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4-14-1986

## Canadian Studies Minor

The College at Brockport, College Senate

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Resolution #21

TO: President John E. Van de Wetering

FROM: The Faculty Senate Meeting on April 14, 1986  
(Date)

RE: X I. Formal Resolution (Act of Determination)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ II. Recommendation (Urging the fitness of)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ III. Other (Notice, Request, Report, etc.)

SUBJECT: Proposal for a Canadian Studies Minor



Signed: [Signature] Date Sent 4/15/86  
 (For the Senate)

TO: The Faculty Senate

FROM: President John E. Van de Wetering

RE: I. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution

a. Accepted. Effective Date 5/1/86

b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on \_\_\_\_\_

c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II., III. a. Received and acknowledged

b. Comment:

DISTRIBUTION: Vice Presidents: just. cooper. Sheik - see list attached

Others:

Distribution Date: 5/15/86 Signed: [Signature]  
 (President of the College)

Date Received by the Senate: \_\_\_\_\_

State University of New York  
COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT  
Brockport, New York 14420

Department of History  
716-393-2377/2378

February 12, 1986

Dr. Fred Powell, Chairman  
General Undergraduate Curriculum Committee  
230 Science Hall  
Campus

Dear Fred:

Attached please find a proposal for a Canadian Studies Minor; this program identifies and organizes courses that for the most part already exist (a few new ones being developed). It is our intent to put some structure to what a group of us have been working on informally over the past few years. Because of the relationship with Plattsburgh's program and the revised K-12 curriculum which has the study of Canada in 3rd and 5th grade and as an elective in high school, we believe the establishment of a minor will make Brockport more attractive to teachers and students, not to mention the Rochester area business community; we believe it would compliment our international business program.

This proposed minor rests on the belief that Canadian studies are relevant to our students and the community at large. We believe there is a Canadian identity worthy of study in its own right, made unique by a duality of cultures, British-Canadian and French-Canadian. It is also important to note that our geographical proximity helps stimulate interest in Canada. Canada and the U.S. are each others number one trading partner (NY ranks eighth).

Overall, the purpose of the program is the study of Canada: its history, geography, government, economic development, culture, languages, literature, art and institutions. To the extent that its relations with the U.S. are part of the study of Canada, they are included. However, the program is not focused solely on Canadian-American relations. **WE BELIEVE THAT CANADA IS WORTH STUDYING FOR ITS OWN SAKE.**

Because of Canada's importance to the U.S. in a number of areas - business, energy production, and military alliance, to name but a few - the systematic study of Canada is important if we are to understand the complexities of American-Canadian interdependence. As we mentioned above, the new K-12 Social Studies curriculum requires units of study on Canada; several of us continue to be asked to make presentations to area school groups.

Resources: Faculty

As the list of courses would indicate ten full-time faculty are currently involved in teaching courses with Canadian content. It should also be noted that ten grants have been received by eight faculty members; these grants were for research and teaching about Canada.

Resources: Library (see attachment from Steve Buckley)

Administration of Program

This program would be the responsibility of Global Studies or International Education; a faculty person would serve as Director of Canadian Studies. This person would serve as part of his or her governance responsibility and would receive no extra pay or release time.

The Center for the Study of Canada at SUNY-Plattsburgh has asked us to serve as the Western New York Canadian Resource people under their "broad umbrellas." This is very significant because they recently received a U.S. Department of Education grant making them the fourth Center established by the Department (Johns Hopkins, Duke, and Michigan State University are the others).

Curriculum

- PS 343 Canadian Politics and Society (Ullman)
- HST 351 History of Canada (Boston)
- FRN 417 Quebec Civilization (Pettit)
- ENL 395 Modern Canadian Literature (Tollers)
- ENL 473 Studies in literary Genres (Fr/Can Poetry) (Poulin)
- THE Theatre in Canada (Sakshi)
- GSE 400 Comparative Economic Systems Canada & the U.S. (Fenton)
- FRW 303 French Conversation
- AMT 401 Native American Art (Blackman)
- CSZ Issues in Canada (Boston)
- BIO 495 Topics in Biology - "Acid Rain"
- CRJ Comparative Criminal Justice Systems: Canada & US (Frye)
- ZDI 499 Development of Curriculum Materials for the Teaching of Canadian Topics (Jorkasky)
- CBS 399\* Directed Study - Canada
- CNS 499\* Independent Study - Canada

\*To be taught by faculty teaching in program.

