

UW School of

Optometry

Newsletter

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The following is extracted from a report to the Government of Ontario on Future Directions of Postsecondary Education. A priority focus of the report is the poor level of financial support for universities in Ontario.

Excellence, Accessibility, Responsibility

The Advisory Panel on Future Directions for Postsecondary Education was appointed in mid-July, 1996 by the Minister of Education and Training, with the following terms of reference:

1. to recommend the most appropriate sharing of costs among students, the private sector, and the government, and ways in which this might best be achieved;
2. to identify ways to promote and support co-operation between colleges and universities, and between them and the secondary school system in order to meet the changing needs of students;
3. to provide advice on what needs to be done to meet the expected levels of demand for postsecondary education, both with reference to existing public institutions and existing or proposed private institutions.

Adequacy of Total Financial Support

Total financial support for colleges and universities from public and private sources has become seriously inadequate in recent times. This assessment is based on a variety of measures we have examined, including total financial support available to public postsecondary institutions in other jurisdictions in North America. We believe that the correction of this situation, now and in the future, should be a widely shared responsibility in Ontario.

The Level of Government Support

Recent sharp reductions in government grants to Ontario colleges and universities followed a long period of restraint over the past twenty years. The adverse financial impacts are apparent in many indicators. For example:

- Government operating grants per capita for universities in Ontario are now the lowest of any province.
- Government funding for major public universities in the United States has increased relative to Ontario.
- The share of Provincial budgetary expenditures for college and university operations has declined since 1977-78 from 8.1% to an estimated 4.9% in 1996-97.
- Universities and colleges have experienced long-term declines in real expenditures per student, while other transfer payment recipients, such as hospitals and elementary and secondary schools, have experienced real growth in expenditures per client served.

Tuition fees have increased substantially in Ontario, but the increase has only partly offset the decline in direct government support. To reduce the impact on accessibility, additional government funds have flowed to student assistance programs.

These indicators, along with much other evidence submitted to us, lead us to the conclusion that public financial support for postsecondary education in Ontario is seriously inadequate_indeed it has become

so low that the sector's competitive position in North America is dangerously at risk. Much time, effort, and resources have been devoted to building the structure of colleges and universities that Ontario needs. It would be extraordinarily short-sighted to let it crumble now.

Thus, while we appreciate the call for all sectors to share in the general constraints on public expenditures, we believe that much attention must also be given to priorities in a longer-term context. A first-rate postsecondary education system is vital for Ontario's future. To meet this priority, we are convinced that the system should not sustain further reductions in grants, and that a medium-term goal should be for government support to approximate the average of other Canadian provinces and to close the gap with public funding of major public university and college systems in the United States.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

We recommend that Ontarians undertake to correct the current serious inadequacies in total financial resources available to postsecondary education. This undertaking is a shared responsibility that includes government, postsecondary institutions, students and their families, and the private sector.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that provincial government support of universities and colleges in Ontario be comparable to the average for other Canadian provinces and be reasonably in line with government support of major public university and college systems in the United States. This goal should be achieved by arresting reductions in government grants now and by building towards this goal over several years in ways that strengthen excellence and accessibility.

1996 Clair Bobier Invited Lecture in Vision

The 1996 Clair Bobier Invited Lecture in Vision was held at the School of Optometry on the evening of 24 October 1996. Members of the Bobier family were joined by a small but enthusiastic audience. The speaker, Dr. Jay Enoch, Professor and Dean Emeritus of the School of Optometry, University of California Berkeley, discussed Vernier acuity: a hyperacuity test with important clinical applications. Before addressing the subject of his talk, Dr. Enoch reminisced on his experiences at the Ohio State University when Clair Bobier was studying there for his M.Sc. degree. It was a fitting tribute in this first lecture following his unexpected death at the end of August, 1996.

The Clair Bobier Invited Lecture in Vision is an endowed annual lecture which was established to honour the contributions of Clair Bobier to the UW optometry curriculum and the construction of the School of Optometry building (for which he served as Chair of the Building Committee). Previous lectures have been Professors Kenneth Cuiffreda, Michel Millodot, Ronald Jones, Arnulf Remole, Anthony Adams, Robert Hess and Donald Pitts.



Dr. Enoch and Dr. Sivak. Photo by Dr. A.P. Cullen.

