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La recherche / Research in Political Science

Profiles / Profils de science politique

La pratique de la science politique / The Practice of Political Science


From the Americas / Des Amériques

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LE MOT DU DIRECTEUR / FROM THE EDITOR

Ce numéro du *Bulletin* contient plusieurs textes fort intéressants. Nos chroniques régulières offrent en effet une présentation de Philip Oxhorn sur les études supérieures à McGill ainsi qu'un texte de Erick Duchesne tentant jusqu'à un certain point de démystifier l'accès aux études supérieures dans les universités américaines pour les étudiants canadiens dont ceux du Québec en particulier.

In addition to our regular columns, this issue of the *Bulletin* also contains some very interesting pieces ranging from CPSA affairs to the teaching of international relations in Argentina. Doug Brown, Gary O'Brien and Chantal Maillé present the final report of the Financial Planning Committee. Our column *From the Americas* also includes two interesting presentations by Jerry Haar on the Canada Program of the North-South Center and by Gladys Lechini de Alvarez and Anabella Busso on the teaching of international relations in Argentina and particularly at the University of Rosario.

Kent Weaver of the Brookings Institution presents a thorough and interesting analysis on recruitment of political science faculties in Canada and the U.S. while William Mathie and Peter Aucoin offer useful data on Political Science departments around the country. All this completed by our other regular columns on departmental activities, scientific meetings plus the recent list of SSHRCC's grants for 1994-1995 provided generously by Les MacDonald.

Je tiens à remercier ici tous les collaborateurs qui ont bien voulu accepter d'écrire un texte pour le *Bulletin* ainsi que tous les directeurs et directrices de département qui continuent à nous faire parvenir un matériel fort utile. Merci également à Marie-Pierre Ashby pour un travail toujours de haut niveau et à Martin Roy, Isabelle Martin et Mélanie Amyotte sans lesquels la préparation de ce *Bulletin* aurait été une tâche beaucoup plus fastidieuse.

Gordon Mace

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FROM THE PRESIDENT /
LE MOT DU PRÉSIDENT

David E. Smith

November is a time for taking stock, of past accomplishments and future needs. Of the former, I know I speak for all those who attended the June meetings when I thank Lynda Erickson, the programme chair, and her Committee, as well as Keith Archer, the local representative, for providing a memorable conference. Calgary will be the template for future organizers. On that point and looking ahead, I want to express the Association's support and gratitude to Chantal Maillé, the current programme chair, her committee members, and Maurice Couture, the UQAM local representative, for assuming responsibility for the 1995 meeting. At the moment, none of us knows the date of the Quebec referendum, but there is no question that the sixty-sixth annual meeting of the CPSA will coincide with a period of intense discussion about the future of Quebec in the Canadian federation.

Les activités habituelles de l'Association, à savoir la publication de *La Revue* et les programmes de stages, se déroulent d'une manière satisfaisante. Nous avons un nouveau directeur pour le PSALO en la personne de Robert Williams (Waterloo) et un nouveau directeur adjoint pour le PSP, à savoir Clinton Archibald (Ottawa). Ceux et celles d'entre vous qui ont lu le *The Hill Times* du 6 octobre y auront sûrement lu l'article (avec photo de groupe à l'appui) intitulé « *Parliamentary Internship Program celebrates a quarter of a century* ». Il faudrait garder cet anniversaire à l'esprit lorsqu'on parle du travail de l'Association. Tous les départements devraient maintenant avoir reçu les annonces du prochain concours pour le PSALO et le PSP. Veuillez porter ces précieux documents à l'attention de vos étudiants et les inciter, par la même occasion, à devenir membres de notre Association. Il y avait beaucoup d'étudiants des cycles supérieurs à Calgary et un grand nombre d'entre eux ont exprimé leur satisfaction à l'égard du programme.

You probably know that late this past summer the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade announced it would accept applications for the position of foreign service officer only from persons with degrees in law, economics, commerce/administration or with proficiency in one of five languages: Japanese, Mandarin, Korean, Russian or Arabic. Such restrictions on applications is without precedent. I wrote to the minister, his deputy and Parliamentary secretary, other MPs and parliamentary secretaries, and current and former members of the Department, in each case protesting these exclusionary criteria and asking for their elimination. I also wrote to all chairs of political science in Canada, informing them of the new policy and asking them to take whatever action they thought would be effective. Finally, I raised the matter at the annual meeting of the Social Sciences Federation of Canada (SSFC) at the end of September. The Federation, through its president, Elvi Whittaker, has added its voice to protest against this ill-conceived policy.

