



CICS REPORT

A newsletter from the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies at the University College of the Fraser Valley

Premier Campbell makes impression with UCFV BBA degree students in Chandigarh

When Premier Gordon Campbell's flight landed in Chandigarh on Dec. 2, as part of his 2007 trade mission to India, he had no idea that the entire student body of UCFV's BBA degree program in that city were waiting at the gates to greet him. But it was the students themselves who got the real surprise, when the Premier took the time to meet each of them personally and pose for several photographs with the group.

"On the day we received Premier Campbell from the airport I was very nervous, because we didn't expect that such a senior person would have time or even care about the people who were waiting to welcome him," says second-year student Manreet Sahi, who had been selected to present a bouquet to the Premier.

"I didn't think I would even get the chance to finish my welcome message. But it was incredible. He took the time and had the patience to listen and shake hands with everyone waiting to receive him. It gives me immense satisfaction and pleasure that British Columbia — the place where I will hopefully head in the future — is lead by such an amazing person."

The next day, the Premier again spent more than half an hour interacting with the UCFV students. In an informal speech, he encouraged them to follow their dreams and shared with them insights of his own time as a student. Afterward, despite preparing to address a huge congregation of educational officials before racing to catch a flight to Delhi, he delighted them by offering to pose for individual photos with each student.

Many students commented that the two-day event was one of the most exciting



BC Premier Gordon Campbell with UCFV BBA degree students in Chandigarh

things that had ever happened to them, inspiring them and creating memories that would last a lifetime.

"It was an amazing honour to meet a person of such high position who is helping us to fulfill our dreams. The help and support he showed for our program truly told me how successful my future is going to be. And I really appreciate that he took time for us out of his busy schedule," says Amar Singh Kooner.

Fellow student Shefali Joshi agrees, "When UCFV promised us last year that we would get a whole new level of global exposure, I never expected it to be of this level. It was absolutely amazing to be met with such warmth and treated like professionals, rather than just students. We really felt a tremendous amount of support from British Columbia for the UCFV degree we are studying here in India."

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UCFV awards \$5,500 in scholarships during second anniversary celebration — The Hon. Michael de Jong provides keynote address



The Hon. Michael de Jong, Abbotsford City Councillor Moe Gill and Prof DJ Sandhu award UCFV student Ms. Arvinder Jhutti in the amount of CDN \$1250 (INR 48,850) for combined excellence in academics and athletics.

About 200 students, parents, Panjab University officials and community supporters gathered at Shivalikview Hotel on January 29 to celebrate the UCFV Canadian BBA degree program in Chandigarh second anniversary and scholarship awards dinner. The BC government's Leader of the House, the Honourable Michael de Jong, provided the keynote address.

"Work hard, study hard, believe in your professors and in the Canadian education you are receiving, and dare to dream big," Minister de Jong told the students. "UCFV is delivering on every promise and through its highly practical, applied model, is preparing you to be leaders in business

anywhere in the world. Whether your future is in India, in Canada, or elsewhere, the whole world is crying out for strong leaders. Under UCFV's guidance, you will succeed beyond your dreams."

Four awards were presented to students of the degree program. The top award for outstanding academic achievement, in the amount of CDN \$2500 (Rs. 97,700) was given to Ms. Ssonam Dutta, who had an 89 per cent average after passing out of Sacred Heart Tara Hall and Dayanand Public School in Shimla.

Ms. Arvinder Jhutti, a graduate of Balvidya Mandir in Nainital, was also awarded CDN \$1250 (INR 48,850) for combined excellence in academics and athletics.

Ms. Mandeep Chahal, who attended Dilwan International Public School in Bilja, Punjab, received the award for academic excellence and financial need in the amount of CDN \$1250 (INR 48,850).

UCFV also surprised student Mr. Gurneet Anand with a cheque for CDN \$650 (INR 25,000) to recognize his outstanding willingness to provide all-around assistance to professors and administrators of the program.