In conclusion, if you have any questions concerning this proposal, please call me at your convenience. If approved, we would like to introduce the minor with a "Canada Week" in April; the Canadian Consulate in Buffalo and the Center in Plattsburgh will assist us with this.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Walt*

Walter Boston, Jr.  
Department of History

THE RELEVANCE OF CANADIAN STUDIES AND THE  
INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLEGE AND  
UNIVERSITY STUDENT

Paul Lacoste  
DUKE UNIVERSITY

Any Canadian is apt to believe that the relevance of Canadian studies for the American student needs little demonstration. However he may soon discover that his country is far less known south of the 45th parallel than he would have expected. Such a sad discovery could probably be made by the citizens of any country visiting a neighbor which is of much greater population, resources and influence.

Yet the educated American has obvious reasons to give some attention to Canadian studies. There is no need to insist on our geographical proximity, long historical association and common interest in defence. It is also well known that economic relations between the two countries are closer and closer, that there is an increasing movement of migration across the border and that the American way of life exerts a tremendous influence on Canadian society. But other factors are far less understood: for instance the British character of our political institutions and more generally a strong attachment to British traditions which has persisted to a great extent in spite of the increasing American influence. A substantial proportion of our immigrants after 1774 was of American loyalist stock and after all one main reason for uniting the British colonies into our confederation in 1867 was to develop a strong British country north of the United States. An American observer may be surprised to find in most Canadians a strong sense of identity in spite of so many points of similarity with his American neighbors.

This perception of Canada and Canadians as a distinct country and a distinct population is apt to manifest itself in more than symbolic ways and to create actual problems of which the American public has to be aware. May I mention certain negative attitudes which are found in many Canadian political circles toward American foreign policy. The evaluation of the needs of military defence has also proved to be a source of tension, Canadian public opinion refusing to identify the interest of our country with those of our much more powerful neighbor. One should mention also a frustration aroused in Canada by the increasing measure of economic control by American interests. This is the source of a form of economic nationalism which is actually much more noisy than efficient, but which has some political importance.

Such differences of interest and outlook should be better known in the United States, and this not only in view of promoting friendship between the two countries, but more immediately in order to facilitate the solution of difficulties at different levels. Canadian studies with an emphasis on actual problems and based on an objective and realistic approach are a valuable and necessary contribution to the understanding of questions which are important for Americans.

Of course I am expected to put some emphasis on a typical Canadian problem which is the relationship between the English-speaking majority and the French-speaking minority and between the federal government and the Quebec government. Indeed the presence of two cultures in Canada is probably the most basic difference between our country and the United States. It has been repeated again and again that this distinctive feature is an essential component of Canadian identity. In fact, however, what we have seen until these very last years has been the simple coexistence of two cultures rather than a genuine relationship between the two. The Canadian situation has been described with the words "Two Solitudes", which was hardly an exaggeration. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism has been surprised to find how little each group is known to the other and so we Canadians should not be too disappointed when we discover that we are not very well known in the United States.

This dual character of our country should be a source of interest for any American involved in the study of problems of language, culture and coexistence of ethnic groups. But recent events have made the study of French Canada more than a purely academic subject. For a few years now our country has entered a period of tensions which, according to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism amounts to a serious crisis. It is still too early to predict the ultimate political repercussions of this crisis, but its potential importance for all America is obvious. Few informed Americans would be indifferent to what could amount to a disintegration of the Canadian confederation or to prolonged frictions which could lead to acute political difficulties. There is also and some would say that there is primarily the problem of the integration of French Canada to the industrial and eventually post-industrial North American society. For any French-Canadian holding a responsible position, this is altogether a great challenge and a fascinating experience. For an American student, it is at least a very interesting subject of study.

