



Bulletin

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF TECHNICAL WRITING
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES PROFESSEURS DE RÉDACTION TECHNIQUE ET SCIENTIFIQUE

Greetings to all CATTW/ACPRTS members and newcomers!

Fall is here again and, as a familiar sign of the season, a new edition of the Bulletin has arrived. In this issue of the Bulletin, I would like to express special appreciation to Céline Beaudet, who has already started working on the preparations for our next annual conference at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Céline and Pamela Grant-Russell have bravely ventured into the preparation of another CATTW/ACPRTS application for the SSHRC's "Aid to Occasional Conferences" program. The results of the competition will be announced in January 2003.

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Salutations à tous les membres, anciens et nouveaux!

Voici une nouvelle édition du bulletin, signe familier de l'arrivée de la saison automnale. Je voudrais formuler des remerciements tout particuliers à l'endroit de Céline Beaudet, qui s'est déjà mise à la tâche en vue de préparer notre prochain congrès annuel, à l'Université Dalhousie, à Halifax, en Nouvelle-Écosse. De plus, Céline a vaillamment entrepris de préparer, avec l'aide de Pamela Grant-Russell, une nouvelle demande de subventions dans le cadre d'un programme d'aide à la tenue de congrès du CRSH. La réponse de l'organisme est attendue pour le mois de janvier 2003.

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Du rédacteur en chef ♦ From the Editor

Welcome to the fall edition of the Bulletin. This edition traditionally includes some of the important material for the organization. There are member contact lists, the minutes of the Annual General Meeting, and other sorts of things. Robert Irish generously supplied these things. One of the Ideas columns comes courtesy of Amanda Goldrick-Jones, web-master and sage. Michael Jordon sent in a proposal for the testing and instruction of English TA's. Natasha Artemeva, our busy president summarizes the year ahead and the year past in her front-page address. Finally, you can check up on the latest news and happenings of our members. Thank you to you all for helping make this Bulletin edition a worthy read.



Voici le numéro d'automne de notre Bulletin. Comme à l'habitude, ce numéro contient des documents importants pour notre organisation. On y trouvera ainsi la liste des membres, le procès-verbal de la dernière assemblée générale annuelle, de même que d'autres éléments pertinents. Nous remercions Robert Irish pour ce travail. La rubrique "Idées" est l'œuvre d'Amanda Goldrick-Jones. Notre présidente, Natasha Artemeva, nous parle, quant à elle, de la dernière année et de la prochaine dans son "Mot de la Présidente". Enfin, vous pourrez prendre des nouvelles de certains de nos membres et de leurs accomplissements. Merci à tous, car c'est notre travail collectif qui donne à ce Bulletin sa substance et sa raison d'être.

Canadian Association of Teachers of Technical Writing
Association canadienne des professeurs de rédaction technique et scientifique
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I D É E A S

“A Dangerous Venture?” Seeking Practitioner Feedback about a University-level Online Technical Writing course

Amanda Goldrick-Jones – University of Winnipeg

As teachers of technical communication, we spend a great deal of time constructing curricula that balance theoretical grounding with practical experience. Teaching technical communication online presents a particular set of challenges in this regard. Two years ago, I adapted for the web a face-to-face course I had developed in 1997 called “Strategies for Technical and Professional Writing.” At the time, I thought “adapting” the existing materials would suffice. It should surprise no one who has taught online courses that I found I virtually (no pun intended) had to rewrite my entire curriculum.

Emerging from that experience (which I won’t detail here), I offered the first version of this online course in the Fall of 2000. Theoretical readings touched on information design, collaborative writing, plain language and metaphor, gender and communication, ethos in technical communication, and the peculiar tensions resulting when human relationships are mediated through virtual space. Assignments covered several standard technical writing genres and also challenged students to work collaboratively online.

The version being offered in Winter 2003 will feature a redesigned web site, new curricular materials, and a slightly different roster of assignments. One of my goals is to help students work more effectively with interpersonal tensions while managing online projects. Wanting to ensure my redesigned course is grounded as much in good practice as good theory, I engaged in the possibly dangerous venture of inviting technical communication practitioners to provide feedback on what kinds of elements to include in my redesigned course.



The venture began early in 2002, when I provided members of the Society for Technical Communication, Manitoba Chapter, with summaries of my existing (2000) course materials along with a few starting-point questions. Two or three chapter members and one non-member practitioner provided detailed comments. Here, in a nutshell, is what they asked me to consider:

- Is it possible to get direct student feedback on possible or actual “barriers to communication”? Currently it isn’t possible for students to do a formal course evaluation online at the University of Winnipeg, so any mechanism I can arrange that won’t put students on the spot will likely be helpful.
- Could the new web site be arranged in clearer patterns? To me, the 2000 web site is a bit of a dog’s breakfast—yet one STC member said he could discern a process of preparing, doing, and reflecting in the readings and assignments.
- Do pages need to be so heavy with text? All reviewers noted this defect about the 2000 web site. (Academics are so fond of text, aren’t they?)
- Could the literature of “business coaching” offer any insights into managing an online class and/or helping students manage projects online? “Coaches” aid clients in a variety of business-related skills—communications, relationships, networking, time-management, etc. This is a relatively new field and, at the first glance of an skeptical academic eye like mine, seemed alarmingly cheerful, trendy, and heavy on self-help.