Admission is open for the next batch of UCFV students, who will start their degree on July 14, 2008. For information, contact Ms. Crystal Sawyer at ucfv.india@gmail.com, call +91-987-248-4206 or visit www.ucfv.ca/chandigarh.



Student Gurneet Anand receives his award.





Centre supporter profile: Sgt. Amar Kingra



Amar Kingra

Tell us a little about yourself.

I came to Canada at the age of fourteen. I have lived in this area since 1972. I have been a police officer since 1981. I'm currently serving as a Sergeant in the patrol division of the Abbotsford Police department. I am married and have three children. I am quite involved with the Indo-Canadian community in law enforcement related issues. I try to be a good role model and encourage young people to consider a career in policing.

What is your affiliation with UCFV and the CICS?

I was a student at UCFV and completed my BA in Criminal Justice and a certificate in Business Administration. I have served on the UCFV Criminal Justice department Advisory Committee in the past. My two daughters are currently enrolled at UCFV and several members of my extended family have also graduated from UCFV. I have been involved with the Centre from its planning stages and currently serve on the Community Advisory Committee as the Vice Chair.

What roles do you see the Centre having in the future?

I believe the Centre will play an important role in promoting cultural awareness, educating people in both countries, and thereby strengthening our relationship. It will play an integral role in promoting new business opportunities in both countries. It will also provide new opportunities for skilled professionals from both countries.

As you know UCFV is now offering a BBA program in Chandigarh. What direct or indirect benefits do you see students obtaining a UCFV BBA ?

UCFV has a well established Business Administration department that is staffed by world-class professors. Students obtaining their BBA at the Chandigarh campus will have the unique opportunity of being taught by some of these professionals. The graduates of this program will be in a much better position to compete for job opportunities anywhere in the world. This program will also allow students to stay close to home during their studies and obtain the same quality of education.

In what ways do you think the Centre can better serve the community?

The Centre is a relatively new institution and its role in serving the community will evolve according to the needs of the community. It can better serve the community by utilizing its resources to unite the community for the common good. The Centre should also continue to be more visible and raise its profile and awareness across the country. It should also examine creative ways of attracting and educating young people about the purpose of this institution.



Study Tour to India 2008

In February, twenty-two UCFV students and participants took part in an exhilarating study tour of Northern India, visiting six cities in 25 days at an often-hectic pace. They learned about Indian people and culture, its history and architecture, its political and cultural ethos, and its institutions in a most interactive way. From the wonder of the Taj Mahal to meeting His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, the students were enthralled with the sights and scenes of India. Bustling Delhi, the calm pedestrian city of Shimla in the foothills of the Himalayas, the windy twelve-hour journey to Dharamsala, City Beautiful Chandigarh, the serene Golden Temple in Amritsar, and a restful resort in the hills all provided a diversity of experiences and adventure. Along the way, we met numerous people who touched our lives in unique ways: children in slums who still laughed and played, UCFV BBA students in Chandigarh who created new friendships with us, NGO leaders who inspired us, Indian university students who charmed us, villagers who opened their doors and hearts to us. All in all, India was a heady experience – one that will stay with us for a long time.





Faculty Profile: Dr. Nicola Mooney



Nicola Mooney, Ph.D.
Anthropologist
Department of Social, Cultural and Media Studies

Tell us a little about yourself.

Well, whenever I ask this of my research informants and collaborators, they usually begin with their village, so perhaps I should begin in the same way! I was born in the English town of Wallasey, which is, famously, a short ferry ride across the river Mersey from Liverpool. My family moved to Canada in the late 1970s, and we settled near Toronto. I attended the University of Toronto for each of my degrees, and I met my husband through mutual friends while studying there. But as my husband is Indian, and I have visited India several times, I now feel quite at home there as well.

Why did you get interested in anthropology?

