



Newsletter

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Tony Petric, EDITOR

in this issue:

Joint Committee Agreement

Richard Slobodin

Announcements

New Members

Housing

Indexing of Pension Plan

Making the Grade

MUFA Annual General Meeting

Joint Committee Reaches Agreement regarding Remuneration Issues

On Friday, March 5, 2005 members of the Joint Committee signed a one-year Agreement regarding remuneration issues. Members of the McMaster University Faculty Association who participate in the Career Progress/Merit Scheme (CP/M) have been sent ballots which are due in the Association Office by March 28, 2005.

An information meeting has been scheduled for Monday, March 21, 2005 in Hamilton Hall Room 302 at 3:30 pm. Joint Committee members will be available to answer questions about the Agreement.

Details of the Agreement will be on the MUFA website (www.mcmaster.ca/mufa) if it is ratified.

Remuneration negotiations for Librarians will begin in April.





**Richard
Slobodin**
Professor Emeritus
Anthropology
January 22, 2005

Richard Slobodin, one of the finest ethnographers to work among the First Nations peoples of the Canadian north, and one of the founders of the Department of Anthropology at McMaster University, passed away in Hamilton on January 22, 2005. Born in New York City on March 6, 1915, he was just short of his 90th birthday.

Professor Slobodin attended the City College of New York where he completed a BA in comparative literature in 1936, and an MS in education in 1938. During and after his studies he worked as a teacher, mainly of English, in New York City high schools.

After completing his Masters degree he took a break from teaching and made a career-altering trip to the Northwest and Yukon Territories in Canada, adjacent to Alaska. He and a friend traveled and did research in the Mackenzie Delta area and among the Gwich'in people of the Fort McPherson region through the winter from September 1938 to May 1939.

The trip and his decision after to turn to a career in anthropology probably flowed from his early upbringing. He wrote of his career that, "My best preparation consisted of belonging to a family wherein both parents and many associates had broad humanist interests, which led to an early exposure to the literature, folklore, and art of many cultures. I was also fortunate enough to have some excellent teachers.... These influences were much more important than formal majors and minors."

After returning to New York he registered in the PhD program at Columbia University in 1940 and began his career as an anthropologist. But his career was interrupted more than once, and it took a quarter-century before he had a continuing academic position. In 1942 he enlisted in the US Army, but he was then accepted for officer training in the Navy where, although he sought and earned his qualifications as an aircraft carrier-based fighter pilot, he was assigned to be an intelligence officer in the Pacific. After he left military service in 1946 he returned to Columbia to complete his PhD, going to the Fort McPherson region for doctoral research from August 1946 to May 1947 with support from the Social Science Research Council and a Research Fellowship from the Arctic Institute of North America (1947-48).

His return to the Gwich'in was a mutually happy one. He commented that being a returning visitor meant that he was not treated as "a formidable official sort of person." And he reported that Chief Julius remarked of him on one festive occasion, that he was the fellow whom the people had previously "taken in when he was just a poor boy" (Slobodin, 1969: 57).

Following his doctoral field research he began his university teaching career with assistant professor appointments at the University of Southern California (1947-49) and Los Angeles State College (1950-51). But in 1951 he was notified by the latter institution that he was not eligible for reappointment. His career was interrupted by his being named in the US Congressional investigations into "Un-American Activities" headed by Senator Joseph McCarthy. The McCarthy hearings used innuendo and guilt by association with colleagues and friends to accuse people. The unfounded accusations besmirched the reputations, and sought to bar from employment, many academics and intellectuals of the early Cold War era in the United States.

Dick, as he was called, did not speak frequently about this period in later years, but he described his activities during the next eight years in one of

his curriculum vitae without bitterness but with poignancy, as "jobs outside anthropology, mostly in California and Mexico." For part of the period he worked with several social work agencies in California (1954-58). In the decade following 1948 his first three children were born.

