to which they are accountable.* As a result, society-wide assertions and commercials are false, inflated, or outlandish. Facts are repressed and denied as a matter of course. Basic logical or grammatical construction are overridden at will. You can look in vain through every corporate charter and the “global information economy” to find a single measure whereby knowledge can be told from falsehood, or truth from propaganda.

Yet the pervasive cognitive slippage of the global market’s communications systems do not occur to its corporate leadership as a problem. This is because the global market is a very different kind of value system. It recognizes money-demand alone as its guide and goal. Not even documentation of life-and-death news is an issue of truth-telling, but a vehicle of entertainment to sell audiences to advertising sponsors. Business and corporate representatives are, it follows, far from competent to enter “partnerships” with places of education, let

alone as commanders of educational priorities and methods. Their incessantly repeated claim that schools and universities must “adapt to the new knowledge economy” is unable even to distinguish between knowledge and indoctrination, or between teachers and electronic circuits of transmission. Consider the systematic depth of ignorance that is at work here. Why is this pervasive educational incompetence not challenged by educators head-on?

This is why teachers should become proactive in standing for their profession and for learning in the classroom: by revealing and explaining the corporate market culture of self-bias and falsehood wherever its claims bear on reading, writing and reasoning and subject disciplines, which is almost everywhere. In this way, learning can move by the light of educated analysis, reasoning, and informed imagination to fulfil the task they are meant to: *public education.*

No misrule can stand up to such scrutiny for long. Public understanding cannot be left by default to corporate mass-entertainment systems which select against the standards of education by their nature. Yet even now, corporate advertising vehicles wrapped in disconnected news events still misguide teacher comprehension of reality, and are even used as information sources in classrooms. In the end, we might say, public education confronts in the corporate regime seeking to subjugate it its ultimate test as public education.

Taking back the classroom by the authority and profession of learning

Let me move beyond the debasement of education to the “real basics” to which the public education system and the teaching profession need to commit to if they are to be true to their meaning.

- (1) Sound education lies in the multiple codes of reading, writing, and reasoning in the traditional subject matters, and creative understanding and expression in the arts.

- (2) Education in and out of subject matters *is always defined by the learning it enables*. More exactly, there is one inner logic of all education whatever, and that is that it *enables a greater range of capability of understanding and expression in those who participate in it*. This is the touchstone to guide us in all that we do as teachers, and do not do.
- (3) *Educational value* can be assessed in every dissemination of subject matter, question or answer *by the life capability or understanding it advances further than without it*.

We can see how much of what goes on in the schools is ruled out as of nil or negative educational value by these criteria. Examples which come to mind are redundant busy work, principal and teacher positioning to enforce non-educational commands, and exclusion of provocative issues and questions deemed to be controversial.¹⁴

In a real place of education, the *professional* is the one who knows her stuff, stands for the knowledge process she has learned and has been certified for knowing by experts, and self-directs in the fields of expertise she has learned to be self-standing on. To know a discipline or a code of meaning of a subject matter, a professional teaches is the necessary condition of being a professional. But this baseline of the discourse of professionalism is almost never mentioned. The intellectual challenge of the subject matter and the need to be up to it, moving on the edge of its forward meaning, aware of and open to the deep simple questions is never alluded to in any public teaching document I've seen.

The reason teachers are not treated as professionals is that they *do not stand up as professionals*: that is, people who know their subject matters as professionals in its understanding, and demand that learning advance is the regulating standard of whatever they do, and demand that learning advance is the regulating standard of whatever they accept from anyone. This is respect for the profession's standards. Yet I have read hundreds of pages pro-and-con government policy on education,

many thousands of pages on primary and secondary education policy and on the recent testing regime, and I have not once seen standards of learning or academic freedom mentioned.

Professionals, and those who teach professionals in colleges of education, are both fooling themselves unless they institute the authority of learning and standards of academic freedom as a first principle of the teaching and learning process. All the way down. Otherwise we are not professionals, but become paid indoctrinators.

The other dimension of the teaching professional is the preparation and specialized knowledge involved in not just knowing, but teaching what one knows to a younger generation. There are mountains of educationese on this derivative function of the teacher, and it almost never relates it back to the subject disciplines being taught. That is what one would expect from an indoctrinating process. It represses questions of the doctrines being taught, and puts all the emphasis on the *how* of indoctrination—the authority of superiors, not of the subject matter itself, and the conditions required for the injection of predictable repertoires reproducible on demand—for example, financial inputs into the system, teacher status, physical structures, parental socioeconomic status, first language facility, and so on.¹⁵

This is all the documents I have read from the OSSTF and others talk about. The *meaning or truth of the prescribed curriculum and its centralized testing is effectively out of bounds to discuss*.

That is why what I am saying here about this meaning is so unfamiliar. Indoctrination never questions itself, and it stays that way by fencing off inquiry regarding all of the demands of thought obedience it prescribes from the centre. At its height of closing the mind, it tests all the minds in timed performance and monopolizes control over all of the questions and answers so that no deeper question can arise. What you cannot see cannot be discussed. Yet which professional has even raised this indoctrinating method as an issue?

The greatest irony of this capitulation to centrally prescribed routine is that it rules out the very

motivation to learn that is the necessary condition of all learning. That is why so many students are apathetic and mutinous. They are being denied the direct conditions of education and free inquiry. I've told students throughout my teaching career that *intelligence is interest*. Find your interest, and you'll find your intelligence. Nothing interests pre-pubescents and adolescents so much as open inquiry: the interrogation of what is normally accepted, as well as finding out some secret they did not know before. These are the moving lines of their learning and their motivation to learn. But both are so hedged around by the school's authority of rank and age in place of the authority of learning and freedom of critical question that their minds are "turned off." In place of learning comes the need for one-way, television-style entertainment.

With the very young and pre-adolescent, the "why's" never stop to begin with if the teaching relates to the vital experience of finding out about the world and all its wonders. This is where the motivational dimension of the professional teacher comes in. Teaching the next generation in any subject matter is as exciting and sacred a trust as the evolved human mind itself.

The good teacher must not only know how to explain the subject matter inside out, down to the most basic questions the freshest mind can ask. Profession comes from the etymological root, to profess, as in a vow. The vow includes telling the truth as best one can know it, sharing that truth as a teacher as best one can explain to the young mind not knowing it, and keeping all of it open to question about its meaning.

For the adolescent, the school should become—as it is in all the best places of education—a hotbed of learning controversy where the advancement of knowledge and learning is the ruling standard of the action. For the younger, the wondering-why needs to be led by the professional's questions and explanations to open the mind to all that can be found out from centuries of investigation.

True accountability is to the learning dynamic and to the knowledge of what is said. One is not accountable to a principal or a parent or even the student, but to the love and teaching of what the most learned have come to understand, and to the most self-governed understanding and expression of it the student can learn. The high adventure of being human as the only being which can learn without limit is the vocation of our species. Insofar as psychologists, business representatives, parents, or administrators can help in this public education trust for which teachers are professionals in bridging one generation to the next in an ever-growing shared love of learning and its individual expression, they too have a role. But the roles of all must defer to the only true educational authority: the learnedly open process of learning itself. The rest is distraction, or a mask for indoctrination.

My pessimism is that teachers and the colleges of education teaching them have lost their bearings, that they are not given to the learning vocation but to career self-advancement in an anti-educational game where corporately-financed political parties use them to turn public education into a business servo-mechanism.

My optimism is that the boredom of the students, the demoralization of the teachers, and the bureaucratic sludge of the discourse so obviously signal a system that has lost its internal direction that the people who care about the life of the mind will wake up and stand for education all the way down. It is time to serve only the advancement of learning in the students we are teaching. Nothing worthwhile will be lost. It is time to draw the line *for* learning and *against* anything from business, politicians, parents, or principals which obstructs it. This is what being a teaching professional entails.

Endnotes

¹ My reference is to the looting and destruction of the Iraq National Museum housing the greatest artefacts of the world's most ancient civilization, including the

most treasured cuneiform writing tablets in existence and countless priceless works of art from Sumerian, Assyrian and Babylonian antiquities - almost entirely stolen and vandalized over days with occupying U.S. troops allowing, under central command and in violation of international criminal law, the most destructive sacking of human cultural memory in modern history; while the same occupying U.S. forces simultaneously sealed and guarded the Ministry of Oil and the Ministry of the Interior with no damage incurred to either (documented through April 2003 by highly respected *Independent* reporter and eyewitness, Robert Fisk). The Ministry of Education was also, revealingly, permitted to be burned at the same time, while U.S. plans to rewrite all textbooks by contracts awarded to American firms concurrently proceeded. To round out this re-engineering of human mind and memory to institute the new barbarism, Republican legislation was introduced in the U.S. by Sens. Santorum, Bennetts, Brownback and Colemanto to cut all federal funding to thousands of colleges, universities and student organizations for prohibited criticism of Israeli state policies.

- 2 I have most recently analysed this regulating structure and its global alternative in *Value Wars: The Global Market versus the Life Economy* (London GB: Pluto Press, 2002).
- 3 Canadian Association of University Teachers' News Release to Faculty Associations, reported by the *University of Guelph Faculty Association Newsletter*, November 2, 1998, pp. 3-4.
- 4 D. Bruce Johnstone with Alka Arora and William Experton for The World Bank, "The Financing and Management of Higher Education: A Status Report on Worldwide Reforms," UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, Paris, October 5-9, 1998, pp. 22, 4, 16, 22.
- 5 Ibid, pp. 12, 25.
- 6 See David F. Noble, "Digital Diploma Mills: The Automation of Higher Education", *Monthly Review*, February 1998, pp. 35-52.
- 7 *CanadExport*, September 1999, p.16.
- 8 Cited by William Graham, "From the President", *Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations Bulletin*, 6:15 (1989), 2-3. Brzutowski now sets research policy at the federal level as President of the National Science and Engineering Research Council.
- 9 Government of Canada booklet, *The Canadian AgriFood Research Strategy, 1997-2002*. Professor Ann Clark, a researcher in the field, reported in a paper to the October 1999 Conference of the Canadian Association of University Teachers in Ottawa: "Non-proprietary research - of the sort that benefits everyone -

- is of no interest to industry sponsors" - for example, integrated pest management, organic farming, management-intensive grazing, small-scale producer co-operatives, and alternatives to factory-processed livestock and genetically-engineered commodities. On the other hand, research which counters what commercial industry *does* invest in may be censored and attacked. In the case of internationally recognised British researcher, Dr. Arpad Pusztai, a pro-GMO researcher whose research on genetically modified potatoes showed severe gastrointestinal tract damage to rats, he was suspended from his long-time laboratory privileges and publicly slandered. He concludes from his experience: "I can say from my experience if anyone dares to say anything even slightly contra-indicative, they are vilified and totally destroyed". Dr. Pusztai's research has since been vindicated by publication in the prestigious medical journal *Lancet* (16 October 1999). The co-author of this research has written me since that "this research was government funded and the work was potentially stopped by the highest authority in the country, although denied by 10 Downing Street".

- 10 Thus corporately directed science and medicine have devoted little or no research funds to resurgent malaria, dengue fever or river blindness because their many millions of victims lack market demand to pay for cures, while they invest billions of dollars into researching and marketing dubious and often lethal drugs to treat non-diseases of consumers in rich markets. There is no reason to suppose that market corporations will or have reversed this principle of investment selection with educational tasks and problems.
- 11 The extent to which neo-liberal governments have funded and university administrators and researchers have profited from the agenda to replace the objectives of higher learning with priced research and service is documented in Eyal Press and Jennifer Washburn, "The Kept University", *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 2000, pp. 39-45. This commercialized research has led to insider trading by faculty members, and attack on dissemination of research findings, including a University of South Florida filing of criminal charges against an M.A. student whose continued research on a patented project was alleged as "stealing university property", a charge which resulted in the student's sentence to a state chain gang (Press and Washburn, p.48).
- 12 The use of provincial acts of professional incorporation can be more sinister in their blinkering out of knowledge standards and use of punitive sanction to ensure conformity to the dominant corporate culture. The Ontario Institute of Agrologists is "an organiza-

tion of professionals in agriculture” currently seeks, presumably with the backing of Ontario’s powerful corporate agribusiness industry, to limit the freedom of scientists to discuss “food production, processing, marketing and policy making advice in Ontario to the agri-food industry, the government and the public”. Only what is deemed “good advice” by the Institute, with no exact criterion to bind its opinions, is to be permitted. Control of speech is here directly instituted by so-called “professional standards”, rather than avoided as with the “Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession”.

¹³ “Conference Weighs Dynamics of Tradition of Academic Freedom”, CAUT Bulletin, May 2003, p. A8.

¹⁴ The bureaucratic horror of controversy in primary and secondary schools preconsciously mimics the formal prohibition of controversy in television commercials by “the established rules of practice” of media corporations. Such instituted silencing mechanisms have, for example, ruled out paid advertisements ABC and CBC Television by the Vancouver-based magazine, *Adbusters*. It is in such cases that we can discern a syntax of repression that not only rules out critical challenge of a dominant regime of thought, but rules out recognition of the repression: not only in the for-profit market sphere, but in the non-profit public sector of education at the same time.

¹⁵ I do not disagree that “financial, physical and socio-economic conditions” are important as conditions of learning. But the most important such conditions of learning begin with the wherewithal to ensure a minimally healthy diet for the students (eg., minimum protein intake and maximum sugar levels), and these are *not* the external conditions for learning which the OSSTF even mentions. Its proposals, rather, blinker out the most important out-of-classroom conditions of learning (not just diet, but parental involvement in literacy development rather than financial “status”). In this way, even the current system’s effective prescription of the corruption of students’ diets by in-school junk-food-and-beverage contracts, with profound negative consequences for learning capability, are silently acquiesced in. At the same time, the direct conditions of learning, like freedom of inquiry, are completely submerged in the near compulsive avoidance of learning requirements. So far as I could see, the booklet, *The Schools We Need: A New Blueprint for Ontario* (April 2003) which was distributed with this conference’s package, does not advance beyond this acculturated ceremony of avoidance. There is no sense of what the title concept of “need” means related to learning, and the new official vehicles for the secret-content provincial testing mechanisms and the vacuous “standards of teaching practice” are directly praised at face value (p. 6).

Deregulation and accessibility for law students at the University of Toronto

By Charles C. Smith

Introduction

In April, 2003, two Ontario law schools approved significant increases to their tuition fees. These fees go into effect in the upcoming year and mark a rise over the past eight years in law school tuition fees from approximately \$2,451 in 1995 to \$16,000 for the 2003-04 academic year at the University of Toronto and from \$3,228 in 1997 to approximately \$8,961 in 2003 at Queen's University¹. Further, the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto has indicated its intentions to increase tuition fees by \$2,000 each year until they total \$22,000,² and Queen's University has projected to increase its tuition fees to \$10,663 in 2004 and \$12,856 in 2005. While other faculties of law may have similar interests, none have declared such ambitious plans; nor has any stated a long-term strategy to increase tuition fees.

On the other hand, the cost of a legal education continues to rise and, like other professional fields of study, there is no clear indication as to how high such increases may go. These increases have raised concerns from a number of organizations and student groups. In March, 2002, the Law Society of Upper Canada addressed this matter in response to a report from its Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee³. At its annual general meeting in 2002, the Canadian Bar Association adopted a resolution expressing its concerns⁴. As well, for several years various student associations and coalitions have raised strong concerns over the poten-

tial impact of increasing tuition fees and members of one student association have filed a human rights complaint against two Ontario faculties⁵.

In this context, and in order to appropriately address the need to provide adequate financing to offer high-quality legal education that will be accessible to diverse communities, a number of law schools have begun to develop an accessibility study as a way of projecting the potential impact of increased tuition fees on the composition of the student population⁶. While this is a laudable exercise, it is also one that requires attention to a number of critical details in order to be credible and to produce results enabling law schools to undertake financial planning for the cost of a legal education that will not erect barriers to individuals from communities who have been under-represented historically in law schools, i.e., Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, individuals from subordinate racialized communities and low-income households. Such a study will also need to examine the implications of tuition fees on student choices of courses as well as their career aspirations and selection to assess the impact on what is taught in law school as well as the employment that is sought by law school students and graduates.

