



Officers Mess, Canadian Forces College Toronto.

ACADEMICS 101: AN INTRODUCTION FOR THE MILITARY COMMUNITY*

by Adam Chapnick and Barbara Falk

Introduction

After three years of teaching at the Canadian Forces College (CFC),¹ we have realized that there is an uncomfortable divide between academics and members of the Canadian Forces (CF) that every so often leads to miscommunication and unnecessary misunderstandings. At its core, we believe, the problem is that members of the CF have little knowledge of what it is Canadian (and, indeed, North American) academics do when we are not in the classroom.² Both sides deserve some blame for this situation. Even though the CF values higher education and mandates that its leaders develop first-rate critical and strategic thinking skills, its members – professionals who typically pride themselves on understanding their operating environment – have rarely taken the time to learn about the academic world in which they will develop many of those skills. Similarly, the academic community – which preaches the importance of shared learning experiences and mutual understanding – has made little effort to introduce itself to the CF comprehensively, using language and examples that resonate with this unique audience.

As academics who contribute to professional military education, we *can* and *should* do more to understand the many backgrounds, occupations, experiences, and service environments of our students. Here, however, we intend to provide

the Canadian Forces and its supporters with a basic sketch of Canadian academics and our roles in society.

In doing so, we will answer eight fundamental questions: (1) How are we educated? (2) What kind of jobs do we have? (3) Why do so many of us work in universities? (4) How do we get hired at universities? (5) What are our university ranks and what do they mean? (6) What do we do with our time? (7) What does a “typical” academic day look like? And (8) Why should we matter to the military and how should you deal with us?

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Questions and Answers

To begin, a working definition: *Academics are educated professionals who create scholarship, or new knowledge, for the benefit of society.*

1. How are we educated?

The vast majority of academics have completed at least three university degrees: bachelors, masters (includes MBA), and PhD.³ This is particularly true of university professors, although there are exceptions. Policy practitioners who might lack some of the formal education, for example, can be offered university appointments, and might evolve to become academics. Sometimes they obtain PhDs in the process. Similarly, employees of community colleges or think tanks might have other qualifications (for instance, practical experience or particular methodological expertise – perhaps in statistics) that make a PhD unnecessary to the fulfillment of their academic duties.

A bachelor's degree introduces students to the academic process (potentially including basic analytical, critical thinking, and writing skills; laboratory training; preliminary research experience; and so on.) A master's degree provides a breadth of knowledge across a particular discipline – for example, War Studies. It is fairly similar to the later years of a bachelors program, only the expectations placed upon the students are significantly higher. A PhD is markedly different. The focus is upon original and independent research that results in the publication of new scholarship. Graduates of PhD programs should be among the world's experts in their particular area of research.

2. What kind of jobs do we have?

We have already referred to the two most common academic jobs: university professor and research associate or analyst, which is our typical role in 'think tanks' and in the public sector. But academics also do other things. Prime Minister Stephen Harper's first Chief of Staff, Ian Brodie, is a former professor of political science at the University of Western Ontario.⁴ John Ralston Saul and Margaret MacMillan are best known as writers and public intellectuals. However, both have earned PhDs. Some academics 'cross over' into public life and are well known for their commentary in the mainstream media as experts, exemplified by Janice Stein of the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto. Others, after long and prestigious academic careers, use their retirement to focus upon public policy and service. Since he left York University, for example, historian Jack Granatstein has written extensively on the future of the Canadian

military, and was a driving force behind the revitalization of the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa and its move to a new location. Many academics teach or have taught at community colleges. Others have jobs within government, the broader public sector, and private industry. Urban planners often double as municipal government advisors. Historians consult for film producers (to make sure, for example, that their costumes properly reflect the historical setting), while anthropologists are sought after by executives in transnational corporations relocating to other countries. Rhetoricians teach public speaking and presentation skills in the corporate sector. Medical experts consult for the pharmaceutical industry.

For the purposes of the remainder of this article, however, we will focus upon university professors and their related activities.

3. Why do so many of us work at universities?

Academics that choose to teach at universities generally have at least one of two passions: independent research and/or teaching 'the best and the brightest.'

Universities offer us a venue that encourages, and indeed *funds*, our research projects. Affiliation with a reputable academic institution makes it easier for us to identify fellow scholars with similar interests, and to organize projects and meetings to share, compare, and build upon each other's research findings. Some researchers enjoy teaching; others much prefer to be in the field, in their labs, or in their offices, and view teaching as a necessary duty. They might still be outstanding teachers – academics take their responsibilities as seriously as any other professionals – but their hearts lie with their research. They are most likely to be found at the major research universities (the University of Toronto, McGill, the University of British Columbia) as well as at the think tanks, such as the Conference Board of Canada or the C.D. Howe Institute.