In 1959 he was able to complete his doctoral dissertation and his degree, and he started to get employment in anthropology. In 1959-60 he was a research associate with Cornell University, the next year on a child-rearing study in Washington, DC, and in 1960 he was hired for two years as a lecturer at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. He moved to Canada in 1962 for an 18-month contract as a senior research officer with the research centre in the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. During his time in Ottawa he also took contracts with the National Museums of Canada, but it was made clear by immigration officials that he was not to be given any work related to national security.

The positions in Ottawa afforded him the opportunity to continue doing the research he obviously loved in the north. He had returned to visit First Nations communities in the Yukon in 1961, with a grant from the US National Science Foundation, and in 1962 he did research among the Gwich'in of Arctic Red River with support from the National Museum of Canada. His first monograph, based on his dissertation about the Gwich'in, appeared in 1962, Band Organization of the Peel River Kutchin (National Museums of Canada). In 1963 he did a path-breaking social and economic survey of Metis in the Mackenzie District of the Northwest Territories, which provided the basis for his second book, Metis of the Mackenzie District (Canadian Research Centre for Anthropology, 1966). He returned to northwestern Canada and adjacent parts of Alaska in 1966 (for the National Museum of Canada), 1968 (with a Canada Council research grant) and 1977 (as an Associate of the Northern Yukon Research Program, University of Toronto). During these periods he spoke Gwich'in "with fair fluency," and although he was still hoping to improve his competency he noted that he was one of only three researchers "with any appreciable knowledge of the language," the other two being linguists. (He knew French, Russian and German as well.)

When McMaster University sought to introduce an anthropology program he was highly recommended by his colleagues and McMaster invited him to take up an appointment as associate professor of anthropology in the Department of Sociology, soon to be Sociology and Anthropology, with a mandate to develop the program. At the time of his initial appointment to McMaster in 1964 the question of his receiving permanent residency status in Canada had become an issue with the government. It was an odd question, for he had already spent nearly five years in Canada including his northern research trips. His application received support from the University and the Faculty Association, and after some worrisome delays he became a permanent resident of Canada in 1964. He took up citizenship in 1970.

Thus he was 50 years old when he found an academic "home". He immediately set out to build the anthropology program and to hire colleagues. But he also worked to make it feel like a home to the others who would join him. Dick Slobodin had a profound influence on the character not just the development of the program and then department of anthropology. He exemplified a graceful scholarly collegiality. He welcomed and encouraged thoughtful repartee, and his example of engaging in a common endeavour encouraged others to respond in kind. He carefully cultivated relationships with colleagues, students and

friends, and many of those who knew him throughout the University and academia treasured their relationships with him.

Although he was a specialist on the Canadian north, he did not offer a course in the subject until 1969 because he "put my own predilections and interests aside in favor of developing the anthropology program at McMaster." He was in effect the associate chairman for anthropology of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology during the formative years from 1964-71, although he served de facto and without formal title until the last two of those years.

His leadership by example and his subtle mentoring continued after he was promoted to professor in 1969, after anthropology became a separate department in 1973, and even after his retirement in 1981. His was an active retirement. He continued to teach courses for many years, to participate in department events, and to undertake entirely new research and publications.

When he took ill early in 2005 and was in hospital, it turned out that he was being cared for by nursing staff and visited by clergy a number of whom had taken his courses and who spoke both of their admiration for him as a teacher, and in some cases of the influence he had on their lives. The lives of many of his colleagues and students were enriched by his presence.

His courses were always thoroughly engaging, communicating his constant intellectual inquisitiveness, his exceptionally diverse knowledge, his passion for learning and teaching, and his profound respect for students. He nurtured and encouraged their intellectual and personal growth with an unpretentious but rare combination of entertaining stories, a sympathetic and judiciously critical sense of human character and foibles, a quiet but pervasive sense of humour, thought-provoking generalizations, and a commitment to standards without being rigidly judgmental. His classes and his person were memorable.

His academic interests extended to aspects of the history of anthropology and related disciplines in addition to his more than 50 years of research and publications on the ethnography and ethnohistory of subarctic First Nations. His monographs on the Gwich'in and on the Metis were analytical ethnographies of little studied places and peoples that revealed their diversity and often unexpected complexity. In 1978 he published what has become the standard biography of W. H. R. Rivers (Columbia University Press, reprinted 1997) a little studied key figure in early 20th century anthropology, psychology and psychiatry who contributed to field research methods, the study of kinship, and the first recognition and treatment of "shell-shock" victims during World War I.