To assist in this endeavour, such studies require methodologies aimed at gathering information from key sources, i.e., current students, graduates, students considering studying law who are in university and high school, the parents of these latter

students, and literature related to the impact of tuition fees on access to post-secondary education, graduate studies and law school. The purpose of this paper is to briefly discuss these matters and to offer them to those faculties of law that are preparing to initiate an accessibility study. Following a discussion on current research identifying the needs of students from diverse communities, the paper will examine concerns regarding methodologies to gather information from the data sources identified above. It will then discuss a set of values that may be of use in developing strategies based on the data received.

Current evidence of negative impact

Concerns regarding the impact of tuition fees on individuals from historically subordinate and marginalized communities have been addressed by a number of research based and education focused Canadian organizations. In reviewing some of this research it has been noted that⁷:

- Statistics Canada data indicates that 38.7% of youth aged 18-21 years from wealthy families attended university compared to 18.8% of youth from poorer families⁸.
- The Canadian Association of University Teachers confirms that Canadian families have significantly increased their education-related expenditures in recent years largely due to increasing tuition fees and that the increasing cost of post-secondary education has placed a considerable burden on low- and middle-income households. It also suggests that if current trends continue, access to post-secondary education will be increasingly divided along income lines.⁹
- A study at the University of Western Ontario showed that, after medical tuition fees were increased from \$4,844 to \$10,753, the average family income of first year medical students increased from \$80,000 in 1998 to \$140,000 in 2000.¹⁰
- Concern has been expressed by the National Professional Association Coalition on Tuition¹¹ (NPACT) who, in a written submission to the federal government in September 2000, stated that NPACT is "...very concerned that high post-secondary tuition fees in professional programs create barriers to access to education and, as a consequence, threaten the supply of professionals required to serve the needs of the Canadian public."
- According to analyses of recent census data, despite their educational achievements, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and individuals from subordinate racialized groups tend to fall below the Low-Income Cut Off (LICO) more so than others. They tend to be either under-employed, unemployed or reliant on transfer payments more so than other groups and have not been able to translate their educational achievement into increased income and professional success.¹² The result of this is lowered earnings for members of these communities, which leaves them less able to support the educational advancement of their children, particularly at the post-graduate level, including medical and law school.¹³
- Legal Aid Ontario has suggested that the debt incurred during law school as a threat to the long-term sustainability of Legal Aid Ontario.¹⁴ That report stated that new, young lawyers who are vital to the certificate program's future can ill afford to consider legal aid certificates.
- The NPACT believes that high tuition fees have a significant impact on current and future students, as well as on professional services offered to the public. NPACT's position paper identifies the following impacts: education for the affluent and a less diverse workforce; exacerbating the brain drain to the U.S.; decreased access to professional services; effects on the health and well-being of students; insufficient public funding and increasing dependence on bank loans; previous education debt and accumulative debt; decreased pay and

potential and limited ability to pay off debts quickly; and adverse effects on the Canadian economy¹⁵;

Other studies on this matter indicate similar concerns. For example, in *Missing Pieces IV: An Alternative Guide to Canadian Post-Secondary Education*, it is evident that higher tuition fees result in lower participation rates and that, while tuition fees increased dramatically, access to student loans has dropped significantly in Ontario from 1995-2002.¹⁶ Further, the joint publication of the Canadian Federation of Students and the Canadian Association of University Teachers notes that “Researchers at the University of Guelph found that 40% fewer students from low-income families were attending University after tuition fees rose.¹⁷”

Further, in examining the University of Toronto’s Provost study on accessibility, it is evident that Aboriginal peoples and individuals from subordinate racialized groups comprise a very small number of the overall student population. The Provost study also demonstrates the small percentage of students who come from low-income families.¹⁸ Further, the CBA has noted that most U. of T. students choose to articulate in large firms, most graduates choose to start their careers in large firms and that the decline in students taking articling positions in small firms has occurred most dramatically from 1997 (49.4%) to 2000 (38.3%). This is particularly notable given the corresponding increase of students who have accepted articling positions in large firms. i.e., 30.9% in 1997 and 47.1% in 2000.¹⁹

These studies have provided significant evidence related to the impact of increasing tuition fees and, based on such evidence, credible projections have been made regarding the impact of such increases on particular individuals and communities. This suggests that increases in tuition fees will impact negatively on those interested in entering post-graduate programs, including law schools, and that this impact may limit access to those seeking

a legal education. It may also affect those in law school, influencing their choice of courses to study and where to articulate; and it may affect recent graduates’ career choice. In addition, it may impact on the courses offered at law schools and the areas of legal practice, thus affecting the availability of legal services to a diverse population, particularly if it influences the number of graduates who choose a career in corporate as opposed to public law or in large firms as opposed to small firms.²⁰

To address this, it is important for law school accessibility studies to probe the degree to which tuition fees may present barriers to access and, in an effort to avoid erecting such barriers, the kinds of actions that can be taken to avoid this, including the types of programs and/or supports that may need to be put in place to ensure such access is not denied.

Methodology

As noted earlier, it is critical to establish a methodology to gather information from all relevant sources. This signifies those who are currently enrolled in law school, those who have recently graduated and, most importantly, those who are now considering a legal education. To further examine this matter, it is useful to conduct a literature review of other relevant experiences and it is important to ensure that the line of inquiry is clear regarding the potential increases being sought and the possible alternatives to increasing tuition fees. In seeking information from those considering law school, it may also be useful to compare this data with information related to students considering other post-graduate educational opportunities. This may help in seeing how a legal education compares to educational opportunities for other professions and if costs are a significant factor in student interest and possible selection.

In terms of the groups to be included in the research, they are important for the following reasons:

1. data gathered from these groups will assist in assessing the impact of tuition fee increases since 1995;
2. the data gathered will enable law schools to set benchmarks for future reference and analysis of impact over time; and
3. this data will also assist in assessing the affordability of increased tuition fees on those considering a legal education.

Such data can then be analyzed against socio-economic factors to assess the implications of increased tuition fees on the career choices and course selection of recent graduates as well as current students and, in addition, against incomes of future students, including their families where appropriate. This will assist in understanding the factors that such individuals will have to consider in order to pursue a legal education, even if offered loans and/or bursaries, the risks associated with enrolling in law school, the potential impact this may have on the students' and/or families' financial capabilities, students' course selection and subsequent career choice.

Before reviewing these matters, however, it is critical that an appropriate methodology provide information that will enable those engaged to practically assess the potential impact of proposed increases in tuition costs. To do this, it is necessary to give a clear indication regarding the amounts that fees may be increased to, how they will be increased and by when. It may also be useful to provide information on the other costs of a legal education, e.g., residential accommodation and living expenses, as well as how law schools will enable students to cope with any proposed increases. This will ensure all individuals who conduct or participate in the study are clear regarding the scope of the research.

Setting benchmarks

While gathering data based on current students and recent graduates is essential to assessing the impact of increased tuition fees since deregulation in 1995, the data are also useful as a benchmark

by which to measure the impact of future changes to law school tuition fees. This will help in acknowledging the stresses felt by students who have been faced with such fees since the imposition of deregulation. Concerns regarding affordability and access, course selection and career choice can be examined based on these data. For example, it will be possible to assess whether there is an income gap between individuals attending law school, if this gap has increased since 1995, and whether it is continuing to increase. It will also be possible to examine student choice of courses and to query if tuition increases have influenced student behaviour in the selection of courses, particularly electives. It is also essential to examine the career aspirations and actual choices of graduates from the 1995 entering cohort to assess the degree to which tuition increases have influenced their choice of careers.

There are numerous methodologies that can be used to do the above:

1. Tracking the applicant pool to seek information regarding the share of Canadian students applying to law schools and their personal as well as socio-economic background.
2. Gathering data concerning career choice and the impact of tuition fees on law students' career aspirations as well as selection of articling positions and subsequent employment.
3. Gathering information from students and graduates to gain their responses to the impact tuition fees has had on their course selections, e.g., have these increases influenced them to take more courses in corporate law and less in areas of public law.

Such data can be gathered through focus groups, as well as surveys, and used to examine the current impact of the most recent tuition fee increases. It can also be used as a benchmark to compare against future students and graduates. This will require ongoing review by each faculty and will assist in assessing the implications of tuition fee increases on diverse student groups over time.²¹

In undertaking such methodologies, it is critical that:

- The methodology be developed and implemented by an outside third party. This may assist in ensuring the overall reliability and appropriateness of the data samples it will explore.
- Care is taken in using law school administrative data for either applicants or actual enrolled students. Such data have been gathered for administrative purposes and were not contemplated to be used for the purpose of this type of research. This poses serious concerns regarding the reliability of the data and their uses. For example, many students may have elected not to provide data because they had no interest in the purpose for which the data has been collected. This was evident in the University of Toronto Provost study where socio-economic data were only available for two-thirds of the class in any given year and where there was nothing noted regarding the other 33% except that they did not request financial aid. This was a significant amount of data to be missing and its absence raised serious questions about the reliability of the socio-economic data on students and any correlates of this data with race, gender, Aboriginal status, and other personal characteristics.²²
- There is particular care in employing terminology common to the study of social groups within Canadian society. In this context, it is best to base such language on the categories used by Statistics Canada for Census purposes and to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities. For example, the methodologies for the University of Toronto and the other Ontario law schools employ terms which do not correspond with Statistics Canada census categories. This poses challenges to comparing data from law schools with those on social groups within Canada. It may also pose challenges from students in terms of self-identifying the social group(s) to which they belong.

In terms of examining data on career choice, it is important for the research to examine the articling experiences of students as well as the selection of employment by graduates. To do this will likely require accessing data gathered by law societies. There are two concerns here:

1. The law societies of B.C. and Upper Canada have gathered data on barriers faced by Aboriginal peoples and individuals from subordinate racialized communities to highly competitive and lucrative articling positions in large, prestigious law firms.²³ These data are essential to assessing the impact of tuition fee increases and a student's ability to repay any loans or bursaries advanced by law schools to enable a student to pay for their legal studies, particularly since Aboriginal lawyers and lawyers from subordinate racialized groups may not be able to attract employment that provides income sufficient to repay high student debts; and
2. The member's annual report of law societies has not in the past gathered information disclosing individual lawyer's personal characteristics. This has only been done for gender and, as such, cannot give any information relevant to Aboriginal peoples, peoples with disabilities, and individuals from subordinate racialized groups²⁴.

Further, in assessing these data, it is critical that students and graduates be given opportunities to discuss their career aspirations and the impact increased tuition fees has had or may have on their career choices. For example, some students and graduates may select careers based on the need to repay high student loans as opposed to their real interests in the practice of law²⁵.

It is also critical that the data be examined in the context of current challenges facing particular individuals and groups within the legal profession. It would be rather unusual to approach a study on accessibility and to decontextualize the fundamental issues affecting students, particularly their per-

sonal characteristics and how individuals from specific social groups have succeeded in the practice of law. Omitting reference to this information ignores the well-known history of disparate outcomes in legal practice, including articling, for specific groups. This masks deeply entrenched societal and systemic inequalities and evades a critical point on the likely deleterious impact that increasing tuition fees will have.

For example, there has been substantial material written over the past decade regarding women in the legal profession, the challenges they face, and the inordinate number who appear to withdraw from the practice of law.²⁶ Also, as stated in the CBA's critique of the University of Toronto's Provost study, it is common knowledge that the Canadian legal profession is predominantly white and male.²⁷ Despite their numbers in the population, there are only 5% of individuals from subordinate racialized groups, 0.8% of Aboriginal peoples, 30% women, and an indiscernibly small number of peoples with disabilities.²⁸ There is also evidence in the public domain on the barriers individuals from these groups face in attracting lucrative articling and associate positions as well as becoming partners and receiving comparable remuneration after lengthy years in practice.

In addition, data from the Law Society of Upper Canada indicates ongoing challenges facing women and individuals from subordinate racialized groups in attracting articling positions.²⁹ In some cases, a significant number of students have complained about the inaccessibility of lucrative positions in large law firms, while others have questioned the rate of call-back based on gender and racial characteristics.³⁰

Further, evidence from the 1996 Census indicates significant earning differentials between white lawyers and those from subordinate racialized groups, as well as between male and female lawyers.³¹ Such differences in earnings are evident throughout their careers and now have, and will likely continue to have, a negative impact on the ability of certain groups of lawyers to find employment in law firms which provide significant re-

muneration. The continued inability of individuals from these communities to successfully engage in all aspects of the legal profession will limit the choices of some law school students and this may have a deleterious impact as individuals from these communities considering legal education and a career in law may be reluctant to accumulate significant debt even if provided with increases in financial aid.

Finally, in terms of an appropriate methodology for an accessibility study, individuals from such groups need to be specifically included and provided opportunities to discuss these issues so that they can make informed comments as part of their contribution.

Assessing the interest of those considering a legal education

In terms of its direction, the methodology's premise needs to be clear and to state the interest and/or need of law schools to raise tuition fees, the amounts being contemplated, and the kinds of programs that will enable students to offset the negative impact of any proposed increases. Unfortunately, this matter was not considered at all in the Provost study for the University of Toronto Faculty of Law. It is likewise missing from the proposed *Ontario Law School Accessibility Study: A Research Proposal* which, like the U. of T. study, is confining its scope to either those now in law school or those recently graduated.

The issue is not just related to whether the current fees present a barrier to access, although that is now being contested through a human rights complaint by numerous law students of African descent. The issue also concerns the impact that increasing tuition fees may have on the aforementioned student groups and whether or not such fees will pose barriers to their being able to study law. This should be a key point in any accessibility study, and a methodology addressing that question is what is needed.

To gauge a response to this, it is necessary to find an appropriate sample size and then gather qualitative and quantitative data. The first may be

impressionistic and anecdotal based on perceptions about ability to pay these fees; the latter can be based on examination of student and/or family incomes to assess the extent and capacity of such incomes. It may also be useful to compare results with those of other students considering other professional fields for post-graduate studies, e.g., medicine, science, engineering, social work.³²

Literature review

In addition to research on these groups, it is important to do a thorough review of the literature relevant to the impact or projected impact of tuition fees on student enrolment. While it is important to focus on legal education, it may be useful to examine literature related to other professional educational programs, e.g., medicine, dentistry, social work, and to include literature which discusses student and graduate perceptions on this.

