20th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour and Cognitive Science

Dalhousie and Saint Mary's Universities
Halifax, Nova Scotia
June 11-13, 2010

Conference Report

2010 Program:

Donald O. Hebb Lecture – Given by Colin McLeod
President's Symposium – organized by Robert Sutherland (4 papers)
Symposia: 5 other symposia
Paper sessions: 18
Poster sessions: 2
Papers presented orally, including symposia: 124
Posters: 162
Total scientific presentations: 286

Registration etc.:

Pre-registration: 302 people used the web site to pre-register (not all paid)
On-site registrations: ~45 more individuals registered/paid at the conference
Total Registration: ~347
Programs printed: 358
T-shirts ordered: 75
T-Shirts sold & given to helpers: 65
Banquet tickets purchased and given to helpers: 115

Awards:

Donald O. Hebb Award winner: Colin McLeod, University of Toronto
Richard Tees Award winner: Michael Masson, University of Victoria
Donald O. Hebb Graduate Student Award winners:
    Best Paper: Jonathan Fawcett (Dalhousie University)
    Runner Up: Peter Jansen (McMaster)
    Best Poster: Judy Ann Prasad (McGill)
    Runners Up: Jeremy Hogeveen (Wilfrid Laurier), Edward Wilson (McGill)
Graduate Student Award Committee:
Nathan Crowder, Jason Ivanoff, Debbie Kelly, Bruce Milliken, Aaron Newman, Leslie Phillmore, Jean St. Aubin

Conference web site: Trudy Shore, MohSho Multimedia

Conference organizers:
Raymond Klein and Leslie Phillmore (co-chairs), Jason Ivanoff, Nicole Conrad, Chelsea Quinlan, Aaron Newman, Nathan Crowder, Shannon Johnson, Cindy Hamon-Hill, Jonathan Fawcett, Heath Matheson, Michael Wong

Student Helpers:
Tim O’Leary, Kate Thompson, Jenn Richards, Terese Chevalier, Laura Goodman, Amanda Hudson, Jillian Filliter, Jeff MacLeod, Yoko Ishigami, Nicole White, Heather Phelan, Anne Brochu, Lisa Verge, Chelsea Denaro, Lori Bowden, Sean Roach, Michael Sond, Michael Lawrence, Cindy Hamon-Hill, Heath Matheson, Jonathan Fawcett.

Other Assistance:
Alison Martin
Rahia Mashoodh
Christopher Dean
Patti Dill

Sponsors:
Dalhousie University
Saint Mary’s University
Pearson Canada
## Budget

### Expenses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artwork, printing, program, signage, abstracts</td>
<td>$6,431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swag (Bags, notebooks, mugs)</td>
<td>$3,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-Shirts</td>
<td>$285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch (space, food, AV)</td>
<td>$4,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquet (decorations, security, food, wine, etc.)</td>
<td>$3,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks &amp; drinks</td>
<td>$6,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space for talks (plus security &amp; custodial)</td>
<td>$3,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reimbursement to Helpers</td>
<td>$460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posterboards, tables, chairs</td>
<td>$2,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Ahead Events (Event coordination, entertainment, engraving)</td>
<td>$4,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$36,091</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*As invoiced. We are being reimbursed some portion of the HST we were charged by vendors. Hence in the end the total expenses should be considerably less than the total shown here.

### Revenues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registrations</td>
<td>$22,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquets</td>
<td>$4,120</td>
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<tr>
<td>T-Shirts</td>
<td>$880</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advertisements</td>
<td>$250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearson Canada Sponsorship</td>
<td>$800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dalhousie University (VP, Science, Psych)</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Mary’s University*</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$36,390</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Saint Mary's contribution (to the Banquet) was paid directly to Aramark Catering and this payment did not go through the Dalhousie BBCS Conference Account.

