

Final Report on the Masterminds Lecture Series 2016

Section A. The 2016 Masterminds Lectures

The twelfth Masterminds Lecture Series, in April 2016, was successful in attracting approximately 379 people from the UVic and the Greater Victoria communities to the four lectures in the month of April.

The first lecture, by Dr. John Olesen (Greek and Roman Studies), was entitled “Building for Eternity: Investigating the Secrets of Roman Marine Concrete.” The lecture was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience as evidenced by the evaluations. Dr. Olesen has a very engaging presentation style, his subject is fascinating and well explained, and he used excellent visuals. There were 111 attendees at his lecture.

This was followed by a lecture by Dr. Lorna Crozier (Writing), which was attended by 135 people. Her presentation *When the Heart Starts Thinking* was an interesting and entertaining perspective on the role of poetry in our lives and our thinking about the environment. It was by happy coincidence that her lecture was scheduled in Canada’s poetry week and we were able to capitalize on the media coverage of poetry events in Victoria. Dr. Crozier’s evaluations were very positive, however, the sound in BWT, as it is so large, was not up to the standard of the lecture.

The third lecture was by Dr. James Tully on *Gaia Citizenship*. Dr. Tully, with exquisite logic, linked the current ‘green movement’ to the historical philosophy of BC’s First Nations regarding the environment. In his classic understated presentation style, Dr. Tully engaged the audience in a very well reasoned and factually substantiated discussion of what it means to support the recovery and preservation of the environment. Eighty six people attended Dr. Tully’s lecture, which we considered a small gathering, considering the expertise of the presenter and his profile in Canada and internationally.

Dr. Elaine Gallagher (Nursing) and her co-researcher, Dr. Vicki Scott, presented the final lecture, which addressed research on fall injuries in the First Nations communities. This lecture gave the audience some insight into the challenges that elders in the First Nations community may face and the implications of those challenges. It was unfortunate that the lecture coincided with a hockey game of some importance that involved the Vancouver Canucks and was one of the first beautiful warm evenings of spring. Forty-six people attended the lecture.

Section B. Attendance and Feedback

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The average attendance number was 97 with the majority of the attendees identifying as 'senior'. Attendance decreased for the last two lectures although the topics and speakers were very interesting.

All lectures were evaluated as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Section C: Venue

We were, again, unable to use the Harry Hickman Building lecture theatre (HHB), a venue that we have used with success from 2004-2014. We were offered the Bob Wright Lecture Theatre (BWT), which seats approximately 350 people although our attendance, on average, has been about 100. There was a choice to have all lectures in the BWT or to use the HHB lecture theatre for the first and last lectures, as these were outside of the examination period, and to change venues to BWT for the second and third lectures. We decided that having two lectures in HHB and changing venues for the second and third was preferable to using the very large lecture hall for all four lectures. The staff from COAG did an excellent job on signage and other forms of communication, so we do not think that changing venues reduces audience size significantly.

We have three options with regard to a suitable venue for the 2017 Mastermind Lecture Series:

1. Continue to use HHB in the period outside of examinations and seek a suitable venue for the two lectures in exam period.
2. Change the timing of the lectures so that they are all outside of the examination period.
3. Seek an alternative venue that is not used during the examination period.

Option one has inherent challenges with communicating the location of the lecture and the parking situation with each location. Option two means that we move the lecture to the month of March, which is a very busy time for the COAG personnel and probably not feasible, or to May, during which time many people prefer outdoor activities and we would predict that attendance would be reduced.

As for option 3, Lois Holizki is investigating the use of the new lecture theatre in the Continuing Studies Building in April of each year and this would be the most preferable option, if that venue were available.

Section D. Communications

Suzanne Ahearne was our UVic communications' contact and ensured that the larger community was well informed of the series. She was instrumental in the preparations of the posters that were distributed to the UVic departmental offices and some external sites,

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for the media releases, and for organizing media interviews. The series was also featured in the Times Colonist and other local publications. We are very grateful to Suzanne for her excellent work.

As in past, email and ‘word of mouth’ appear to be the most significant communications channels for the Masterminds Lecture Series. Over \$5000 of the budget for Masterminds is spent on print media although many respondents did not identify these channels.

Section E. Evaluation of the Masterminds Lectures.

Attendees were given short evaluation forms to complete as they entered the lecture hall. Approximately 60% of all attendees completed these forms.