I examined “Coachville.com,” where the “history” of coaching is summarized. One of the links spells out “15 coaching proficiencies,” essentially common-sense hallmarks of effective process-based teaching. But I also found a reference to coaching in an article in *Technical Communication* about learning orientations. A “performing learner” is one who “succeeds in semi-complex, semi-structured, coaching, environments that stimulate personal value, and provide interaction, and external rewards and benefits.” This learner “will situationally assume learning responsibility in areas of interest but willingly gives up control in areas of less interest; expects continual coaching for achieving goals.” A useful question here is--What aspects of an online course might a “performing learner” find most difficult to manage? Can “coaching” methods help students to help each other? Students themselves may be invited to “test” this question.

In all respects, the feedback I received was kind, supportive, thorough, and—yes—practical, and I would seek such feedback again in a minute. So why did I think inviting practitioners’ comments might be a “dangerous venture”? Was I expecting criticisms about being too heavy on theory? About assignments not being practical enough? In fact, the practitioners’ suggestions underscored the importance of articulating—through a good balance of theory and practice—the interrelations among writing and technology, genre expectations, and social relations when teaching technical communication. My only complaint is that so few practitioners accepted my invitation. Of course, they’re busy people.

* Martinez, Margaret. Using Learning Orientation to Investigate How Individuals Learn Successfully on the Web. *Technical Communication* 46 (Nov. 1999).



(continuer de la page 1)

Même si l'Association n'a pas reçu l'aide demandée l'an dernier, notre plus récent congrès, à l'Université de Toronto, fut un franc succès. Dr Christine Räisänen, notre conférencière suédoise, a donné plus d'amplitude à nos débats, tout en pimantant nos discussions informelles. Les présentations se sont distinguées tant par leur diversité que leur qualité, les conversations et échanges se sont avérés stimulants et le dîner officiel a été couronné de succès. Il était tout particulièrement rafraîchissant de faire connaissance avec plusieurs nouveaux venus à l'Association et d'entendre leurs communications. Fait à signaler, lors de ce congrès, nous avons franchi la barre des cinquante participants inscrits. En vertu des règlements de la FSSH, ce nombre dispensera l'ACPRTS de payer les frais d'inscription de deux conférenciers invités à notre prochain congrès de 2003. Je suis persuadée que vous serez tous heureux d'apprendre qu'à cette occasion, l'une des nôtres comptera parmi ces invités de marque : il s'agit de Lilita Rodman, qui nous entretiendra de l'évolution de la communication technique et scientifique au cours des quarante dernières années.

La dernière année a vu naître de nombreuses initiatives. Nous avons établi des liens étroits avec l'Association for Business Communication (ABC); l'Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW); la Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning (CASLL/Inkshed); la Société canadienne pour l'étude de la rhétorique/Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric (CSSR/SCÉR); l'Association canadienne de traductologie/Canadian Association for Translation Studies (ACT/CATS); et la Société pour l'avancement de la pédagogie dans l'enseignement supérieur/Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (SAPES/STLHE). En mettant à jour le site web de notre association, notre webmestre Amanda Goldrick-Jones a placé des hyperliens vers les sites de ces associations B qui ont fait de même en sens inverse. En plus de cette *coopération virtuelle+, toutes ces associations ont accepté de publier notre appel de communications dans leurs bulletins et revues, et nous leur rendrons la pareille dans *Technostyle*. Je vous invite tous à visiter le site de l'ACPRTS à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/~agoldric/CATTW/>, de même qu'à explorer les hyperliens qui s'y trouvent.

L'une des questions les plus pressantes qui se posent à notre association est celle de maintenir et même d'accroître le nombre de nos membres. Je profite de l'occasion pour inviter tous les membres de l'ACPRTS à renouveler leur adhésion, si ce n'est déjà fait. Pour conclure, je vous souhaite, à toutes et à tous, une bonne fin de trimestre d'automne. J'ai très hâte de vous revoir à Halifax, lors de notre prochain congrès, qui promet d'être des plus stimulants.

