

Reports  
President's Report – Winter 2010

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I am pleased to report that the Canadian Political Science Association is in good shape, and has continued its development this year. Membership numbers remain healthy; the budget is balanced; and the 2009 annual conference at Carleton University was a great success.

Moreover, our core programs are in good hands and seem well positioned for the future. The editorial teams at the Canadian Journal of Political Science are doing a remarkable job. Csaba Nikolenyi continues as English co-editor, and James Kelly was appointed as English assistant editor beginning on September 2, 2009. The French co-editor is Nicole Bernier. Rounding out the teams are Francesca Scala and Linda Cardinal, who are the English and French book review editors respectively. We all owe a great debt of thanks to the two editorial teams, and I would like to thank them for their service. A special vote of thanks also goes to André Lecours for his work as assistant editor from July 1, 2006 to September 1, 2009.

Stuart Soroka and the program committee are doing a wonderful job preparing our annual conference, which takes place at Concordia University in Montreal during June 1-3, 2010. The committee received a near record number of proposals, and the program is now available on the CPSA website. Highlights will include the plenary lecture by David Miller, the Oxford political theorist whose publications include *On Nationality*. The conference will also feature a record number of co-sponsored panels, workshops and receptions. The annual dinner will be held in the Glass Court of the Musée des Beaux Arts. Come and join us.

The Parliamentary Internship program is thriving under the leadership of Garth Williams. Ten new interns are now on Parliament Hill, learning about parliamentary life in an especially interesting year in the life of Parliament. Ontario Legislative Internship Programme also remains vigorous, and we are both pleased and fortunate that Henry Jacek was willing to extend his directorship for another three year term, beginning April 1, 2010.

In addition to these continuing responsibilities, the Association has been engaged in a number of other developments:

1. Professionalization of the CPSA

In her President's Report last year at this time, Miriam Smith drew attention to the growing professionalization of the CPSA as an organization. This process has been driven by the growth of services provided by the Association, and by the wider range of issues on which the Association plays a representational role for the discipline as a whole. The two-year experiment of mounting our annual conference outside of the Congress format has also added to the administrative challenges we will face in the next few years. Accordingly, the Board decided to enhance our organizational capacity, appointing Sally Rutherford as a part-time Executive Director to work with Michelle Hopkins, our Administrator.

The impact is becoming evident already. The most obvious sign has been the redesign of our website. The addition of the MyCPSA space has created a platform for a wide range of activities. For example, members can now update their own profile, renew their membership, download travel grant forms, or search the CPSA directory of members online. For the first time, we are conducting the election for members of the Board electronically. The Association has also acquired the technical capacity to conduct surveys of members through the MyCPSA space, which is being used for the first time in the survey of diversity in the discipline (discussed below). Perhaps not surprisingly, our first survey revealed technical problems, but these have been solved and the survey has been re-launched.

2. State of the Profession

The CPSA remains engaged in debates about the state of political science as a discipline in Canada. Two

major initiatives have moved forward this year.

First is the Diversity Task Force. The Task Force, which was established in 2006 to examine diversity in the profession, is currently composed of Yasmeen Abu-Laban (chair), Joanna Everitt, Richard Johnston and David Rayside. The committee completed a survey of diversity in Canadian political science departments, and presented a draft report to the annual meeting of the chairs of political science departments in December. Discussion during the session was useful to the Task Force, and its final report will be presented to the Board in June. In addition, the Task Force has launched a survey of individual members of the CPSA, which is designed to develop a profile of the discipline and understand members' experience with diversity issues.

The second area concerns professional ethics. In December 2008, the Board established a Committee on Professional Ethics, whose members included Carolyn Dick, Avigail Eisenberg (chair), and Jocelyn Maclure. Unlike many other associations, such as the American Political Science Association and the Canadian Sociological Association, the CPSA does not have an official policy on the professional obligations of political scientists; nor does it have procedure for handling complaints among members. The Committee was asked to advise on whether the Association should establish a formal statement on professional ethics, and whether it should adopt some form of complaints procedure. The report of the committee, entitled Professional Ethics in Political Science, was posted on the CPSA website in February. Members are encouraged to read it and comment on its analysis and recommendations by May 1, 2010. The Board will review the report and comments at its meeting in June, 2010. This is an important issue for CPSA, and I urge all members to read and comment on the report. Comments should be sent to Sally Rutherford at [sally\\_rutherford@cpsa-acsp.ca](mailto:sally_rutherford@cpsa-acsp.ca).

