

ACCUTE Newsletter June Edition 2010

ACCUTE

President : Heather Murray

Secretary Treasurer: Craig Patterson

Office Coordinator: Pam Coles

ACCUTE's Mandate: To promote the interests of those teaching and studying English language and literatures in Canadian colleges and universities by facilitating the dissemination and exchange of research and the exploration of professional issues, by organizing scholarly and professional meetings, by seeking to improve work conditions, by representing the interests of members before provincial and federal decision-making bodies, and by supporting the interests and aspirations of members entering the profession.

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The ACCUTE office will be moving to Concordia University (Nicola Nixon president, John Miller secretary-treasurer) around mid-July. For updated information on the transition, as well as Concordia contact information, check the ACCUTE website.

ACCUTE's 54th annual conference, under the umbrella of the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, will be held in Fredericton (University of New Brunswick and St. Thomas University, co-hosting) May 28 to 31 inclusive, 2011.

President's Column

This report marks the official end of ACCUTE's time at the University of Toronto, and the beginning of the transition to ACCUTE-at-Concordia, although the actual handover will occur sometime in mid-July. Nicola Nixon will become the president and John Miller the secretary-treasurer, as readers of this newsletter will doubtless know, and there will be transitions within the executive as well: Stephen Guy-Bray finishes as member-at-large, Sara Humphreys finishes as sessional representative, and Mary O'Connor and Jamie Paris finish as CACE representative and Graduate Student Caucus representative respectively. At the AGM, John was confirmed as secretary-treasurer, and Craig Patterson (Humber), our outgoing secretary-treasurer, was elected member-at-large representing the college constituency, with Veronica Austen (Waterloo) and Lynne Evans (Dalhousie) becoming the new sessional and graduate student reps. Doug Thorpe (Saskatchewan) succeeds as president of CACE and will thus sit on the executive *ex officio*. This is a forward-looking moment, and at our executive meetings during the Congress we discussed the future directions of the organization as well as

ways to make the handover to Concordia as seamless and as painless as possible. In my report to the AGM, however, my task was to look backwards, and to report on events since the last AGM as well as the overall health of the organization, and that report is digested here.

Our membership has stayed almost identical to what was reported in May 2009, and the balance of member-categories also is almost unchanged, with the exception of a slight increase in graduate students, who now form fully 1/3 of our members. Revenues, however, are down, as you will see from the secretary-treasurer's report, and this seems to be caused in part by the slide in dues among the sessional/stipendiary/CLTA members whose salaries (and thus dues) are eroding. In handing on the organization, my main concern is the very slim financial margin on which we balance despite the frugality of our office and our predecessors'. The new fee structure has ensured the financial health of *English Studies in Canada*, which is an important achievement, but has done little to change the fiscal situation of ACCUTE itself. Perhaps the new dues structure would have been more successful if the financial downturn had not inter-

vened, with consequent cuts to professional allowances among more senior members. The structure of the dues system (and the question of whether or not we should stay with an income-linked system) require further consideration. Also on the topic of memberships: our effort to move to an electronic membership (and fee payment) system is ongoing, and discussions with the Federation continue.

Last year's campus reps meeting targetted the website as an area needing improvement, and during the summer we redrafted the entire contents of the website (with a special eye to providing procedural information for first-time submitters), while Laurel Ryan undertook a re-organization and re-design to make the website more attractive and user-friendly. On the topic of campus reps: the network remains strong, with reps at more than 70 campuses across Canada. All of them are to be thanked for the very important work they do, and for their feedback and suggestions throughout the year.

Moving to this year's conference, submissions were roughly the same as in fall 2008: 160 to the general CFP (5 fewer than the previous year) , 76 for member-organized CFPs (9

fewer), and there were 20 fewer submissions to the joint-organized sessions, although there were fewer of these CFPS in the first place.

Given the fact that conference and travel funding has been cut or is nonexistent in many departments, it is a tribute to the loyalty of our membership that the submission rate held so steady. Last summer we searched for a new and perhaps more efficient system to process vector reports, although we were unable to find one that could handle the very detailed (and sometimes lengthy) comments that we transmit to the submitters. However, at a meeting of the Federation in Ottawa in the spring, I learned of several new and more flexible systems that might be suited to ACCUTE's particular needs.