A cadet and his professor, Royal Military College of Canada (RMC).

DND (RMC) photo 2007-03-13 144616.

Although the teachers generally have the same research training and expertise, they choose to work at universities and other post-secondary institutions because of their passion for the classroom. Their students provide them with learning – as opposed to research – companions, and they relish the mentorship opportunities that come with their positions as professors. Again, these individuals might well be outstanding researchers – there is truth to the argument that good research informs good teaching and vice-versa – but their real joy comes from contact with their students more than from the results of their latest independent project. They are more likely to be found at the smaller undergraduate universities and at community colleges.

The ideal university model is what we call teaching-inspired research. This is evident when talented scholars bring their passion and new knowledge into the classroom in ways that textbooks cannot accomplish. It should not come as a surprise that many – although admittedly not *all* – leading researchers are also first-rate classroom teachers.

4. How do we get hired at universities?

Competition for academic jobs is intense. There were over 140 applicants for the four positions that we contested at the CFC in 2006. Selection committees that are forced to choose from among hundreds of applicants, not only from Canada but from universities around the world, are not uncommon. Canadian universities have an excellent international reputation. Four top Canadian schools regularly appear in Shanghai Jiao Tong University Index, which ranks the top 100 universities in the world.

The process of applying for an academic position is tedious. Typically, applicants submit a one-to-two page cover letter, a one-to-two page summary of their research interests, a one-to-two page summary of their teaching philosophy or a longer teaching dossier, a lengthy *curriculum vitae* (resume), sample publications, and up to three letters of reference from senior colleagues and experts. Selection committees from the department seeking a new member then pare down their list of candidates to three or four, who are invited to campus for a formal interview.

That process can be as short as three hours, or as long as three days. Candidates will often be asked to give a research presentation, to offer a guest lecture in a real class, and to attend a series of meetings and social events with department members, graduate students, student leaders, and administrators.

Committees make their final decision, based upon a set of pre-determined criteria. These often include: the applicant's research and teaching interests; publication record; scholarly potential; compatibility with the personalities within the department; and/or ability to fulfill particular departmental needs (be they teaching-, research-, or service-related).

5. What are our university ranks and what do they mean?

There are two basic streams for university academics: tenure and non-tenure.

Tenure, which basically means permanent or indeterminate status, is most academics' ultimate goal. Tenure provides researchers in particular with the freedom to publish what they want without fear that their employer will terminate them because their findings are controversial. At the CFC, for example, tenure means that professors do not have to shape their books and articles to please the Department of National Defence. At a civilian institution, academics who study effective business practices can criticize the labour policies of their employer without fear of retribution.⁵

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Critics who deride tenure as a lifetime of unaccountable employment are being unfair. Tenured faculty must be professional and accountable, and respect university policies and labour and employment laws. Although the examples are not plentiful (largely, we would argue, because of the rigours of the hiring process), there are documented cases of Canadian academics being dismissed from tenured, or tenure-stream positions.

Tenured professors are generally eligible for sabbaticals – six or 12 month periods during which they have no teaching or administrative responsibilities – once every seven years. These sabbaticals are not holidays; rather, they are designed to provide us with the time necessary to complete major research (that might involve extensive travel, for example), or to write up our findings in book form (our most recent books are both over 120,000 words long, plus footnotes). The new scholarship often forms the basis of new courses and lectures that we present at our institutions upon our return.

Sabbaticals are not guaranteed, nor are they paid holidays. Professors must apply for them and include a thorough research plan. When our sabbaticals end, we must submit a detailed report outlining our progress. Future sabbaticals are granted, in part, based upon the success of previous sabbaticals. At RMC, sabbaticants must also sign a ‘return to service’ agreement, a contractual obligation that requires signatories to return to work the following year, or to pay back the salary earned while on sabbatical.

Non-tenured academics, who are often referred to as sessionals, are contract workers.⁶ They might be employed to teach a single course, to teach a series of courses over a single year, or to teach for a defined number of years (perhaps as a replacement for a tenured or tenure-stream professor who is away on sabbatical). Because of the insecure nature of their employment, they are more likely to be teaching courses outside their areas of expertise (they will accept whatever position is available), and are less likely to be researching extensively (the time it takes to develop new courses, especially outside one's area of expertise, takes away from the time to

do research). Most of them, particularly the younger ones, will be applying for permanent jobs during their contracts. Others continue to teach as a second, part-time job because of their passion for the work or their interest in maintaining ties with the academic world. They are sometimes referred to as 'adjunct' professors.

are cases in which particularly notable sessionals will be ranked higher.