Natasha Artemeva
Présidente de l'ACPRTS/CATTW

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Minutes of CATTW AGM 2002 at University of Toronto May 27th, 2002

1. The meeting was called to order.
2. **Motion #1:** to approve the Agenda: Carried.
3. **Motion #2:** to accept the Minutes of the 2001 AGM: Carried.
4. Business Arising from the 2000 AGM Minutes
 - A. Application for aid to occasional conferences — Celine worked to put together another application but it was rejected. We don't have funding for this year. Membership was big issue.
 - B. Name change for our organization – The question was: whether, if yes, why and how? The net survey got only six responses: 3 maybe, 3 yes. Obviously these results are not representative, but the issues raised are relevant:
 - Do we want a name that is more inclusive of our roles as researchers as well as teachers, or of professional writing that is not strictly speaking “technical”?
 - CATTW is a name already acknowledged to SSHRC, so that is a factor against change.
 - P. Grant says committee has no proposal to submit due to the lack of real response. The committee will try again to generate an open discussion on the web regarding that issue. Pam Grant and Diana Wegner will moderate a discussion. Amanda will categorize messages, etc.
5. Reports
 - A. President's report. Natasha Artemeva

We met with the Federation reps yesterday. The Federation is changing its name to Canadian Federation of Social Sciences and Humanities. They are prepared to lobby on our behalf for the program that was put on hold in 1993. Organizations like us were not in a position to get money in 1993. We will lobby SSHRC.

Fed and SSHRC are keen to encourage young scholars so we can play on that. If an association is getting aid and attendance grant it is directed toward grad students, if other grant, we can use it at will – to cover costs more broadly, including dissemination of knowledge. We will also continue to apply for the occasional grant conference, which will require that the call for papers come out over the summer.

Also, fed supports aid to scholarly publication grant – it includes edited collections produced by edited by members. One of our ideas was to use one of the special editions of TS as an edited collection of articles, because the fed does not provide funding for journals. SSHRC has such a fund for journals, but TS does not have sufficient



subscription.

Question for membership: we may start publishing paid ads in TS. We even have interest. Would the membership agree to paid advertisements?

Discussion on this point led to agreement that we need a policy in writing to determine appropriate advertising.

Motion #3: that the TS editorial committee be empowered to develop a policy regarding paid advertising in in TS to be put in effect by the executive. Carried.

President then continued:

Technostyle is exploring a joint issue with TCQ and reciprocal advertising of conferences and journals. We will publish ads for TCQ and ATTW conference and they would reciprocate. We have agreement for special issue but we don't yet have a theme. At the meeting in Quebec, we discussed online publication, but discussion died without a decision. Therefore, we need a committee to analyze 1. Feasibility, 2. desirability (quick, grad student? Etc.) 3. Peer review process 4. Adjunct to TS. Or separate from TS.

Motion #4: That a committee analyze feasibility and will report to us next year. Withheld.

Motion #5: That we thank Amanda for website. Carried with applause

Motion #6: That we thank Celine for difficult task of grant application. Carried.

B. Vice President's Report: Celine Beaudet

The Conference has 40 presentations with 49 people. Celine thanked those who helped with the proposal and the call for papers: Lil, Cathy, Pam, Natasha, Graham, Charles, Janet.

Next year we need to pick a guest speaker and we need to name people and discuss it among ourselves. Guest Speaker is related to the grant proposal and has to do with international representation. The review committee recognized the interdisciplinarity and the international, and the grad student contribution.

C. Beaudet was vexed by the poor response from SSHRC, but the abstracts could have been longer and emphasized the theoretical framework much better. Most did not cite scholars or explain the framework of the research. The abstracts that came in January were longer and better and more like what we were looking for. Therefore, if we are going to write a new grant proposal we need to write the real conference abstracts by October.

SSHRC has put emphasis on research papers. They differentiate between research and pedagogical activities. Everyone has to submit a research and theoretical framework. This is especially true for students. Any "teaching-based" paper must make use of the



research in that field.

Motion #7: that the final deadline for abstracts will be in September to facilitate SSHRC application. Carried.

We lost a Joint session with applied linguistics with the loss of the grant.

Themes for next year: Conflict and Cooperation

1. Local national global
2. Representations of justice
3. Wealth and creativity

We have a new French Website, moved to Laval. E. Kavanagh and I. Clerc designed the French site.

Motion #8: that G. Smart and H. Graves will assist C. Beaudet in reviewing proposals. Carried.

C. Past President's Report. P. Grant.

Attended HSSFC's Weekend meeting in November. The point of most interest is the grant application and particularly small associations that are in the same position as us – not having access to AAGSA. Smaller associations set up committee. We discussed that with the reps from Fed. yesterday. One rep mentioned that the amount is just \$2-3000. We would not qualify for funds. We need to continue the two pronged approach for both occasional and the AAGSA.

Fed tells us number of guest speakers based on congress registrations.