Il n'y a manifestement aucune raison valable pour de telles restrictions; en tout cas, aucune ne nous a été fournie. Il est rassurant de se voir dire, comme on me l'a dit, que cela ne se reproduirait plus. Mais, cela s'est effectivement produit, si bien que les candidats potentiels de cette année ont été exclus cette année.

I am optimistic that some good may yet flow from the Department's otherwise parochial action. The federal government review of science and technology expenditure (\$7 billion) began during the summer. A management committee was established to arrange five regional and one national conference to explore government priorities in the sciences. The SSFC is one of ten organizations that comprise the Committee, and that position has allowed it to keep the social sciences and social science research before the representatives of government, business and the natural and engineering sciences. As the conferences have progressed, it is interesting to note that attacks on the relevance of disciplines such as ours are being replaced by attacks on technocrats and narrow-minded policy-makers. The blinkered perspective of Foreign Affairs on the matter of the foreign service examination further underlines the suspicion that government departments are out of touch with the social and economic reality of the 1990s.

Pour ce qui est de la FCSC, la science politique a raison d'être optimiste: le nouveau président de la Fédération, Marshall Conley, est l'un de nos membres. (Chantal Maillé, outre ses responsabilités en matière de programme, est la représentante de l'ACSP à la FCSC.) Mais un gros nuage noir se pointe à l'horizon: nous ne savons pas si le gouvernement va financer les conseils subventionnaires et, pour ce qui est de nous, quel sera l'impact des coupures sur les programmes. On pourrait qualifier les scénarios quant à l'importance des réductions de sombres à apocalyptiques; dans l'intervalle, les budgets pour les associations et les journaux savants sont gelés. C'est justement en prévision des jours gris que l'un de mes prédécesseurs avait mis sur pied le Fonds de fiducie de l'ACSP. Si vous ne l'avez pas encore fait, veuillez songer à verser un don dans le Fonds. (Communiquez avec Fred Fletcher à York University pour plus de précisions sur cette question.) Le CRSHC a une nouvelle présidente, Lynn Penrod, humaniste et ancienne vice-présidente adjointe (études) à l'University of Alberta. Il n'y a aucun doute que Mme Penrod, Ph.D., comprend les problèmes auxquels font face les universitaires dans le domaine des sciences sociales et des sciences humaines, mais il est également vrai que le Conseil dispose de moins d'argent à distribuer et ce, à un nombre accru de candidats. Pour cette raison, je crois que les politicologues (et leurs collègues dans les autres sciences sociales) doivent se préparer à un débat difficile et à des décisions encore plus difficiles dans les prochaines mois.

I encourage all of you to make contact with your university representative to SSFC and to keep informed about what is happening to policies that will affect you personally as a social scientist and which may have a long-term impact on the health of our discipline. It is especially important, I think, to examine proposals for changes from the perspective of how these will affect all of our members taking into account, for instance, our different ages, gender, research specialization, etc.

Je me méfie de la pertinence comme un des critères pour l'octroi de fonds à des chercheurs parce que la définition de ce qui est pertinent est trop sujette à de la manipulation de court terme. Quoi qu'il en soit, il est important que nous soyons prêts, à titre de membres de l'une des principales associations dans le domaine des sciences sociales, à expliquer de façon parfois même combative l'importance de nos recherches. Les politiques et le public en général ne voient pas (mais est-ce trop leur demander?) le lien entre ce que nous faisons et les avantages que peut en retirer la société. Si nous ne commençons pas à expliquer notre travail et son utilité, personne ne le fera à notre place.

**GRADUATE PROGRAMMES /
LES ÉTUDES SUPÉRIEURES**

**THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN POLITICAL
SCIENCE AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY**

Philip Oxhorn
Director of Graduate Studies

Over the past few years, the Graduate Program in Political Science at McGill has undergone a number of important changes, making it a dynamic and intellectually stimulating environment for graduate students with a wide variety of academic interests. In today's competitive job market, we strongly believe that quality graduate work must allow students to achieve a maximum breadth in their education, at both the MA and PhD levels, without sacrificing depth of knowledge in their specific field of interest. With this philosophy in mind, we have recently restructured both our MA and PhD programs to best meet the changing needs of graduate students.