New Textbook in Optometry

A new textbook in binocular vision care has recently been published by Dr. A. Remole and Dr. K.M. Robertson. Entitled *Aniseikonia and Anisophoria*, the book describes the most recent developments in

the management of aniseikonia and related binocular vision problems. It is currently being used as a textbook in two of the courses in the Optometry Program.

The book contains descriptions of new theories and new methods in diagnosing and correcting problems related to aniseikonia. For example, it explains the close relation between induced aniseikonia and prismatic differences and how these conditions affect binocular visual comfort. It describes how isekonic corrections can be designed either by simple calculator methods or by using computer spreadsheets. A large portion of the book is devoted to the description of the management of binocular vision case histories in which aniseikonia played some part. It contains numerous illustrations not previously shown in the optometry literature. The book is of special interest to those involved in binocular vision management.

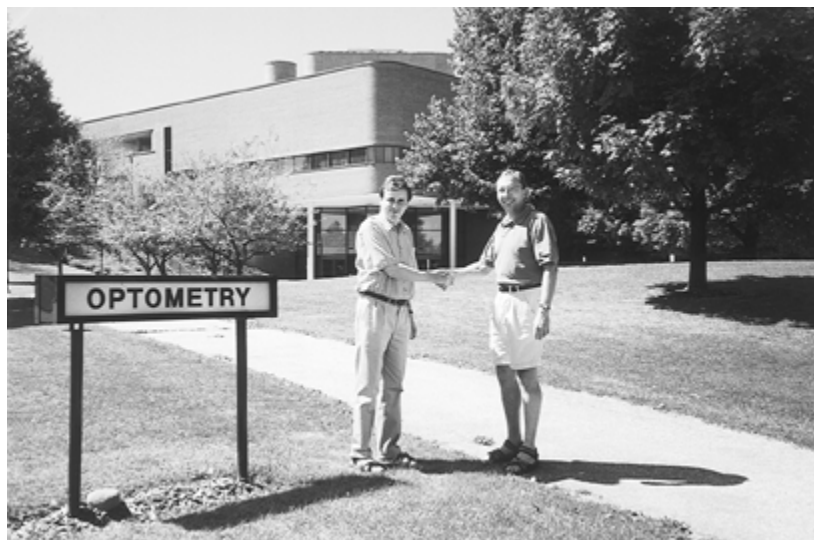
More information about the book plus an order form can be obtained from Runestone Publishing, c/o School of Optometry, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G1. Fax (519) 725-0784. It is also available at the University of Waterloo Book Store.

Waterloo Establishes Links with The University of Ulster

The School of Optometry has established formal links with the new School of Optometry that has been established at the University of Ulster's Coleraine campus, within the faculty of Biomedical Sciences. In March 1996, Dr. A.P. Cullen officially opened the School's clinic in his capacity as President of the American Academy and a Professor at the University of Waterloo. The School currently has two academic years enrolled.

Dr. J. Flanagan has recently been appointed as Visiting Professor, and will help establish collaborative research and teaching efforts. The new School's other Visiting Professor is Colm O'Brien from the Department of Ophthalmology, University of Edinburgh.

Biomedical Sciences at the University of Ulster was recently awarded the highest possible rating (5 star) in the 1996 National Research Assessment Exercise. This is the system by which academic departments are ranked for research excellence in the UK; only two other Departments in related disciplines received a similar ranking.



In August 1996 Dr. Roger Anderson visited Waterloo from Coleraine, and is seen here with Dr. Flanagan.

Obituary

GRACE ELIZABETH (BETTY) WILLIAMS died in her 82nd year at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital on Monday 23 September 1996. Her late husband, Albert Thomas (Al) Williams, practised optometry for 50 years in the Beaches district of Toronto, and served as a clinical supervisor at UW's Optometry Clinic for several years. Betty was a long-serving member of the then Optometry Women's Auxiliary. Visitation was at Ward Funeral Home in Oakville, 109 Reynolds Street, Wednesday 25 September 1996, from 7-9 p.m., Thursday 26 September from 2-4 and 7-9 p.m. The funeral was held at St. George's-on-the-hill, 4600 Dundas Street W., Toronto, at 11:00 a.m. on Friday 27 September 1996. Interment at Park Lawn cemetery followed.

