Polemic

Recent e-mails concerning the nature of Kinesiology disturbed me and I hesitated at the time to become involved. I decided, however, that the newsletter is an appropriate vehicle in which to respond.

We are a multidisciplinary school with (by my count) 25 faculty members. It is not surprising that there should be significant differences in our view of our academic milieu. In my opinion, the single most important event within our School in the last few years is that we all, unanimously, approved a Mission Statement and definition of our program. That is, we all agreed that, with the current definition and Mission Statement, we were comfortable calling ourselves Kinesiologists. Those with backgrounds in kinesiology, physical education, medicine, biophysics, psychology, physiology, anatomy, biochemistry, engineering and education could agree that we all share an interest and are satisfied to be under the umbrella of what we call kinesiology.

If we are to remain a healthy multi-disciplinary department, then we cannot marginalize, ostracize or denigrate any component of our discipline. Tolerance for and acceptance of different approaches to the study of human structure and function seem to me the only way that such an eclectic body can survive. Surely when we look at our own achievements we can have respect for success in many different academic fields. I don’t want to generate hard feelings by failing to list everyone’s accomplishments, but over the last six months we have had 3 grants awarded of over $700,000 – one in behavioural aspects of virtual and augmented environments for surgery, one in diabetes research and one in the neurophysiological aspects of behaviour in Down Syndrome. When taken in conjunction with all the other successes, this is first-rate multidisciplinary research productivity. To start arguing that one is more “kinesiological” than another does not seem to me to be a valuable exercise.

I think I am prepared to accept that the balance between the various orientations to kinesiology will always be a source of disagreement and discussion. Piloting a route through those discussions is one of the intellectual challenges of directorship. However, I urge everyone to review our definition of kinesiology, to re-affirm that it is what we do and who we are and to recognize that it also includes those with approaches, skills and goals very different from our own.

John Dickinson

The Human Motor Systems Lab has had a number of presentations accepted for this year’s North American Society for Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity Meeting. They are: “Remote Manipulation Using Tongs,” by JENNIFER IBBOTSON, CHRISTINE MACKENZIE and ANDREA MASON, “Prehensile and Bimanual Coordination in Give and Take Protocols,” by ANDREA MASON and CHRISTINE MACKENZIE, “Coordination During a Combined Locomotion/Prehension Task,” by CHRIS BERTRAM, RON MARTENIUK, and MICHELLE WYMER, and finally, “The Role of Vision in Prehension,” by MICHELLE WYMER, RON MARTENIUK and CHRIS BERTRAM.

The Human Motor Systems Lab also attended the ASI Exchange this week, with presentations by REGAN MANDRYK, “Virtual Environments for the Future,” ANDREA MASON and JENNIFER IBBOTSON, “How should we augment environments for human activities?”
and REGAN MANDRYK with “Endoscopic Surgery: How primitive is our current technology and where do we go from here?” YANQING WANG also presented, “Can we simultaneously transport and orient an object in virtual reality?” Congratulations to these graduate students. All of their posters received a Graduate Student Communication Award.

YANQING WANG also presented, “Can we simultaneously transport and orient an object in virtual reality?” Congratulations to these graduate students. All of their posters received a Graduate Student Communication Award.


DIANE FINEGOOD was invited to give a lecture at the Institute for Mathematics and it’s Applications Workshop. Her paper was entitled, “Endocrinology: Mechanism of Hormone Secretion and Control.” She subsequently presented an additional lecture on “Investigating beta cell mass dynamics with a mass balance model.” At the same meeting graduate student BRIAN TOPP was an author of “The beta cell mass insulin and glucose model: pathways to diabetes.” The lecture was presented by the UBC collaborator, Robert Miura. Meeting was held in Minneapolis and was also attended by graduate student CHERYL MCDONALD.

The BC Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology has approved an award to Simon Fraser University in the amount of $113,201 from the BC Knowledge Development Fund to be used for infrastructure costs associated with the Environmental and Aerospace Physiology Lab. This grant constitutes a portion of matching funding required towards ANDREW BLABER’s Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) Project #736.

JEAN FREMONT has recently authored Nutrition Resources Guidebook With Web Links, 2nd edition, which is now available in the SFU Library. It contains 280 pages, 70% of which is new material, documenting electronic and print-based resources in food, food safety, applied human nutrition and dietetics.

DAN WEEKS has recently had a publication accepted in Experimental Brain Research titled, “Hand deviations towards distractors: indirect evidence for attention centering around the anatomical origin of the effector.” Dan has also been appointed to the Editorial Board of the Behaviour Research Methods, Instruments and Computers Journal published by the Psychonomics Society. Last week, Dan was also a judge at the Science Fair at Senator Reid Elementary School.