D. Technostyle

1. At time of meeting, first issue is out. The good news is that we saved money by only one per year, but bad news is the second issue is needed to get support for journal from SSHRC. Several of these issues are contingent on each other. TS is exploring possibility of cheaper printer, but we're back with the same printer. Thanks to Natasha for the TCQ contact. We now need to write the proposal for TCQ and we are looking for input. One seemed to be medical competency.

Deborah Andrews was amenable to reciprocal advertising with ABC, and we have done that. They will put our journal on their website.

Pages of ads add cost by adding weight.

Online vs. not. Nadeane is keen to research this and would like to have others who are interested in this. Good news about money is that UCFV president's fund has paid some of TS expenses. \$1000 funding is good for one more year, but we are concerned after



that. At UCFV, we don't have students to typeset the journal. We have Bill Glassco who comes at a price, but not a great price. Bill does a remarkable job of creating a high quality journal.

We are a year from having to make the decision about the future. We have to think of solutions between now and next session. We want to emphasize input suggestions for joint issues and will pursue it about it on CATTW-net.

In terms of potential costs, Dorothy Winsor will become editor of JBTC, and we will pursue the reciprocal advertising at that point.

Motion #9: That a committee of 3 to analyze feasibility of online publication and report to us next year. Carried.

Nadeane, Celine & Cathy were selected as committee members.

E. **Bulletin Editor's Report.** We have received requests for bulletin from overseas – France and Switzerland.

Motion #10: thanks to Bill for all the hard work, particularly for on-line version. Carried.

F. **Secretary Treasurer's Report.** Rob Irish (attached separately).

6. New Business

Next year's conference May 29-31. It continues to overlap with CSSR, so we would like to negotiate with them regarding lessening overlap.

Motion #11: that we approach CSSR. Carried.

Nominating Committee:

Motion #12: that Diana Wegner and Margaret Procter join the nominating committee. Carried.

On the 29th of may Tri Council holds council on ethics.

Motion #13: that we thank Natasha for her hard work. Carried with applause.

Motion for Adjournment.



(Continued from page 1)

Even though our organization was not awarded the grant last year, the conference at the University of Toronto was a smashing success. Dr. Christine Räisänen, our Swedish guest, added new themes to our disciplinary conversations and proved to be a great companion at the dinner table. The variety and quality of the conference presentations were impressive; informal discussions were stimulating and provocative; and the society dinner was a great success. It was particularly stimulating to meet many newcomers at the conference and to listen to their talks. I would like to note that last spring, our organization finally reached the “magic” number of over 50 registered conference participants. According to the HSSF’ regulations, this number allows CATTW to waive registration fees for two guest speakers at the next conference. I am sure that you all will be excited to learn that one of the guest speakers at the 2003 CATTW conference is our own Lilita Rodman, who will speak about the evolution of technical communication over the time period of 43 years (1960-2003).

The past year was rich with new initiatives. We have established close links with the Association for Business Communication (ABC); Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW); Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning (CASLL/Inkshed); Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric/Société Canadienne pour l’Étude de la Rhétorique (CSSR); Canadian

Association for Translation Studies (CATS), and the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE). Our web master, Amanda Goldrick-Jones has updated the CATTW website and provided hypertext links to the websites of all the associations listed above. All these associations have also established hypertext links from their websites to the CATTW website. In addition to this “virtual” cooperation, we have reached an agreement with all the above associations that they would publish CATTW Calls for Papers in their Newsletters and Journals, while we would publish their Call for Papers in Technostyle. I would like to invite you all to visit the CATTW website at www.uwinnipeg.ca/~agoldric/CATTW and explore the links to our counterpart organizations.

One of the most pressing issues for our society remains maintaining and possibly increasing the membership. I would like to take this opportunity to address all members of the society and to urge them to renew their membership if they have not done so yet.

In conclusion, I would like to wish all CATTW/ACPRTS members a successful end of this Fall term. I look forward to another engaging conference in Halifax next spring and hope to see you all there.

Natasha Artemeva
CATTW/ACPRTS President

A special thanks to the Centre for Communication Studies at Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta, for sponsoring this issue of the *Bulletin*.



MOUNT ROYAL COLLEGE



Report on the General Assembly of the Federation Pamela Grant

The Annual Meeting of the General Assembly of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences took place on November 23-24 in Ottawa. As CATTW/ACPRTS representative, I attended the two-day event along with representatives from universities and other associations. The highlights of the Annual Meeting include the following.

