



A Bug In Your Ear...

Education at risk under GATS, critics charge

By David Leibl, Central Bureau

WINNIPEG (CUP) -- Canada's participation in a little-known World Trade Organization agreement could have dire ramifications for higher education, student and faculty leaders are warning.

"We feel that if [the government] goes forward with this agreement, it will pose a tangible threat to post-secondary education," said Michael Conlon, the chairperson of national lobby group the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). Conlon says the CFS is worried about the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services, or GATS. Critics fear it would water down Canadian education standards and could further open the door to foreign investors eager to provide for-profit education on Canadian soil.

Canadian trade officials were in Geneva last week to take part in GATS negotiations—an event that received little media attention and raised the eyebrows of few multilateral free trade opponents. Despite the GATS' apparently low profile, Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew stressed before the talks that protecting social programs would be a top priority.

"We will not negotiate our health, public education or social services, and we will maintain the flexibility to pursue our cultural policy objectives," Pettigrew said.

But critics insist that as long as Canada is taking part in GATS negotiations, the government won't be able to safeguard education.

According to the WTO, services "provided to the public in the exercise of governmental authority" aren't included in the GATS. The WTO defines such services as those "supplied neither on a commercial basis nor in competition with one or more services suppliers."

The CFS, however, maintains Canadian post-secondary education doesn't comply with the WTO's grounds for exclusion because higher education in Canada isn't entirely publicly administered.

"Education is overrun with private institutions" and therefore not protected, Conlon said. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) agrees. According to CAUT's executive director Jim Turk, under GATS the Alberta government's decision to allow the U.S.-based DeVry Institute to grant degrees would essentially licence any other private institution to demand equal treatment.



"Any foreign investor would simply go to a trade tribunal and argue, 'Look, there's a private presence in Canada, we're continuing to be excluded, and we want a ruling that we're being allowed in,'" said Turk.

Anna Dashtgard, an organizer with activist umbrella group Common Front on the WTO, fears Canada's involvement in the GATS could dismantle Canadian education standards. Foreign investors, she says, could argue that universities' regulations regarding classroom size, entrance standards and tuition caps are all barriers to trade and could appeal to a WTO tribunal to have such regulations removed.

CAUT's president, Tom Booth, adds that other regulations like limiting positions on boards of governors to local citizens, restricting student loans to local students and restricting research grants to Canadian universities could also be viewed as trade barriers and could be eliminated under GATS.

"We're convinced Canada's position will jeopardize our public education system." Pettigrew says GATS negotiations will continue for at least three more years. The minister pledged that Canada "will take a leading role" in the discussions.

Student Profile

By Mark Gueffroy

Shadia Amblie is a thirty-seven year old student of Athabasca University, enrolled in the Bachelor of Administration program. Her favourite course to date is Administration 232 (Administrative Principles) due to the focus on leadership skills and interpersonal relations.

Shadia lives in Lac La Biche, Alberta with her husband Earle and her two children (Jamal, 13; Adam, 10). Shadia was an active participant in the publishing of the Lac La Biche chronicles, where she contributed her artwork and creative design talents. She currently volunteers for Hope Haven Women's shelter, and assists them with the publication of newsletter and brochures.

Shadia has an extensive educational background; she's completed the Business Administration Program at Portage College, and the Distance Learning Business Administration program at Fairview College. She owns and operates Mission Graphics, a printing services company, and is also employed as a Communication Assistant for Alberta Human Resources and Employment.

Mark Gueffroy is a writer/reporter for The Voice, which is a student newspaper sponsored by the Athabasca University Students' Union. He may be contacted by e-mail at advice75@hotmail.com or by phone at (780) 623-9488 or (780) 623-1632. If you are interested in being profiled in the Student Profile column, please contact Mark by email or phone. Thanks for reading!



Anti-free trade groups worry about focus on violence in Quebec

By Vincenzo D'Alto and Darren Stewart, Ottawa Bureau

QUEBEC CITY (CUP) -- As activist groups prepare to protest in Quebec City later this month, they are encouraging the public and the media to embrace their message, rather than focus on the potential for violence.