During the last year I have represented ACCUTE in the Assembly of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and have now taken a seat on the Board, representing large associations (a position previously held by Steven Bruhm). We continue our close and very collegial working relationship with the "Feds," and I hope in future to be able to help ACCUTE's members to better understand the work of the Federation and feel the benefits of our collaboration. All of the

Federation Congress staff are to be thanked for helping things to run so smoothly this year.

Which brings me to the “thank you” portion of this report, which must be abbreviated to fit the Newsletter although I was able to be more expansive at the AGM. First, for Congress 2010: thanks to Ronald Rudin, Concordia’s Congress convenor, for support for our round-table on Indigenous educational issues (and to my colleague Cheryl Suzack for acting in an advisory capacity); to CFH for support from the Aid to Interdisciplinary Sessions program; to SSHRC for travel funding; and to Jason Camlot and Concordia’s Department of English for graciously hosting our wine and cheese reception. Kevin Pask has been a resourceful Local Arrangements Co-ordinator, assisted by Nicola Nixon and John Miller.

The work of ACCUTE of course goes on all year, and it is the executive that makes things tick: Jamie Paris, Sara Humphreys, and Mary O’Connor have all done a wonderful job of representing their various constituencies, and we will miss Stephen Guy-Bray’s sardonic sense of humour and Occam’s razor problem-solving abilities.

Thanks, once again, to the Department of Eng-

lish at the University of Toronto for two years of exceptional support. The Dean of Arts and Science and the Department provided two years’ of stipendiary releases for both Craig Patterson and me, as well as two ACCUTE offices, RA support for both years, a computer, office supplies, telephone and photocopying... the list goes on. Thanks to then-chair Brian Corman, then-dean Pekka Sinervo, and current -chair Alan Bewell, for their backing. And the moral and practical support was just as crucial: we are indebted to departmental administrator Donna Sabo, financial officer Cristina Henriquez (and, this year, Penny Wilson), and computer whiz Marguerite Perry.

I will miss day-to-day life on the ninth floor of the Jackman Building, and the chance to work with some extraordinary people. Our RAs Heather Ladd and Laurel Ryan each brought ingenuity and commitment to the position.

With her terrific “people skills” Pam Coles was wonderful as the human face of the ACCUTE office, and maintained her good humour through the inevitable ups and downs of paperwork and conference planning. Craig Patterson brought to the position his considerable diplomatic skills, his consummate professionalism, and his canny frugality, all essential

qualities for a secretary-treasurer, and worked many many more hours than his release-time stipend could ever begin to compensate.

And last, I'd like to thank the hundreds of ACCUTE members who have corresponded with me over the last two years, with suggestions, observations and (very often) encouraging words. It has been a privilege to be in constant contact with so many colleagues across the country, and to witness the dedication and the intellectual energy that teachers and students of English bring to their work, even in – especially in -- these challenging times. Best wishes to all of you for the summer, and to our Concordia successors. ACCUTE will be in good hands.

– Heather Murray



Secretary - Treasurer's Report

The following financial statement was passed by the Annual General Meeting at Concordia

University, May 30, 2010. ACCUTE's finances remain healthy even though revenues have fallen (the cost of Congress 2009 was especially low because of its location in central Canada). Future executives may want to revisit the dues' structure so that it continues to reflect the composition of the membership and the Association's financial needs.

REVENUE

	2008-2009	2009-2010
Membership	\$50,477.18	\$46,149.86
Mbr. Donations	380.00	465.00
CFHSS		
Rebate	4,388.78	8,331.76
Outreach	2,000.00	2,000.00
Advertising	250.00	500.00
Other (interest)	11.57	3.34
Balance forward	27,306.75	8,874.36
Total Revenue	\$86,564.18	\$66,324.32

EXPENSES

ESC	\$31,185.00	\$17,125.00
Priestley Prize	500.00	250.00
Executive	3340.75	2,262.18
Conference	1033.11	759.26
Salaries/Benefits	26,275.32	18,940.00
Plenary	3,566.58	3,395.65
CHFSS	5,601.00	5,786.72
Mbr Donations	1,110.00	490.00
Office	1,244.96	667.19
Printing	2,007.94	2,736.16
Other (bank charges)	75.26	26.16
Total Expenses	\$77,689.92	\$52,448.32
Net Balance	\$ 8,874.36	\$13,876.00