For example, the University of Toronto Provost commissioned a literature review undertaken by Professor Emeritus David Stager. Most of the material cited by him is dated well before the current upswing in tuition fee increases in 1995, and almost all studies examined identify a negative impact based on student's race and, to a lesser extent, gender as well as student interest in public interest law. This is evident in the following ways:

- The study entitled *Minority Students and Debt: Limiting Limited Career Options* conducted by Professor Marilyn V. Yarborough (Professor of Law and Dean at the time of her study) indicates that black students have more difficulties finding employment with large law firms and are 2.5 times more likely to enter the public service.³³
- Similar concerns are cited by Lewis Kornhauser and Richard L. Revesz who, in their study *Legal Education and Entry into the Legal Profession: The Role of Race, Gender and Educational Debt*, note "...that for African American and Latino women, loan forgiveness had an important impact: more than a third of those taking for-profit jobs would have selected

the alternative as a result of the loan forgiveness." This study goes on to note that (a) "...women are more likely than men to enter law school with not-for-profit career plans, but law school disproportionately shifts their preferences toward for-profit jobs." (b) "debt burden is not an important determinant of career choice, except for African American and Latino women. . .³⁴"

- Some of the results of the study published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* are included in a summary of the *Effects of rising tuition fees on medical school class composition and financial outlook*. Such information indicates that "(m)ost (U.S. investigators) have found that debt is a small but significant influence away from a career in primary care, but others have reported no such effect. (However), among Canadian medical students, financial considerations were reported to be much more important, in terms of specialty choice and practice location, for those at schools with high tuition fees.³⁵"

In addition to Professor Stager's report, there is interesting information related to the shift in university education as being less accessible to low-income groups. The literature summary here acknowledges that trends over the past three to four decades indicate that "...rising educational costs (including costs other than tuition) impose greater financial need on small, specific groups of students, including those with disabilities, single parents, from remote areas, etc., and who need specific aid programs in response.³⁶

It is also instructive to note the studies, news articles and reports Professor Stager has not included in his literature review. Some of these include: *The Economic Value of Higher Education; Student Response in Higher Education: An Update to Leslie and Brinkman; Graduates taking longer to pay back student loans; College Choice and Family Income: Changes Over Time in the Higher Education Destinations of Students from Different Income Backgrounds; The Impact of Increased*

*Loan Utilization Among Low Family Income Students; College Price Barriers: What Government has Done and Why it hasn't Worked; Another Look at the Demand for Higher Education: Measuring the Price Sensitivity of the Decision to Apply to College; Price Response in Enrollment Decisions: An Analysis of the High School and beyond Sophomore conduct; and A Mortgage Without a House: A Study of the Financial Burden of Social Work Students.*³⁷

Further, the study of law is not isolated from other post-secondary and post-graduate programs. As such, the experiences of other disciplines may be useful to review to assess their implications on access to legal education. Some of these studies have already been cited in this paper. Other studies include: *Promoting Access to Post-Secondary Education; Making Ends Meet: the 2001-2—2 student financial survey; University Funding Cuts: Shortchanging Ontario Students; Empty Promises: The Myth of College Access in America; and the 2000 Alberta Universities and University Colleges' Graduate Employment Survey*³⁸.

Conclusion

As noted in *Missing Pieces IV*, “The cost of attending university and college is a key indicator of the degree to which access to higher education has been made a priority by provincial governments.”³⁹ The same can be said for law schools where the issue of access is fundamental to the development of a legal educational environment and legal practice that reflects the diverse composition and interests of the population, and that particularly ensures that all efforts are being implemented to increase the number of individuals who have been historically under-represented in law school and the legal profession.

There is no doubt that increasing tuition fees, particularly without having safeguards and programs in place to ensure access, will make this goal extremely difficult to attain; and if this does come to pass, the legal profession may suffer immeasurably through the loss of potential talent, through

the erosion of interest in public interest law as well as legal practices in small firms, outside of large urban areas and in such sensitive and difficult domains as human rights law and equity practice. If this is to occur, it will not only be Canada's legal profession that will be the less for such losses, it will be the Canadian population that will be left with less and less legal counsel competent to address issues fundamental to their day-to-day lives.

This report was originally prepared for the Standing Committee on Equality of the Canadian Bar Association in 2003.

Endnotes

- ¹ These figures are based on data compiled by the African Canadian Legal Clinic as provided by the following Ontario faculties of law: Queen's University and the universities of Toronto, Windsor, York and Western. See Appendix “A”. See also *Access Denied: The Affordability of post-secondary education in Canada, 1857-2002*, Canadian Education Review, Canadian Association of University Teachers, Vol.4, No.1 at 3 where it is noted that law school tuition fees have risen 123.9% from 1972 to 2002. In addition, see *The Daily: University Tuition Fees*, Statistics Canada, August 21, 2002, which indicates that law school tuition fees have risen the most over 2001/02 - 2002/03 of all post-graduate programs from an average of \$4,375 to \$5,019, or an increase of 14.7%. The closest comparison in percentage increase is Graduate Programs which increased tuition fees by 11.1% during the same period from \$4,454 to \$4,948.
- ² See Office of the Dean, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, 2001 for the five-year plan which put forward the proposed tuition fee increases.
- ³ Law Society of Upper Canada, Convocation March 2002.
- ⁴ See CBA *Resolution 02-01-A Law School Tuition Fees*, August 2002.
- ⁵ Some of these student groups include the Black Law Students Association of Canada, SPINLAW and SLAM, the latter two organizations comprised of law school students at the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall Law School.
- ⁶ See Provost Study of Accessibility and Career Choice in the Faculty of Law, Shirley Neuman, Vice President and Provost, University of Toronto, February

- 24, 2003 and Ontario Law School Study: A Research Proposal
- ⁷ This information is based on a report prepared by the Equity Initiatives Department of the Law Society of Upper Canada and presented to its Convocation by the Equity and Aboriginal Issue Committee in March, 2002.
- ⁸ See Statistics Canada Participation in Postsecondary Education and Family Income@, *The Daily*, Dec 7, 2001 @ www.statscan.ca. See also *Missing Pieces IV: An Alternative Guide to Canadian Post-Secondary Education* which states that “In 2001, Statistics Canada reported that young people from wealthy backgrounds were 2.5 times more likely to attend university than those from lower-income families.” Edited by Denise Doherty-Delorme and Erika Shaker, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, May 2003. Similar circumstances are also noted by Stephen Machin in *The Expansion of UK Post-Compulsory Education: Rich Kids Win, Poorer Kids Lose*, January 2003
- ⁹ See the Canadian Association of University Teachers **Out of Reach: Trends in Household Spending on Education** (2000) as cited in *CAUT Communiqué*, Feb 22, 2000.
- ¹⁰ See *Effects of rising tuition fees on medical school class composition and financial outlook*, Jeff C. Kwong et al Canadian Medical Association Journal, 166(8).
- ¹¹ The National Professional Association Coalition on Tuition (NPACT) is a non-profit, voluntary group established in May 2000 in response to concerns regarding increasing tuition fees at postsecondary educational institutions, and the adverse impact that high tuition fees has on access to education. National professional associations involved in NPACT include: the Canadian Bar Association, the Canadian Dental Association, the Canadian Federation of Students, the Canadian Medical Association, the Canadian Nurses Association, the Canadian Pharmacists Association, Canadian Physiotherapy Association, the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, and the Royal Architectural Association.
- ¹² See: Edward N. Herberg, *The Ethno-Racial Socioeconomic Hierarchy in Canada: Theory and Analysis of the Vertical Mosaic*, (1990), *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, XXXI, 3-4, September-December; Tana Turner: *The Composition and Implications of Metropolitan Toronto's Ethnic, Racial And Linguistic Populations*, (1990) Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Multicultural and Race Relations Division, Chief Administrative Officer's Department; and *The Composition and Implications of Metropolitan Toronto's Ethnic, Racial and Linguistic Populations*, (1995) Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Access and Equity Centre; K. Pendakur and R. Pendakur, *Earning Differentials Among Ethnic Groups in Canada*, (1996), *Strategic Research and Analysis, Department of Canadian Heritage*; Michael Ornstein *Ethno-Racial Inequality in the City of Toronto: An Analysis of the 1996 Census*, (May 2000) City of Toronto and Centre for Excellence for Research on Immigrant Settlement; and Canadian Council on Social Development *Unequal Access: A Canadian Profile of Racial Differences in Education, Employment and Income*.
- ¹³ A full discussion on barriers to legal education is provided in *At the Foot of the Walls of Jericho: Future Directions for Equity and Diversity in Legal Education*, (2000) Charles C. Smith Equity Initiatives Department, Law Society of Upper Canada. In terms of specific barriers facing Aboriginal peoples see *Addressing Discriminatory Barriers Facing Aboriginal Law Students and Lawyers*, (April 2000) Law Society of British Columbia.
- ¹⁴ See *Legal Aid in Ontario: Tariff Reform Business Case* (November 2001) Legal Aid Ontario
- ¹⁵ See NPACT Position Paper on the Effects of High Tuition Fees, submitted to the Standing Committee on Finance, September 2000. These concerns were again raised in NPACT's November 2001 submission to the Standing Committee on Finance.
- ¹⁶ See Doherty-Delorme and Shaker at 5 and 9-10; and at 31 where it is noted that “In spite of this additional burden being downloaded onto Ontario students, the percentage of those same students who actually receive provincial loans dropped from 212,189 in 1995 to 130,687 in 2002.”
- ¹⁷ See *Access: National Education Summits, Tuition Fees in Canada: A Pan-Canadian Perspective on Educational User Fees* where it is also noted that “Research undertaken elsewhere confirms that, in general, students from lower income households are much more likely to be affected by financial issues when deciding whether to pursue their education beyond high school. In the 2000 Youth in Transitions Survey, Statistics Canada found that financial obstacles were cited by over 70% of young people who did not go on to post-secondary education because of a barrier.”
- ¹⁸ On this point, on Black students the Provost writes: “The numbers are quite small, and thus not statistically significant.” Regarding Aboriginal students, she writes “Again, the numbers are small and there is considerable fluctuation from year to year, so it is difficult to reach conclusions..” The Provost report also indicates that approximately 17% of students come from families at or below \$60,000.00 annual income. While the Provost suggests that these numbers compare favorably to other law schools, she does not com-

pare them with their number in the general population; nor does she address people with disabilities at all. See Neuman at 5.

¹⁹ See CBA *Response to the Provost Study of Accessibility and Career Choice in the University of Toronto Faculty of Law* at 4. These are quite dramatic shifts in student choices which may support the contention of increasing tuition fees influencing career choice. Unfortunately, this is not possible to conclusively determine without exploring directly with these students the reasons behind their articling choices, a course of study the Provost has declared to be of no use due to the likelihood of distortion based on individual biases. In terms of career choices, there are notable decreases in the number of graduates accepting employment in “Non-law” and small law firms. For the former, 49.4% accepted employment in 1997 compared to 31.9% in 2000; for the latter, 34% accepted employment in 1999 compared to 29.4% in 2000. While small firm career choices have fluctuated over the study period (27.8% in 1995 compared to 16.7% in 1996, 34% in 1999 and 29.4% in 2000), “Non-law” career choices have steadily and significantly decreased (52.2% in 1995 to 31.9% in 2000) and career choice of large firms has steadily increased from 20% in 1995 to 38.7% in 2000.

²⁰ See also From Paper Chase to Money Chase: Law School Debt Diverts Road to Public Service Washington D.C., 2002, Equal Justice Works, National Association for Law Placement and the Partnership for Public Service as cited in Missing Pieces IV at 26.. This report examines career choices of graduating law school students and notes the impact of debt load on the occupations they select resulting in a severe shortage of public attorneys whose clientele is largely low-income individuals and families. The report states that “In 2003, 33 million Americans (12% of the population) lived below the federal poverty level ... These people face legal problems associated with their most basic needs - food, housing, health care, personal safety, and education - yet attorneys trained to assist them are in short supply. A 1994 study by the American Bar Association concluded that 80% of low-income people in [the U.S.] do not have access to legal services.” at 9 of Paper Chase.

²¹ For example, see footnote 18 on page 4 of this paper regarding the implications of tuition fee increases on students historically under-represented at the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto.

²² Further, in the University of Toronto data was gathered to provide insight into record of application by Aboriginal peoples and individuals from other equity-seeking groups and was drawn from a data source entitled “Other Admission Statistics, Faculty of Law”.

This exploration contradicted the stated research questions which sought to gather application data from Canadian students applying to law schools and it did not specifically address data on applications from the Aboriginal peoples and individuals from subordinate racialized groups. Further, it was unclear as to why this data was separate from the “Record of Application” data which had been the data source for examining applications to the Faculty of Law. It is critical to understand the relationship between these two data sources in order to ensure they are equally reliable and comparable.

²³ See *Model Equity and Diversity Strategies for Recruitment of Students*, Equity Initiatives and Education Departments, Law Society of Upper Canada, Sept, 2001; *Racial Equality in the Canadian Legal Profession*, Canadian Bar Association, 2000; *Addressing Discriminatory Barriers Facing Aboriginal Law Students and Lawyers*, Law Society of British Columbia, April, 2000

²⁴ However, data on this is available through a study commissioned by the Law Society of Upper Canada’s Equity Initiatives Department and conducted by Professor Michael Ornstein of the Institute of Social Research at York University. This report indicates significant earning differentials between White members of the legal profession and those from Aboriginal and subordinate racialized groups. There may be further research needed to explore these initial indications. For those who are interested, there is every opportunity to do so through a similar study of the recent Census data. This, however, is not addressed in the methodology described in the Provost memo. See *Lawyers in Ontario: Evidence of the 1996 Census*, January, 2001.

²⁵ This appears evident in a number of studies, eg., *Paper Chase*, and Professor David Stager’s review of literature for the U. of T. Provost study on accessibility. These sources are discussed later in this paper.

²⁶ See Canadian Bar Association *Touchstones for Change: Equality, Diversity and Accountability*, 1993, as well as Fiona Kay *Flight From Law: A Competing Risks Model of Departures from Law Firms*, Law and Society Review, Vol. 31, No. 2 [1997] and *Raising the Bar: The Gender Stratification of Law Firm Capital*, American Sociological Review [1998]. See also Joan Brockman *Leaving the Practice of Law*, Alberta Law Review, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, 1994.

²⁷ See Professor Michael Ornstein *Lawyers in Ontario: Evidence from the 1996 Census*, Law Society of Upper Canada 2000, and, Racial Equality Working Group *Racial Equality in the Canadian Legal Profession*, Canadian Bar Association.

- ²⁸ Ibid Ornstein at 11 and 20. The figures for women are based on data related to the Province of Ontario.
- ²⁹ See *Concerns Regarding Discrimination in Attracting Articling Positions*, August 2000, and *Articling Student Feedback Report 2001*.
- ³⁰ For example, see *Barriers and Opportunities Within Law: Women in a Changing Legal Profession*, Fiona Kay et al 1996, and, *Survey of Black Law Students, Black Articling Students, and Recently Called Black Lawyers, July - August, 1992*. These concerns are also supported in more recent articles by Michael St. Patrick Baxter and Professor Camille Nelson who have provided evidence on the barriers faced by African Canadian lawyers in securing opportunities in large firms. See respectively *Black Bay Street Lawyers and Other Oxymora*, 30 Canadian Business Law Journal, 1998, and, *Towards a Bridge: The Role of Legal Academics in the Culture of Private Practice*, paper presented at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law Conference on *Future Directions for Legal Education*, 2000.
- ³¹ For example: (1) White lawyers between the ages of 25 - 29 earn approximately \$6,000 per year more than lawyers from subordinate racialized groups (\$28,000 v. \$33,900) . This gap increases to approximately \$33,000 for lawyers between the ages of 35-39 (\$58,000 v. \$91,200) and to \$40,000 for lawyers between the ages of 40 - 49 (\$70,000 v. \$110,000); (2) Male lawyers between the ages of 30 and 34 earn \$7,900 more than women (\$54,800 v. \$62,700) This rises to \$16,300 for ages 35-39 (\$79,100 v. \$95,400), \$35,000 for ages 40 - 49 (\$84,600 v. \$120,900); and (3) Wage differentials between whites lawyers and those from subordinate racialized communities is quite dramatic in the peak earning years of 50 - 54 with whites earning \$70,000 more. In terms of gender differences amongst the same cohort, men earn \$65,000 more than women#.
- ³² The importance of gathering such perceptions are evident in the *Access: National Education Summit: Post-Secondary Education Issues and Canadian Public Opinion* which notes the results of two Decima Express National Telephone polls conducted in Sept. 2002 and March 2003 identifying that “The majority of Canadians believe that financial barriers are the main reason why academically qualified high school graduates do not go on to university or college” and that “Six out of ten Canadian parents are concerned that their children may not be able to get a university education and they overwhelmingly cite high costs as the reason.”
- ³³ See Neuman inclusion of Professor David Stager’s *Accessibility and Career Choice Review: A Review of Related Literature*, October, 2002, Prepared for the Office of the Vice-President and Provost University of Toronto at 37.
- ³⁴ Ibid at 40.
- ³⁵ Ibid at 42.
- ³⁶ See Neuman inclusion of *Tuition Fees and Accessibility to Law School* at 44 - 45.
- ³⁷ See respectively: L.L. Leslie and P.T. Brinkman, *Washington: American Council on Education* 1988; G.H. Heller *Journal of Higher Education*, Vo. 68 (November/December 1997); Elaine Carey, *Toronto Star*, December 13, 1998; McPherson, M.S. and Schapiro, M.O. *Williamstown MA, Williams Project on the Economics of Higher Education Discussion Paper No.29, 1994*; Thomas T. Mortenson *Iowa: American College Testing Program*, 1990; M. Mumper *State University of New York Press*, 1996; Savoca, E. *Economics of Education Review*, 9(2) 1990; E.P. St. John *Research in Higher Education*, 31(2), 1990; and C. Allen et al *University of Toronto Faculty of Social Work, 1998* (unpublished). These articles were included in a paper entitled *Challenging tuition fee policy: Discussion Paper* which had been drafted by Vilko Zbogor (December 22, 1998) at the time of the previous Provosts’ study on tuition fees. See *Report of the Provost’s Task Force on Tuition and Student Financial Support*, University of Toronto, 1998.. This paper summarizes the above noted literature to point out the negative impact of tuition fees on student career choices as well as on student educational choices. It strongly suggests that the “sticker shock” of tuition fee increases offsets the offering of financial assistance and is more pronounced than the promotion of the availability of such assistance. In fact, one of its research sources is based on a study of students at the University of Toronto Faculty of Social Work which indicates that “...nearly one in every five students felt that it was a realistic possibility that they may be unable to complete their education due to tuition constraints. A greater number, close to 70%, considered the tuition constraints to be a significant hindrance to further studies. Also, close to _ of students said that school tuition was the most significant barrier they faced when it came to their pursuit of higher education (See Zbogor at 21).”
- ³⁸ See respectively: Caledon Institute, July 2002; Ekos Research Associates for the Millennium Scholarship Foundation, March 2003; Hugh MacKenzie and Mark Rosenfeld for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, April, 2002; U.S. Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, June 2002; Harvey Krahn and Marianne Sorensen for the Alberta Learning and Alberta’s Universities and University Colleges
- ³⁹ See *Missing Pieces IV* at 9.