As many as 20,000 people are expected to demonstrate outside the Summit of the Americas meetings in Quebec City this April 20-22, when leaders from Alaska to Argentina meet to discuss free trade in the region. Many groups advocate peaceful protest and believe that the police and the state are more to blame for violence than

activists.

Philippe Duhamel, spokesperson for SALAMI, a large anti-trade agreement citizen's group based in Montreal, said the movement could grow stronger with a solidarity in nonviolent protest, and that the media is already focussing wrongfully on protestor violence.

"I often warn reporters that there will be a group of people dressed in black, running around, carrying sticks, throwing stuff at people," he said. "These people are the police."

Duhamel said he thinks 99 per cent of violence in the world is caused by the capitalist system, which the news reports often overlook, though he hopes to keep the question of violent protests in the discourse.

"I don't think violence is a non-issue," he said. "A lot of people are concerned whether they can bring their kids to Quebec City or their aunt or uncle or grandparents."

He said he hopes activists can agree on an approach of peaceful non-violent protest going into Quebec City, which will make the movement stronger.

"I need to trust that you're not going to be behind me, throwing a rock at the police while I'm sitting in peaceful civil disobedience in the street," he said. "How could I trust you as an ally?"

Duhamel predicts that the police will clamp down hard on any violent protests, which wont be a good thing for his movement.

He worries that a few isolated violent incidents will distract public attention from the real issues, much like they did at similar anti free-trade protests in Seattle and Windsor, though he suggests that the anti free-trade movement is much better organized and prepared for peaceful protest.

The Groupes Opposés à la Mondialisation des Marchés, Opération Québec Printemps 2001 and Forum Populaire de l'Outaouais are trying to shift the debate away from protester violence in Quebec.

At a press conference held at UQAM last Wednesday, they suggested that the real question is how governments and police forces are using advance repression and scare tactics against the building opposition to the Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement that will be on the summit agenda.

According to Pascal Durand, of the FPO, the governments are leaving people no choice but to express their opinion in the streets during protests. He worries that the state wrongfully using various elements of intimidation, such as a security perimeter and the emptying of Quebec prisons, to prevent people from voicing any concerns.

"The message from the police is simple: 'Don't take advantage of your democratic rights,'" Durand stated.

When asked if that was not violence and justification for force, Durand answered that the definition of violence could be stretched.

"Police use violence all the time; with the homeless, or [disabled] people; as well as physical, political and even economic violence," he said.

Maude Barlow, director of the Council of Canadians, agreed that public attention is too focussed on the violence of protests but ignoring the violence in the system being protested.

"Free trade has invaded areas of life it was never supposed to be in," she said. "It is intruding on all areas of the commons."

People protest because they're sick of living in a world where corporations hold all the power, said Barlow.

Speaking My Mind

By Mark A. C. Gueffroy



"A meeting-weary businessman once listed meetings as one of the three absolutes in life: death, taxes, and meetings... Those who want to control the influence of meetings on their lives are usually eager to accept ideas and strategies for managing meetings more effectively."

DeVries, M. (2nd ed.). The New Robert's Rules of Order.

Meetings are inevitable... they are simply a part of our day-to-day lives. They are unavoidable; although, admittedly they can be difficult and frustrating. The most important factor of having an effective and efficient meeting is to *be prepared*. For a formal meeting, such as a committee or board

meeting, this can be as simple as the preparation of an agenda or schedule. In a more informal setting, such as a staff meeting or interview, the key to being prepared is as simple as knowing the topic(s) of the meeting and researching related information.

Be in control of the meeting, while maintaining considerations for the other participants. Remain calm, reasonable, and as cheerful as possible. Always be respectful of the other participants. Address issues of concern without offending the other people present.