DAN WEEKS and HAL WEINBERG have been working closely together in recent years and have now decided to merge their laboratories. This realignment reflects their common interest in the application of neurophysiology, behavioural and psycho-physiological methodologies to better understand the interaction of brain function, cognitive and motor function. The laboratory will also develop methodologies to apply theory to applications in human factors, both for normal and pathological human function including cognitive and motor performance, cognitive rehabilitation and human-machine interaction. They anticipate new opportunities for equipment and research funding to result from the reorganization. The former Human Factors Laboratory and the Brain-Behaviour Laboratory, both in the School of Kinesiology, have been renamed the Brain-Behaviour and Human Engineering Lab (BBHE)

JIM MORRISON attended an Executive Council meeting of the Human Factors Association of Canada in Montreal on 6-7th March. The Association voted to change its name to "Association of Canadian Ergonomists" effective May 3rd. The 31st Annual Meeting is to be held in Hull, Quebec, October 13-15th, 1999. Themes include Transportation Ergonomics, Accident Investigation, and Injury Prevention in Manual Handling Tasks.

A workshop on "The ergonomics of upper limb musculoskeletal disorders" is planned for April 29-30th, at Harbour Centre. The workshop is sponsored jointly by Kinesiology, HFAC and BCAK. This workshop was offered last October and was fully subscribed. Further information is available from JIM MORRISON (jmorriso@sfu.ca)

Kinesiology Student Symposium
The Human Factors Association of Canada invites all senior SFU Kinesiology students to present their course projects, directed studies or other research papers to an audience of HFAC and BCAK members. This is an excellent opportunity to promote yourself and your work, and to demonstrate your presentation skills, to potential employers! It is also a rare and opportune
forum to practice public speaking and receive some constructive feedback on your work.

The Symposium will take place Tuesday evening, June 1st at a location to be determined. There will be an informal meeting and wine & cheese to follow.

All interested students should contact one of the HFAC student representatives by e-mail or telephone: Annie Brisbois brisbois@sfu.ca 731-3777 or Don Carmichael dbc@sfu.ca 570-0193. Please give your name, e-mail address or telephone number, and the title and topic of your research.

Human Factors meeting: The next meeting of HFAC-BC will be held at: Health Care Benefit Trust, #200 - 1333 W Broadway (& Birch) 7:00 pm., Wed. April 7th, Topic: "Study of the design of Xray equipment" Speaker: Andre Russo, (Health Care Benefit Trust).

For those of you who haven’t seen it, I recommend that you take a look at the Maclean’s magazine of February 22nd which features a cover article on prostate cancer with significant coverage of the extent to which CRAIG ASMUNDSON has been involved in generating awareness of this disease.

SUCCESSFUL DEFENCES

LIQUN ZU

Ontogeny of Myocardial Excitation-Contraction Coupling

March 5th at 2:30 p.m. in ASB 9896

PENDING DEFENCES

WILLIAM RANDALL

One-Trial Motor Learning

March 19th at 1:00 p.m. in ASB 9896

SEMINARS

Dr. Javad Dargahi of the Biomedical Robotics and Manufacturing Group at SFU will speak on: “A Micromachined piezoelectric tactile sensor for use in endoscopic grasper.”

Tuesday, March 16th, 1999

11:30 a.m. in ASB 9896.

Dr. Kenneth W. Spitzer, Professor of Physiology, University of Utah spoke on, “Electrotonic interactions between purkinje and ventricular cells,” on March 4th.

WCB: The Worksafe Workshop to be held on April 10th covers topics dealing with the new 1998 WCB Regulations and how they affect you, including:

- Are you liable? • What are the costs of mistakes?
- Regulation fundamentals made simple
  • What does it mean? • Translate the jargon. • What are you responsible for? • Is it healthy and safe to work at your place? • What should you be inspecting at your workplace? • Dealing with accidents and injuries. • How do you deal with the paperwork.
- Ergonomics
  • Chronic and acute back pain • Strength and posture • How to design a workstation • Repetitive lifting.
- Are you ready for an emergency?
  • Do it yourself risk assessment: an easy check list to follow.
  • Are your employees prepared? Call 291-5160 to register.

ICBC: The BEST PRACTICES: Effective Strategies for Preventing and Monitoring Stress During the Rehabilitation Process workshops will be held April 17-18, 1999. This conference examines the impact stress has on the rehabilitation process and strategies for mitigating its effect, and provides tools for dealing with stress in the workplace. Call 291-4904 to register.

G & T LOUIE CENTRE WORKSHOPS

WCB: The Worksafe Workshop to be held on April 10th covers topics dealing with the new 1998 WCB Regulations and how they affect you, including:

The new regulation package
- Why the 4 books? • Why change? • Who does it apply to?

Please submit your news items to: dickinso@sfu.ca / lazaro@sfu.ca