A motion of support for Dr. Martha Piper's Killam Lecture on research in the social sciences and humanities was expressed. In her October Killam Lecture, Dr. Piper presented a series of proposals for a reconception, renewal and restructuring of support for human science research in Canada, including:

- \$ Establishing a Prime Minister's Advisory Council on the human sciences;
- \$ Investing 1% of all federal social spending into human science research;
- \$ Restructuring SSHRC

Dr. Piper's highly interesting paper is on the Federation web site at www.hssfc.ca/english/whatsnew/whatsnew.html

The Federation's Three-Year Strategic Plan to strengthen research and university education in the social sciences and humanities and to increase government funding for the human sciences was described. Part of this initiative includes an

Advocacy Campaign. The Federation has been working to raise the profile of human science research among MPs and bureaucrats, pressing for an increase in funding for SSHRC and for graduate students and new faculty. Feedback from these meetings suggests that the next budget may well contain provisions to continue the indirect costs program and to address graduate student funding, but a major boost for SSHRC has not been confirmed.

Canada Research Chairs

The Federation is now on record as sharing the Adiscouragement and outrage of the SSHRC Board over the low number of female chairs nominated and awarded through the CRC program.

Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences

Members were reminded that Congress 2003, hosted by Dalhousie University and University of King's College in Halifax, runs from May 28 to June 4. Future Congresses are set for:
2004 B University of Manitoba in Winnipeg
2005 - University of Western Ontario
2006 - York University
2007 B University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon

SSHRC President Marc Renaud delivered a presentation on SSHRC. He stressed the importance of research reaching beyond individual disciplines and beyond academia. Collaborative team research projects were highlighted as an ideal training ground for students.

In the question period, the issue of funding for individual research projects was raised: there is a need for smaller, more accessible grants. Dr. Renaud also admitted that two outstanding questions that have not yet been addressed by SSHRC are those of travel funding and aid for scholarly publications.

Two workshops were held on "Renewing scholarly infrastructure for the next generation" and "Meeting the needs of the new generation of scholars". Reports on both workshops will be posted on the Federation web site in December.

Association representatives met in their respective groups and discussed common concerns. Concerns expressed by the Small Associations included the need for stable and adequate travel funding for scholars attending the annual Congress and the need for support for web page maintenance



and translation services. Medium-Size Associations were also concerned with access to travel funding. Large Associations expressed reservations about the push towards collaborative research based on a model more suited to the natural sciences and underlined the need for

smaller, more accessible grants for research in their disciplines.

Outgoing Federation President Patricia Clements turned over the position of President to **Doug Owram**, current Provost of the University of Alberta

Technostyle: Call for Papers

Technostyle invites manuscripts dealing with subjects of interest to readers involved in business, technical, academic, professional, scientific, and governmental communication, as teachers, practitioners, or researchers. A wide range of approaches to the study of nonliterary communication is entertained by *Technostyle* - rhetorical, linguistic, sociological, cultural, ethnographic - but all submissions should be securely situated in relevant research. While manuscripts addressing pedagogical issues are welcome, authors should avoid describing lessons without explaining their significance to broader theoretical concerns. In addition to the criterion of relevance to the teaching, practice, and research of technical writing, suitable submissions for publication are as follows: articles based on sound empirical research, the significance of which is explicated in terms of relevant and current theory, or articles that make a contribution to a current, developing rhetorical framework. *Technostyle* also welcomes articles that place these concerns in a context specific to relevant scholarship in Canada.

Manuscripts should be addressed to:

Faye Hyndman, Gloria Borrowes, and Nadeane Trowse
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Guidelines for Contributors

Manuscripts should be no longer than 6,500 words (25 double-spaced typed pages) and should be submitted in two copies free of internal or external indications of identity of author(s). All manuscripts will be externally reviewed and authors may be asked to undertake revisions in response to reviewers' evaluations. The editor also invites submissions of 500 words that respond to articles published in *Technostyle*. Publication will be subject to editorial decision.

Authors of accepted submissions will be asked to conform to APA style in citations and headings, and to provide a disk as well as a hard copy of the final version of articles. Submissions must be made on a 1.4Mb 3.5-inch disk formatted in Rich Text Format (RTF) or text only.

Technostyle welcomes manuscripts in both French and English.



I D É E A S

NEW TA ORAL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TESTING AND INSTRUCTION AT QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

Michael P. Jordan – Queen's University at Kingston

A recent report [1] of the senate Sub-committee on the Training of Teaching Assistants at Queen's University made nine recommendations aimed at improving the training and assessment of TAs throughout the university. Two of these recommendations deal with a mandatory assessment of English-as-a-second-language oral proficiency and a new term-length remedial course for those who fail the test:

Recommendation 7

That a mandatory diagnostic assessment of ESL oral proficiency be developed. That all new graduate students who are required to obtain satisfactory results in an English language proficiency test for admission also be required to undertake this supplementary assessment before they begin their work as TAs.

Recommendation 8

That a new term-length course entitled English Language Communication Skills for Teaching Purposes be developed and offered in the fall term. That this course be mandatory for all graduate students who were required to obtain satisfactory

results in an English proficiency test for admission and who have failed the diagnostic test of ESL oral proficiency."