News Flashes

Director on Editorial Board

Dr. Jacob G. Sivak, Director of the School of Optometry and Associate Dean of Science is currently on the Editorial Board of Investigative Ophthalmology and Visual Science. Dr. Sivak is the first scientist to have his OD listed by that journal as well as his Ph.D. To be one of the editors of this prestigious Journal is a distinct honour. Dr. Sivak has received the Glenn Fry Award and the Canadian University Prize for Excellence in Teaching and Research in Optometry. He holds six patents on a variety of optical devices and processes. Dr. Sivak has worked particularly on topics pertaining to the optical development of the eye, in both the phylogenetic and ontogenetic sense. His emphasis has been on the refractive components, the refractive state, and the mechanisms that subservise accommodation. His studies have examined the vision problems experienced by those animals that are amphibious. Recent work has concentrated on the effect of the early visual environment on the development of the refractive components of the eye including the crystalline lens and its influence on the quality of the retinal image. Other studies have dealt with a lens culture system that could be monitored optically for the study of lens sensitivity to foreign agents and as an in vitro alternative to in vivo toxicology.

Congratulations

Two third-year students are the first optometry students to receive Research Fellowships from the Glaucoma Research Society of Ontario. Taline Farra and Tanya Flood are also two of the first combined OD/MSc students in the Waterloo Program. Taline has been working at the Eye Research Institute of Canada with Dr. John Flanagan on the imaging of the optic nerve in progressive glaucoma. Tanya works with Dr. Flanagan in his Waterloo laboratory investigating new psychophysical techniques for the generation of flicker-defined form.

Retirement

Your editor has heard that Professor E.J. (Ted) Fisher was honoured by a genuine "surprise" party on Saturday, January 4, 1997. He had been invited to play for a sing-song and found a crowd of people waiting to greet Eleanor and himself. The event had been organized by their daughter, Dr. Margaret Fisher-Brillinger to commemorate the completion of Ted's 65 years of choir-leading and organ-playing. It proved to be a complete surprise. Ted first led a choir and played an organ in 1929 in Toronto at the age of 16.

We understand there were more than 120 friends and associates present including 4 former pastors, 2 pastors' widows, and 12 soloists who had worked with Ted, 1 former optometry student and dozens of former choristers and other friends. Several car loads came from Stratford and Toronto, as well as locally. The "surprise" was held in the church hall of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, Conestogo.

After some excellent singing with Ted directing, refreshments were served by Eleanor and Ted's offspring - two daughters, a daughter-in-law and 9 of their 10 grandchildren. Ted says it was a memorable experience and will never be forgotten. His love for choir and organ music continues as he is substituting wherever needed.



Dr. T. David Williams is shown here with University of Waterloo President James Downey. Following a banquet at the UW Federation Hall on 14 May 1996, Dr. Williams was among 47 people inducted into

the University of Waterloo's 25-Year Club, made up of members of staff and faculty who have completed 25 years of service to the University. Time marches on.

"Shared Care in the Ophthalmic Profession"

The Trinidad and Tobago Optometrists Association and the University of Waterloo

Faculty members from the School of Optometry were invited to give a series of workshops and lectures to the Trinidad and Tobago Optometrists Association, in Port of Spain, Trinidad in November 1996. Drs. Murchison Callender, John Flanagan, Lisa Prokopich and Kathy Dumbleton gave courses on pharmaceuticals, foreign body removal, nasolacrimal system evaluation, punctal and canalicular occlusion, management of diabetic retinopathy, indirect ophthalmoscopy and biomicroscopy techniques and glaucoma work up and case management. The weekend workshop was officially opened by Dr. Hamza Rafeeq, the Minister of Health for Trinidad and Tobago and the successful course was attended by approximately forty optometrists from Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Jamaica, Grenada, Guyana and Antigua. Professor Murchison Callender, a Trinidadian, was the co-ordinator.

The Minister of Health has since issued a directive that all systems be put in place in 1997 for optometrists to practise as they have been trained. The local optometrists are sure that this is a direct result of the joint seminar between the University of Waterloo and their Association. We feel that the seminar has impressed upon him the seriousness of Continuing Education and the fact that we are keeping updated regardless of the restrictions under which we work.



Left to right: Dr. Lisa Prokopich, Dr. Kathy Dumbleton, Professor John Flanagan, Professor Murchison Callender, Carol Ann Affat (President, Trinidad and Tobago Optometrists Association), Dr. Hamza Rafeeq, Minister of Health, Trinidad and Tobago.