Perhaps what is most compelling to me about anthropology is its attempt to understand other peoples and their ways of living with utmost empathy and respect. As well, anthropology is in many ways an interdisciplinary discipline as it considers

all aspects of human cultural life in their diversities and interconnections. Moreover, as anthropology raises questions about the dominance of the West and the frequently colonial bases of its knowledge and power, it also proposes a sort of political message about recognizing the virtues of different cultures, and through this, constructing peace, equitability, and tolerance.

Where did you earn your degrees?

All of my degrees were from the University of Toronto. It was a great school, with exciting courses, fantastic libraries, and a lively research culture. I took an honours BA specializing in socio-cultural anthropology and majoring in religious studies at what is now the U of T at Mississauga. At that time called Erindale College, this campus had smaller classes where one could get to know one's professors. There, I was fortunate to encounter some very good teachers and mentors (particularly Dr. Neil McMullin of Religion, as well as Dr. Gary Crawford and Rosamond Vanderburgh of Anthropology); these individuals inspired me as teachers, and they also encouraged me to go to graduate school. I took somewhat of a detour through Museum Studies for my Master's degree, but my thesis work on community collaboration in museum settings left me very interested in issues of community, identity, social memory, and representation. I then decided to pursue these issues further through a return to anthropology.

I completed my PhD in Sociocultural Anthropology, as well as the graduate collaborative program in Ethnic, Immigration and Pluralism Studies, with a thesis entitled Good Families,

Good Fortunes: Ethnicity and Modernity among an Urban Jat Sikh Middle Class, which was in large part about the construction of Jat Sikh identity in urban Indian contexts, that is removed from villages, rural life, and local community solidarities.

How did you zero in on your dissertation topic, and how did you come to focus on South Asia?

I had always taken courses and written papers with an Asian emphasis as an undergraduate simply for the reason that I found it the most compelling area of the world on which to read and write. But in answering this question with regard to my PhD, it will become clear that my personal and professional lives collide considerably, for I got married to a Punjabi just a few months before I began my PhD. Although I had initially proposed to focus my doctoral thesis work on a comparison of post-colonial experiences and representations in Canadian and Indian museums, I began to think that I should do 'real' ethnographic fieldwork in India, and in part for personal reasons, because it would give me an opportunity to live with my in-laws for quite some length of time, to get to know them and learn about their lives, as well as to learn some Punjabi.

At the same time, around 1996, there began to be considerable activity around the 50th anniversary of independence in India, and a number of publications on Partition appeared; these works began to address the troubled and traumatic collective amnesia on the subject that had previously held sway. I knew that my father-in-law's family had been uprooted at Partition, and I was very moved by his longing for a home that





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he could no longer visit nor experience; my husband and others of his generation had been torn from their homes in a new and equally painful way in the aftermath of 1984. I became very interested in what these events had meant for identities in the region.

I framed my dissertation proposal around the hypothesis that the boundaries between Sikh and other religious identities in Punjab had become crystallized, more clear and insurmountable, in the years following 1947 and 1984; and with my committee's approval, I set off for fieldwork. But in perhaps most ethnographic projects, one's pre-fieldwork ideas are, sometimes drastically, reframed in the process and experience of living in the field. For me, living as a daughter-in-law in India, my gender and associated questions of status seemed to become among the most pressing aspects of my everyday life there, and thus the status of women and family life became considerable parts of my research. But my work continued to focus on regional identity, as I was living among Jat Sikhs (members of an agricultural and often land-owning

Sikh caste), and thus this community became most central to my research. Indeed despite my new emphasis on gender, the most central questions of my dissertation focused on what -- having left the village for urban and middle class pursuits -- it means to be Jat Sikh in the city, as well as in the context of deeply-perceived historical slights and traumas.

What attracted you to pursue teaching at UCFV?