Trickle-down academics:

University policies and Alberta's political culture, 2002-03

By Shannon Phillips and Glen Hughes

THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA remains remarkably dependent on the oil and (particularly) gas industries for provincial revenues, despite the continuing tax breaks and royalty concessions handed out to the industry. Recently, at least some within the government are coming to understand the role post-secondary education (PSE), and universities in particular, must play in the expanding knowledge economy.

Unfortunately, this understanding has generated an even greater determination to harness Alberta's universities to the demands of the market economy and its largest corporate players. As in other jurisdictions where market ideology is ascendant, policy is primarily dictated by the desire to produce additional human and intellectual capital, and the supposed need to funnel this capital efficiently into the marketplace; evidently, goals of economic growth and "innovation" trump public education's role in the social, cultural and civic domains. In Alberta, this is undertaken with peculiar intensity, and with a disturbing lack of democratic dialogue and debate—phenomena to be explored below in a section on Alberta's political culture. In the post-secondary education sector, these developments are evident not only in the provincial government's research regime, but also, more subtly, in the curriculum and culture of our public campuses. Before delving into these ongoing developments, allow us to provide a snapshot of what happened on Alberta campuses this year.

The province of Alberta stood out in a few ways this year. Sponsored research income at our

largest institutions soared, and "partnering" with industry received a few new dollars through federal grant programs and Alberta Ingenuity, a new science and engineering granting council. Always keen to keep extra funding for public institutions short-term and unreliable, the province reinstated the "Access Fund," (\$25 million) a small, conditional funding program or "performance envelope" in this year's budget, continuing the trend of influencing enrolment at the Universities of Alberta and Calgary, so as to better tie those institutions to the marketplace.

Alberta's universities also introduced "differential" tuition – the practice of charging extra fees in supposedly high-demand, high-cost, and/or high-return programs. The province's "tuition fee policy," in place since 1995, had placed an expectation that universities would charge differential fees based on (i) the cost of delivering the programs, and (ii) the expected earning power of graduates. Administrators and Boards of Governors had resisted this market-based pricing model, but succumbed this year under the pressure of sub-inflationary increases to public operating grants,

and enrolment demands in two of Canada's fastest growing cities. Differential tuition is also designed to produce semi- to wholly-private enclaves on public campuses, providing additional budgetary backing for the re-branding of business schools under the names of well-heeled private donors.¹ While fees for such programs are not technically deregulated, Alberta's current tuition policy regulates only the *average* annual increases, allowing universities to distribute that permitted burden in any way they see fit. The other aspect of the tuition fee policy, the much-vaunted but ineffectual "30% cap" (tuition as a percentage of institutional net operating expenditures), applies on the institutional level, not to specific programs or faculties. At the universities of Calgary and Alberta, massive differentiated increases to these small-enrolment faculties had only small dampening effects on the across-the-board increases seen by students in all other faculties. In other words, public universities in Alberta are free to create essentially privatized, cost-recovery programs, despite the illusion of "regulated" tuition.²

Bill 43: The Post-Secondary Learning Act

Bill 43 topped off the year's policy shifts, signaling the provincial desire for further tuition increases. Where the previous Act contained the aforementioned "30% cap," the new Bill moves the cap on tuition to the regulations, where it can be easily tinkered with behind closed doors.³ The Act is also designed to create an efficient, seamless learning system (Campus Alberta), pulling colleges, technical institutes, and universities under one Act and further obscuring the important differences in purpose and mandate between these institutions. The Act also requires universities to submit specific, focused mandates to be approved by the Minister, and restricts the board from carrying on any activities, including offering academic programs, that do not fall within that mandate. The simple-minded logic of specialization and the di-

vision of labour are creeping into higher education, and the days of public universities serving their communities by offering a comprehensive array of programs are clearly over. Perhaps most disturbingly, the Act seems to envision the possibility of the establishment of new universities that would be exempted from the legislative provisions regarding Boards of Governors, General Faculties Councils, etc. The intent of this section is unclear, but it may be setting the legislative stage for private, for-profit universities—the second act of a poorly conceived Tory power play that began with giving the DeVry Institute of Technology the ability to grant/sell baccalaureate degrees.

Bill 43 contains provisions for undermining the political legitimacy, power and rights of those who might oppose the commercialization/marketization agenda at Alberta's universities. For example, it maintains the effective power of the Minister to appoint nearly half the members of the board. These members are technically "representative of the public," but in practice tend to represent a narrower range of interests. It also explicitly outlaws the right of graduate students and academic staff to strike, fails to provide a seat on the Board for university faculty associations, and provides the foundation for the for the Board to initiate the auditing, investigation, and dissolution of elected student councils. The Tory government's preference for control over the riskier venture of democratic pluralism and the autonomy of civil society is evident in the Bill.

I. Research

In 2002, Alberta universities led the country in research intensity, which is measured as sponsored research income per full-time faculty. Alberta also tops the country in sponsored research per capita, and research income per university.⁴ Sponsored research dollars come from both the public and private sectors – from domestic and international companies, as well as foundations like the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research and Alberta Ingenuity, a new engineering and sci-

ence granting council established with a \$500 million endowment in the 2000 budget.

Alberta's provincial R and D strategy is coordinated by the Alberta Science and Research Authority (ASRA), whose board is comprised of private sector decision makers, charged with identifying key investment strategies in three areas of research – the life sciences, energy, and information communication technology (ICT). Provincial granting council monies are explicitly intended to facilitate the attraction of other sponsors and additional funding sources – from the federal government or the private sector. Furthermore, Ingenuity and the Energy, Forestry, and Agricultural Research Institutes all run programs whereby researchers are “loaned” to the private sector, in an attempt to “conduct[...]applied research in an industrial setting and in turn help small companies gain additional research at low cost.”⁵ Other programs aid in recruiting recent graduate students to meet the needs of Alberta industry, while still others provide large grants for market research and networking, in order to facilitate technology commercialization.

Tellingly, Alberta has no social sciences and humanities counterparts to the long list of councils and institutes who support “marketable” research.

The fact that Alberta's universities are leading the country in sponsored research income is, in some sense, not particularly interesting or unique. The research and commercialization agenda is not specific to Alberta, but part of a broader federal and even international agenda focused on refashioning public institutions such that they better serve the needs of capital. With the ascendance of the so-called “knowledge economy,” states are increasingly investing in research and development, as knowledge and patents are easily transferred by multinational corporations through space and over time. Contrast this agenda with the welfare state, in which states invested in universities because postsecondary institutions trained people and citizens for participation in the marketplace and society. Indeed, people are not as portable as knowl-

edge in today's global economy. Thus, research that is easily put to use in the private sector merits a larger share of state investment, and the educative function of universities is increasingly rendered a user-pay, commodified service. In order to prove this point, it is useful to follow the money trail. Sponsored research funding for the U of A increased 16% between 2000 and 2001, largely due to new federal and provincial granting council moneys, *not* direct funding from the private sector. As a matter of fact, the proportion of private research income has remained exactly the same – under 30% of research income at the U of A – since 1992. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada's pledge to triple commercialization efforts over the next decade means that taxpayer-funded research will be directed towards transferring knowledge and products to the private sector. Significant new government investment in universities is for research, not students. The per-student operating grant to the U of A has dropped by 29% since 1992.

II. Key performance indicators and curriculum

Campus culture and curriculum

Like numerous other jurisdictions, the Alberta government has made some of its support for universities conditional on their achieving certain performance targets, or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Leaving aside serious questions about their effectiveness as a management tool (particularly where their total value has typically been less than 1% of institutional revenue) and the appropriateness of their use in public-sector management, KPIs accomplish something more fundamental: they institutionalize the very dubious assumption that the public should expect short-term “returns” on their (economic) investment in universities.⁶

This lack of attention to broad social and cultural purposes of public higher education is formalized in the government's recently developed but forever mutating system of performance indica-

tors (“PIs”) for universities. The tendency to implement PI systems has itself been identified as a part of a movement to bring previously autonomous universities to heel and to harness them to identified governmental and economic purposes. And in terms of the content of Alberta’s system, there is no effort or ability to measure or reward the sector’s contribution on these fronts.⁷

Alberta’s *Performance Based Funding Mechanism* is divided into “Learning” and “Research” Components. The former consists of five indicators meant to measure three goals: Responsiveness (graduate employment rate⁸ and graduates’ program satisfaction levels), Accessibility (aggregate enrolment levels), and Affordability (administrative cost control, and maximizing “enterprise” revenue). The latter consists of supposed measures of Excellence (success in winning research council awards, citation impact, community and industry support of research, and research “enterprise” revenue).

It is important to note that even the indicators that seem student- or academic- focused, such as measuring student satisfaction with their program of study, are based on an explicit assumption is that the program is or ought to be measured against employment outcomes. This preference for professional and vocational training—and the economic “returns” presumably flowing from them—over general arts/liberal education is evident in both tuition policies and Access funding and will be discussed below.

Even where the Alberta Ministry of Learning seeks most consciously to highlight the social and cultural benefits of adult learning, as in the following rhetorical flourishes contained in departmental promotional documents, they are clearly ancillary to the main point of economic development:

The benefits of adult learning extend beyond the positive economic outcomes. The creation of knowledge, skills, competencies and aptitudes relevant to economic activity also affect social behaviour. Spin-off benefits affect public health, crime, the environment, parenting, political and commu-

nity participation and social cohesion, which in turn feed back into economic well-being.⁹

[Departmental] Mission: Alberta Learning’s leadership and work with partners build a globally recognized lifelong learning community that enables Albertans to be responsible, caring, creative, self-reliant and contributing members of a knowledge-based and prosperous society.¹⁰

Only by privileging economic outcomes over social and cultural goals—or by reinterpreting the latter to conform to and support the former—can the Ministry achieve its goals of being responsive to and building “effective working relationships with partners.” It is apparent from the nature of the KPI system that such “partners” are primarily *corporate* partners. This appearance is confirmed by the fact that the Klein government’s earliest planning document guiding the reorganization of the “adult learning system”—*New Directions for Adult Learning in Alberta (1994)*—proclaimed that the system should “focus on programs that address the needs of the economy.” Peter Rae has pointed out that this language “was not carried forward into the final document due to concerns voiced by respondents that ‘the focus on the labour market was too narrow and ignored or reduced the value of a general education’.”¹¹ Despite the tempered language and the increasingly sophisticated rhetoric of the new Ministry of Learning, the policy and funding support for this aspect of the drive to privatize the higher education sector is apparent.

Access funding or, “bums in seats”

The key component of the misplaced obsession with professional/vocational education is the Alberta government’s “Access Fund.”¹² After being cut in the 2002 budget, this fund was reinstated in 2003. In recent years the value of all “Access Fund” monies has been in the neighborhood of \$10-20 million per year at the larger Alberta universities.

The Access Fund involves the government providing restricted or “envelope” funding to increase institutional capacity temporarily in areas desig-

nated by the government as high priority. Rather than allowing institutional decision makers to manage an adequate, unrestricted grant and respond to student needs and demands, the Access Fund provides the leverage to affect students' program choices and the resulting supply of human capital

At the university level, "high priority" areas are those in which established corporate interests have a stake (computer and information technologies, commerce or management, engineering, etc.). In other instances, the government provides this restricted money to increase the capacity of programs that funnel graduates into otherwise underfunded and nominally public programs such as health or education. Rarely does any of this restricted money find its way into core arts and science programs. Access funding announcements often seem carefully timed to pre-empt or deflect public criticism, as was the case this year, when access funding was re-announced in the days before the final 02-03 budget surplus came it at just under \$2 billion, despite the pleas of the public education sector for more funding.

Enrolment trends

Restricted funding to support increased enrolment in selected disciplines is an obvious way that the Alberta government has attempted to undermine the autonomy of universities and to constrain or influence the academic decisions of university students. Another way this occurs is through tuition policies. High costs and average debt loads of roughly \$20,000 have the effect of instrumentalizing higher education choices: as costs soar, so too does the pressure to ensure (economic) returns on that investment. Treating higher education as a high-priced private commodity will cause prospective students to look to vocational or other programs associated with an identifiable career path.

While there may very well be other, more diffuse cultural causes of these shifts, targeted grants to selectively support program capacity and pricing policies surely play a major role in enrolment trends at Alberta universities. For example, faculty enrolments at the University of Calgary between 1991 and 2000 are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1

| <u>Faculty</u> | <u>1991</u> | <u>2000</u> | <u>%Change</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| Communications and Culture* | 5505 | 6248 | + 13.5 |
| Education | 1099 | 862 | - 21.5 |
| Engineering | 1318 | 2076 | + 57.5 |
| Fine Arts | 608 | 486 | - 20.0 |
| Humanities | 608 | 558 | - 8.2 |
| Kinesiology | 509 | 561 | + 10.2 |
| Law | 203 | 221 | + 8.9 |
| Management | 1016 | 1636 | + 61.0 |
| Medicine | 583 | 669 | + 14.8 |
| Nursing | 327 | 482 | + 47.0 |
| Science | 1349 | 1898 | + 40.7 |
| Social Science | 2395 | 2302 | - 3.8 |
| Social Work | 349 | 362 | + 3.7 |

*Note: The Faculty of Communications and Culture was, until 2003, a "holding" faculty for most incoming students until they applied to their faculty of choice in year 3. Some students of course would choose to stay in that faculty. Enrolment increases in that faculty likely reflect general institutional enrolment trends rather than an exception to the rule of decreasing enrolment in traditional arts and science faculties.