ACCUTE SHRCC Amount**REVENUE**

SSHRC Grant	\$26,986.00	\$13,493.00
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Interest	1.55	1.25
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Balance forward	932.11	\$13,634.44
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TOTAL	\$27,919.66	\$27,128.69
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EXPENSES

Congress	\$14,285.22	\$10,896.21
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Grants

Bank Charges		3.00
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BALANCE	\$13,634.44	\$16229.48
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- Craig Patterson

ESC Report

ESC: English Studies in Canada enjoyed a very successful year and continues to make substantial progress in the areas of production, readership, and finances. Over the past year, the journal produced five issues in total, bringing us to issue 35.1 (March, 2009), released in May 2010. Our intention is to continue to work extra hard, producing as many as six issues over the coming year, in order to bring our publication dates more in line with calen-

dar dates. This means, however, that we'll want to see an increase in the number of submissions received in order to maintain sufficient, high-quality content. Please submit your best work to *ESC*, and encourage your academic colleagues, at every stage of the profession, to do the same. Remind them that with this sort of production schedule, they're likely to see their work in print relatively quickly.

ESC is eager to hear suggestions regarding book reviews and review articles. Contact our Reviews Editor, Rob Appleford, at rob.appleford@ualberta.ca if you'd like to contribute to the journal. We also have a fabulous special issue in the works that should be of interest to many members of ACCUTE: *ESC* invites proposals on the subject of "TRAFFIC" from various perspectives. Contact mark.simpson@ualberta.ca or cecily.devereux@ualberta.ca for more information. The deadline for proposals is June 30, 2010.

ESC's online readership expanded dramatically over the past year, as access to the journal's articles almost tripled from 20,000 downloads in the previous year to over 53,000 this year. About 70% of those downloads were in the

U.S., 18% were in Canada, and the remaining 12% in more than fifty other countries worldwide. In addition to our individual and institutional print subscriptions, this means that the journal is read regularly by a sizable, global community of academic scholars. That's great news for our contributors, as it means their work enjoys a remarkably high profile.

That's also great news for the journal financially, which this year saw sizable increases in revenue from digital aggregation and institutional subscriptions. The journal is in excellent financial health, and we posted a surplus of over \$15,000 this year, even while producing an extra issue. *ESC*'s additional revenue will be directed to re-establishing the journal's contingency fund and meeting the costs of catch-up production slated for 2010-11.

ESC was saddened to lose one of the long-standing members of its Editorial Advisory Board this year. D. Lorne Macdonald, who passed away in January 2010, had been a valued member of the journal's team since 1995. A note on Lorne's career and life was published in the front pages of issue 34.4, and he is remembered fondly. We were also pleased to add four new and outstanding members to

the EAB: Anne Quéma (Acadia), Miriam Jones (UNB), Renate Eigenbrod (Manitoba), and Lauren Berlant (Chicago). Please join us in welcoming them to their new positions.

The journal is thrilled to announce that the 2010 F.E.L. Priestley Prize has been awarded to Herb Wylie, Acadia University, for his article "Going Out of Their Way: Tourism, Authenticity, and Resistance in Contemporary Atlantic-Canadian Literature." The essay, which appears in 34.2-3, offers a broad scope, interesting conclusions, and wit as it sets up a larger political context along with sensitive readings of a variety of works. Thanks to the adjudicators Jim Ellis (Calgary), Janice Fiamengo (Ottawa), and Committee Chair Lisa Vargo (Saskatchewan).

The Editors of *ESC* look forward to another successful year, and would like to thank the Executive and Membership of ACCUTE for their ongoing support. Special thanks to our Guest Editors, Authors, and Peer Reviewers. Please remember that the success of this journal depends on the active contributions of all of the members of our academic community!

- **Michael O'Driscoll**

Report from the Committee for Professional Concerns

The newly reformed Committee for Professional Concerns (which briefly--and mistakenly--went under the pseudonym Professional Concerns Committee...), had a successful first year, culminating in three professional concerns panels at the 2010 conference. These sessions, "Defining Professionalism," "Labour and the Profession," and "Professional Transitions," were all well attended and generated active discussion in the question periods and beyond, centrally concerning the pressures placed on the profession by the current state of hiring and the continuing increase in the size of graduate programs. Though there were too many speakers to list individually here, I would like to thank them for their terrific and carefully considered papers, especially since all of them were actively involved in other aspects of the ACCUTE conference and Congress as a whole. I'll also extend thanks here to my fellow committee members and the ACCUTE executive for their tireless work in organizing and chairing these panels.