Because my research and teaching interests are quite wide-ranging, working in an interdisciplinary department such as Social, Cultural and Media Studies seemed a good fit for me, as here, I can work on all of the questions that interest me: ethnicity and identity, transnationalism and diaspora, history and memory, land and rurality, gender and other forms of social difference, religious identity and religiosity, popular culture and media, and the impacts of the nation-state, development, post-coloniality and modernity among Sikhs in India and Canada. But my decision to apply for a position here was also very much influenced by the possibility for involvement with

the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies, its projects, students, and community outreach activities. For someone whose research is focused on India and its diaspora, this is a very good place to be, especially as the Sikh demography of the Fraser Valley means that there are wonderful research opportunities for me here.

How does the Centre impact your research and teaching at UCFV?

It is great to be at an institution with 'critical mass' in one's area of research. For instance, within two months of my arrival, I became involved with an exciting community-based social history project. Moreover, my affiliation with the Centre allows me to position myself very effectively in terms of research development; it also lends my projects some further credibility in the community at large. And, although not all of my teaching is India-focused, my affiliation with the Centre is always a consideration as I go about course development and design. I also enjoy the comparatively public, and even social, aspects of Centre life, such as the Ehsaas film festival.

Cultural Recovery Program of the Khalsa Diwan Society

The Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies at UCFV is assisting in the Cultural Recovery Program of the Khalsa Diwan Society of Abbotsford. The initiative seeks to develop an interactive website that will highlight the 100-year history of the Indo-Canadian Punjabi/Sikhs in the Fraser Valley. The experiences of a tumultuous century, fraught with trials and tribulations, has culminated in a momentous juncture with the designation of National Heritage Site in Abbotsford as the oldest Sikh temple in the Americas.

The objective of the website is two-fold: firstly to provide an avenue for any Canadian to learn about the 100 year history and secondly to link the institution with local, national and international organizations that provide cultural, historical, and traditional information on the Sikh/Punjabi community and its Diaspora communities. The project is grateful to Canadian Heritage for funding support.

For more information, please visit www.canadiansikhheritage.ca

Harnam Singh Hari Memorial Annual Scholarship

This \$1500 scholarship was established by Jason Hari, great-grandson of Harnam Singh Hari, who was a renowned Calgarian, Sikh pioneer, and mentor to the community. He was a philanthropist in his homeland, helping establish and guide many towards opportunity and prosperity in Canada. An undergraduate student in any faculty at UCFV who is continuing his/her studies may apply for this award by May 10.

For more information on this scholarship please visit: www.ucfv.ca/CICS/Scholarships





UCFV criminologist Yvon Dandurand testifies at Air India inquiry



Yvon Dandurand testified for the Commission of Inquiry into the investigation of the bombing of Air India flight 182. Dandurand appeared as a witness to present his report and answer questions from counsels for the Commission and for the families of the victims. He identified the main challenges faced by the criminal justice system in attempting to secure the cooperation of witnesses in the investigation and

prosecution of terrorism cases. Dandurand also examined the nature and efficiency of various procedural and security measures that can be taken to ensure the protection of witnesses who are at risk of intimidation or retaliation. He emphasized the particular situation of vulnerable groups and communities that can become subject to community-wide intimidation and the importance of addressing that kind of intimidation to prevent terrorism. Dandurand argued in favour of designing some broader strategies to protect whole communities against intimidation and retaliation by terrorist organizations and their sympathizers. Since then, He has also testified before the Standing Committee of the House of Commons on Public Safety and International Security examining some of the same issues. The full report of the Air India inquiry will be released sometime this year.

Ehsaas film festival big success

Ehsaas was presented by the Centre in March and April, in conjunction with the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute's 40th anniversary celebration.

A Punjabi/Hindi word, "ehsaas" means "to reflect" or "to come to a realization". This festival showcased four powerful films – Swades, Monsoon Wedding, Mangal Pandey, and Lagaan, which all emphasized social consciousness. Each film had significant historical and current relevance while highlighting social justice issues. The goal of the festival was to raise awareness, initiate dialogue, and encourage understanding on topics that are globally significant yet have local relevance.