Such are some of the reasons for the relevance of Canadian studies for the American student, even at the undergraduate level, especially in the Eastern region of the United States.

To wish the relevance of any patently important subject for historical study is, in many ways, to do a disservice to the discipline of History. Those of us who are historians are aware that we need provide no further legitimacy for our study than to reply, as Buch allegedly said when asked why he composed, "for the greater glory of God - and because I enjoy it." Unfortunately, both the tax-payer who must support the insertion of new courses and new subject matter into the curriculum, and the student who must choose between a variety of course offerings, many of which are oriented toward current, and pressing, world crises, so abstract and academic a reply to the question of relevance is unacceptable. The student has the right to expect that his university work, and in particular his work in history, will help him to find himself in place and time, providing guidelines by which he may further give definition to his own experiences. In this sense Canadian history, or Canadian studies, must compete with other seemingly more urgent demands upon the time of the student, the patience of the administrator, and the money of the accountant.

Given this condition of American education, the strongest arguments for the relevance of a study of Canadian history and society may be made along two lines:

1) Canada affords a unique opportunity for making comparative studies between the United States and another culture. Americans so often assert, and so seldom test, the validity of their cherished notion of difference. In large part because the national histories against which we would have compared our goals, value systems, and development have been those of European states patently different in their experiences from that of the United States. Setting aside for the moment the question of whether one should make the nation the normative unit of study, we must show students how they may learn far more about their own, or the American (i.e., United States) experience by a study of Canada. Given an environment of many similarities, a like period of settlement, and joint isolation from Europe and Asia, Canada and the United States nonetheless developed along quite different lines. In showing how those theses put forward by historians to account for the basic patterns of the American experience - the theses of Frederick Jackson Turner, David M. Potter, and C. Vann Woodward, to cite but three - do not apply to the pattern of Canadian development, the teacher may quickly illumine the uniqueness of the Canadian experience. One may then explore specific elements of comparison, whether by British/French-Canadian vs. British/Spanish - American treatment of aboriginal groups, or reactions to the depression and world conflicts. In such a way as to show the student something about the history of the United States, about Canada, and about the very process of comparative history itself.

2) Canada is close at hand, and the cultural crises developing there may have parallels to those arising in the United States. Students of political science, international relations, economics, and sociology who wish to study theoretical problems relating to nation building, to ecological matrixes in culturally plural situations, or to middle power status and the alternatives posed to policy makers by such status may initiate valuable theoretical and methodological studies within Canada, without the necessity of soliciting funds for research abroad. Such pilot studies may then lead to the application of the models built for the purposes of Canadian work to other cultures, at higher levels of study, or may lead directly on to doctoral level research within the Canadian context itself. Canada thus becomes a testing ground for theory, the repository of data upon which theory may be built, and a culture worthy of intensive study in its own right.

**REPORT**

SUNY Brockport  
Brockport, New York 14420  
Phone: 315/377-XXXX

Report of the Faculty  
Date: April 1, 1986  
To: Senate  
From: Faculty  
Subject: Canadian Studies  
Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Fred Powell, Chairman  
Senate Undergraduate Curriculum Committee  
SUNY College at Brockport  
Campus

Dear Fred:

Several questions concerning the Canadian Studies minor arose during my discussion with you and your committee last Thursday. I promised to respond to these questions as soon as possible and below are these responses.

1. The advisement will be done by the director.
2. No specific sequence will be required but the student will be strongly encouraged to take PLS 343, FRN 417, and HST 331; students will also be encouraged to take FRN 303.
3. The current classes on Canadian topics have averaged 15-20 students.
4. The director of this program will be appointed by the administration; the person appointed will be a volunteer in every sense of the word.

I hope these responses are helpful; I am prepared to continue our discussions on Thursday, April 3, 1986.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Walt*

Walter M. Boston

bp

Distribution: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received by the Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