In addition to the panels, the CPC also had a breakfast meeting, where we discussed two central items. First, since Veronica Austen,

this year's CPC sessional representative, is moving on to the ACCUTE executive, we discussed possible replacements for her position, and will be bringing a name forward to the executive soon. Second, but related to the first, we began what will be a longer discussion of the draft report on sessional hiring in English departments, a conversation we expect to be reflected in our panels next year and in other initiatives that we are currently drafting--stay tuned! Many suggestions were made both to and by the CPC for possible future panels and, while we won't be able to represent all of these suggestions, we know that we will have an equally dynamic slate of topics and speakers for next year.

I will close by saying that the CPC welcomes input from the membership on any and all issues related to our professional/working lives, and any initiatives people want to see us take up, or topics they would like to see addressed, either in our panels or in some other forum. We want to make the CPC an active part of ACCUTE, and that will come from input from the membership.

- Jason Haslam

Sessional Report

Firstly, I want to thank Heather and all of the ACCUTE executive members for being such wonderful colleagues over the last two years.

My list of accomplishments as sessional representative is as follows:

The discussion list through Yahoo was outdated as a means to communicate and in terms of the status of members on the list itself. I shut the list down and started a facebook group. There is almost the same number of current members on the Facebook group that was on the discussion group. While there are members there and I am grateful for their presence, I have tried in vain to start discussions, ask questions and/or generate feedback of any kind.

Over the year, I have asserted that ACCUTE is not perceived as a place where sessional issues will be addressed. The situation in terms of contract work in English (and many disciplines) is at a crisis level. I think ACCUTE is doing a great job of representing tenure-track



and tenured faculty as well as graduate students, but the association needs to overtly support its sessional members. I think steps are being taken, such as the revival of the CPC. ACCUTE has started, in my opinion, to fulfill its political mission and goals as an association in terms of addressing this vital issue. I hope it will continue to do so. I want to thank ACCUTE for being the type of organization that facilitates and appreciates dissenting voices and radical opinions. I have learned a great deal from the executive and I thank you.

- Sara Humphreys

CACE Report

Twenty-six chairs of English met for a series of panel discussions at the CACE meeting Thursday, May 27. The members elected Neta Gordon (Brock) as President-Elect. She will serve as Vice-President this coming year and Doug Thorpe (Saskatchewan) will take over as President. CACE Members also voted to pay for the President's travel expenses to attend Congress, an expense that in the past had been carried by ACCUTE.

There are some preliminary findings for the 2009-10 CACE/ACCUTE Hiring Survey. As of May 2010, 42 departments had responded to the survey (as opposed to 32 last year and 27 the year before). 40% of these departments reported a decline in their full-time faculty complement (as opposed to 19% last year); 12% reported an increase and 48% reported that they had remained stable. Of 19 completed tenure-track searches, 89.5% hired Canadians (as opposed to 67% last year); 58% hired women; 42% men. Two hires are from under-represented groups. The average number of applications for these jobs was 43; the range was 9 to 104. Departments reported 38 completed searches for Contractually Limited Appointments (of 8 to 12 months). Again 89.5% of those hired were Canadian. The final report should be ready in July, once hirings for the year are completed. It will be posted on the CACE and ACCUTE websites.

- **Mary O'Connor**

ACCUTE 2011 CONFERENCE FUN FACTS

At ACCUTE's 53rd annual conference there were: **70 sessions, 10 meetings, 3 professional concerns sessions, 3 social events, and 2 plenaries.**

More than 340 people attended with presenters from 48 Canadian institutions, 8 US colleges and universities, and 3 other countries.

**Barbara Godard
In Memoriam**

Barbara Godard was a member of ACCUTE for more than thirty years, and contributed to the association in many ways (not the least, in her formative role in the "Theory Group" of the 1980s). She will be missed for her energy, generosity, and intellectual courage. The following commemorative notice was written by her colleagues Elena Basile, Jody Berland, and Julia Creet, and is reprinted here by kind permission of the authors and the York University e-newsletter Yfile.

