

UOITFA *Express*

Please send all correspondence to for this newsletter to:
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Hannah Scott,
Faculty of Criminology, Justice, & Policy Studies.
Guest Editors Welcome....

A University of Ontario Institute of Technology Faculty Association Publication

UOITFA HAS ARRIVED!

Well, it has been a long time coming, but here we are. The UOITFA was formed on a sunny day in July, 2007, in Polonsky Commons around a picnic table.

It was a momentous occasion. Around the table were Ed Waller and Anthony Waker from the Faculty of Energy Systems and Nuclear Science; Shirley Van Nuland from the Faculty of Education; Hannah Scott, Barbara Perry and Molly Dragiewicz from the Faculty of Criminology, Justice, and Policy Studies, and Raymond Cox from Business and Information Technology.

The first task was to take a vote on whether the faculty association was "official." The vote passed unanimously. The second task was to set up a governance structure. We decided to keep our executive committee lean given our small size, knowing that we would ultimately expand it as we needed to. Third we had to elect people to fill these positions. After a brief discussion, it was decided that Raymond Cox would be President, Barb Perry would serve as Sec-



Interim President, UOITFA, Dr Raymond Cox, Professor, Faculty of Business and Information Technology

retary, Shirley Van Nuland, with previous treasurer experience (thank goodness!) would agree to be treasurer, and Hannah Scott would serve as Vice President.

We all agreed that we would hold elections during the 2008/2009 semester to ensure that these positions are elected by those whom we are charged with representing. We encour-

age you to get involved with the UOITFA, as these first few years are so important to faculty. Make sure your voice is heard. The UOITFA is here for you! This newsletter is a first step in opening up dialogue. We welcome letters, comments, and even guest editorials! We encourage you to let this be an active voice for faculty. **

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UOITFA Members get 10% off Campus Bookstore Purchases!



UOITFA has arranged a first for UOIT's faculty. The Campus Bookstore will give a 10% discount to UOITFA members on purchases such as logoed items, clothing, mugs, gifts, computer

peripherals, cards, stationery items, pens, etc.

Textbooks, software, and confectionary items are not included. Presentation of the UOITFA membership card and UOIT ID card are required for the discount.

Expressing Oneself...

"Substitute "damn" every time you are inclined to write the word "very;" your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be."

Mark Twain.

ExpressOH! This Issue: 8 tips for improving your writing.

By Dr. Hannah Scott, Faculty of Criminology, Justice, and Policy Studies.

As this is our first newsletter, we have the opportunity to experiment with some features. We encourage input regarding what features that you would like to see here. ExpressOH is a space designed to inspire others by looking at how others "do professorship."

This first ExpressOH is dedicated to writing and productivity. Writing is something that most academics assume others have a natural skill at, while most of us struggle. I have been searching around the web for something to inspire me as I think about writing something other than this column. As I was doing this, I was reminded of my first few months here at UOIT.

When I first arrived here at UOIT I was struck by the fact that because we were a new school and we were in the unusual position of having to establish new trends, I began a search for a book that would help me deal with writing (given that the library was not yet built, and buildings were going up, I anticipated a few problems getting writing started) and I thought I could use some sage advice. What better place to start is from a book. I also figured that we had the biggest school in Canada an hour from here and so I trucked myself off to The University of Toronto Bookstore to see what was out there. After a half hour searching, I went to the help desk and was informed by a rather expressionless person that "there are no such books at *this* bookstore." She further added, "I guess they are just not needed." I asked her where U of T professors sought to be inspired when writing was difficult.

"I don't know." She said.

Clearly the U of T bookstore thought all of its students, sessionals, and faculty were to come about this expert knowledge in some other way.

What inspired me this last week was a little tip sheet that I found on a great blog on academic productivity. Here are eight tips to improve your writing. Most of you will know about these tips, but there may be something new here for both new and seasoned writers.