The Klein revolution and Alberta's universities: Hands vs. head

As Klein's own political rhetoric has made clear, he has little time for the affairs of the mind. Even before it became fashionable again in middle-America or Ontario to claim the mantle of "common-sense," Klein was making a political virtue of his lack of formal education. This explicit "anti-intellectualism" resonated well in a province whose dominant self-identity consists in a combination of prairie grit, pioneering Protestantism, and an almost single-minded pursuit of material prosperity. Importantly, this populist, entrepreneurial, individualistic identity and the policies it spawned had little room or appreciation for *politics*. For the purposes of this article, we understand politics to be competing ideas and interests, which require the maintenance of a vibrant, egalitarian, and explicitly public space of civic activities and diverse interests or solidarities. However, Alberta's provincial identity has instead been based on an antipathy towards politics as we define it. As Gordon Laird has noted, "the West wasn't really designed to include politics...this was the fantasy of "Minimal Government"—civil society built around property, happy consumers and family values..."¹³

Throughout the 1990s, the Alberta Conservatives led the way in North America in changing public expectations of politics and government. In Ralph's world, genuinely democratic politics are too costly, messy and inefficient: the false populism of Klein's personality combined with highly structured and theatrical political "summits" have reduced the role of the legislature, the opposition parties, the press, and other civil society groups in ensuring good governance. Perhaps most critical of all, the concept of the "public good" (which university scholarship is supposed to serve) is suppressed, forcing universities to justify their existence based on how many patents were awarded, how many spin-off companies created, how much private-sector investment in university research was

created, and how satisfied the private sector is with university graduates.

Klein's Alberta, then, of necessity, had little room or appreciation for the traditional activities of universities—or for their vital role in informing political space or structuring the debate within it. Few in the Conservative party had a real understanding of the activities of universities or the scholars who traditionally governed them. This guaranteed that the government bought into the dichotomy, continuously propagated by the business community, between the "academy" (the idle world of ideas, theory, and leisure) and the "real-world" (the world of action, practicality, and vigorous male energy).¹⁴ Asked recently about how his ongoing studies in communication were going, Klein reinforced the distinction between book learning and the way things "really work."

It is no surprise that privately sponsored research or government/market interventions in curricular offerings should thrive in such an environment. Commercial research is explicit in its exclusion of undergraduate students and teaching – it does not contribute to smaller classes, university accessibility, or more time for professors to spend with students. Indeed, commercial research reinforces polar opposites: class sizes have ballooned as faculty salaries and recruitment have stagnated, given that university resources have been concentrated on the indirect costs of research. The rising indirect costs of research have caused general operating budgets to skyrocket, allowing Alberta's universities to jack tuition at the fastest rate in the country, while remaining compliant with the 30% cap. As costs increase, so too do concerns about low- and middle-income accessibility for undergraduate programs. Last, as research gains prominence, so do professors who spend most of their time in pursuit of time and money for research. The results are a decline in office hours and tenured faculty teaching introductory courses – both of which contribute to educational quality.

Alberta's universities are interacting with the private sector at an accelerated rate, through research sponsorships, reliance on corporate and

alumni donations, and tying curriculum and course offerings more closely with the private sector. This is not without consequence for Albertans, given the concurrent degradation of the undergraduate experience over the past decade. Resistance can and should come from a variety of sources – from public intellectuals, faculty associations, and student organizations. The extent to which academics and students shy away from asking the difficult questions about the commercialization of our universities is the extent to which the agenda has already triumphed over the mission and goals of the public university.

Endnotes

- ¹ For more information please contact the authors directly, or refer to previous editions of *Missing Pieces*.
- ² The University of Calgary Faculty of Management rebranded this past year as The Haskayne School of Business after a multi-million dollar donation from Richard Haskayne. Richard Haskayne now sits on the School's advisory body. There is also discussion by senior administrators at the University of Calgary regarding the increased brand value purportedly associated with high cost programs. At the U of A, the "Funding Solutions Taskforce," released in late 2002, recommended that the University expand "professional" programs that operate on a full cost-recovery basis. The next recommendation in the report is to cut undergrad course offerings and sessional instructors, and to consolidate lectures into larger classes. Quality is therefore increasingly contingent upon a program's capacity for cost-recovery and revenue generation.
- ³ The 30% cap will no longer constrain institutional tuition increases. Instead, if indications from the Ministry hold true, it will merely serve as an administrative marker or threshold: institutions over the cap will be subject to a different, though not necessarily more restrictive, *annual* tuition cap policy. The provincial Ministry of Learning has also signalled its intention to deregulate tuition for "distance learning" programs, although the formal policy has not yet been released.

- ⁴ Research InfoSource, Inc. Research InfoSource is a private research and development consulting firm. 'Canada's Top Research University Report' is available at www.researchinfosource.com
- ⁵ www.
- ⁶ For a particularly unfortunate version of this assumption in the area of research, see Paul Kedrosky, "Low Payoff from Academic R&D," *National Post*, June 21, 2003.
- ⁷ For an attempt to construct a system that assess the "civic" contributions of higher education, see Jane Wellman, "Contributing to the Public Good: Assessing and Accounting for the Civic Contributions of Higher Education." Institute for Higher Education Working Paper, 1999.
- ⁸ As part of the Ministry of Learning's own self-assessment exercises, it measures employment rates of graduates as well as the degree to which employers are satisfied with the "academic/technical" skills of post-secondary graduates. While this measure attempts to cover the skills of both technical institutes and universities, their conflation here is telling.
- ⁹ Alberta Learning, "Profile of Alberta's Adult Learning System: A Context for Discussion." September 2001, p. 2. Interestingly, the three graphs accompanying this text relate to (i) employment rates, (ii) average earnings and (iii) standard of living.
- ¹⁰ Alberta Learning, "Annual Report 2000," p. 6.
- ¹¹ Peter Rae, "New Directions: Privatization and Higher Education in Alberta." *CJHE* v. 26(2), 1996, p. 73.
- ¹² "Misplaced" because the best evidence available suggests (i) that university graduates have lower unemployment rates and higher incomes than graduates of other sectors, (ii) that general skills learned in core arts and science programs teach skills that enable graduates to adapt to changing labour markets and multiple career paths, and (iii) that initial earnings advantages of some university graduates from vocationally oriented programs erodes over time. (source).
- ¹³ Laird, Gordon (1998), p 11.
- ¹⁴ Jensen and Andrews, "Philosophy of Higher Education," (guest lecture at the University of Calgary Learning Commons, February 20, 2001).

Rethinking and remaking academic freedom

By Claire Polster

THE FOLLOWING TALK was prepared for a session on academic freedom and the special challenges in the sciences that was part of a discussion series organized by a concerned group of faculty with support from the University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association in the Spring of 2002.

The session was inspired by the particular experience of Dr. Nancy Olivieri at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, as well as the general growth in the number of research linkages between corporations and academics. The set-up, title, and reflection questions for the session catalyzed an unexpected shift in my thinking about the current state of university/industry links. Rather than focusing only on the problems inherent in these links, I turned my attention to the new discourse about these links, and how it is itself becoming part of these problems. The text of the presentation is reproduced below.

* * *

What I would like to address today are not simply the problems that are produced for the sciences (and other academic areas) by university/industry research links. I also want to address how we have started **talking** about the problems caused by university/industry links, particularly since the Olivieri case, and how we are proposing to resolve them. Without attributing intention or blame, it seems to me that a new framework for looking at this issue is being put into place, one that is built around a particular conception of academic freedom. And although this reframing of the problem is very enticing, particularly to academics, I will argue that

neither it, nor the strategies that flow from it, serve the needs and interests of academics, universities, or the general public. In what follows, I discuss the nature of this new framework, how it works, why it is problematic, and how we should respond to it. To set up the discussion, however, I first talk briefly about the conception of framing that informs my analysis and then spend some time on the general problem that I see being reframed.

The conception of framing that I use in this paper draws loosely on the work of Canadian sociologist Dorothy Smith (Smith, 1990, 1999). Smith suggests that one way in which people in our society are ruled is through the use of ideologies—or frameworks—that enable those in power to reconstruct people’s experiences in ways that render them more amenable to management. This is accomplished by producing accounts of people’s experience in which only certain aspects or particulars of their experience are represented, and in which the connectives or intrinsic links among these particulars are severed and sometimes reformulated. The effect of this narrowing and reorganizing of people’s experiences is that they become subject to alternative interpretations which then require and legitimize different forms of intervention. According to Smith, these forms of in-

terpretation and intervention generally serve the needs of those doing the ruling, rather than those who are ruled.

One example Smith provides to illustrate this process involves two letters that describe a confrontation between the police and street people in Berkeley in 1968 (Smith, 1999: 50-51). In the first, a witness describes in detail how the police roughly searched a young man who was then sent on up the street. This event is offered as evidence that the police were trying to provoke a reaction from the crowd that would justify harassing and arresting them. The second letter, which is issued from the mayor's office after an internal investigation of the event, provides a reformulation of the first. It extracts only certain particulars from the event and inserts new connectives between them. It tells us that the young man was a juvenile who was already known to the police. The letter also notes that he was later arrested and pleaded guilty to the charge of being a minor in possession of alcoholic beverages. The effect of the mayor's letter is to reframe the event and to instruct the reader to understand it in a very different way. Rather than harassing innocent victims, the police were identifying and redressing a crime. Hence, rather than protesting police provocation as did our misguided witness, we should rest assured that the police force is doing its work responsibly and competently. Below, I will suggest that an analogous (though not identical) form of reframing is taking place with respect to our understanding of the problems inherent in university/industry research links. Before I discuss how our conception of the problems is being reframed, however, I need to talk about the problems themselves.

Both my own research and that of others on university/ industry links suggests that these links contribute to very significant transformations in what our universities do and in what our universities are¹. Perhaps the most obvious impact of these links relates to knowledge production in the university. In both direct and indirect ways, these links transform the selection and conception of academic research projects, skewing the academic research

agenda towards areas of industrial application and economic relevance. University/industry research links also transform the execution of academic research by introducing new norms, practices, and exigencies into the research process, such as increased secrecy and competition in research, or the need to work with shorter time lines and an eye to profitability. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, corporate links transform the ways in which and conditions under which academic research is used. Rather than a public good that is freely shared with all who can use it, university research is increasingly being privatized and commercialized and thus rendered accessible only to those who can afford to pay to use it.

In addition to its knowledge production function, corporate links also produce and reinforce changes in the more general nature and operations of the university. Indeed, the more universities work with business, the more they are required and encouraged to adopt values and practices that predominate in the private sector. This shift is perhaps most clearly reflected in the erosion of collegialism and institutional democracy in the university, as administrators centralize more power, make more decisions in secret, and by-pass established collegial structures and processes—often in the name of better serving corporate clients. However, it is reflected in many other places as well, such as in the corporate language that is being adopted by our universities, in the displacement of academic by economic criteria in the allocation of institutional resources, and in new practices and criteria for evaluating and rewarding academics which are placing growing emphasis and value on entrepreneurial activities of various kinds.

The third and final impact of corporate links that I will mention is that they produce a fundamental shift not in how our universities do their work, but in the work that our universities do. Rather than simply doing research for business, or operating as does business, universities are progressively becoming knowledge businesses in their own right. Increasingly, universities and the academics within them are getting involved in lucrative en-

trepreneurial activities of their own: establishing commercial development offices, selling ringside seats to leading-edge research, setting up spin-off companies, licensing valuable intellectual property, etc. And rather than small-scale ventures that are peripheral to the activities of academics and universities, these initiatives are consuming more and more of their money, effort, time, and other resources. This shift is a very important part of the discussion of corporate/university links. Among other things, it points to the fact that these links do not only come into the university from the outside, but also go out of the university from the inside.

Two additional points about the impact of corporate links on the university are worth emphasizing. First, the three kinds of changes that I've just described are not discrete, but inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing. Second, the impacts of corporate links on our universities are not additive, they are transformative. That is, these links are not an "add-on" to the university, such that after their establishment we have the old university plus these links. Rather, they are an "add-into" the university that produces qualitative changes which pervade its multiple and interacting aspects and dimensions, including its culture, its system of governance, its methods of allocating resources, its reward structures, and so forth.

Thus far, I've addressed some of the impacts of corporate links on our universities. One final piece of the problem I need to lay out has to do with the implications of these changes. Although corporate links have brought some benefits to some corporations, academics, parts of universities, and citizens, it seems to me that these benefits are far outweighed by the costs. In particular, Canadian citizens do not benefit much from these links, as in various ways they erode the ability and willingness of universities and academics to serve the public interest.

For instance, although the Canadian public still pays the lion's share of the costs of university research, they are getting diminishing returns on their investment, as the research they support in-

creasingly becomes the private property of corporations, universities, and/or academics (Atkinson-Grosjean, 1999). Should various members of the public wish to access the results or products of the research they helped pay for, they must pay for them again. This is assuming that research results are accessible, which may not be the case for a variety of reasons, including exclusive licensing agreements and prohibitively high monopoly prices. Not only may the public not benefit directly from the results of academic research, but they may also fail to benefit from it indirectly, such as when researchers refrain, either by necessity or choice, from sharing their knowledge and expertise with various publics in a variety of fora, including the students in their classrooms, the audiences at public lectures, or the readership or viewership of various media.

There are many other ways in which public benefit from university research is being diminished. There is a lot of evidence which suggests that corporate involvement in academic research may slow the pace of knowledge production in the university, as people work in secret as opposed to sharing research results. Evidence also suggests that corporate involvement may harm the quality of knowledge production in the university, as areas are pursued not for their scientific merit, but for their commercial potential, and as the temptations and pressures to quickly produce desirable results increase (Turk, 2000). It is also important to emphasize that, as the research agenda is skewed in the direction of business needs and interests, research that is needed by other groups, particularly disadvantaged groups who cannot afford to sponsor research, is not being done in the short term. Even more seriously, the ability to do this kind of research may atrophy or disappear in the long term.

Finally, at the same time that our universities become less and less useful to more and more of us, corporate links are also rendering our universities less trustworthy and reliable. As academics and universities become more involved with business ventures of others or of their own, they become less able to protect the public from harm, as the

Olivieri case illustrates. They also become less **will-****ing** to protect the public from harm, as the case of David Healy and the growing number of scandals involving university business ventures—both legal and fraudulent—suggest².

Ultimately, the corporatization of the university threatens to leave our society without a disinterested source of expertise to which we can turn for assessments or advice on important social, economic, and political questions. More than simply eroding the university's public service mission, it might be fair to say that corporate links actually serve to invert it: rather than using academic resources to serve the public's needs and interests, universities are using public resources to serve their own and other private needs and interests.

Although this discussion has been both brief and simplified, I hope it is clear why I and some others have long argued that the best—indeed the only—response to university/industry research links is to get rid of them. As these links do not simply produce particular problems for the university, but rather fundamentally or organically transform its very nature and function, it is not possible to redress their impact through any other means, particularly through mechanical means, such as regulation. You can imagine my surprise and concern, then, with the growing consensus that has developed around the strategy of regulation which has become almost unanimous since the Olivieri case. Whereas it had been my tendency to see support for the regulatory response as a simple error in judgment on the part of various people and organizations, in preparing this paper, I realized that it is actually something more significant. It is a clue that the issue of university/industry links is being redefined. It is a symptom that the problem is being reframed.

Particularly since the Olivieri case, the issue of university/industry links is being remade in a way that is similar to the story of the activist and the police that I referred to earlier. That is, only particulars of a certain nature are being extracted from the situation, and the intrinsic connectives or interactions between the selected particulars—and

those that are not selected—are either minimized or broken. As the size and complexity of the problem is reduced, it appears capable of resolution by new means. Indeed, it appears to mandate resolution by new means.