Appended to the report are the following background documents: a report prepared for the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research, April 1993; a report for the Academic Affairs Commission of the Alma Mater Society, March 2000; and the report of a conference entitled *TAs at Queen's: Realizing their Potential, Improving Teaching and Learning*, January 2000. *A Survey of Documents on TA Issues* is also appended as a bibliography. The need for improved TA language proficiency was highlighted by a 1999 AMS report [2] and an article in a Queen's student newspaper [3], which were reviewed in this *Bulletin* [4]. In the 1999 report, 86% of the Applied Science undergraduate students surveyed identified a poor ability to speak English among their engineering TAs.

The new 15-hour course (SGS 802) entitled *English Language Communications Skills for Teaching Purposes* focuses on teaching strategies and cross-cultural awareness as well as classroom communication skills and English pronunciation. This is unfortunate as those who fail the diagnostic



test might well have no difficulty with teaching strategies or cross-cultural awareness, and the senate sub-committee did not identify these as problem areas to be remedied. The inclusion of these subjects could thus appear to students to be of low relevance and perhaps even punitive. More seriously, these subjects dilute the essential language components at the heart of Recommendation 8, perhaps allowing some students who complete the course to remain deficient in oral English. Although students are expected to attend every class, there is no stated requirement for those attending to achieve a minimum level of oral proficiency in English or to retake the oral proficiency test – and pass it before being allowed to work as a TA. The text for the course [5] concentrates on pedagogical issues with no substantive material on ESL language problems.

Unfortunately, the Faculty of Applied Science will not require their TAs to pass the oral test or complete the course as a requirement for TA work this year although they are at least now aware of those who have been deemed deficient in oral English skills. Perhaps they will also take steps to ensure that those students are not in a position in which their lack of English could place undergraduate students or themselves in danger. Hopefully, the recommendations will be fully implemented by next year. Even when implemented, the above recommendations fail to deal adequately with the total language difficulties of TAs at Queen's. Oral proficiency is just part of the language problems with some TAs, and the recommendations do not address the need for minimum written proficiency standards for TAs, even for those who mark students' written work. As misinterpretation of written English is just as likely to lead to dangerous situations as is mispronunciation, a minimum standard for English comprehension as well as writing ability is really called for.

The recommendations, once fully implemented and if supported by a relevant course that requires minimum oral proficiency in English for a pass, should make a significant improvement in TA's English language abilities and in their language competence once they have graduated. More could be done of course. The focus of the senate sub-committee report is on TA oral English competence rather than setting a minimum benchmark for graduate students to graduate from Queen's. It is ironic that all Queen's undergraduate engineering students must achieve a minimum level of comprehension and writing in English before they are allowed to graduate [6] with a BSc, yet the same minimum English standards are not required for students who graduate with an MSc or PhD.

1. "Report of the Sub-Committee on the Training of Teaching Assistants at Queen's University," Senate Report, Queen's University at Kingston, May 2, 2002.
2. "Teaching Assistants at Queen's: A Study for the Academic Affairs Commission of the Alma Mater Society" Queen's University at Kingston, 1999.
3. "TAs Rate Poorly," Shawn Brimley and Nicole Saklama,, *The Queen's Journal*, Alma Mater Society, Queen's University at Kingston, March 2, 1999, 1 and 7.
4. "TA's Poor English Causes Concern," Michael P. Jordan, *CATTW Bulletin*, **10**(1), 14-15.
5. "A Handbook for Teaching Assistants," Allyson Hadwein and Susan Wilcox, Instructional Development Centre, Queen's University at Kingston.
6. "News from Queen's University," Michael P. Jordan , *CATTW Bulletin*, **6**(1), 2.



Member News

Notes

Lil Rodman has taken the early termination package from UBC. Her retirement was marked by the passing of her beloved little red sports car as she drove up to UBC on the day of her retirement. She now logs miles in her somewhat less beloved red Acura RSX. Congratulations and Condolences.

Congratulations to Tatiana Teslenko (SFU Phd, 2000). The series editor of Routledge's Literary Criticism and Cultural Theory series, came across her dissertation, "Genre as Strategy: Feminist Utopian discourse of the 1970s," and she now has a contract with Routledge to publish a book based on her dissertation. Routledge wants only minor revisions, and is hoping to start production in February.

Publications

Harrison, Claire , and Hammerich ,Irene: *Developing Online Content: The Principles of Writing and Editing for the Web*, John Wiley & Sons, 2002.

Harrison, Claire: "Professional Writers: Masters of Rhetorical Knowledgeability," to be published in *Technostyle*, Fall 2002.