It is with great sadness that the Department of English at York University announces the death of Professor Emerita Barbara Godard, a professor of English, French, social & political thought and women's studies. A pillar of the York community and one of Canada's pre-eminent literary scholars, Prof. Godard broadly influenced the fields of Canadian and Quebec studies, translation studies, feminist poetics, semiotics and cultural studies. She was a generous supervisor and mentor who trained and influenced a contemporary generation of cultural workers, including academics, writers and artists. The scope of her

mentorship was fully recognized in 2002 when she became the recipient of teaching awards from York University's Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools. Prof. Godard retired from full-time teaching in 2008, but continued a full intellectual and pedagogical life until her sudden passing.

Prof. Godard was a prolific and influential intellectual. An extraordinarily sharp and encyclopedic thinker, Prof. Godard's interests encompassed semiotics, translation, gender, textuality and the body, as well as archives, memorials, and the history and changing politics of cultural production. With a keen eye for detail and a unique capacity for breadth of vision, she catalyzed interdisciplinary connections among culture, language, gender, politics, poetics and meaning.

After completing her doctorate at the University of Bordeaux, Prof. Godard began teaching at York in 1971 as a visiting assistant professor and was hired into a tenure-track position in 1976. She published eight books, 80 book chapters and 115 articles and catalogue entries. She translated the major writers of Quebec feminism, including Nicole Brossard,

Yolande Villemarie and Louky Bersianik. She also served as editor or on the editorial board of no less than 22 journals. She was a founding co-editor of the feminist literary periodical *Tessera*, a contributing editor of *Open Letter* and *The Semiotic Review of Books*, and the book review editor for *Topia: A Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies*. She also made long-standing contributions to *Resources for Feminist Research*, *Voix et Images* and *ECW* among others.

Prof. Godard was committed to and passionate about her graduate students across the Departments of English, French Studies, Film and Visual Arts, the School of Women's Studies and the Program in Social & Political Thought, supervising over 35 PhD candidates. She built bridges between people and modes of inquiry because of her genuine enthusiasm for ideas. She worked between and across languages which so often divide. Prof. Godard inspired her colleagues and students through her critical creativity and her unwavering commitment to interrogating and producing the conditions for full civic engagement in the University and in the public sphere. We will miss her greatly.

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FROM THE ACCUTE ARCHIVES: 25 Years in 250 Words

In its issue of December 2008, *English Studies in Canada* republished Marjorie Garson's long-out-of-print history, *ACCUTE: The First Twenty-Five Years, 1957-1982*. What about the next twenty-five? Some notes toward that history:

First bang of the ceremonial gavel hand-crafted by Jan de Bruyn. Impact of the "Rudrum Report" (on CLTA hiring), and the CACE/ACCUTE employment register. The beginning of the Theory Group and its Newsletter.

The Christianity and Literature Study Group starts up. Gay theory comes to ACCUTE with Robert Martin's plenary in 1988. Many shots fired in the canon wars. The years of the "allied association" conference programs.

ACCUTE gets its "second C." Graduate student and sessional representatives join the executive. ACCUTE's statement on fair employment practices for stipendiary/CLTA academics. The CACE/ACCUTE hiring survey starts in 1997 with a ten-year retrospective. Perennial issues: underemployment, accreditation, copyright, research funding, the new university-colleges, electronic publication, equity and diversity.

Conferences at UBC, Guelph, Montreal, Manitoba, McMaster, Windsor, Laval (rain!), Victoria (rhododendrons!), Queen's, UPEI, Carleton, Calgary (mountain ranch BBQ!), UQAM, Brock, Memorial (icebergs!), Ottawa, Bishop's, Alberta, Laval, Toronto, Dalhousie, Manitoba, Western, Saskatchewan (Mad Hatter croquet!). Plenary speakers Tony Dawson, Margaret Doody, Lee Edelman, J. Hillis Miller, Toril Moi, Mary Nyquist, Peter Schwenger, Eve Sedgwick, Helen Vendler, and many many more.

ACCUTE gets a website, and the Newsletter goes electronic (although not the membership system, at least not yet). *ESC* moves from UNB to Alberta, and then to Carleton, and back to U of A, now with a fresh new look. Joint association sessions, "WHY DO I HAVE TO" panels, graduate student caucus "academic speed dating," and the dance party gets under way.