1. **Get your relevant Manual of Style.** (e.g., Chicago/APA). APA wants you to buy it in book form, but I think this is one of the resources that should be online.
2. **Get Oliver Strunk's *Elements of Style*.** It'll recommend some rules of thumb that may well be obvious (e.g., avoid passive voice. Reduce the use of adverbs to a minimum) but overlooked. There have been several editions, and the older ones

3. **Read essays and books on how to write well.** The site recommends the following from their own contributors entitled *How to Write Well* at <http://www.paulgraham.com/writing44.html>. This site is not recommended for journal writing per se, but rather for essay-style writing such as those done for grants, where the readers are often not experts in your field and require more of a layperson's understanding of your work.
4. **Get a competent professional editor,** even if your writing style is very good. Jose asserts that even if you have others read your work, that those who do it professionally can offer high quality comments to improve writing that you can use with future publications. Some universities have such services on campus! Given that this is not the situation at UOIT, the site recommends that these services can be purchased. Many advertise online. Publishers often outsource this work, so asking your local book representative about a proofreaders list might be a place to start if you are interested in using this option.
5. **Get as many people as possible to read your draft.** Although passing your work to colleagues is always a good idea, one could also create an academic community of academic writing where a group of colleagues agree to meet to routinely pass works in progress around. These groups have been very successful with creative writers.
6. **Read it out loud backwards.** Although Jose is not sure where this was first written, there are several spaces online that do offer this tip. According to these sites, the process really works, even though it may be boring after a while. It's the closest that an author can be to reading with the reader mindset. When writing we usually become blind to our own mistakes since the brain automatically "corrects" wrong words inside sentences. In order to break this pattern you can read the text backwards, word by word.
7. **Know who you are writing for.** Although not done by every academic, there is a tendency to write for potential reviewers rather than for the discipline. As a result the article can become bogged down in details and the quality of the work can suffer. If you know the journal you would like to pitch the article to, it might be helpful to read a few of the latest editions first

can even be found online at <http://www.crockford.com/wrrld/style.html>

as editors change and with them so can the focus of the journal.

8. **Avoid distractions.** Distractions come in many formats. While some find working at home easy with minimal distraction, others need to physically leave the house to get into productivity mode. For some, there are days when neither of these places have what it takes. The library here at UOIT has won an awards for esthetics and during non-crunch times for students, it can actually be a very quiet place. You can book a room for even more privacy if needed. More common distractions at this high-tech university are the constant Instant Messages, the little IM-like friendly notifications of incoming email, the internet, and so on. The site does mention that there are a few software packages out there that tell your computer to get all of these computer distractions to leave you alone. In other words the software allows you to write without distraction.

As an aside, there used to be a faculty room in the library up until last year, but it was absorbed into the library restructuring as apparently it was never used. Perhaps we should think about asking for such a space back? Would that be something you would use? Better yet, is this the first you are hearing of such a space?

We hope you have enjoyed this article. We welcome feedback on this feature. Let us know if you liked the article and perhaps what other features you would like to see here at ExpressOH. If there are others who have knowledge on productivity to pass on, we welcome it here at ExpressOH.

In response to my U of T experience, and being open to the idea that UOIT would be a fresh start, I decided to work with the library to build an extensive collection of "self help" books specifically for academics such as ourselves. There are now several books for faculty on writing for academics.

There are also books on how to improve **teaching**, best practices for achieving **tenure and promotion**, **publishing**, and even **negotiation in academia**. I encourage you to look

Source: Adapted from: Jose (2007, June 14). *Eight tips for better academic writing*. Retrieved March 8, 2008 from: <http://www.academicproductivity.com/blog/2007/eight-tips-for-better-academic-writing/>

Feeling Stressed out? You are not alone.

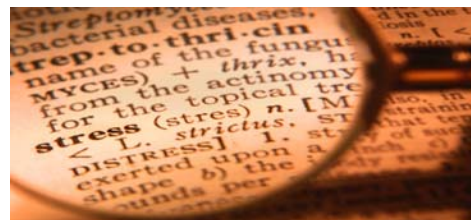
It is that time of year again. Students are clamoring at your door, assignments are due, faculty merit assessments are being made, and we periodically think about our publication record this year. If you are like many faculty, you are *stressed*. A recent study by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) in 2007 found that:

"...academic staff working in Canadian universities, like those in Australia and the U.K., are stressed to a high degree. In most cases a large majority, of respondents reported high levels on seven of ten stressors: Work Load, Work Scheduling, Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity, Work-Life Balance, Fairness-Administration, Fairness-Rewards, Job Control, Skill Use, and Fairness-Chairperson were not sources of stress for the sample respondents, in general. Overall study participants were satisfied with their jobs and committed to their institutions emotionally; however, a significant minority of the respondents reported a relatively high occurrences of stress-related physical and psychological health symptoms and the use of stress-related medications over the past twelve month period. These results

warrant consideration of contemporary academic work by both academic staff associations and university administrations with respect to the implementation of changes in policies and procedures that might lead to reductions in work-related stress and strain." (p. 6)

There is help out there for those who feel that they want to get their stress levels under control. *Coping with Faculty Stress. Survival Skills for Scholars, Volume 5* by Walter M. Gmelch (1993) attempts to deal with some of the issues identified by CAUT.