Most tenure-stream academics begin as assistant professors. After anywhere from one to seven years (depending upon their previous experience and the policies of their employing institution), they are considered for tenure. Usually at about the same time, they are also considered for promotion to associate professor. At many institutions, the processes are combined. Both tenure and promotion to associate are typically based upon excellence in research, and at least satisfactory performance in both teaching and service. We will discuss all three of these areas in our next section. Typically, associates can apply for promotion to full professor after at least five more years of service. In most institutions, full professors must be acknowledged research leaders in their field, with an extensive publication record to prove it.⁹



An intent student.

There are sizeable discrepancies in compensation between tenured and non-tenured academics which is, in turn, a source of considerable friction at many Canadian universities. Sometimes academics with completed PhDs (commonly known as postdoctoral scholars or fellows) can work for years before obtaining a coveted tenure-stream position, and many never do find permanent employment. Increasingly, both universities and colleges rely upon non-tenured contract faculty for the bulk of undergraduate teaching.⁷ This approach saves the institutions money, but it can deprive students from exposure to some of the leading academics in their fields of interest. At the same time, because obtaining a permanent position has become so challenging, many sessional instructors today are not only experienced and capable teachers, but are also accomplished scholars with stellar publication records.

In spite of the tension between tenured and non-tenured faculty, rank is much less important among academics than it is in the military, and is not a reliable indicator of how we are perceived in our respective fields. There are four basic ranks: instructor / lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor.⁸

Non-tenured professors, including graduate students and the majority of sessionals, are typically granted the title of instructor or lecturer. Tenure-stream professors who do not yet hold a PhD might also be assigned this rank. More senior sessionals, and particularly those on longer-term contracts, might be classified as assistant professors, and there

Some tenured academics will never proceed past the rank of associate. Those who move on to administrative positions early in their career often do so before they have developed the research profile necessary to progress any further. Others choose to concentrate upon improving their teaching at the expense of their research output in institutions that do not reward teaching as generously as they do research. Although some academics might frown upon 'career associates,' most do not think any less of their colleagues for their professional choices. Moreover, unlike the situation with respect to military service, in the academic world, one's rank is hardly ever mentioned, nor is it revealed by insignia on a uniform. One's discipline and affiliation are the primary markers of one's scholarly identity, and they too are only immediately apparent to those who already know an individual.

6. What do we do with our time?

An academic's time is typically divided between research [at the Royal Military College of Canada, 40 percent), teaching (40 percent), and service (20 percent)].

Before we go any further, it is crucial to recognize that 60 percent of an academic's responsibilities therefore do not respond directly to what would typically be considered teaching-related activities. Time between academic years or semesters, whether the eight weeks at the Canadian Forces College, or the four months at the Royal Military College of Canada and most other Canadian universities, is not a holiday. Rather, it is an opportunity for us to concentrate more seriously upon

our responsibilities outside the classroom. Moreover, many of the following duties do not require the academic to be on campus, which explains why some of us – who prefer to work from home – could well be in our campus offices much less often than someone without a clear understanding of the academic system might expect.

Research

While 100 researchers will provide 100 definitions of research, what is important for our purposes is how it is evaluated and measured. In the academic world, one's research output is judged primarily by one's community of peers, and it is measured largely by a combination of publications and grant achievements. Although *quantity* matters – you must demonstrate continued active and productive engagement in your field – *quality* is critical. Books published by well-respected academic publishers and lead articles in well-respected peer-reviewed academic journals are the most prestigious because they have been evaluated by experts in the field and deemed worthy of further dissemination. They become even more highly regarded if they are referred to regularly in other publications. Articles published in less prestigious, but still peer-reviewed, journals likely place second. Magazine articles, opinion editorials, and book reviews reach a much broader audience than the traditional scholarly publications, but because they are not subject to the same level of peer scrutiny, they are not accorded nearly as much respect by the academic community.¹⁰ The respectability of on-line publishing varies by discipline (some science journals no longer publish print versions at all, whereas, with respect to history, the pure on-line journals have yet to achieve the same level of respectability as the traditional printed publications).