Each film focused on a different area of the human condition, such as poverty and societal solidarity. Much can be said about the film-makers, who show human suffering, courage, and dignity in a memorable manner. The real power of these films is that they connected the audience with people who are normally not within their sight lines. In short, they made you care.

UCFV Career Fair

In January, the Centre held two career fairs that focused on Indo-Canadian students and their parents. The career fair ran on January 13 at the Sikh Gurdwara on South Fraser Way (Khalsa Diwan Society) and on January 14 at the Gurdwara Sahib Kalgidhar Darbar on Blueridge Drive. The fair was held during the celebration of Lohri and Maghi and lasted about 3 hours each day.

The career fair came about in response to feedback from a youth forum that was held in March 2007, where students provided feedback that their parents may not

know about the wide scope of potential programs/courses offered at UCFV. Since Indo-Canadian parents are integrally involved in their children's choices for further studies, they are sometimes unable to guide the children in their educational and career choices, if they don't have all the information. Students had expressed the need for a career fair targeting parents who would gain both knowledge and access to the various career options and educational opportunities at UCFV.

The Centre invited UCFV faculties to promote their programs/courses to

Indo-Canadian parents. Groups that participated included Social Work & Human Services, Teacher Education, Political Science & Philosophy, Computer Information Systems, Child & Youth Care, Visual Arts, Abbotsford Police, and the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies. Each group was represented by either a student or a faculty member who could talk to parents. Parents and youth were able to talk with individual representatives and take away materials from the different programs offered at UCFV and the career opportunities at Abbotsford Police.





International Child-friendly Conference, Feb. 2008

An international conference on Child-friendly Cities was held at Panjab University in February. The conference was jointly organized by the Canadian Studies Centre at Panjab University in collaboration with UCFV.

The conference focused on key issues regarding child-friendly cities and the child-friendliness of Indian cities, in particular Chandigarh. The conference highlighted child-friendly examples from around the world and some already being run in Chandigarh.

The conference began with Prof. B.S. Ghuman, Coordinator, Canadian Studies Centre, who welcomed all the participants.

Cherie Enns, professor of Geography at UCFV, introduced the theme of the conference, emphasizing the challenges that children face in the process of rapid urbanization, such as social exclusion, boredom, pollution, and traffic. She discussed the UN convention on child rights and elaborated on how these conventions can be used for slum development. She also suggested social entrepreneurship. The inaugural address for the conference was delivered by Prof. R.C Sobti, the Vice Chancellor. He focused on problems of rural children and socially disadvantaged students. He stressed practical implementation of child-friendly cities guidelines, particularly from environment and education perspectives.

Ms. Harjinder Kaur, former mayor of Chandigarh, spoke about the challenges of



Panjab University, UCFV Abbotsford and Chandigarh students and faculty at Child Friendly Conference

adolescent children, child abuse, and drug addiction. She stressed that child-related issues must find place in policy-making.

While delivering the presidential address, Dr. Eliana Riggio of the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre in Florence, Italy, elaborated on the concept of child protection and suggested that children and young people should take part in policy-making because only they can better tell what changes are required in their lives.

The inaugural session was followed by three technical sessions. The first focused on child-friendly cities from different perspectives. The presenters in the second session shared their experiences working

with children. The third session was a panel discussion on child-friendly cities. The day portion of the conference concluded with presidential remarks made by Prof. S. K. Kulkarni, Dean of University Instruction, Panjab University, who highlighted the importance of making policies based on the input from the conference. The valedictory address was delivered by Prof. Cherie Enns, who shared her thoughts and expectations. The two interns from UCFV, Ms. Sumeet Jammu and Ms. Meggie Shields, spoke about their experiences at the Canadian Studies Centre at Panjab University, having been there since September 2007.