So what are the particulars that are extracted from the larger whole and presented as **the** problems posed by university/industry links? It seems to me that these particulars are those that have bearing on a certain conception of academic freedom: they are those particulars that undermine the conditions necessary for academics to carry out their work professionally, ethically, and with integrity. Some of the key issues that have been raised include overly long publication delays, restrictions on academics' ability to publish their results irrespective of their findings, restrictions on academics' ability to share information in a timely way with relevant parties (such as patients in drug trials), other forms of undue corporate influence over the academics working for or with them, and the trivial nature of some corporate-sponsored research (see, for example, Lewis et. al.). The issue of disclosure has received quite a bit of attention as well, the assumption being that if we are aware that academics have some stake in the research they are doing for corporations, they and/or we will be more vigilant of overt and particularly covert biases that may taint research processes or outcomes.

It is not my intention to suggest that these issues are by any means trivial or that they do not need to be redressed in some way. My point is that the extraction of *only* these particulars from the much larger whole of which they are a small part diminishes our understanding of the problems posed by university/industry links in both quantitative and qualitative terms. The focus on only this subset of issues excludes from the discussion and renders invisible many other important issues, such as the skewing of the academic research agenda, the transformation of university governance, and the growing privatization of publicly-subsidized knowledge. Further, the presentation of the selected issues as discrete problems that are connected only in the sense of potentially threatening academic

freedom conceals the intrinsic linkages between them and between them and the many other issues that are dropped out of the discussion. It also conceals the multiple and complex ways in which all these issues interact. The combined result is that we cannot see **that**, nor can we possibly deduce **how**, corporate links are producing a fundamental transformation in what our universities do and in what they are. All we can see is that these links produce a series of narrow, discrete, and technical problems, in a university that remains essentially unchanged.

Further, as the problem of university/industry links is thus reframed, it becomes capable of resolution, and demands resolution, by new means. The problem no longer calls out for radical responses, such as the elimination of university/industry links. Indeed, this response now not only seems unnecessary, it seems wildly disproportionate and inappropriate to the problem. The logical and appropriate response to a series of discrete and technical problems is a series of discrete and technical regulations. The only remaining questions, which are the ones that the Olivieri case has opened up to debate, are regulation of what kinds, at what levels, etc. What is perhaps most sad about this reframing is that, while we are putting—and will have to put—great amounts of energy into regulating university/industry links, we will not even begin to redress a whole slew of problems produced and reinforced by these links, much less the conversion of our universities from public-serving institutions into knowledge businesses. On the contrary, we will be facilitating and legitimizing this development, both by establishing the rules under which it may proceed and by producing the illusion, not the reality, that all associated problems are firmly under control.

Beyond restricting our general understanding of the impacts of university/industry links, and promoting an inadequate response to them, the ongoing reframing of the issue accomplishes a number of other things. In the interests of time, I briefly address only three of these.

First, this reframing transforms and narrows our conception of the public interest in academic research. It implies that the public interest is served if and when we protect academics' ability to conduct sponsored research professionally, responsibly, and ethically—that is, if and when academics cannot be forced or pressured by corporations into betraying or harming the public in some way. While this is surely a necessary condition of serving the public interest, it is by no means a sufficient one. On the one hand, it is quite a different thing to **enable** academics to work in a professional and ethical manner than it is to **oblige** them to work in this manner, particularly in a context where entrepreneurial endeavours of all kinds—including of academics' own—are strongly promoted and rewarded in our universities. More importantly, however, serving the public interest involves far more than not being unprofessional or unethical in our research. It involves being aware of and responsive to a variety of social needs in a multiplicity of ways, which, as I noted earlier, corporate links render academics and universities progressively less able and less willing to do.

Put differently, a focus on corporate threats to academic professionalism and integrity promotes a uni-dimensional and reactive conception of the public interest in academic research, as opposed to a multi-dimensional and pro-active one. In the process, the public is repositioned as a passive recipient or object of university research, as opposed to the ultimate owner and subject of university research, and the university's growing attention and responsiveness to private needs and interest is normalized, as opposed to being opened up to critique and challenge.

As well as our conception of the public interest, this reframing also narrows and transforms our conception of academic freedom. Specifically, it reduces academic freedom from a condition of work that is collectively produced and sustained into a set of individual, professional rights. This is problematic for a number of reasons. For one, true autonomy in our work requires much more than our having a series of rights and obligations that

sustains and legitimizes our professional status and privilege. Above all, it requires our active and collective involvement in shaping the larger context or environment within which all our work is carried out. In encouraging us to focus on defining and defending our individual, professional rights through regulation, this reframing diverts our attention and energies from the multiple ways in which corporate links are reducing our collective autonomy by eroding academic collegialism and institutional democracy, skewing the allocation and availability of institutional resources, and transforming methods and criteria for evaluating and rewarding academic work. Thus, rather than leading us to protect our academic freedom, this reframing may lead us to think and act in ways that ultimately serve to compromise it.

It is worth further noting that the conception of academic freedom as a set of individual, professional rights helps to reinforce a growing tendency among academics to see themselves as independent knowledge professionals as opposed to public servants. In the long run, this stance may also curtail if not imperil academics' freedom, as a public that derives decreasing benefit from the university provides decreasing support to it.

My final point is that both separately, and particularly when combined, the two dynamics I just described serve to further limit the discursive and political space available both to the general public and to academics to critique and resist the corporatization of our universities. Thus, more than simply impairing our understanding of, and response to, the problems of university/industry links, the reframing I've been discussing actually serves to entrench and intensify them. Not only is it not helpful in dealing with the problem of corporate links, it is itself becoming part of the problem. All the more reason for us to reject both it and the strategy of regulation that it recommends to us.

In closing, I would say that the special challenges for the sciences in terms of university/industry links are twofold. First, we need to resist the temptations of the regulatory approach that

seems to promise us our cake of corporate collaboration and the sustained public support that would allow us to eat it too. This temptation keeps us from recognizing and defending our true interests as academics, which are inextricably related to our recognizing and defending a broad conception of the public interest.

The second challenge is to deepen our understanding of the impacts of university/industry research links in order to devise effective strategies to free ourselves from them. While by no means an easy task, this is still very much a goal that we can achieve. Not only may the process be far less costly than many of us might think, but even the costs might yield a number of benefits, such as promoting more collaborative, innovative, and well-rounded research.

I would like to end with a favourite quote from Wittgenstein, who once said that the way to solve the problem you see in life is to live your life in such a way that the problem disappears. Let's not get rid of the problems of university/industry research links by thinking these problems away. Let's instead get rid of the problems by doing away with university/industry research links.

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Endnotes

¹ The sources on which the following claims are based are too numerous to note here. They are substantiated in my own published work, as well as the work of other Canadian academics such as Janice Newson,

Neil Tudiver, and the many contributors to the CCPA's Education Project. These claims are further supported by the research and publications of national organizations such as the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Canadian Federation of Students as well as the work of academics in other countries, such as Sheila Slaughter, Larry Leslie, and Lawrence Soley from the United States.

² For a disturbing account of some of the scandals that have emerged in the United States, see Press and Washburn, 2000.

Trouble with the commercialisation of university research:

How our campus pub became a Coke bar...

By Marc Spooner & Tanya Shaw

Introduction

The federal government's misguided neglect and under-funding of universities is one of the greatest challenges facing Canadian post-secondary education and the free pursuit of knowledge in the 21st century. According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers [CAUT], "when adjusted for inflation and population growth, the federal cash contribution available for post-secondary education in fiscal 2003 is estimated to be more than 50% lower than in 1992/93" (CAUT, 2004). Government under-funding is the major factor underlying the new commercial ethos taking over our once largely independent universities. As Tudiver (1999) states in *Universities for Sale* "when universities appealed for money to replace what they were losing from government, business people seized the opportunity to capture immediate and direct material rewards" (p. 3).

At most Canadian universities it does not take an extensive tour of the campus to notice how things have changed. Instead of once-proud halls of learning filled with scholars and comprised of facilities whose clear focus it was to generate and disseminate knowledge, one is now more likely to see "clients" surrounded by a retail atmosphere and buildings that are more in tune with the generation of profits than new knowledge. As quietly as pick-pockets, corporations have been creeping onto

our campuses, stirring little notice as they chip away at the heart of academic integrity. Now, as a direct result of government under-funding, we are in grave danger of losing the oldest pillar of civil society: the academy, dedicated to the free generation and exchange of ideas. Universities that operate in the public interest – as places where humans can engage in free thought, curiosity, and creativity – are steadily being replaced by directed, market-driven research and modeled as no more than corporate R & D branches. Simply put, our universities are being sold off, with society left to pay the ultimate price.

Background

The 1980s and 1990s were not kind to universities as they struggled to maintain core programs while faced with increasing enrolment and decreasing governmental support. But perhaps the most profound shift in Canadian universities occurred in 1999. That year the Expert Panel on the Commercialization of University Research added a fourth role, "innovation", to the university's traditional three roles of teaching, research, and community service. It defined innovation as "bringing new goods and services to the marketplace" (Advisory Council of Science and Technology, 1999, p. 1). The Canadian university landscape was dramatically transformed. Funding Councils are now

actively helping universities to form public-private-partnerships, and at the government's urging, campuses across Canada are enthusiastically encouraging their faculty to seek patents and licensing agreements. The current budget advances this agenda by seeking to speed up the rate at which university-based research is commercialised (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, [AUCC], 2004). In fact, the 2004 budget has as a goal to triple the annual financing of programs "directly supporting commercialisation over the next three years" (AUCC, 2004, p. 4).

One might also be surprised to learn just how early in graduate school the corporate "innovation" indoctrination begins. From the outset of their research, graduate students are clearly and regularly reminded that innovation, defined as a marketable service or product, is what will generate recognition and funds. Incentive programs implicitly shift the direction of research that takes place on our campuses; take NSERC's "Innovation Challenge Award" as the newest example:

This is a new award being launched this year by NSERC and the Canadian Science and Technology Growth Fund (CSTGF). Students doing graduate studies in the natural sciences, engineering or computer sciences are encouraged to take a new look at their thesis work and identify, by written essay, what potential product or service could be implemented through application of their research results. Universities play a crucial role in the innovation cycle in Canada. It is hoped that master's or PhD students in their last year, or recent graduates, with the help of their Industrial Liaison Offices (ILO) (or equivalent), will gain an appreciation of the real world application of their research. (Downloaded at http://www.nserc.ca/award_e.asp?nav=ica, April 18, 2004)

On the surface these incentive programs appear to be interesting and welcome opportunities for graduate students to earn a few needed extra dollars; in actuality, they send a clear message about the type and direction of projects that new grads should be planning and undertaking. The innova-

tion agenda helps to bring into focus the wider issue of a corporatised campus.

The many forms of corporatisation

The corporate transformation of Canadian universities usually reveals itself in a variety of overlapping areas: corporate models of governance, broad corporate sponsorship and product exclusivity deals, and corporate research and teaching agendas. Corporations actively exert control over findings and co-opt the public's faith in the notion of disinterested, unbiased university research and researchers. What follows is a brief examination of the various corporate-campus machinations. Please keep in mind that this is meant as an overview of the topics with some concrete examples; however these issues and the individual cases are well-documented in recent books including *The Corporate Campus* (Turk, 2000) and *Universities for Sale* (Tudiver, 1999).

The shopping mall campus

For some departments and faculties on campus, the university student has been replaced by a "client" purchasing a "service". Grafting a business-style consumer-oriented relationship onto higher learning represents a fundamental shift in the discourse surrounding university teaching and research. Higher learning cannot be viewed as a simple two-dimensional monetary transaction; the synthesis and integration of diverse knowledge is a complex and problem-intensive process that would leave any mere "customer" dissatisfied, to say the least, regardless of any tuition bill that was paid to secure the product (degree). It is striking how our campuses have even started to resemble shopping centres complete with mall-like food courts; the corporate sponsorship of whole buildings and research centres can even suggest the appearance of a business park. Corporations have certainly keyed in on the fact that university students represent a "captive" market of young consumers whose tastes may be shaped through repeated exposure. Cor-

porate marketing on campus frequently reveals itself in exclusivity deals that limit what types of soft-drinks are available, what type of cell phones must be purchased in certain residences, and even the very food and food providers present on campus from which students may choose to feed themselves.

In the interest of products and profits not public

Of acute concern is the manner in which Boards of Governors view universities as any other corporation complete with CEO presidents and profit-motivated decision-making. It is interesting to note that a recent headline in the Ottawa Citizen read: "...U of T president's \$427,000 salary heads trend towards 'CEO model' of academic administrators" (Schmidt, 2004). The adoption of this new language by governing bodies is a clear reflection of what is happening on campuses.

Efforts by universities to fulfill the newest "innovation" mandate have resulted in corporate-directed research agendas, which come with grave consequences. These consequences include the non-disclosure of findings, delayed reporting, negative competition, and, perhaps most worrying, a new type of research secrecy - all fuelled by intellectual property patent races. All of this undermines not only the spirit of collegiality, but the original mission of universities to benefit society through the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. According to many updated university mission statements, innovation demands the transfer of knowledge gained through University research and scholarship to the private sector; which embarrassingly omits the transfer of knowledge to the general public of not only Canadian, but global societies, but we gress...

Transfer of knowledge is most often achieved through **consulting** for private companies or **commercialization of technologies**. At first glance, the idea that researchers should receive financial rewards from these endeavors does not seem com-

pletely unreasonable; however, it must come with acknowledgment that these rewards have the strong potential to affect study design, objectivity of the data, interpretation of research results, and/or the presentation and publication of research findings. Above all, it must be acknowledged that the conflict of interest associated with potential financial gain creates risks not only for the individual investigator(s) and for the institution, as Stanford University suggests in their conflict of interest policy (Stanford University Research Policy Handbook, 2004) but worse, creates risks for the general public.

Harrowing examples abound from consultative academic research in collaboration with biopharmaceutical companies for pre-clinical and clinical trials. The evaluation of potential therapeutics by independent scientists is widely accepted as very sound practice, and in fact, it may well constitute one of the core functions of "science" in the mind of the lay public. These types of studies *should* allow for unbiased research on the efficacy and safety of new drugs, by people *without* a conflict of interest or personal investment in the results. The reality is something different, and it is brought to light by events such as the well-known and important case of Dr. Nancy Olivieri (CAUT, 2001). Briefly, Dr. Olivieri collaborated on a research project with the company Apotex to investigate a potential therapeutic for the treatment of thalassemia. Problems arose when Olivieri observed that liver fibrosis was a potential side-effect of treatment and felt an ethical obligation to warn the patients involved in the trials. Unfortunately, non-disclosure agreements had been signed that prohibited the dissemination of the research findings. These contracts put subjects, and eventually the general public, at risk. Bravely, she published her findings despite the non-disclosure agreement, only to be fired by the University of Toronto due to her failure to comply with them. Needless to say, the University had significant financial interest in the success of this particular collaboration and acted with only that in mind. Justly, after a lengthy court battle she was reinstated as a University of Toronto

professor of Medicine and continues to work as a hematologist at two Toronto hospitals.

Undeniably, conflicts of interest are common and practically unavoidable in a modern research university, but in response, universities, granting agencies, and scholarly journals must establish guidelines for appropriate relations between investigators/universities and industry, and design policies to prevent or deal with them. Some attempts have been made to develop such policies, but too often the policies are weak or simply deflect the responsibility onto individual researchers. For example, the University of Alberta states in their policies that it is the responsibility of the faculty member to avoid ethical, legal, financial, or other conflicts of interest. Yes, ideally individual researchers will be honest in proposing, seeking support for, conducting, and reporting research; however, from the University of Toronto vs. Dr. Olivieri example we learned that conflicts of interest call into question not only the professional objectivity and ethics of the individual researcher, but of the University itself. It also seems appropriate that if entire governmental departments or organizations are to be created to facilitate public-private partnerships, they too should require the adoption of a firm policy against conflicts of interest. An example is the Network of Centres of Excellence, an integral off-shoot of the federal government's Innovation Strategy. It is aimed at turning Canadian research and entrepreneurial successes into economic and social benefits for all Canadians, and it facilitates unique partnerships among universities, industry, government, and not-for-profit organizations. They have a thorough policy requiring disclosure of conflicts of interest, however the details on the *extent* of conflict that would warrant *prohibition* of the endeavour is still unclear. How much is too much? (Network of Centres of Excellence, 2004).