Harrison, Claire: "Hypertext Links: Whither Thou Goest, and Why," published in *First Monday* at <http://www.firstmonday.dk>, October 2002.

Harrison, Claire: "Visual Social Semiotics: Understanding How Still Images Make Meaning," to be published in *Technical Communication*, February 2003.

Harrison, Claire, and Young, Lynne: "Bureaucratic Discourse: Writing in the Comfort Zone," to be published in *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis: Studies in Social Change*, Continuum, Spring/Summer 2003.

Harrison, Claire, and Young, Lynne, Editors, *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis: Studies in Social Change*, to be published by Continuum, Spring/Summer 2003.

Schneider, B. (2002). Theorizing structure and agency in workplace writing: An ethnomethodological approach. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 16, 170-195.

Schneider, B. (2002). Clarity in context: Rethinking misunderstanding. *Technical Communication*, 49 (2), 1-9.



You've got Mail!
Vous avez du courrier!
Membership email list
Répertoire des adresses
électroniques

This list of CATTW e-mail addresses was updated over the summer. If you don't see your address on this list, or if your address is incorrect, please e-mail Rob Irish with your updated address.

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 St-Jean, Armande

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 Whitmore, Steve
 Wilson, Maria

X, Y, Z

Yaying Zhang yzhangg@sfu.ca

✂ Je désire devenir membre de l'ACPRTS en 2003 Nouvelle adhésion () Renouvellement ()

Nom: (M.) (Mme) (Mlle): _____

Univ./collège ou entreprise: _____

Adresse: _____

Code postale: _____

Tél. (bureau): () _____-_____ (domicile): () _____-_____ Courrier électronique: _____

Les frais d'adhésion: 25 \$ (étudiants avec identification), 40 \$ (membres réguliers), 50 \$ (institutions/bibliothèques).



CATTW / ACPRTS Secretary's Report for 2001-2002

For the 2001 year, our memberships were down significantly from the previous year (62 vs 85-97). I may have accounted for members differently than Amanda, but in terms of paid members in 2001, we had 53 individual members, and 9 student members. Amanda reported 10 institutions for 2001.

As of May 24th, 2002, the 2002 year has seen a strong increase in memberships. We already have 58 paid memberships – 35 individuals, 12 students and 11 institutions. Of these, 28 are “NEW” insofar as they were not members in 2001. Thanks to members who have encouraged their colleagues and students to join the organization. However, much of our returning membership is continuing its habit of delaying its dues payment until mid-season. As Amanda noted in last year's secretary's report: “It would be helpful to think of ways to encourage members to renew earlier in the year.”

We have 11 paid institutional members in 2002, but Gloria Borrows noted that the National library is not among them.

CATTW / ACPRTS Treasurer's Report for 2001-2002

I took over Treasurer's responsibilities from Amanda, but not actually until August 2002, due to difficulties arranging transfers of accounts from Winnipeg to Toronto. The financial statement covering April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002 is available to all voting members at the AGM. I have provided explanations for significant items:

Income: decreased by \$18.68 over 2001

- \$ membership dues dropped by \$1099.15 due to the decline in paid members last year.
- \$ the membership figures for the two years have been separated to make accounting easier.
- \$ the SSHRC grant from last year was put toward the publication of proceedings in TS

Expenses: decreased by \$3204.65 over 2001

- \$ Technostyle only produced one issue in the financial year.
- \$ the cost of that issue was offset by the one-time-only contribution of SSHRC
- \$ Conference travel was covered by the SSHRC Grant
- \$ No disbursements were made for translation services.

Analysis:

While CATTW seems to have regained its financial health – in part due to increased memberships for 2002 – we can expect the coming year to have more significant expenses for three reasons: we did not manage to get a SSHRC grant to support conference travel or TS, we anticipate two issues of Technostyle, and the lack of translation costs seems anomolous.

In future, I intend to return to a more logical December 31 year-end, so that financial and membership years coincide.



CATTW / ACPRTS Financial Statement

April 1, 2001 - March 31, 2002

	2001-2002	2000-2001
Income	\$	\$
Memberships 2001	1195.67	3,755.20
Memberships 2002 (to March 31st)	1460.38	
Congress Refund		110.23
HSSFC Grant for Joint session	250.00	250.00
SSHRC Grant for Technostyle Proceedings	1300.00	
Interest	164.95	274.25
	4371.00	4,389.68
Expenditures		
Technostyle Printing and Related Costs	1,529.50	3753.03
HSSFC Membership	700.00	500.00
Translation		597.75
Conference Travel		700.00
Conference Guest Speaker	516.88	568.70
Conference Deficit	56.15	
Administrative Costs	270.33	150.15
Bank Charges	31.50	39.38
	3104.36	6,309.01
Net Revenue (Expenditure)	1266.64	(1,919.33)
Cash Balance April 1 2001 (yr begin)	9,047.17	10,966.50
Cash Balance March 31, 2002 (yr end)	10313.81	9,047.17



ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES PROFESSEURS DE RÉDACTION TECHNIQUE ET SCIENTIFIQUE

☞ QU'EST-CE QUE L'ACPRTS?

