

# PHILONNEWS

November 2006

## From the Chair

The leaves have fallen, there is a chill in the air... so it must be time for integrated planning. Last year our department went through an intensive process of self-evaluation, planning and prioritizing, the results of which are contained in our *2005 Integrated Plan*. We have now updated that plan in light of developments over the last year.

It has been a very successful year in our undergraduate and graduate programs. Our undergraduate enrolments are up 19% to 2,515 students this fall semester, and the number of students in our undergraduate programs is up 17% to 192. The department has made progress on all of the planned curriculum changes described in last year's *Integrated Plan*: we are developing a new Minor in Ethical Issues in the Life Sciences; we will be offering a course for Majors in the second year on a trial basis; we have introduced an enhanced 1.0-credit seminar course at the 4th year; we have increased small-group learning opportunities for first-year students.

It has been an outstanding year for our M.A. and Ph.D. programs as well. Both have grown over the last year, and our graduate students won an

unprecedented number of external scholarships and awards. Two of our recent PhD graduates secured tenure-track positions, giving us what must be one of the best placement records of any Canadian Ph.D. program in philosophy: 95% of our Ph.D. graduates in the last seven years are teaching philosophy at a university or college, and 65% already have tenure-track jobs. Although our graduate students are mostly focused on their course work and dissertations, over the last year they also gave 13 talks at philosophical conferences and published 4 papers. - *Andrew Wayne*

## Graduate Coordinator's Report

Much of my grad coordinator time lately has been spent finishing volumes 2 and 3 (faculty CVs, and information on proposed external consultants) of the brief to OCGS for a stand-alone PhD program, as well as making minor changes to volume 1 in light of suggestions from the Dean of Graduate Studies, whose support of the brief will be crucial. The brief is now before Dean's Council, the Division Committee (i.e. all graduate coordinators in the College of Arts) and other dignitaries. I'm optimistic that the proposal will sail through the hoops.

The department had a successful informal meeting on September 20 to welcome this year's group of incoming graduate students. The meeting allowed the students to meet all our faculty and to discuss aspects of the graduate programs. Thanks to all those who attended for making the meeting enjoyable and informative.

Several of our students have either completed their degrees or taken important steps on the way. Leslie Dema successfully defended her MA thesis, "The Inorganic Life of Assemblages: Deleuze and Guattari's 'The Geology of Morals'" on September 5 (co-advisors Lampert and Houle). And several of our PhD students have recently passed their Oral Qualifying Examinations---the last gatepost before full-time dissertation-writing. On October 10, Jill Gilbert successfully defended her proposal, "'A Hegelian Re-vision of Bergson's Concept of 'Duration'." On October 12, Scott Marratto defended his proposal, "The Inter-corporeal Self: Ipseity and Alterity in Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology," and Jing Long defended his proposal, "Identity and the I." Congratulations to the students, and thanks to the faculty---especially those not on advisory committees---who served either as examiners or chairs on these examinations. I'll encourage everyone again, especially our graduate students, to attend such examinations in order to see what research is being done by colleagues.

Finally, it's been external funding application season, as we all know---a sometimes tedious but definitely worthwhile process. I'm not alone in being very grateful to Karen Houle, the department's Awards Officer, for guiding our students through the preparation of their applications, running the departmental adjudication process, and generally being an all-round external funding application monster! We all hope for a year that is as successful for our students as the last.-*Mark McCullagh*

#### Events Calendar

**November 24:** Departmental Meeting, MacKinnon 309, 3:30-5:30

**December 1:** Ron De Sousa (University of Toronto), "Gender dichotomies, sexual continua, and emotional taxonomy," MacKinnon 238, 3:30-5:30

Contact the Philosophy office at 519-824-4120, ext. 53272 for more information

#### Undergraduate Coordinator's Report

We hosted a successful "Meet the Profs" event with pizza and students on Oct 18, starring Profs McCullagh, Newman, Eardley and Lampert in the hotseats. We also hosted 'Philosophizing Music,' on November 15<sup>th</sup>. -*Jay Lampert*

#### PGSA Report

*PGSA for 2006-2007*  
Aaron Masecar (President)  
Evan Clarke (Vice-President)  
Adam Sheridan (Secretary)  
Megan Penny (Treasurer)

The PGSA is looking for philosophy books for our annual book sale. Anyone with books that they would like to donate to the sale can drop them off in my mailbox (Masecar) in the Department Lounge or send me a message and I will come and pick them up. A recent generous donation by Dr. Russon includes a series of new books such as "Greek Tragedies," and a hardcover copy of "Being and Time." The proceeds of this sale go towards travel grants for graduate students and the department social. Thank you in advance for your contribution.

Every Friday evening there is a group of like-minded penseurs that gathers together at the Albion for conversation that varies between the revealing being that being reveals and the physico-psychical implications of the advent of modern technology, and all points in between. We gather around 9pm and disperse when the taps run dry. All are welcome. Please join us, for *in vino veritas!* -*Aaron Masecar*

#### USPC report

The Undergraduate Students Philosophy Club (USPC) organized a fundraiser movie event on Friday, November 3rd, where we screened Wim Wenders' classic movie, "Wings of Desire" (1987).

Professor John Russon, from the Philosophy Department, led the audience into a philosophical discussion of the movie after the screening. Both students and members of the faculty attended to support the event and to participate in the lively discussion. Various aspects of the movie were discussed, including its historical setting and impact, the significance of its use of colours, mythology and politics, and the way in which it portrayed intersubjective relations. The event was successful in raising a favourable amount of donations for the Guelph Food Bank and we would like to thank everyone once again, for their gracious donations and support. Our next event will be the semesterly Pub Night event which will take place on Thursday, November 3rd at the Bullring. We hope to see you there!

The Philosophy department also held another event on Wednesday, November 15th, called "Philosophizing Music". The speakers included Prof. Lampert, Prof. Houle, Prof. Russon, Prof. Mitscherling, and Prof. Dorter. They discussed philosophical themes in jazz, 12-tone music, "spectral" classical music, musical scoring for film, and the Grateful Dead. Each speaker played a 5-minute recording of music, then discussed the philosophical concepts in that music, and at the end of the presentations, there was a general discussion with the audience. *Sheeman Barakzai, USPC President*

### **Recent Book Publications**

Dr. Jay Lampert published his book *Deleuze and Guattari's Philosophy of History*, with Continuum Books (Continental Studies in Continental Philosophy) in May 2006. The book constructs, problematizes and defends a Deleuzian philosophy of history beginning with his neo-Bergsonian theory of the pure past. It covers the following themes: the role of dates in historical chronology, historical (quasi) causality, historical origins, the character of historical events, and the diagnosis of such actual historical events as the rise of capitalism in Europe.

### **Congratulations to our graduate award winners**

Five philosophy graduate students won external fellowships. Cherilyn Keall won a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship, as well as an OGS. Other OGS winners this year were Emily Jaklic, Jing Long, Ileana Szymanski, and Stephanie Zubcic.