After his retirement he co-edited a book with Antonia Mills on *Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief Among North American Indians and Inuit* (University of Toronto Press, 1994). This is a widely cited work in anthropology and religious studies that explores its subject with the finesse required to respect indigenous peoples and to avoid comfortable but reductionist explanations.

In addition he published nearly two dozen academic papers on topics as diverse as those of his books. He had an eye for situations and topics that seemed marginal and overlooked, and a knack for revealing their importance. This is clear in his decision to do research on Metis, and in his research on an escaped American slave who was a near mythic figure

in the late 19th century NWT (1985), and on early Indian involvement with the Klondike Gold Rush (1898-1917) and how that experience ended up supporting rather than undermining "traditions" among Peel River Gwich'in (1963). His eye for the unexpected and his ability to humanize people, partly through keen character sketches, also led him to unconventional analyses. He wrote on indigenous peoples as agents and not just products of change (1964), and he studied band society warfare, survival and vengeance with clarity but not sensationalism (1960 and 1975). This recurrent attention to situations at the boundaries of cultures and categories, and to topics that could be considered "difficult," gives much of his work a contemporary quality.

His scholarship was characterized throughout by an erudite knowledge of the literature from the classics to the most recent debates, by meticulous consideration of field and archival sources, by his sophisticated analyses, and by his capacity to draw conclusions that mattered.

During his career, he received recognition through invitations to be a summer lecturer at Dartmouth College (1967) and at Carleton University (1964), a research associate at the Cambridge University, Scott Polar Research Institute (1972-73), and a Snider Bequest Lecturer at the University of Toronto (1975-76). He was a secretary of the Northeastern Anthropological Association (1972-73), a fellow of the

American Anthropological Association and of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, a member of the Canadian Anthropology Society, and a Charter Associate of the Arctic Institute of North America. He was also an active supporter and part of the response network of Amnesty International for many years.

He is survived by his wife of 35 years, Eleanor Warren (Miller) of Dundas, and by seven children: Jennifer Slobodin, Katherine Slobodin McCulloch and John Slobodin, all of California, and Lisa Miller Kjellberg of Sweden, Roderick Miller of Geneva, Rebecca Miller (Smith) of Ontario, and Peter Miller of Quebec.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, April 15, 2005, at 2:00 pm in the McMaster Chapel. A reception will follow in the Great Hall of the University Club.

*Harvey Feit
Professor, Anthropology*



MUFA Dues Waived for Months of February & March

MUFA Members will have noticed a slightly larger paycheque in the months of February and March. At its regular meeting on January 28, 2005, the MUFA Executive voted unanimously to reduce the mill rate from 5.0 to 0 for the months of February and March. A surplus of income over expenditures for this fiscal year is projected in the Nine-Month Budget Review 2004/05. In addition, MUFA reserves continue to be in a healthy state.

Don't Forget, when you are preparing your tax returns that MUFA dues are tax deductible.



New Members

**Jacob Dalton
Marie Elliot
James Henry
Ahmed Huque
Madhu Krishnaswamy
Jeffrey Racine
Ponnambalam
Selvaganapathy
Stephen Tullis**

**Religious Studies
Biology
Psychiatry
Political Science
Engineering Physics
Economics
Mechanical
Engineering
Mechanical
Engineering**



Apartment for Rent. 31 Ogilvie Street, Dundas,

Ontario. Beautiful, newly renovated New York Style Apartment on the Main Floor of a Victorian 1840s home. Close to all amenities: downtown Dundas; bus route; Dundas Valley — trails off Governor's Road; library; Dundas Valley School of Art. Additional features/descriptors: 950 sq ft; 11' ceilings, cove moulding; hardwood floors; two exposed brick chimneys with beautiful ornamental fireplaces; track lighting; full basement with washer/dryer; very bright and sunny; internet hookups; driveway; backyard — vegetable garden; parking; gas BBQ. Asking \$925.00 plus shared utilities. Photos are available on-line. Available May 1, 2005 and can make arrangements to view anytime. Please call Deborah at 905-628-5468.