Table 1. Evaluation of the Masterminds Lectures 2016

	<i>LECTURE</i>	<i>VENUE</i>	<i>SIGNAGE</i>	<i>ADVERTISING</i>	<i>PARKING</i>	<i>OVERALL RATING</i>
<i>MML 1</i>	4.78	4.63	4.40	4.00	4.08	4.64
<i>MML2</i>	4.95	4.17	4.30	4.00	4.30	4.68
<i>MML3</i>	3.61	4.21	4.43	3.87	4.39	3.68
<i>MML4</i>	4.50	4.75	4.35	4.25	4.45	4.33
<i>AVERAGE</i>	4.46	4.44	4.37	4.08	4.31	4.33

Please note that the average of individual rating categories is 4.47 and is consistent with the average of the overall rating category of 4.33.

Evaluations of the lectures were again very positive with an average of 4.46 on a 5-point scale. For a presentation to be satisfying, the audience must be able to hear the speaker clearly and this year, and in both venues, the audio component of the lecture was good overall, with a few minor issues.

Based on these evaluations, which were received from approximately 60% of the attendees, there are no significant problems associated with the lecture series.

As in past, a significant percent of the attendees self-identified a ‘senior’ and, given the potential needs of this population, it is imperative that the venue for these lectures are accessible in every way including accessible sound and that we explore additional avenues for advertising the lectures.

Section F. Volunteers

Leah Potter, Nina Peresic and Arlene Senft of COAG were extremely helpful in the organization of the lectures, as was Jim Pearce (UVRA) in onsite registration.

COAG volunteers made an extra effort to ensure that attendees could find the venues and, as usual, their signage was excellent.

Scott Hofer, Peter Liddell, Geraldine Van Gyn, and Arlene Senft, as representatives of UVRA or COAG, welcomed the audience and provided some information on COAG and UVRA and the collaboration to produce the Masterminds series.

An individual familiar with the speaker's work introduced each of the presenters. Acting Dean of Humanities, Dr. Cedric Littlewood, introduced John Oleson and the chair of Writing, Lynn Van Luven introduced Lorna Crozier. Dr. John Borrow, Canada Research Chair of Indigenous Law, introduced James Tully and Dr. Debra Sheets from Nursing gave the introduction of Elaine Gallagher and Vicki Scott.

Arlene Senft, Nina Peresic or Lois Holizki thanked each of our presenters and gave them a small UVic gift from the Centre on Aging in appreciation of their contribution.

Nina Peresic prepared a report based on the evaluations completed by audience members at each lecture.

Lois Holizki, as the representative of our partner in the Masterminds Lecture Series, makes an invaluable contribution to the success of these lectures and we are very grateful for her contributions.

Section G. Budget

As in previous years, the Office of the VP External Relations was very helpful in contributing to our budget. However, as the Masterminds Series takes place in the month following the year-end for university budgets, we are finding that the completion of the budget item reporting and commitments are very slow to be received. The budget for the 2016 series is not included in this report as we cannot provide sufficient information on spending at this time. We anticipate no significant deviations from what was anticipated as costs for the series.

Section H. Recognition of Presenters and Volunteers

Volunteers supporting the Masterminds Series were hosted at a Volunteer Luncheon supported by the UVRA in appreciation for their contributions.

A thank you note from the President of the UVRA and the Director of COAG should be sent to all presenters with a copy to the Office of the President and the Office of the VP

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External Affairs. Thank you notes and the small gift to the speakers are appropriate recognition of their efforts.

Section I. Potential Speakers

We have learned that issues of privacy disallow us from receiving a list of all retired UVic personnel. The ceremonies office do not retain print copies of the program of the retirees celebration and so that source is not useful in identifying past retirees. The person(s) who identifies speakers is, therefore, limited in identifying potential speakers to her/his knowledge of UVic faculty and the knowledge of others in the UVRA and COAG. There is a list of past speakers, which should be made available to the UVRA representative organizer of the Masterminds lecture series to ensure that past presenters are not invited repeatedly.

Other strategies for identifying potential speakers should be considered.

Section J. Recommendations

1. Pursue the booking of a venue that is not used during examination period and that is of a suitable size and accessibility for the general audience, the majority of who identify as a senior.
2. Consider additional sources for identifying speakers (e.g., a review of all departmental websites on which some emeritus faculty and staff are listed).
3. Consider eliminating the 'rehearsal' with speakers that usually takes place a month before the lectures and plan to have speakers on site at least one hour prior to the lecture (with AV personnel) to test and troubleshoot all AV requirements. As most venues have very good AV equipment, generally this means a sound check and adjustments.

Respectfully submitted:

Geraldine Van Gyn, PhD
Professor Emerita