For more information on this topic, and of the procedure involved in a meeting, I highly recommend that you obtain a copy of [The New Robert's Rules of Order](#). In my opinion, it is one of the essential desk reference texts.



MONEY TALKS

Financial Fitness Quiz

By Penny Kearns

I take my responsibilities as a leader and an educator in fiscal accountabilities seriously. My goal is to reach many people with regard to financial strategies, helping them to create, construct and implement a viable plan. What we hope to do is present this academic process in a somewhat fun and interesting way.

Naturally, a great deal of training is accomplished in a more formal classroom structure. Equally effective is a one on one personal guidance session. And yet another way is through multi-media and therefore reaching a large number of people with a single effort.

One of the primary steps in this process is to determine your personal knowledge. The attached quiz will hopefully take you a few more steps in that direction. Although information is not wisdom, determining your results might help you understand the next route to consider in your pursuit of financial independence.

A 1997 American Express Financial Responsibility Survey asked people if they knew the difference between a charge card (which must be paid off in full each month) and a credit card (which requires a minimum monthly payment). Although half of the survey respondents said they did, less than 2% got the answer right on a short test.

The following quiz is designed to test your literacy with regard to building a strong financial portfolio. The answers are at the end of the quiz.

1. You have an R9 rating. This means:

- a. You can drive without wearing glasses;
- b. Lots of pre-approved credit cards are landing in your mailbox;
- c. You dive for cover every time someone knocks on your door out of fear of bill collectors.

2. A grace period:

- a. Allows you to pay your credit card bills whenever you have the money;

- b. Occurs just before your diet is scheduled to start, when you can eat anything you want;
- c. Is the time between when your credit card bill is sent and when you start paying interest.

3. A personal line of credit:

- a. Is designed specially for the mathematically challenged who bounce cheques;
- b. Must be paid back in monthly instalments within a certain time period;
- c. Will allow you to choose how much money to borrow within a pre-approved limit.

4. The quickest way to establish a credit rating is to:

- a. Beg for money;
- b. Borrow money;
- c. Steal money.

5. If you die without a will:

- a. Your life partner gets nothing, except maybe your glass armadillo collection;
- b. The government steps in and writes one for you;
- c. The Office of the Public Trustee swoops in and takes everything.

6. Probate fees are:

- a. The tuition costs of becoming a probation officer;
- b. What you pay to have your estate looked after if you die without a will;
- c. What you pay to have your estate looked after if you die with a will.

7. Power of attorney for personal care:

- a. Designates someone to act in your stead should you become incapacitated;
- b. Organizes your hair and your aesthetic appointment;
- c. Makes health-care decisions for you when you can't.

8. The way to avoid someone having too much power over your affairs is to:

- a. Appoint your unemployed brother;
- b. Give joint power of attorney to two people;
- c. Do nothing.

9. The primary purpose of term life insurance is to:

- a. Make sure your insurance lasts as long as you do;
- b. Pay off your term loan from the bank when you die;
- c. Provide insurance coverage until your obligations end or leave home.

10. The best part of the death benefit from your life insurance policy is that it:

- a. Goes directly to Canada Customs and Revenue Agency to pay your final tax return after you die;
- b. Allows survivors to grieve in Tahiti;
- c. Enjoys tax-free status.

11. Company or employer-provided disability insurance:

- a. Is good only as long as you work there;
- b. Has the most generous definition of what constitutes a disability;
- c. Have tax-free benefits.

12. A tax shelter is:

- a. The same as a homeless shelter;
- b. A place to invest your money tax-free until it comes time to cash it out;
- c. A tax benefit that allows you to claim certain costs of your home.

13. The portion of money Canada Customs and Revenue Agency holds back when you cash out your RRSP:

- a. Withholding tax;
- b. Shock therapy;
- c. Early withdrawal penalty.

14. The type of investments that can qualify for an RRSP:

- a. Are stocks, bonds, GICs, Canada Savings Bonds, mutual funds, savings accounts;
- b. Is your glass armadillo collection;
- c. Are stocks, bonds, GICs, Canada Savings Bonds, mutual funds, savings accounts, unemployment benefits, and CPP payments.