House for Sale. 22 Sanders Boulevard Hamilton, Ontario.

Just a five minute walk to McMaster University, this detached 2 storey family home has 2 + bedrooms, 2 full bathrooms, 1 half bath. This house has 8 rooms. A centre hall plan with classic styling, gleaming hardwood throughout main and second floors, as well as all modern conveniences and updates. Basement has been fully finished. Features include an alarm system, forced air heating and central air conditioning, wood burning fireplace (in living room), tons of built-in furniture pieces and ample storage throughout the house, built-in oven and cook top, dishwasher, garburator,

fenced yard, in-ground sprinkler system and outdoor accent lighting. Corner lot exceeds municipal lot measurements of 40' x 100'. Detached garage with automated door opener and oversized double car interlocking stone driveway. Beautifully landscaped property with a raised garden at the front of the house. Move in condition. Contact Stephanie and/or Jarrad at 905-528-4648 or essnjay@hotmail.com.

Indexing in the Pension Plan for Salaried Employees of McMaster University

Why aren't I getting a pension increase this January?

by Les Robb

The following article appeared originally in the MURA Newsletter and is reprinted here with the permission of the author.

Some of you are probably asking yourselves this question right now. Others may have noted how well the markets did last year and think it is obvious that there should be indexing (i.e. an increase) this year. Sorry to disappoint you. There will be no indexing this year in spite of the good returns on the investments last year.

This article attempts to explain how indexing works in the Salaried Pension Plan and why there will be no increase.

An Overview of the Formula

Let me start with an overview of the way our pension indexing works and then go on to the details. That way, you can stop reading when you have had enough.

Indexing in our plan depends on the 'excess returns' our investments earn, and on the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). 'Excess returns' are returns above 4.5% per year. If, for example, our investments earn 8% then there is 3.5% 'excess' available for indexing (8 minus 4.5). Pensions are increased on January 1 of the next year by the lesser of a) the 3.5%, or b) the annual increase in the CPI. (See the Plan text section 5.08 if you want more detail.) So, in our example, if the CPI increased by 2% there would be a 2% pension increase and hence full indexing. If the CPI increased, on the other hand, by 4% or more there would be only 3.5% indexing (partial indexing) as only 3.5% was available from the 'excess return' calculation.

Recent Returns in the McMaster Plan

In addition, because returns on our investments can vary so much from year to year, the indexing formula doesn't just use the 'excess return' from a single year but averages the returns over a 5 year period. The calculation involves finding the average 'excess return' over the past 5 years and using that average to decide if there are any 'excess returns' that can be used for indexing. So, even though our investments earned almost 15% over the year ending June 30, 2004, the earlier years' performance was not nearly as good. The 5 year average return in this year's calculation is just under 4.5%, which results in no 'excess' room for indexing. In particular, there were negative returns in 2002 and 2003 which brings the average down. This averaging provision seems like bad news at the moment, but this year's 15% investment return will stay in the calculation for the next 5 years, giving us benefit in the averaging calculations for those years. Below I provide the actual calculation as approved by our external auditors that was presented to the Pension Trust Committee in October 2004. There is one more little twist that needs an explanation

before this table will make sense. Because of a requirement of the Financial Services Commission of Ontario, in 2002 we had to change our year end for calculating the rate of return (it was moved from December 31/01 to June 30/02). Thus, until 5 years have passed we have to take two six month periods into account along with 4 other full years rather than just 5 full years. With that in mind, look at the Table below. First the return for each of the periods is shown, then the total of these returns and, below that, the 5 year average. (The 6 month periods show the change in the value of funds over the 6 months, not annual rates of return, so we can just add them with the others.) The Table goes on to show the 'excess return' (which is just slightly negative), the CPI increase, and the increase to our pensions (which is zero).