Notes on the Budget: All receipts collected from registrants (registrations, banquet tickets, T-shirts) were deposited with BBCS. The total generated from these sources ($27,840) reported above is at least approximately correct. BBCS has advanced us $25,000 which, together with the $7,050 we received from Dalhousie, Pearson and advertisements, we have used to cover expenses. Depending on how much we re-coop from HST rebates we may not require any more of the revenues generated by the conference remaining in the BBCS coffers. In that case it can be reckoned that the conference generated a surplus of almost $3,000 for BBCS.
Notes for future conferences

What worked:

1. Clear signage – very clear directing to buildings in combo with map
2. Hiring a professional conference organizer to keep details from falling though cracks, doing some jobs (especially getting the initial program document), and being on site
3. Swag – e.g., travel mugs to reduce cost of mugs/use of throw away mugs at coffee breaks; notepads
4. Motivated & well-trained student volunteers (were given t-shirts & free banquet)
5. The food at "nutrition breaks" – fruit, mini muffins
6. Having a bit of food and entertainment at the opening reception
7. Having two poster sessions instead of one; hence there were not too many posters to see in a given session
8. Having bags stuffed at registration (all the same) and t-shirt/banquet/drink tickets in nametags (different because only some registrants pre-paid for the t-shirts and banquet)
9. At least one on site person to “run the show” – av, troubleshooting, answering questions in addition to a professional, hired, conference manager
10. The NSERC lunch – Members liked having a group, onsite lunch that was included in registration and a talk on changes at NSERC. Other agencies or pressing issues could be covered at future lunches
11. The banquet, although we debated whether to hold one, was a success – we ordered more than the pre-sold, and people were searching for tickets by Sunday afternoon. Remember to include extra tickets for the student Hebb Prize winners before you include extra for on-site sale.
12. Having all the Hebb-prize posters on the first day and all the Hebb-prize talks done as early in the conference as possible. This allowed the Hebb Prize Committee to make its selection by lunchtime on Sunday.
13. Volunteers had clear instructions on how to moderate, and were clearly instructed to keep talks on time, and told that they would have the support of the audience for doing this, even if the speaker wasn’t happy. Use a noise to indicate 5 min left – e.g. a knock, rather than hand waving that was not always seen.

What did not work:

1. Interface with conference website
   a. Slow site
   b. Not user friendly – difficult to tell intuitively where things were, going “back” to previous page not easy, links “back” were not proper links, root menus not make things easier
   c. Accepting papers took 2 people 2 days
   d. Downloading titles, authors, abstracts extremely large job and slow requiring inordinate number of hours to produce program and correct errors
i. Author "audit" was required because some first authors were randomly omitted
ii. Special characters (accents; quotes) not translated
iii. Not easy to put affiliations
iv. Formatting took separate amount of time
e. It was not clear when it was Trudy’s job to do something and when it was our job to do something. Some jobs that appeared difficult or impossible might have been less difficult or possible if an expert user of the system was more involved
f. Some confusion with registrants:
   i. If one "registered" with BBCS (updated membership or joined) it was not clear they hadn’t registered for conference
   ii. How to use paypal with a credit card rather than a paypal account was not clear
2. Conference services were not as helpful as they could have been (Dalhousie specific)
3. Buffet lunch ran out of main course before all people served themselves – have a server or choose something that is portioned rather than stir fry

Things to remember:

1. The program will take longer to produce and print than you think
2. There were many last minute requests to change the program (move posters; add authors; withdraw presentation). We tried to accommodate all of these, but there has to be a "point of no return". Check with the printer to determine when this is.
3. There will be an unknown number of last minute registrations. Hence, when you place your order, ask "How long will it take to get an extra 50 or so programs printed at the last minute".
4. Check with your campus about rules on indoor and outdoor signage (e.g. can you tape signs on walls? Do you need the university logo on your outdoor signs?)
5. Computer labs may not be open on weekends – you may have to hire an attendant to be there – advance notice may be required to have it open and find someone to staff it
6. Security may need to be notified to open rooms/buildings early for you to set up on a weekend – they may also need to be reminded even if notice has been sent
7. Check all details on quotes – start times, numbers ordered, etc to avoid mixups and miscommunications
8. Make sure all rooms have the a/v you need - not everyone brings their own
9. Consult with CCDP, who in the past have met at the CPA venue, but this year met "with" us in Halifax.
10. The Executive will need a meeting space the day before the meeting