The book presents plans of action for stress reduction using self-assessment instruments, schematic models, and exercises. Chapter 1, "Check Your Stress Level," encourages the reader to minimize negative stress factors and maximize the positive ones and offers guidelines on plotting a harmonic stress pattern by combining an individual's healthy stress pattern with his or her potentially hazardous and chronic stress pattern. Readers are encouraged to identify their "stress traps" using a Faculty Stress Index. The book outlines five major faculty stressors, and provides strategies for defusing



stress traps. "Use the Power of Perception" considers the personalities, beliefs, and behaviors that affect one's perception of and responses to stressors and outlines ways to change behaviors to become more effective. The final chapter focuses on balance, outlines a personal and career planning process consisting of aligning one's professional career, identifying critical spheres of life, and setting professional aspirations and goals. There are 2 copies of this book available at the DC/UOIT library on the second floor. Call number is LB2333.3G58 1993. *

References

Catano, V., Francis, L., Haines, T., Kirpalani, H., Shannon, H., Stinger, B. & Lorranski, L. (2007). Occupational stress among Canadian university academic staff. Ottawa: Canadian Association of University Teachers.

Gmelch, W. M. (1993). *Coping with Faculty Stress. Survival Skills for Scholars, Volume 5*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Treasurer's Report

By Dr. Shirley Van Nuland,
Faculty of Education.

Since I was elected as UOITFA's treasurer, I've been active establishing the financial protocols. Our account is with the Oshawa Community Credit Union. The account was welcomed, and, aside from the cheques and the initial share (\$100.), no other costs have been incurred from the

account.

I've established a database of members, developed the membership form (which has been updated on the direction of legal counsel), sent out the updated form and, for those whose form is still outstanding, here's a nudge to complete it and return it to me.

The 2007 receipts have been sent to all members as have the membership cards. I've negotiated with the Campus Bookstore for a 10% discount for members. Further infor-

mation on the discount is elsewhere in the newsletter. I will be looking at extending the use of the membership card to business communities in Oshawa.

The membership fees that have been paid after December 31, 2007 will be credited with a receipt for 2008. The membership period is from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008.

Report from the President

By Dr. Raymond Cox,
Faculty of Business Information and Technology

Thank you for joining the University of Ontario Institute of Technology Faculty Association as well as your support for our cause.

While it may seem that our progress has been slow during the year it appears our goal of recognition is imminent. We have submitted

the request for voluntary recognition to Dr. Bordessa who has expressed his support for our recognition and is placing it on the agenda for the Board of Governors meeting of April 16th.

Of course, once we are recognized we are in need of negotiating an agreement between the FA and administration. If anyone is interested in

Continued on Page 5. See "President"

"Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

Reaching Higher program fails to achieve lofty vision, OCUFA

Public Release March 13, 2008

TORONTO - "Despite the Ontario government's 2005 Reaching Higher program, indicators show that threats to the quality of education in Ontario universities remain and students continue to suffer" said Professor Brian E. Brown, President of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA).

"As a consequence, OCUFA has developed a campaign to let the government know that quality education matters to students, parents and faculty."

OCUFA's online campaign allows Ontarians to tell their MPPs about the importance of properly funding higher educa-

tion. Visitors to www.quality-matters.ca will find background information and research, along with a draft letter that they are encouraged to amend to reflect their own experience.

"The Reaching Higher plan was a good beginning, but the government has not followed through. We need to tell government that much still needs to be done to ensure that students receive the high standard of educational experience they deserve," said Professor Brown.

Just as in 2003, Ontario ranks last in Canada in funding of universities, per capita. Student-faculty ratios in Ontario continue to

be the worst in the country at 26 students for every faculty member, compared with 22 students in the rest of Canada and 16 students in American peer institutions. Class sizes continue to increase. And

tuition fees continue to rise significantly.

"The quality of university education in Ontario is in jeopardy just as the province's economy requires the best and the brightest the most,"

Brown warns. "We all need to call on the government to act now to provide Ontario students with the university education they need."