15. Mutual fund management fees are:

- a. Much lower in Canada than they are in the United States;
- b. The costs of administering the fund, including the money manager's salary and sales rep's commission charges;
- c. Incredibly annoying.

16. If you are retiring in 35 years, one of the best types of investment to use is:

- a. GIC;
- b. A high quality mattress;
- c. An international equity mutual fund.

Answers: 1.c; 2.c; 3.c; 4.b; 5.b; 6.c; 7.c; 8.b; 9.c; 10.c; 11.a; 12.b; 13.a; 14.a; 15.b; 16.c

As mentioned above, information is not wisdom. The alarming truth of our time is that anyone can boot up the Internet and have access to more information in an hour than Solomon could retrieve in his entire life. That gives the perception of great power and it is human to miss the intrinsic truth that no amount of information sums to wisdom. What is essential is that some professional experienced external force must step into this surge of data. The great misconception is that you are what you know. Investing wisely is a behavioural function. You are what you do.

People are moved too often by emotion and too little by wisdom.

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CUEBALL

Review of Eugene Krauss's CD

By Bobbie Blue

It's a simple enough recipe. Take a pool hustler from the streets of Toronto, drop him on the West Coast, add a dash of fisherman, clam digger, accountant, granite driller, about a dozen other eclectic occupations, and toss together, Sprinkle with delicious storytelling, delightful humour, delicate sadness, tasteful guitar playing, and a voice as settling as a mountain stream, and you have Canada's newest rising star, Eugene Krauss.

Born in an Austrian refugee camp, Krauss soon landed in Toronto with his parents and grew up on the mean streets of the teeming city. He became a teenage poolshark and quietly dabbled in the bursting-at-the-seams music scene in bohemian Yorkville. It was the 1960's; a time of change, extreme fashion, radical views, listening to Dylan and reading Kerouac.

It was easy to get caught up in the whirlwind. Young Krauss embraced the lifestyle, and before long, he was on the road, hitch-hiking the country like thousands of others. He hopped trains (which landed him some time in a Calgary slammer), fought forest fires, eventually found a new wife and life, and settled –first on Texada Island, BC, and then several years later, in Powell River, which he and Mary Anne still call home. Along the way, a son, Jacob, was born, jobs were won and lost and the music in Eugene's head never stopped.

This dazzling first CD, Cueball, is the end product of living life on the edge, of what the eyes saw and the heart felt from this charming, unassuming man. It is a complete labour of love, but it is more than simply memories stored in Krauss's fertile mind.

Produced by Juno Award winning artist and internationally acclaimed blues musician, Ken Hamm, the CD tells the haunting tales of the streets of Toronto (The Corner), an underwater mermaid near Powell River (The Tin and Copper Maiden of the West), freight train hopping (Dormant for a While), and even the highs and lows surrounding life with Mary Anne while living on Texada Island (Your Love's a Boat).

Krauss has a voice to wake up sleeping romance. His words enter the soul and the host of quality musicians recruited for this major production reads like a who's who of West Coast talent. Joining Hamm is John Reischman, widely acknowledged as one of the country's top mandolin players; Bruce Everett, flautist and harmonica player extraordinaire; and Caridwen Irvine, who, in Krauss's words "is one of the most talented and creative fiddle players around." An assortment of Powell River's finest musicians round out this impressive cast.

Open your hearts and savour this stirring debut from Eugene Krauss. Eventually his sound will reach the distant shores, and when it does, you'll be able to say you were onboard from the beginning.



Canadian Co-operative Association
CCA RECRUITS YOUTH FOR THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE
OF A LIFETIME

Are you looking for an exciting opportunity to gain valuable work experience in an international setting? *The Youth Experience International (YEI)* program, offered by the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA), is recruiting 10 young people with University degrees or College program certificates who are currently unemployed or under-employed. We have recently been approved funding for 10 additional interns in the **Philippines, Indonesia, Ghana, South Africa, Kenya and Costa Rica**. Recruitment for these 10 internships will be commencing very soon. This year, internship opportunities include: Gender and Development, Organic Farming, Youth Programming, Resource Centre Development, Business Development and Co-operative Research.