Centre activities

Chair Updates

The Chair will be participating in “India Calling: 2008 India Canada Business Partnership Summit” in Vancouver from June 18-19, 2008. This summit is being organized by the Indian Merchants’ Chamber (IMC) in association with Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC), Canada-India Business Council (CIBC), and Indo-Canadian Business Chamber (ICBC).

100 year history project

The Centre has formed a steering committee to develop and design a publication on the 100-year history of British Columbia Sikhs. The goal is to develop the publication for launch in 2011, the Centennial Year for the National Heritage Site Sikh Temple in Abbotsford. For more information please email us at cics@ucfv.ca

India Canada studies certificate

A new India Canada Studies Certificate is being offered by UCFV, starting in September 2008. The curriculum for the Certificate has been developed with knowledge of the growing importance of India on the world stage and to our local community. The courses expose students to knowledge, skills, and ideas about a cultural community that has a great impact on our daily work and lives in BC and the Fraser Valley. This is especially important for students who want to work in the field of cultural studies/social work and education or whose work demands cultural knowledge and expertise. The curriculum provides students with a specialization in an area of concentration by taking courses offered through multiple disciplines, helping provide the breadth and depth for the program. For more info please visit www.ucfv.ca/calendar/2008_09/

Ministry of Children and Family Development consultation study

The Centre has undertaken an 18-month consultation study on child-protection issues facing the Indo-Canadian community in Abbotsford. The study’s aim is to develop a service model of prevention and intervention to assist families in crisis. To meet this aim, the following areas of study are being undertaken: a literature review, interviews with key service providers, focus groups with stakeholders, client baseline data review and assessment, service model exploration, and an inventory of services. The report will be ready for the Ministry by late summer. For more information, please contact Satwinder Bains at 604-854-4547.

Annual report

The annual report of the Centre was presented to the Community Advisory Committee on April 3, 2008. This is the premier report by the Centre as it has been in full operation for one year. Additional copies of the report can be obtained by calling Jag Deol at 604-851-6325. The report will be live on the website for your perusal: www.ucfv.ca/cics

Research projects undertaken by UCFV scholars

UCFV Geography Professor John Belec, who has been studying, researching, and writing about Cross-Border Regions (a territorial unit that comprises contiguous sub-national units from two or more nation-states), is in India to form research partnerships between UCFV and scholars in partner institutions in Punjab. UCFV English professor Summer Pervez is conducting research on Post-colonializing Deleuze: Transnational Identities and Horizontal Thought in the British South Asian Diaspora. This research is about the need to re-examine South Asian British literature and film from the perspective of

“horizontal” or Deleuzian thought. Writers and filmmakers of the British Asian diaspora offer a new model of thinking about identity, one that espouses the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. Artists such as Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, Meera Syal, Monica Ali, Suniti Namjoshi, and Gurinder Chadha reveal a concern with showing both celebrations of and resistance to pluralism and possibility in a transnational world. Summer will be visiting England, India, and Pakistan in the summer of 2008.

Student Research

Under guidance of the Centre, third-year Social Work student Satinder Sangha undertook a research study of the Ministry of Children and Family Development’s Child, Family and Community Service Act. The objective was to conduct research on key social issues to help government move forward with an evidence-based policy practice approach. Karen Tiwana worked on a demographic profile of Indo-Canadians in the Abbotsford Census Metropolitan Area. Karen Kang was a student researcher on the Cultural Recovery Program with Khalsa Diwan Society. Sumeet Jammu and Meggie Shields worked as student interns in Chandigarh for four months on the child-friendly conference.

Congress UBC

Satwinder Bains and Adrienne Chan will be presenting for the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education on June 2, 2008 at the University of British Columbia. The presentation will be on racial identity and cultural politics in post-secondary education as part of a panel entitled Emergent Perspectives in Fostering Successful Environments in Higher Education: Experiences among Post-secondary Minority Students in Canada.

Visit our online photo gallery at:
http://www.ucfv.ca/CICS/Newsletters/Spring_2008_News.htm