Each year, approximately 25-30 M.A. candidates and 8-10 candidates in the combined MA/PhD track are accepted out of 300 applicants from Canada and all parts of the world. The result is a diverse student body, including a large number of non-Canadian students. For example, of the 143 graduate students currently in the Department, approximately one third come from outside of Canada, including Australia, Bangladesh, Estonia, Finland, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Somalia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. We believe that this diversity is an important asset of our graduate program, contributing to a richer and more stimulating intellectual environment.

As part of the Department's continual review of its graduate programs, our MA program was substantially restructured in the late 1980s with the introduction of a new Research Project track. As a result, students now have two options in completing an MA degree from McGill. The first option is the more traditional MA Thesis track. Students are expected to complete 5 3-credit courses and a thesis. The thesis is normally 100 pages in length, and is intended to allow students to demonstrate their proficiency in research by successfully designing and executing a major piece of research. The thesis is evaluated by an external and internal examiner.

The second option in our MA program is the Research Project track. Under this track, students complete 7 3-credit courses and a Research Essay. The Research Essay is intended to be of more limited scope than the thesis and has a maximum length of 60 pages. It is normally based on a research essay completed for one of the student's graduate courses and is intended to allow students to demonstrate their familiarity with the most important relevant scholarly work related to their chosen topic, as well as their ability to carry out research and organize the results. The research essay is evaluated by the student's research supervisor and a second professor from within the Department.

As part of the Department's commitment to ensuring breadth as well as depth in graduate studies, students in both MA tracks are required to take a course in either Empirical Methods or the Philosophy of Social Sciences. Further, students are required to take at least one or two (depending on the track they choose) 3-credit courses outside their field of concentration.

In September 1993, the Department implemented a new PhD program formally called the MA/PhD track. The new program was one of the first of its kind in Canada and is designed to allow qualified students with only a BA to enter directly into our doctoral program. The program allows students more flexibility in designing their course of studies in graduate school because they are able to plan their studies as an integral whole, rather than compartmentalizing them into two separate degrees. Students can complete their PhD degrees more rapidly than was previously the case, and in a much more predictable and orderly fashion. At the same time, students are able to maximize their preparation for writing a dissertation, since that becomes the focus of the first years of their graduate program. Students applying to the programme who have an MA degree are given credit within the MA/PhD track for graduate work already completed, although a minimum residency requirement has to be met.

The specific structure of the MA/PhD track is designed to allow students to achieve the greatest amount of breadth in their graduate studies without sacrificing depth. This is accomplished by requiring all students in the MA/PhD track to complete 13 3-credit courses, distributed as follows :

All students are required to select 2 major fields of study from within the five fields offered by the Department : Canadian Politics, Comparative Politics and Government — Developed Countries, Comparative Politics and Government — Developing Countries, International Politics and Political Theory. Within each of their selected major fields, students must complete at least 4 3-credit courses. As part of the four course requirement in each major field, students must also take a 700-level Research Seminar. In 700-level seminars, students are expected to complete a paper which focuses on a clearly defined research problem and is comparable in scope to an article in a professional journal. The objective is to provide students with sufficient preparation to successfully complete a PhD dissertation. Each 700-level seminar paper is evaluated by 2 readers from within the Department.

In addition to 2 major fields of study, each student is also required to select a minor field of study which is satisfied by the successful completion of 2 3-credit courses. Minor fields can be in any one of the five fields offered by the Department. Students may also request permission to take as a minor some special combination of courses which is suitable to a particular student's planned course of study, such as a minor in empirical methods or a minor that includes courses taken outside of the Political Science Department.

The remaining 3 3-credit courses include one course in both Empirical Methods and the Philosophy of Science, as well as an additional 3-credit course in either of the student's major fields or minor field, according to what best meets the particular student's needs.

As part of the Department's commitment to producing PhDs with a broad training in political science, all doctoral students must also complete several non-course requirements. These include passing a written comprehensive examination in both major fields of study, an oral comprehensive examination, and an advanced-level (translation) test from a modern language other than English or a basic-level (translation) test from two modern languages other than English. Normally, students are expected to have completed their written and oral comprehensive examinations by the end of their second year in the MA/PhD track program.