In addition to publishing, academics get credit for presenting their work, and thereby sharing new knowledge, in open forums. These presentations typically take place at conferences – originally designed as a venue to present and receive feedback on new and in-progress research – as well as at workshops and through public lectures. Once again, academic conferences that peer review all proposals (and accept a limited number) are the most prestigious. Events to which academics are invited to speak also receive some degree of credit because they are a sign of the scholar's national or international reputation. Again, confer-

ence presentations and related work are not as valuable to an academic as are traditional publications. Nevertheless, conferences provide important opportunities for collaborating academics, often located over several continents, to conduct research meetings, to dialogue with publishers, and to organize new research teams and proposals.

An academic's success in generating research funding is also widely considered a professional indicator of ability. Although major grants are more important in the sciences and engineering where the money is needed to buy expensive equipment and to staff labs, professors in the humanities and social sciences are also expected to apply for funding to support research efforts that require student assistance or extensive travel. In some fields, the size of the grant is critical to its significance. In most, however, the key indicator of the grant's value is the nature of the process that led to its reward. In other words, money obtained from an academic agency that uses a rigorous peer review process to evaluate the quality of proposals again reigns supreme.

Teaching

Just like researchers, 100 teachers will provide at least 100 definitions of teaching. For our purposes, the key is that it involves students and a real (or virtual) classroom. With this thought in mind, the idea of teaching is broader

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The thin red line. Cadets march in front of the Mackenzie Building, RMC.

than just giving lectures, leading labs and seminars, and marking. Course design, which includes selecting readings and developing course policies and class assignments, is a critical part of the teaching process that can often, especially in the first year of a course, take up more time than the actual classroom responsibilities. Teaching also involves

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correspondence with students outside class hours in person, by telephone, or electronically. It includes revising courses in light of self-reflection and student feedback. It means sitting on student PhD committees (internal or external to one's home institution) and supervising masters' research projects and independent studies. And it encompasses bureaucratic processes such as submitting grades, dealing with appeals, working and coordinating with co-teachers or teaching assistants, and website development.

Creating a one-hour undergraduate university lecture from scratch typically takes six to eight hours if one is already a specialist in the field, and more if one is not. This does not necessarily include supplementary reading, rehearsing, or developing the slides or other audiovisual resources that might go along with a presentation.

Similarly, preparing a seminar for the first time will likely take the professor – who is responsible not only for the conduct of the discussion, but also for the student assessments that might accompany it – twice as long as it will take the student, even though both will be asked to read the same material in advance.

Standard temporal allotments for marking include 10 to 15 minutes for a short test (including logging the results and responding to student concerns after-the-fact), 30 to 45 minutes for a two-to-three hour exam, an hour for papers that are less than 4000 words long, and as many as six to eight hours to provide feedback on a comprehensive chapter or section of a graduate thesis.

Developing a new course from scratch – either lecture- or seminar-based – will often take 60 to 100 hours. The efforts will include selecting all of the readings; developing and refining course objectives, expected learning outcomes, and assessment strategies; assembling a course website and any other relevant technology; and fulfilling any administrative-related responsibilities.

Service

Because universities are largely self-governing institutions, and because the idea of peer review is so important to the academic community, a significant portion of a professor's time is dedicated to what are called service-related activities.

Service can be divided into two main categories: (1) departmental and institutional obligations, and (2) community and public duties.

Departmental obligations include attending weekly, biweekly, or perhaps monthly departmental meetings, or sit-

ting on departmental committees (for example, a committee on tenure and promotion, curriculum development, or academic appeals). Institutional obligations might include service on a university-wide task force or committee (for example, a search for a new dean), or representing the university at a student recruitment session.

Community and public duties include speaking at local events, sitting on advisory boards, and serving as an external reviewer for journals or granting organizations.

Although service obligations are genuinely embraced by a select few academics, the majority accept them as a necessary constraint on their time.

7. What does a “typical” academic day look like?

As is the case in the military, there is no such thing as a typical academic day. We will therefore describe three ‘typical/atypical’ days (one for a teaching academic, one for someone doing research, and one for an academic administrator), based upon our own personal experiences.