### 3. Finances

The overall finances of the Association remain in balance, thanks to the careful stewardship of our Secretary-Treasurer, Éric Monpetit. However, the Board did have to manage an important transition in the life of the CPSA Trust Fund this year. The Trust Fund, which was established as a separate entity in 1989, has grown in the intervening years, providing a small but steady flow of funds which the Association has devoted to student travel to the annual conference and other special projects.

When the original Trust Fund was set up, its founders established that it should be terminated after twenty years. Its term therefore expired in December 2009. Following the recommendation from the Trustees of the Fund, together with advice from our auditors and legal counsel, the CPSA has established a similar Trust within the structure of the Association. While this new Trust will be housed within the CPSA, it will also function in an arms-length manner and will continue to support the goals of the Association. The Board will establish policies for the management of the Fund at its next meeting.

The Association would like to acknowledge the service of all the colleagues who have nurtured the Fund over the years, and to thank them for their efforts on behalf of the Association: Peter Aucoin, David Cameron, Lynda Erickson, Elisabeth Gidengil, Peter Meekison (chair), all former Trustees as well as successive Presidents of the Association.

### 4. CPSA Representation Role

The CPSA has been active in representing the discipline of political science and the professional interests of Canadian political scientists on numerous issues.

Copyright: In August 2009, the Association submitted a statement to the federal government's consultative process on changes to the Copyright Act. We would like to thank Tony Porter, who has tracked this issue on behalf of the Association and who took the lead in developing the Association's approach to the issues. The statement can be viewed on the CPSA website at <http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/reports-copyright.shtml>

Research Ethics: The CPSA was also active in the consultative process concerning reforms to the research

ethics policies of the granting councils, which universities administer on their behalf. The Tri-Council Research Ethics review has been a long process, and until recently has been dominated by bio-medical conceptions of the ethical issues involved in research. The CPSA has argued consistently for an approach which also recognizes with the distinctive features of social science research. Thanks again to the leadership of Tony Porter, our message has been clearly articulated. Our statement to the Tri-Council process was submitted in February 2010, and can be found on the CPSA website at <http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/researchethics.shtml>

SSHRC Program Architecture: The Association has recently taken up the document released in early March 2010 by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). Entitled "Briefing on SSHRC's Renewed Program Architecture," the document sets out a sweeping restructuring of SSHRC's programs, primarily but not exclusively in the area of research grants. The time frame for comment in this case was very short: comments must reach the council by March 31, 2010. This time frame limited the Association's capacity to develop a fully considered response. The Association is encouraging members to send their comments to SSHRC, and is posting a series of questions to assist members in assessing the document. The questions can be found on the CPSA website at <http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/reports-SSHRC-architecture2010.shtml>.

The CPSA also has representatives who play a major role in important national and international organizations. Tony Porter is our representative on the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences (CFHSS), and has been recently elected to the Executive of that body. Les Pal remains the representative of the CPSA and the SQSP to the International Political Science Association, and also serves as a member of the Executive Committee of that organization. Tony and Les have served the CPSA and its members well, and we thank them sincerely. I am also pleased to report that the CPSA and the Société québécoise de science politique (SQSP) have collaborated to support a bid made by colleagues in Montreal to bring the IPSA International Congress to that city in 2015.

## 5. Planning for 2011

Although 2011 is still some time away, preparation for the annual conference that year is well under way. This will be year one of our two-year experiment in mounting the CPSA conference outside of the framework of the Congress. The conference will be held at Wilfrid Laurier University during May 16-18, 2011, and President-Elect Graham White was pleased to announce that Debora Van Nijnatten has agreed to serve as Programme Chair, with Andrea Perella as local representative. The Programme Committee is already at work, and officials at Wilfrid Laurier are highly committed to making the conference a success. We are also pleased that ISA Canada has decided to stay with the CPSA for the 2011 conference, co-organizing the International Relations section.

## A Final Word of Thanks

Serving as President of the CPSA is an immense honour. But it is also a demanding position, and would be impossible this year without the support of countless people. Sally Rutherford and Michelle Hopkins have been invariably professional, supportive and - best of all - pleasant to work with. Other members of the Executive Committee have also carried a large part of the load. Caroline Dick, Éric Montpetit, Miriam Smith and Graham White have taken the lead on important projects and provided invaluable advice. They have undoubtedly saved me from many mistakes. Members of committees such as the Diversity Task Force and the Committee on Professional Ethics have devoted significant effort to the Association this year, and we are in their debt. Colleagues such as Henry Jacek, Les Pal, Tony Porter and Garth Williams have also labored cheerfully and effectively on our behalf. Finally, the Board is a wonderful group of colleagues. Although we have had serious issues to deal with, the sense of a collective, collegial enterprise has been powerful. It has been a privilege to work with all of these people, and I thank them all for their support.