

THE SENIOR COLLEGE MESSENGER

Issue 8: June, 2022

This is an organ for members of Senior College to submit short articles that share news, opinions, reactions to the program and anything that they feel will be of general interest. Its regular appearance will allow for an exchange of opinion of topics of interest to the members.

Please submit contributions to the editor, Ed Barbeau at barbeau@math.utoronto.ca

ON THE HORIZON AT SENIOR COLLEGE

The Executive Committee of Senior College met on Wednesday, June 1, to consider three important proposals that will be coming to the Senate at its meeting on Wednesday, June 22 for ratification.

The administrative structure of the College

The recent Provostial Review recommended that the College simplify its administrative structure. Currently, the affairs of the College are handled by an Executive Committee, a Council and a Board of Management for the Senior College Centre, all ultimately responsible to the Senate consisting of all Members. Our administrator, Vennese Croasdaile, provides necessary support in scheduling, dissemination of information, and maintaining the website.

A committee, chaired by Jim Gurd, with members Michael Hutcheon, Brian Corman and Peter Lewis, noted the redundancy in the membership and functions of the Executive Committee and Council, and the “separation” of the management of the Centre from the “mainstream” of the administration. To simplify things, they proposed that the Board of Management be dissolved and its functions distributed to the Executive Committee, Council and a Senior College Centre Committee. They also suggest that the Executive Committee will be reduced to six members, and that Council will be expanded to a maximum of 30 members to include representatives of the various committees and seven Fellows at large. As before, each Committee will lie in the purview of one of two Vice-Presidents, Academic and Administrative.

Any change to the administrative structure of the College must be approved by the Senate and the office of the Vice-Provost before being out into effect.

Senior College Dues

Before the interruptions of the pandemic, Fellows paid an annual fee of \$190 that included Faculty Club membership of \$115. As we return to a normal routine, a couple of factors led to a review of the fee. Under the new manager, the Faculty Club has set the membership fee for *all* retired faculty at \$190. This has the impact of a reduction from the previous standard retired faculty fee of \$230, but an increase

for Fellows of Senior College who previously paid a special rate of \$115. Secondly, future inperson events will be complemented by Zoom.

A recent survey of Fellows showed that over 70% of 118 respondents prefer having all two dozen or so Wednesday talks continue at the Faculty Club in person to moving most talks to a new venue and having some on Zoom. Since the Faculty Club, as part of the deal, has provided free use of rooms and audiovisual facilities, moving elsewhere would generate an additional expense. The same survey also showed that over 70% are likely to continue their Fellowship with a dues increase, with about half of these certain to do so.

The Executive Committee approved a new fee scale to be presented to the Senate. While the annual fee for Fellows will increase considerably, there will be a reduction for those who, because of distance or health, are unable to attend the Faculty Club. In addition, there will be reduced fees for new Fellows in the first year.

Senior College Scholarship

In the past, Council accepted in principle the establishment of a Scholarship for students. At this meeting of the Executive Committee, a specific proposal was approved for consideration by the Senate.

The **Senate** will meet on **Wednesday, June 22** at 11:30 am. Look for the announcement with the Zoom link in your weekly message from Senior College.

WHERE LOYALTIES LIE

I came across an article recently with the provocative title “Can we go along with this?” Written by Michael Jonas, it appeared in the *Journal of Contemporary History* 47:2 (April, 2012), 240-269 (available on <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23249186>). It concerned the dilemma faced by individuals in the German foreign service in the years 1918-1919 and 1933-1934, when many were alienated by fundamental changes in governance. While most diplomats subscribed to the sentiment of one of them, to wit “one does not desert one’s country only because it has a bad government”, some found themselves pulled in different directions because of their professionalism, morality and humanity in the face of a government that they saw as transgressing acceptable norms of behaviour.

There are a number of current situations that bring similar internal conflicts into play for those who have to measure their loyalty to party or nation against their professional, moral and humanistic instincts, and their ideals for their country not seen to be upheld by those in power. Included among these are those implicated in the Russian state in its aggression against Ukraine as diplomats, soldiers, members of parliament and judges, not to mention the heirarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as Chinese diplomats and judges over hostage diplomacy, political trials, treatment of the Uyghurs and the suppression of democracy in Hong Kong. Closer to home, we have the stance of Congressional Republicans in the US, and the deliberations of the Supreme Court on abortion. In each case, I suppose it

can be argued that the individuals genuinely believe in the righteousness of their cause, and can bring the necessary denial and rationalization to bear to suppress any qualms. However, it is hard to believe that these people lack the intelligence to understand that at some level they are being asked to support in words and actions things they should know to be either wrong or open to serious reservations.

To be sure, it takes courage for anyone in these positions to step out of line, and one has to admire those who have the moral courage to resist, such as Boris Bondarev (the Russian diplomat who resigned at the UN) or Liz Cheney who now faces a formidable challenge to retain her Wisconsin seat. As for the Supreme Court, the Alito draft opinion indicates that the Court is missing a golden opportunity to exercise wisdom and enhance its stature by balancing the many facets of the complex abortion issue and throwing off the shackles of ideology. While there may be times and places for a split decision, the abortion issue before the Court does not seem to be one of them; it is worth the Court to make the effort and take the time to come up with a unanimous decision that may not be universally agreeable but would provide a level of analysis to earn it the respect and deference of the population at large. This should be expected of a court at this level.

I raise these issues because I find them genuinely fascinating and hard to adjudicate. I hope that it might generate some discussion among our members, particularly those with professional expertise and experience. (Ed Barbeau)

HONOURS

Suzanne Hidi, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at OISE has received the 2022 *Sylvia Scribner Award* from the American Educational Research Association (Learning and Instruction, Division C).

See next page.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Events marked with **F** are for fellows and external fellows. Registration a few days ahead is necessary for each event. This can be done in response to a weekly email from Senior College to its members that describes the events or by going on line at www.seniorcollege.utoronto.ca .

*Informal Biweekly Lunches at the Faculty Club: Wednesday at noon **F***

Join Fellows for an informal lunch at the Faculty Club. Food and drink will be ordered from the menu (outside dining if weather permits). To be included in the reservation, email Daphne Maurer (daphne@maurier.ca) before noon the day before.

June 15 (Hostess: Janet Paterson)

June 29 (Host: Michael Hutcheon)

July 13 (Host: Daphne Maurer)

July 27 (Host: Daphne Maurer)

Weekly Talks: Wednesdays, 2-4 pm

June 8: **Keith Baar**, Molecular Biology, UC Davis
Molecular biology and living longer, healthier lives.

*Book Club: Mondays, 2-4 pm (**F**)*

June 6 (Chair: Maggie Redekop)
Who Do You Think You Are? (by Alice Munro)

July 4 (Chair: Linda Hutcheon & David Milne)
Lampedusa (by Steve Price)