Calculation of Five Year Average		%
2004 Rate of Return (ending June 30, 2004)		14.84
2003 Rate of Return (ending June 30, 2003)		*(2.57)
2002 Rate of Return for 6 months (Jan 1/02 to June 30/02)		(2.81)
2001 Rate of Return (ending Dec. 31, 2001)		1.14
2000 Rate of Return (ending Dec. 31, 2000)		7.11
1999 Rate of Return for 6 months (July 1/99 to Dec. 31/99)		4.70
Total Return for Last Five Years		22.41
Five Year Annual Average Return (Total Return / 5) =		4.48%
(a) Rate of Return in Excess of 4.5% (4.48% - 4.5%) =		(0.02)%
(b) Average CPI to June 30, 2004 =		1.73%
Increase to Pensions (the lesser of a or b) =		0.00%

*bracketed figures are negative

What about Next Year (January 2006)?

Some of you might want to know what rate of return on our investments will be needed this year to get any increase in January 2006. To do that calculation we first need to drop off the 4.7% return for the 6 months in 1999, and adjust the 7.11% for 2000 to reflect only the last 6 months of 2000. Unfortunately we cannot simply divide the 7.11% by 2 as the calculation actually values the fund's performance over the 6 months and, although all the information needed is known, the actual calculation will not be done until next fall when the auditors approve the calculation for the new 5 year average. However, to try to give a 'best guess' at the number, let's suppose that the 6 month rate of return is half of the 7.11% and so is 3.56% for the 6 months in question.

If the fund earns 8.35% for the year ending June 30, 2005 the 5 year average return calculation result would be 4.5%, giving no 'excess return'. In other words, using the 3.56% 'guess', any earnings greater than 8.35% would give room for some indexing. For example, if the fund earns 15.85% for the year ending June 30, 2005, the 5 year average return would be 6% and there would be room ('excess return') to allow for 1.5% indexing. Whether that would give full indexing would depend on whether the CPI increase exceeds 1.5%.

A Final Twist

Since someone might refer to this article a few years from now I will note one other aspect of the indexing formula that does not apply this year but could be relevant in the future. There is provision in our Plan for a Supplementary Pension Increase (see section 5.09 of the Plan). This provision allows any unused 'excess return' (the amount that 'excess return' exceeds the CPI increase) for any of the preceding 3 years to be used in the current year to make up for a rate of return that does not provide full indexing. Suppose, for example, that there was an 8.5% average rate of return last year, yielding an 'excess return' of 4% (8.5

- 4.5), making 4% available for indexing. Suppose further that the CPI increase was only 2.5%. The increase would have been 2.5%, leaving an unused capacity of 1.5% that could be applied this year. As stated earlier, this provision is not relevant this year since there has been no excess capacity for the past three years.



Making the Grade

by Tony Petric

When we are faced with the prospect of adjusting final grades, it is useful to have a simple equation that will do the conversion. The chart below can be used to select a function that gives the desired class average. Note that low scores are affected most and that a mark of 100 remains 100.

For example, if you want to bring up the class average from 50 to 70, then you would use the standard 10 x the square root of the mark to move from the straight line to the top curve. By applying this function, a failing grade of 25 becomes a passing grade of 50. In other cases, you may need a smaller correction to move a mark of 35 or 40 up to a pass. All of this can be done easily using Excel and one of the following functions:

Series 1	= $100^{(1/2)} * \text{mark}^{(1/2)}$, i.e., 10 x square root of the original mark	
Series 2	= $100^{(3/7)} * \text{mark}^{(4/7)}$	30 -> 50
Series 3	= $100^{(1/3)} * \text{mark}^{(2/3)}$	35 -> 50
Series 4	= $100^{(1/4)} * \text{mark}^{(3/4)}$	40 -> 50
Series 5	= $100^{(2/15)} * \text{mark}^{(13/15)}$	45 -> 50
Series 6	=original mark	50 -> 50

MUFA Annual General Meeting Thursday, May 5, 2005, 3:00 pm Great Hall of the University Club

March 17, 2005

pdk