Policies currently vary widely between institutions and organisations; from no rules at all or suggested self-disclosure (common), to complete prohibition of financial conflicts of interest (extremely rare). As recommended by Dr. Angell,

editor of The New England Journal of Medicine (Angell, 2000), and others, we support the adoption of a strong, **common** code for conflicts of interest that prohibit university-based investigators and research staff from holding stock, stock options, or decision-making positions in a company that may reasonably appear to be affected by the results of their research.

The discussion to this point sought to outline the effects of campus commercialization in general. We would now like to focus on the process by using concrete examples from our own experience as graduate students and student leaders.

A non-atypical story from the field Our fate as Coke dealers and minions revealed

In our case at the University of Ottawa, the grads own and operate a Café-bar that strives to serve healthy food at reasonable prices; something, incidentally, that is becoming increasingly rare on campuses as student associations slowly lose their businesses and space to large corporate outlets and fast-food chains. But, if it's choice in the soft drink category you're looking for at our café, you have been out of luck since 1997, when the University of Ottawa's administration, the alumni association, and even members of our own executive committee, signed a secret and exclusive deal sealing our fate as Coke dealers. Rest assured our ten-year term in trafficking Coke was not an act of volition. Not owning our own building, we were obligated to sell the product, exclusively, or risk not having our lease renewed. But selling Coke was only the first sour taste of campus commercialism ...

We have heard grandiose plans for buildings named and sponsored by corporations; presumably some of the buildings will still be devoted to higher learning and academic pursuits, but only time will tell. We also remember the shoe manufacturers who "collaborated" with university researchers to design better skates, only to abruptly pull out of the research partnership leaving gradu-

ate students scrambling to find new topics and projects.

However, our next example ranks with underfunding as a fundamental threat to the free pursuit of knowledge in universities; though more tacit in nature. It involves how university's pride themselves, in principle, on their great ability to provide space for dissenting views, intellectual freedom, and the asking of difficult questions when in actuality we are often *not* encouraged to stand up as members of the academic community and to ask fundamental questions, reflexive questions, questions that may be perceived as challenging to the status-quo, our administration, our Board Of Governors (BOG), or simply, our very craft as academicians. With subtle cues and veiled, if not formal, displeasure, our own administration has created a climate where we feel anxious about reflecting in a serious manner upon the nature and purpose of academia itself. Here's how this "climate change" affected a recent conference we organised at the University of Ottawa.

The scholar and the state conference

In February 2004, after months of planning and organising, the grads at the U of O hosted a conference dedicated to examining our direction and *raison-d'être* as scholars and places of higher learning. The conference featured a strong focus on discussing the commercialisation of research. The national television (CPAC) and print media coverage (University Affairs) of the conference joined with the enthusiastic responses from many students, professors, and members of the community clearly demonstrated that many people felt the time was right for the topic to be explored. Feedback was positive and sustained, in fact, as this is being written it is now more than three months on from the event and many on campus are still talking about the conference. Ironically, this strong response from all who participated has only served to magnify the official response from our own Central Administration— which was to give ab-

solutely *no* acknowledgement at all. Disheartening as it was to see the denial and avoidance of this extremely important topic, worse still was the unofficial suggestion that the topics of future graduate-organised conferences should be carefully considered by the university prior to support being given. The degree to which commercialisation (a main topic of the conference) has become ubiquitous and *de rigueur* on ours and other campuses across Canada has to be suspected as an explanation for this reaction.

One could speculate that the extent to which administrators are feeling uneasy about the creeping commercialism of university campuses reflects their own private belief that that this is a less-than-ideal situation. Or, perhaps it is the case that university administrators do not want to be challenged on this issue for fear of losing future corporate funding, or maybe they fear having to answer to the Boards of Governors for whom they work. *Fear and funding*: clear indicators that they are acting more like corporate CEOs and less like discovery-driven scholars open to debate and discourse, despite rationalisations and justifications given by many administrators that they themselves are academics first and foremost. The increasing corporate nature of universities needs to be publicly discussed in order to allow all scholars, be they students, professors, or administrators, to self-reflect on what it is they ought to be doing and the type of research in which they ought to be engaged. We need to ask questions as fundamental as "what happened to freedom of thought?" and as specific as "what message are young graduates, or even senior faculty, receiving about our 'acceptable' posture as enquirers within the academy; or for that matter within the larger society?" Universities have strayed far from their traditional goals; long gone are the days when they were a student-centred environment that found scholars pooling their money to attract experts and teachers of interest in the pursuit of thought, reason, and enlightenment.

More specifically, for grads at our university, the need for forceful and immediate action regarding accountability and the increasing

corporatisation of Canadian campuses was crystallised by one event in particular. On Friday, February 19th, 2004, the indefatigable consumer advocate and US presidential candidate Ralph Nader delivered a rousing keynote address at our Annual Graduate Students' Association Interdisciplinary Conference, where he was joined by Leonard Minsky, Executive Director of the National Coalition for Universities in the Public Interest, and York University professor and anti-commercialisation activist, David Noble. Together they addressed the capacity gathering of close to 500, which included our own Rector (University of Ottawa's equivalent of President).

Each speaker's moving and complementary treatment of the theme "the Scholar and the State" proved a powerful call to arms. Those fortunate enough to be in attendance – or fortunate enough to have seen the truncated version of the evening's proceedings on CPAC – won't soon forget Minsky's description of academic posture and its learned submissive nature, Noble's exposé of the unregulated and corporate nature of University Boards of Governors, or Nader's straightforward suggestions for developing accountability and transparency.

Conclusion

Most crucially, universities must remain places where freedom of speech and the clashing of ideas are not discouraged, either explicitly or implicitly, but rather encouraged and fostered. The free pursuit of curiosity, reason, and enlightenment should not be slowly disciplined out of one's academic character, but boldly defended and rewarded. Scholars should not be forced to adopt a submissive posture in order to gain promotion and funding. For public universities to remain integral components of our society, as places of education, free thought, inquiry, and public-interest research, a firm commitment on the part of university administrators, academics, *and* Canadians will be required. The federal government must increase its investment in, and commitment to, education.

Furthermore, the relationship between including "innovation" as a university mandate (as recommended by the Expert Panel on the Commercialisation of University Research in 1999) and the consequent erosion of discovery-driven research must be investigated. In short, we must take back our universities and demand they act in a transparent manner and in the public interest.

What can be done?

As Ralph Nader (2004) and others suggest, there are four relatively easy changes that could be implemented at the university level to help slow (and optimistically, perhaps even deter or reverse) the corporate invasion of our institutions.

First, to address the reality that university research is not always conducted with the public's best interest in mind, we need to establish **conflict of interest rules governing research and partnerships**. These would disallow not only the obvious owning of stock of the company in question, but would define how intellectual property partnerships and licensing arrangements should be negotiated; ideally they would encompass the less obvious but equally important acceptable practices for university faculty who moonlight for other corporations.

Next, we need to address those conflicts of interest that compromise whole institutions. Though it is often argued that agreements and partnerships between universities and corporations are unavoidable during an era of under-funding, policy could still be implemented whereby agreements that would compromise the integrity or reputation of the university as a place of free thought are worth no amount of sponsorship or funding in return. To that end, a **commercialization boundary policy** detailing the criteria used to decide whether an agreement with a given corporation is consistent with the mandate of the university is a necessary step.

Some corporate partnerships may then be identified as necessary and at least not detrimental to

the university environment. Insurance that university Board of Governors will act and enter into these agreements responsibly and with all interested parties in mind, including the students, faculty, and support staff, requires **transparency**. We must be in a position of knowledge and understanding so that we can oversee, criticize, and even, in some cases, act as a conscience.

Unfortunately, university BOGs (especially in Ontario) are currently operating with no regulated transparency, since, by a convenient (for them) loophole in provincial legislation they do not fall under the Freedom of Information Act. Why is it that British Columbia, Quebec, and Saskatchewan have been able to include universities in this Act, but not Ontario? Of course, the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) has “guidelines” for access to information, but as guidelines they are strictly voluntary and have no force in law. As David Noble suggests, it is like asking Hydro One to self-regulate and set its own policy on public access to information. Ontarians are likely aware that the gross and scandalous mismanagement of millions of dollars would have never become unearthed if that were the case.

A commitment on the part of university administrators and BOGs to act first and foremost in the interest of the public good would be well demonstrated by **open house meetings with the BOG**. The whole academic community and the broader public should know who the Board members are, and should have real input into their decision-making processes.

Finally, the free-for-all sell-off of our public institutions of higher learning must be stopped immediately and universities should once again set out to be the pillars and defenders of free thought, curiosity, creativity, tolerance, and knowledge production and exchange.

Acknowledgements

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The introduction of applied degrees and research in Ontario community colleges: Retrenchment of the Corporate Agenda

By Diane Meaghan

IN THE LATER PART OF THE 20TH CENTURY, Canadian corporations not only sought to increase productivity and reduce expenditures through downsizing, contracting-out and “offshoring,” but they also demanded tax reductions by casting a pall on the sense of entitlement of universal public programs.

International institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) monitored the restructuring of the state, the public sector and the labour market for capital (World Trade Organization, 1998). In the name of deficit reduction, the federal government reduced income support programs to systems of health, social services, and education.

Trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) identified commercial activities in universities and colleges as unfair trade practices and restricted the ability of public institutions to provide educational services in areas dominated by the private sector (Griffin-Cohen, 2000:136). A series of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) included educational services as a way to expand trade and market practices of competition into public services. Dismantling the Keynesian welfare state in favour of monetarist and managerial approaches meant that the public sector was to be restructured and state enterprises were to be privatized to become more cost effective.

The transformation of relations between capital and the state resulted in changes within universities and colleges as well as among institutions of higher learning, the state, and the corporate sector. As outlined in *Science and Technology for the New Century* (1995), the federal government looked to post-secondary education as a way to generate economic growth and sustainable employment by reformulating its views with respect to the contributions of the human capital to economic competitiveness.

Corporations targeted knowledge to be transformed into profitability as they pressured for the redirection of public educational expenditures to the private sector through public/private learning partnerships, centres of excellence, commercial skills training, and public support for private post-secondary education (Meaghan and Casas, 1994). As the National Advisory Board on Science and Technology (1996) diligently advocated for the production and export of knowledge, there was a shift in the administrative role of the federal government to becoming a partner with business and academic institutions in entrepreneurial activities

and commercial research (Government of Canada, 1995).¹

In the Ontario government's vernacular of "doing more for less," a rapid downward spiral of quality college education occurred during the past decade with additional and substantial provincial decreases in college funding. Ontario had the second lowest per-full-time student funding support of all the provinces (Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, 2003a:1). Ontario also devoted only 0.5% of its total budget to post-secondary education—less than the average of all other provinces taken as a whole (Brown, 2002:A6).

Since 1991, Ontario colleges received the lowest funding and the smallest increases per student (45% less per full-time equivalent student) in comparison with other public sectors, despite enrolment increases of 34% in that period (Association of Colleges of Applied and Technology of Ontario, 2002:3). What ensued within the colleges was extensive budget cuts, new forms of governance, formations of business partnerships, privatization initiatives, and the decline of faculty and staff services and salaries (Meaghan, 2000.)²

As tuition and student fees rose by 21% in 1991/1992 to 66% in 2000/2002 as a percentage of total operating grants, in corporate parlance the new educational client was increasingly expected to adopt the principle of user fees to replace public funding (Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, 2003:1). Academic work was redesigned to utilize a two-tiered faculty that would include some full-time career college faculty and a large and growing number of casual, contract, and adjunct teachers. Knowledge became fragmented through the introduction of "on-line learning" methodologies (Noble, 1997; Postman, 1995) that highlighted "teacherless teaching" (Barrett and Meaghan, 1995) and skills acquisition to replace content, diversity of teaching styles and interactional learning processes.

According to Dianne Cunningham (2002:1), former Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, the inauguration of the Ontario Colleges of

Applied Arts and Technology Act (2002) was an effort "to match the original version of the college system with a vision...that was more flexible and market driven...would heighten corporate status and change board bylaws to provide additional local authority."

In addition to continuing to fulfil the mandate of providing vocational education, colleges were increasingly encouraged to undertake "education and training related" activities, including applied research and partnerships with business, industry, and other educational institutions as part of their primary mandate (Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, 2003b:12). Coupled with the 2000 legislation that gave approval to colleges to offer up to 15% of programming in applied degrees, this "business model for education" pressured colleges to operate like businesses by providing educational and research services for market demand.

Intensifying corporate managerialism within colleges also aimed at restructuring the academic labour process while advocating a human capital discourse to produce the skilled, flexible, and cutting-edge workers of tomorrow. With college administrative initiatives, modularized computer instruction rapidly became the core business in many colleges, training student with "just-in-time" skills and a "learning to earn" mentality for the changing needs of the job market.³

Unlike John Dewey's liberal humanist view of education, this corporate vision views college teaching in a functionalist manner, based on routine labour, and is responsive to channeling public funds to entrepreneurial training and research through the establishment of private commercial companies and corporate research partnerships (Gewitz, 1997:217). Peeling away the carrot of applied degrees and research reveals the stick of entrenching the corporate model that continues the transformation of colleges through commercialization and privatization.

A number of the large urban colleges have begun to export educational services by offering Internet-based courses in a few disciplines of busi-

ness and technology, locally, nationally, and internationally for Canadian college credit. Such actions are a prescription to further stratify the academic labour force and move it to a system where a small core of faculty are capable of commanding the highest salaries, good working conditions, benefits, and contract protection, while the majority of contingent instructors perform more routine and less well remunerated tasks, while they experience job intensification and demands for increasing accountability.

Secrecy pervades corporate donor agreements shielding applied commercial research partnerships from public scrutiny. Research in colleges will likely be conducted by only a few faculty or professional non-faculty brought into centres of excellence to work in conjunction with private partners. The careers of these faculty will not likely involve teaching, but will direct the training of faculty in the design of “web-based courseware” for corporate training and participation in corporate research partnerships, with differentiated rewards for approved performance that complies with managerial priorities.⁴

The commodification of education will continue through the vigorous recruitment of foreign students because this select group pay full fees of approximately \$11,000 a year per student. In the future, the minority of college students paying full market prices for applied degree programs are likely to be taught by full-time faculty and exposed to quality programs, compared to the majority of traditional diploma students who are likely to have part-time contract teachers and “e-learning” experiences as part of their government-subsidized college education.

A corporate vision that downplays or ignores intellectual growth, the contributions of public service, and the personal satisfaction of college students and employers must be challenged and replaced with an educational model for Ontario colleges. A strong public college system is the best way to provide high levels of quality education and contribute to the economic well-being of the nation. Given the chronic underfunding of Ontario

college for more than a decade, as well as a need to address the dependency of colleges on corporate largesse, it is imperative that operating funds be substantially augmented by both the federal and provincial governments, and the distribution of funds favour the neglected sectors of students, staff and faculty.

Ensuring that differences in the quality of programs based on the ability to pay does not create barriers to participation ought to be the primary goal of government. An educational model compels the state to supply the vital financial infrastructure for college education by committing to low universal fees to safeguard accessibility, inclusion, and equity. Since the purpose of a college education is to develop critical thinking, autonomy and skills for life in order that students may play a full and active role in a democratic society, it is imperative to reject the notion of students as consumers of training based on an accumulation of facts as a substitute for interactional and collective processes of intellectual and social growth. Restructuring should be a negotiated process with shared responsibility for decision-making among faculty, administration, and regulatory government bodies concerning matters of admission, curriculum, accreditation, hiring, promotion, research and resource allocation.