L'ACPRTS regroupe des Canadiens et des Canadiennes qui pratiquent l'enseignement de la rédaction technique et professionnelle dans les collèges et les universités, au sein du gouvernement ou dans l'entreprise. La rédaction technique englobe ici tous les aspects de la rédaction fonctionnelle: administrative, scientifique, médicale, spécialisée. L'Association s'intéresse également aux aspects oraux et visuels de la communication technique, ainsi qu'aux relations entre écriture et informatique. Les membres de l'ACPRTS peuvent échanger des idées, des techniques, assister à la rencontre annuelle des membres, et recevoir la revue bi-annuelle de l'Association, *Technostyle*, ainsi que le *Bulletin* semestriel. Les frais d'adhésion sont de 25 \$ pour les étudiants, de 40 \$ pour les membres individuels et de 50 \$ pour les membres institutionnels.

☞ QUI PEUT DEVENIR MEMBRE?

Toute personne qui enseigne ou étudie la rédaction technique ou administrative, ou qui en fait un objet de recherche, ou encore qui s'intéresse aux aspects visuels, écrits et oraux de la communication technique, peut devenir membre.

☞ OÙ ET QUAND SE TIENT LA RENCONTRE ANNUELLE DES MEMBRES?

Les membres de l'ACPRTS se réunissent chaque année dans une université canadienne accueillant le Congrès de la Fédération canadienne des sciences humaines et sociales, à la fin du mois de mai ou au début de juin.

☞ DE QUOI TRAITENT LES ARTICLES PUBLIÉS DANS TECHNOSTYLE ?

La revue *Technostyle* aborde un grand choix de sujets, comme en témoignent les titres d'articles suivants, choisis parmi les plus récents numéros:

- Evaluation: A Holistic Perspective
- Proposal Writing and Leadership: Taking a Hermeneutic Approach Toward Professional Writing as Social Action
- Le Poids de Trois Siècles de Normativisme Linguistique
- Reading Bureaucratic Texts: Analysis of Committee Documents
- Pour une typologie des résumés fonctionnels
- Journeying Through Paralysis to Praxis: Teaching Professional Writing with Bourdieu and Williams

En plus, *Technostyle* publie régulièrement une bibliographie sur la rédaction professionnelle et technique au Canada.

☞ COMMENT PUIS-JE DEVENIR MEMBRE?

Il suffit de remplir le formulaire ci-dessous et de le retourner à l'adresse suivante, en y joignant un chèque (à l'ordre de l'ACPRTS) :

Dr. Robert Irish
Language Across the Curriculum
Applied Science and Engineering
University of Toronto
35 St. George St., Sandford Fleming B670
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
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(suite page 17)



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF TECHNICAL WRITING

☞ CATTW IS...

. . . an Association of Canadians who teach technical writing, mostly at universities and community colleges, but in some instances in government and industry. ("Technical" embraces all aspects of functional writing: engineering, medical, scientific, business, etc.). The Association also focuses on oral and graphic communication, and computer-mediated writing. CATTW members are able to exchange techniques and ideas with members at other universities and colleges, attend the annual conference, and receive the Association's refereed journal *Technostyle* twice a year as well as a semestrial *Bulletin*. The annual membership fee is \$25 for students, \$40 for individuals, and \$50 for institutions.

☞ WHO MAY BELONG?

Anyone who studies, researches, or teaches technical or business writing, or is concerned with the graphic, written, or oral presentation of technical/business information.

☞ WHERE IS THE CONFERENCE HELD?

We meet at a different Canadian university every year, as part of the annual Humanities and Social Sciences Federation of Canada Conference, in late May or early June.

☞ WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF *TECHNOSTYLE*?

A sampling of papers from recent editions of *Technostyle* illustrates its broad range of interest:

- Stylistic Prescriptivism vs. Expert Practice
- Evaluation: A Holistic Perspective
- Proposal Writing and Leadership: Taking a Hermeneutic Approach Toward Professional Writing as Social Action
- Le Poids de Trois Siècles de Normativisme Linguistique
- Investigating Summary Typology: Consideration for Classifications
- Reading Bureaucratic Texts: Analysis of Committee Documents
- Journeying Through Paralysis to Praxis: Teaching Professional Writing with Bourdieu and Williams

Technostyle also publishes a "Bibliography of Administrative and Technical Writing in Canada."

☞ HOW DO I ENROLL?

Complete the attached application form and mail it with your cheque (payable to **CATTW**) to:

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