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations represents more than 15,000 professors and academic librarians. **

Bullying a serious job hazard

PATRICK WHITE,
From the Globe and Mail,
Monday March 10, 2008.

It was the sleep deprivation that finally broke Stephen Hill.

He could stand up to the bullies by day. By moonlight, though, they caught him lying down.

All night he would lie there replaying how his Simon Fraser University co-workers refused to eat lunch near him. An eager employee fresh from England, his enthusiasm never jibed with his more cynical colleagues. He agonized over the way his boss only communicated by Post-it note and his colleagues gave him the cold shoulder in meetings.

The exhaustion led to anger, forgetfulness and numbness in his lips and fingers. A psychologist eventually diagnosed him with work-related post-traumatic stress disorder. After wrangling with management and his union, Mr. Hill finally left the school with severance in 2001.

"Even then, it took two years to recover," said Mr. Hill, now an employment counsellor who runs NoBullyForMe.org, an advice site for victims of workplace tyrants.

"It's not one traumatic event like a car crash that causes it. Like carpal tunnel syndrome, it's the repetition. That tapping movement on the keyboard looks very innocent, but repetition does the damage."

Mr. Hill's experience is hardly unique. A U.S. poll last year showed that roughly two in five workers had been bullied at work. And now, Canadian researchers

have found that bullying is actually more destructive than sexual harassment to workers and workplaces.

With that research in hand, some lawyers and employment counsellors are vowing that bullies won't be overlooked much longer.

"Bullying is where sexual harassment was 30 years ago," said Janice Rubin, an employment lawyer with Rubin Thomlinson LLP. "Employers are trying to wrap their heads around how to deal with it."

In a new study, Canadian researchers reviewed 110 studies that compared the effects of bullying and sexual harassment. They found that workers who suffered yelling, rudeness, gossip or other torments were more likely to quit their jobs than workers who were subjected to sexual harassment.

M. Sandy Hershcovis and Julian Barling also found that bullying victims reported more job stress, less job commitment and higher levels of anger and anxiety. The researchers embarked on the study to see if sexual harassment deserved its reputation as the worst of workplace ills.

"Originally, we thought it would be the other way around," said Dr. Hershcovis, assistant professor at the University of Manitoba's I. H. Asper School of Business, who presented the study over the weekend at the International Confer-

ence on Work, Stress and Health in Washington. "But, surprisingly, it was the other way around."

Despite the adverse effects of workplace taunts, only Quebec and Saskatchewan have anti-bullying laws.

In the absence of specific laws elsewhere, employment lawyers are staking out a new front in the battle against bullies. In recent years, a number of mistreated workers have successfully sued their employers for constructive dismissal, the legal term for employees who feel they have been forced to resign because a boss's behaviour constitutes a breach of contract.

But generally, bullying tends to fly under the legal radar because so many employers actually encourage the aggressive behaviour that can lead to taunts and torment.

"That hard-hitting, macho, cowboy behaviour that employers condone because it gets results can often feel like bullying," said Ms. Rubin. "Everyone understands sexual harassment: If you grab a bum, it's a bad thing. We all get that. Bullying isn't as clear."

When companies are accused of bullying, they often hire lawyers like Ms. Rubin to investigate and settle charges

New research shows that employees tormented at work were more likely to quit than those sexually harassed

Bullying... (Con't)

privately, so that they stay out of the courts. Every year, Ms. Rubin probes roughly 10 bullying charges, mainly involving a worker's claims that a boss's swearing, yelling or rudeness has rendered an office too hostile for work.

In one recent case, she investigated the clerical department of a large national company run by "two women who were really, really nasty individuals." The managers made fun of workers behind their backs, sent belittling e-mails and demanded to know where workers were going every time they stood up from their desks. Over a seven-year period, they drove out every original employee.

Ms. Rubin quickly advised the company to strip the duo of their managerial duties.

"So much of this goes undetected in most organizations," she said. "If an em-

ployee quits or goes on disability, the employer may never know why."

Bullying might never be as much of a taboo as sexual harassment, but new provincial legislation would at least raise its profile.

"Other provinces could certainly follow Saskatchewan and Quebec," Dr. Hershcovis said. "That would certainly encourage organizations to adopt clear policies around bullying. But they'll only do something if they see they'll be harmed by not doing something about it."

"So much of this goes undetected in most organizations," she said. "If an employee quits or goes on disability, the employer may never know why."