In maintaining public accountability for the expenditure of public funds, an educational vision necessitates the presence of qualified and dedicated faculty with superintendence over teaching/learning, evaluative processes, and technological-based pedagogy to generate and disseminate knowledge for the common good.

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Endnotes

- ¹ An examination of the resources provided by the federal government demonstrates that funding for skills development and apprenticeship training dropped by 50 percent between 1991 and 2002 (Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario, 2002:1).
- ² Corporate managerialism emphasizes a private sector mentality that grows the role and enhances the salaries of administrators while curtailing the numbers and reducing the benefits accorded to faculty and support staff. According to Rhoades (1998:80), the number of administrators working in higher education increased by 46 percent between 1977 and 1998. Faculty on the other hand, accounted for a declining portion of the academy’s professional work force and institutional expenditures compared with two decades ago.
- ³ Just-in-time training is part of a larger project of international capital to dismantle national economic borders in serving the ever changing, fragmented global market by drawing on capital and labour across the world. The aim is to ensure that a new global labour force of “knowledge workers” is mobile and sufficiently skilled to serve in the new global economy.
- ⁴ As Janice Newson (2000:184) observes, funding by corporate clients provides only a small amount of research costs in universities. Partnerships between universities and corporations are heavily subsidized by Canadian tax payers, despite the fact that the knowledge generated serves the interests of private groups.

Greening the ivory towers:

Academia to action!

By Kerri Klein and Jeca Glor-Bell

Introduction

Post-secondary institutions play a unique and important role in society as incubators of critical thought and innovators for solutions. They bear the monumental responsibility of educating much of our world's next generation—many of whom will become our future leaders and decision-maker—and serve as places where problem-solving, leadership, and moral integrity can flourish. This *avant-garde* role played by Universities sets and reshapes our social scenarios and allows humanity to make more informed decisions today that will impact our future tomorrow.

Post-secondary institutions have been instrumental in confirming the seriousness of the current planetary situation in which we find ourselves. The principle of academic freedom has allowed atmospheric chemists to report steady rises in greenhouse gases; ecologists to register the impoverishment of ecosystems and the extinction of species; and philosophers and theologians to observe the erosion of moral principles and the alienation of humans from the natural world¹. Never before has it been so apparent that the health of the Earth is inextricably connected to our global social, political, and economic practices. This knowledge has started to change the reductionist and isolationist academic practices of universities towards more holistic and cross-disciplinary approaches to learning.

Today, more than ever, we look to our post-secondary institutions to demonstrate alternative ways to address our unsustainable social, economical and environmental practices. We expect universities to go beyond the simple implementation of recycling programs or the mere adoption of a purchasing policy. We expect them to incorporate an ethic of sustainability into the core of their practices by taking responsibility for the socio-economic and ecological impacts of the campus itself. By doing that, Universities will help the formation of well-informed citizens who are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to challenge a society that currently perpetuates a model of anthropocentrism and disconnection from the rest of Nature.

The campus sustainability movement

The understating of the intrinsic connection between human practices and environmental degradation invited people to look at our campuses through the lenses of sustainability, allowing us to think about values associated with age-old precepts that are both sensible and logical. These include a respect for the biota and natural processes, being mindful of place, holding a commitment to live within limits and to consider full costs, and the acceptance, and even assumption, of civic responsibility². It is this type of integrated and innovative approach to campus “greening” that was deemed required to create the fundamental para-

digm shift to mend contemporary society's environmental condition.

The notion of campus sustainability is not a new one. In fact, there have been many initiatives over the last 10 years to promote and move universities towards more a sustainable future. These local, national, and international efforts have formed the basis for a movement that encompasses academics, campus administrators, governments, governing bodies, and organizations. Together, these diverse groups have developed a bold vision of the role of higher education and the obligation of universities to be responsible and accountable institutional citizens. The integration of this visionary role of universities into the institutions themselves is demonstrated in that, by 2003, 18 Canadian campuses had adopted environmental or sustainability policies and 23 out of the 250 university signatories of the international Talloires Declaration for sustainable universities are Canadian³.

Sierra Youth Coalition's Sustainable Campuses Project

In 1998, the Sierra Youth Coalition (SYC), the youth arm of the Sierra Club of Canada, launched the Sustainable Campuses Project—a youth-driven initiative that aims to inspire, inform, train, and support Canadian students to promote environmental responsibility and sustainability in post-

secondary institutions. The project has been working to harness and hone the creativity, inquisitiveness, and expertise of the university community to facilitate the societal transformation we need to improve the well-being of our planet and our communities. The Sustainable Campuses Project counts with a network that includes over 250 students representing more than 50 different universities and colleges from across Canada and the United States.

In seeking to find our place within the emerging campus sustainability movement, the Sierra Youth Coalition worked with students, faculty and staff to identify success and achievements of this movement, as well as the gaps that needed to be bridged. What we found was a growing understanding among members of the campus community about *why* they should work towards a vision of sustainability; what was then lacking was a comprehensive and cohesive understanding of what sustainability *is* and *how* to effectively work towards this goal.

In light of our findings, SYC began to focus on dealing with the scattered nature of the movement, not only geographically, but also relating to the scope and vision of what the campus sustainability movement means. Our experience working with the campus community led us to

"University leaders must initiate and support mobilization of internal and external resources so that their institutions respond to [the earth's] urgent challenge. . . we agree to take the following actions:

- *Create an institutional culture of sustainability;*
- *Educate for environmentally responsible citizenship;*
- *Practice institutional ecology;*
- *Involve all stakeholders;*
- *Collaborate for interdisciplinary approaches"*

The Talloires Declaration, 1990.

<http://www.uslf.org>

What is campus sustainability?

A sustainable campus community acts upon its local and global responsibilities to protect and enhance the health and well being of all humans and ecosystems. It actively engages the knowledge of the university community to address the ecological and social challenges faced both today and many years from now. Academic freedom provides the ideal conditions for inspired innovation. Universities, long regarded as bastions of free thought, are unparalleled in their ability to apply new theories, technologies and values. As such, it is incumbent upon universities to lead by example in enacting positive change.

Lindsay Cole, 2003.

The Sustainable Campuses Project has the following objectives:

- **SUPPORT:** the sustainable campuses initiative seeks to support student groups, and the university community in designing and implementing sustainability programs on campuses across Canada.
- **UNDERSTAND:** through the use of comprehensive indicators we seek to measure and understand the state of campus sustainability in Canada.
- **EXCHANGE:** by hosting the Sustainable Campuses Network we aim to provide the opportunities and the venues for active exchange and communication between campus groups across Canada.
- **CHANGE:** the intent of all of our objectives is to change campus communities and to influence broader societal change in the transition to sustainable and healthy communities.

identify the need to develop a comprehensive and comparable tool that would assist universities in understanding the socio-economic and environmental impacts they have regionally and globally and assist them to develop solutions that address overarching structural problems and facilitate institutional as well as lifestyle change. This tool, called the *Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework*, is based on a definition of sustainability that seeks to balance the ecological and social systems. This framework was designed to establish goals and benchmarks to mark the way to a more socially and ecologically balanced society. It offers a basis to begin developing consistent reference points for campus well-being that is both holistic in perspective and scientifically credible.

The Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework

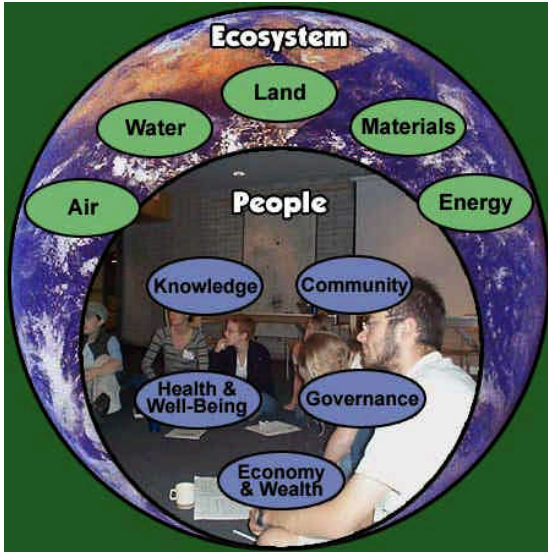
The Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework (CSAF) allows campuses to understand their ecological, economical and social impacts in a similar way, promoting the emergence of a consistent “language” of campus sustainability. The motivation behind this tool was to provide a framework with

which to measure our nation’s post-secondary institutions’ progress towards sustainability, and to serve as a mechanism to produce relevant and thoughtful recommendations that will improve social and environmental cohesion of both the campus community and the larger ecosystems and social systems in which campuses are embedded. At the same time, we wanted to create a tool that would respond and adapt to the unique characteristics of each university today and in the future. This tool was also meant to be accessible to the campus community so that it could be integrated into existing university programs and structures, both academic and operational.

The Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework (CSAF) was developed through the academic research of Lindsay Cole, M.Sc. Royal Roads University, and a co-research team consisting of university faculties, students and administrators, and government representatives from all over Canada. Over the two years that led to the birth of the CSAF, the research team intensively reviewed a dozen Assessment Tools developed by various well-established organizations. The CSAF team incorporated the strengths of each framework and tried to address some of their weaknesses. In that respect, the CSAF represents the most holistic Sustainability Assessment tool to date, as it truly takes into consideration the concept of overall sustainability.

The CSAF examines campus sustainability by looking at the interconnectedness of People and Ecosystems⁴ in maintaining the sacred balance of life on this planet. Beyond ensuring that the campus community understands how its actions affect environmental well-being at the local and global levels, the project will aim to translate these understandings into actions in students’ daily lives and in their university institutions.

The People system lies within the Ecosystem, representing the human interdependence on a healthy environment for living. Each of these systems is divided into five sections, which are further broken down into 160 university-specific indicators of sustainability. The large number of in-



dicators offers a structure in which to perform an encompassing inventory of campus impacts, which provide the basis for effective and well-informed strategies for change.

The holistic analysis offered by the CSAF also serves to highlight those elements of sustainability which are often hard to measure or simply neglected, such as quality of life, safety, and opportunity to do fulfilling work. Though less easily measured, these components are fundamental to expanding and deepening our vision for more sustainable campuses and our approaches to adopting more appropriate practices. Below is a fragment of the *Community* section of the CSAF.

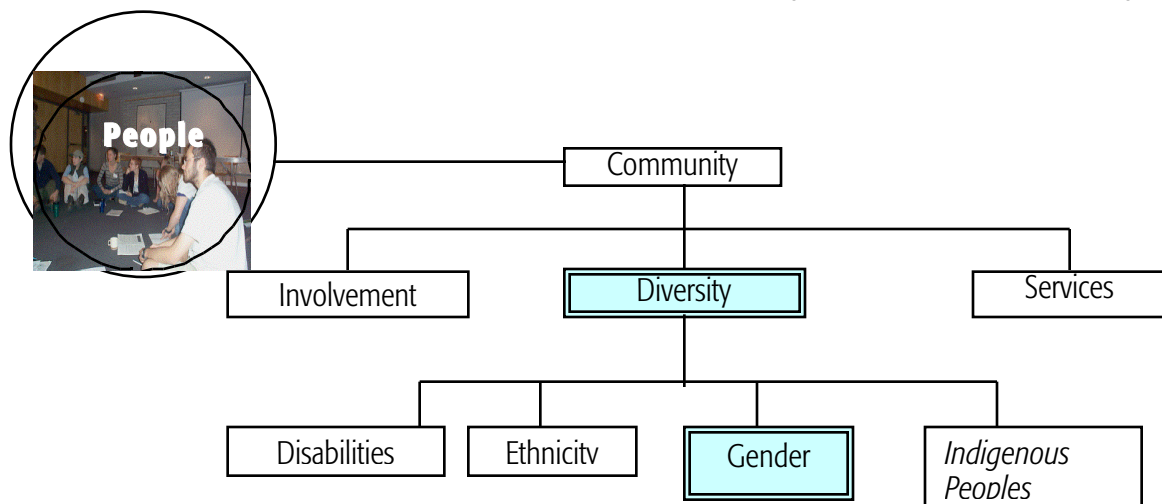
Promotion of gender equity in hiring and recruitment processes has long been a sustainability

issue in Canada and beyond. These indicators help to assess a campus's gender diversity, thus helping to promote more vibrant and equitable learning, teaching, and working environments. Each of these indicators measures the gap between the provincial population average of women of working age, and the campus community group in question.

The Greening the Ivory Towers Project (GITP)

The CSAF was developed as a response to the needs of the campus sustainability movement. In order to ensure that students were aware of the framework and received sufficient support in the form of resources and professional assistance, the Sierra Youth Coalition developed the *Greening the Ivory Towers Project (GITP)*. The project aims to offer support, resources, networking and information to students, faculty and staff interested in enriching and improving their campus community and ecology through the CSAF. The GITP is designed to build the capacity of people on campus in making effective change by providing tools to envision, shape, and better understand that change.

SYC is also suggesting a process for performing the project that is integrated with the pedagogical mandate of universities. We recommend that students and faculty work together to bring this integrated and innovative project into the classroom. Through this process, we are helping to cul-



tivate the movement from academia to action, whereby students have an opportunity to apply their theoretical classroom learnings to the community in which they spend most of their time: the campus!

There are two tools and a number of resources currently available through the project:

The Greening the Ivory Towers Toolkit was developed to make the CSAF more accessible and user friendly. It is a how-to guide for using the CSAF, offering tips on where to find data, links, and references to best practices, case studies, recommended survey questions and approaches, as well as laying out a model for reporting findings.

The e-Missions software was developed by Torri and Smith Associates and aims to assist universities in measuring their greenhouse emissions and creating strategies to reduce these emission by targets set by the campus community. This software, like the Toolkit, is an action-oriented tool, and is meant to assist universities in making the best choices to realize positive change on their campuses.

Other resources available within Greening the Ivory Towers are training in using the CSAF, ongoing support from SYC staff, access to the Sustainable Campuses network, and the advice and input of long-time participants in the campus sustainability movement.

Conclusion

“The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking that we used when we created them.” (Einstein)

Arguably, “business as usual” is not an option if we hope to create a future where humans coexist with natural systems in a healthy and sustainable way. To create a sustainable future, we will need a fundamental transformation in the values, attitudes, and actions of society’s leaders, professionals, and the general population. As society’s institutions of education, innovation and critical thought, universities have an essential role to play in instigating this paradigm shift. This may seem like a

daunting and overwhelming vision; where can we begin? The first step to reaching this goal is knowing where we are and what point we are starting from.

Through the Greening the Ivory Towers Project and the growing campus sustainability movement, we are offering a way for universities to start counting their current social and ecological impacts *today* so that we can make effective plans to reduce these impacts in the near future. We are at a turning point, not only in our institutions of higher education, but in our businesses, our communities, and our governments. We have enough information to know what is wrong, but we feel afraid or incapable of making change in our world. The campus sustainability movement is one of many grassroots solutions to this sense of disempowerment. Positive change is already occurring throughout the country, offering new models, new structures, and new approaches for constructing the relationship between our social and natural worlds. Although by no means a panacea for creating a societal paradigm shift, initiatives like *Greening the Ivory Towers* can help universities fulfil their responsibility to become catalysts and epicentres for the creation of a more socially just, environmentally sustainable, and yet economically viable world.

Endnotes

- ¹ Penn State Green Destiny Council. Penn State Indicators Report, “Steps Towards a Sustainable University”. 2000.
- ² Penn State Green Destiny Council. Penn State Indicators Report, “Steps Towards a Sustainable University”. 2000.
- ³ University Leaders for a Sustainable Future. “Talloires Declaration Institutional Signatories List”. 2003. http://www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires_signatories.html#Canada
- ⁴ In this model economic systems are embedded within human systems. This divergence from the classical model of sustainability as based on the three pillars of environment, economy and society, was designed to draw attention to the fact that economic systems are, in fact, one of many human systems which make up society.



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