The objective of the program, currently entering its fifth year, is to help young professionals make the transition from post-secondary education to long-term employment. The program provides young Canadians a unique opportunity to acquire invaluable professional and personal experience within the co-operative movement. CCA will assist participants in securing long-term employment upon their return to Canada.

CCA will place trainees in its international field offices or with CCA's international partner organizations for a six-month period. These exciting placements are designed to enhance skills, provide meaningful experience, and broaden participants' understanding of the global economy. In short, the YEI program will better prepare participants for long-term and fulfilling employment.

Applicants must be available for placement overseas between August 2001 and January 2002, as well as the necessary preparation and evaluation time.

Interested?

For more information on CCA's Youth Experience International (YEI) program, or to obtain an application package, please contact:

Preet Segaric, Program Officer, CCA
Phone: (613) 238-6711 ext. 218, Toll Free: 1-866-266-7677
or send an e-mail to interns@coopcca.com

Detailed Program Information and Application Forms available at: www.coopcca.com/youth/yei.htm

APPLICATION DEADLINE: May 9, 2001

Funding and support for the Youth Experience International program is made available from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) as part of the Government of Canada's *Youth Employment Strategy*.

ENLIGHTENING INFORMATION:



APPLY TO JOIN THE STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE OF AUSU

The Student Services Committee of the Athabasca University Students' Union is currently accepting applications for four Committee Member positions. For further information, or to submit your application, please contact the Student Services Committee Chairperson, Mark Gueffroy, at mark@ausu.org, or fax Christine Lynch at (780) 497-7003. You may also contact Mark by phone at (780) 623-9488 or Christine at (800) 788-9041 EXT. 3413.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Summer Student Positions

May 1, 2001 – August 31, 2001

Athabasca University, Canada's Open University, is accepting applications for summer employment. These positions will provide local students with work experience in a variety of areas throughout the University: Library Services, Public Affairs, Academic Centres, Academic Support Unit, Financial Services, Registry Services, Computing Services, Learning Services (Outreach), Office of the Vice-President, Academic, and the Office of the President.

Applicants must be enrolled in a post-secondary institution or have completed grade twelve and enrolled in a post-secondary institution for the fall of 2001. Excellent interpersonal, organizational, and writing skills are highly desirable. Knowledge of Microsoft Word, Access, EXCEL or HTML will be a definite asset.

SALARY: \$10.00 per hour plus 6% vacation pay

Athabasca University develops and maintains an environment that supports equitable working conditions for members of groups traditionally under-represented in universities.

Please submit applications on or before April 20th, 2001 to Diane Ellefson, Human Resources, Athabasca University, 1 University Drive, Athabasca, Alberta T2S 3A3 or email resume@athabascau.ca

Convocation June 2001

In order to graduate on June 08th from the graduate programs and June 09th from the undergraduate programs, the following conditions must be met:

Students must apply to graduate no later than April 16, 2001. The Application for Graduation form is available at the Learning Centres, AU Central, and on the web.

All final grades, including grades for courses completed through other institutions on Letters of Permission, must be received by the Office of the Registrar no later than May 07, 2001.

**GOT PROBLEMS? NEED ADVICE?
LOOKING FOR AN HONEST OPINION?**

Send your comment, question, or concern to The Voice's Advice Columnist at advice75@hotmail.com

WRITE FOR THE VOICE!

Fill on our online application at www.ausu.org/voice/write.html or contact Tammy Moore at 1-800-788-9041 ext 2905 on Fridays between 8:30 and 4:30 MST. You can also email voice@ausu.org or contact Tammy Moore at 1-800-788-9041 ext 2905 on Fridays.