Pinning down tyrants in the workplace

Office bullies can be deviously discreet. In his book *The Bully At Work*, workplace consultant Gary Namie helps identify these crafty tyrants by placing them into four categories. The Screaming Mimi controls by intimidation, belittling workers with insults, finger pointing and threats of violence.

The Constant Critic finds fault with colleagues' work, then plays the role of chiding parent to officemates.

The Two-Headed Snake is a passive-aggressive Jekyll and Hyde character who cheerfully goes for drinks with colleagues one day and then trashes their reputations in front of higher-ups the next.

The Gatekeeper sabotages co-workers by holding back money, office supplies and vital e-mails. **

Source: *The Workplace Bullying Institute*
From: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/>

Budget Fails to Address Quality Crisis in Post Secondary Education in Ontario: Investing in buildings will not remedy the problems facing Ontario universities, OCUFA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 25, 2008

TORONTO— "This budget missed the point. New buildings are not enough. For students to receive the quality education they deserve, sufficient academic staff need to be hired," said Professor Brian E. Brown, President of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA).

"The only way to reduce class sizes and improve student-faculty ratios is to hire more faculty now," continued Brown. "All we are asking is that students have access to the same quality of education as their parents did."

Just as in 2003, Ontario ranks last

in Canadian funding of universities, per capita. Student-faculty ratios in Ontario continue to be the worst in the country at 26 students for every faculty member, compared with 22 students in the rest of Canada and 16 students in American peer institutions. Class sizes continue to increase. Ontario students reported 28 percent lower levels of interaction with faculty than students at peer institutions in the United States.

"The Reaching Higher plan was a good beginning, but the government has not followed through. The very least this budget should have contained \$440 million to hire the 5,500 new tenure stream faculty that are required to bring Ontario's 2009-10 student-faculty ratios to the

Canadian average and ensure that students receive the high standard of educational experience they deserve," said Professor Brown.

"Without this funding, university students across the province will see their class sizes grow even larger, they will have even less interaction with their increasingly transient faculty and their education will suffer," Brown warned.

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations represents more than 15,000 professors and academic librarians.

For more information on this and other articles, please go to: <http://www.ocufa.on.ca/>

President... (Con't)

serving on the bargaining team we welcome you to volunteer.

In the meantime we will be surveying our members for what you would like included in the collective agreement. I

want to thank all our Faculty Representatives this past year: Ali Grami, Molly Dragiewicz, Robin Kay, Janette Hughes, Anthony Waker, Scott Nokelby, Robert Weaver and Franco Gaspari as well as our Secretary Barbara Perry, Treasurer Shirley Van Nuland and Vice-President Hannah Scott.

Also, I want to thank those members who attended our meetings and apologize to those who were unable to attend due to the timing schedule. We all look forward to your participation at the upcoming April 7th meeting. Again, thank you for your contributions.

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Haven't signed your membership form yet? We can help.

As faculty, we know how busy you are. We have had several requests for forms. As a result we hope you will find this form helpful. Membership dues are currently set at \$100 and they cover a period following the academic year—from July 1 to June 30. Membership dues are tax deductible.

We have been working hard to establish this organization, including setting it up with all the legalese that is standard with all other university Faculty Associations around the country. Your membership is important. We provide a voice for faculty that is different from the university, where faculty can help faculty.

If you have not signed this document yet, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible so we can move towards our goal of providing services for faculty by faculty. Your Faculty Representative would be happy to witness it for you and deliver it to Shirley Van Nuland.

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP UNIVERSITY OF ONTARIO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY FACULTY ASSOCIATION

I hereby apply for and accept membership in the University of Ontario Institute of Technology Faculty Association ("UOITFA"). In so doing I authorize UOITFA to act as my exclusive bargaining agent in all matters relating to my employment relationship with the University of Ontario Institute of Technology.

Surname: _____

First Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Rank (Please circle): Professor Associate Assistant

Status (Please circle): Tenured Tenure-track

Faculty: _____

Office Phone: _____ Extension: _____

Home Phone: _____

Would you prefer emails sent to your UOIT account or other?

If UOIT account, check

If other, please provide the email address

Please return this form and the tax deductible membership fee of \$100.00 payable to **UOITFA** to **Shirley Van Nuland, Faculty of Education, UB3042**

A receipt for the tax deductible membership fee will be sent to you.

On behalf of UOITFA I hereby accept this Application for Membership

Signature

Date

Signature of Witness

Date