Our first example is taken from Dr. Chapnick's memories of teaching in the National Security Programme (NSP) at the Canadian Forces College during the fall term of 2008-2009. At the time, he was teaching two courses: DS 579: Critical Thinking and Writing in a Canadian Context (a course for the international students for whom English was an additional language) and DS 572: Canadian Government and Decision-making in a Strategic Context:

‘I left my home at about 0620 hours with two newspapers in hand. I read them on the bus and subway and arrived at the College at about 0715. I turned on my computer and began to check my email. Among the messages were summaries of four list-serve discussions to which I subscribe (discussion groups focusing on diplomatic history, Canadian history, political science, and teaching in higher

education), two replies from students in DS 572 about their upcoming in-class presentations, and a note from a journal editor requesting that I complete a book review. At about 0745 I began to review the material for the 0830 DS 579 seminar. Although I had done the readings carefully on Friday, because it was now Monday, it was important to skim again. The class ran from 0830 until 1030 after which I met with one of the students in my office to discuss his work. At about 1100 I rechecked my email. Among the messages this time were news headlines from two Canadian papers, a summary of comments from another teaching-list serve, a request to attend a meeting within the College about the future of the National Security Programme, and correspondence from a colleague about a conference we will be coordinating in the fall. By 1130, after making notes about how to improve today's DS 579 class for next time, I was reading and commenting on the six short papers submitted that day by my DS 579 students.

After about an hour, I picked up the current issue of one of the academic journals to which I subscribe and began lunch. I noticed an article that might be suitable for the Joint Command and Staff Programme and emailed the Chair and Deputy Chair of the CFC's Department of Security and International Affairs to let them know that they should read it. When lunch was over, I finished reviewing the short DS 579 papers and emailed the students letting them know that they were welcome to stop by to discuss their work any time this week. I then left the office and wandered down the hall to see a colleague and clear my head. As usual, we ended up discussing work.

When I returned to my office, I took out the readings for DS 572 and prepared for the next day. I

left the office at about 1645 with the same academic journal that I had been reading at lunch. I arrived home at around 1730. Unlike other academics, because I spend so many hours in the office during the week, I typically do not check my email or read for work once I get home. So at 1730, my day was over.'

Our second example takes place during one of Dr. Chapnick's 'research days.' Unlike many academics, he prefers to do his research in his work office. Nonetheless, apart from the additional commuting time, there should not be too many differences between his experience and that of a scholar who is working from home. This particular day took place while "Academics 101" was being written and revised.

Since this account begins the same way as the last one, we will start at 0745 hours:

'I read through Dr. Falk's most recent revisions of our proposed article on academics and began to revise by hand (I still do my best editing working pencil to paper). After about 90 minutes I reached section seven, the typical day. At that point, I was mentally tired so I began inputting the changes electronically – a much less demanding task. By the time I had finished inputting the changes I was fresher and turned to drafting section seven. Because I had been working through these ideas in my head the night before, the writing came quickly. After about an hour, a first draft of section seven was finished. Section eight looked like a lot of work, so I put it away for later.

I went back to my email to deal with a message from a conference organizer who needed a brief biography for his promotional material. He advised me that he would be able to pay for some of my expenses, so there will be more money left in my research budget than I had anticipated. That money will go to my research assistant (RA), who will be able to do more work on the book that Dr. (Craig) Stone and I are working on about academic writing for military personnel. I faxed my RA's completed time sheet to RMC and emailed her the good news. I then scheduled meetings with a student whose MA thesis I am supervising and confirmed with a former student that I had completed the three reference letters that he had requested.

It was now closer to 1100 hours. I moved on to historical research that I have been doing about a report on Canadian-American relations that was issued in 1965 but remains relevant today. It will likely make for a good case study for the elective that I teach in the Joint Command and Staff Programme (JCSP) and, given how little appears to have been written about it, it also has potential as an article for a historical journal. I read



The historic clock at CFC Toronto.

DND (CFC) photo.

through three of the sources that I had borrowed from the information resource centre (IRC) on a previous day and noted two sections that would make for good student readings. The sources also provided six new leads. The IRC had three of them, so I picked those up and ordered the rest through the interlibrary loan system.

Lunch was spent at my desk reading another academic journal and was followed by another email check. I had been in touch with the University of Calgary about possibly giving a presentation to graduate students looking for permanent academic work (while I will be at the conference that I mentioned two paragraphs above), and the administrative assistant confirmed her interest in my proposal. I added “creating the presentation” to my list of tasks for the week.

I turned back to Academics 101 and worked on section eight until 1400 hours. I re-read and marked up the entire manuscript once more and emailed Dr. Falk to let her know that she would get a fully revised draft the next day. I took a walk down the hall to clear my head but no one was around so I made a couple of phone calls. At about 1430, I decided to work on the graduate student presentation. I took an hour to sketch out the things that I wanted to talk about and then left the formal writing for another day.

At around 1530 one of the CFC directors stopped by to talk about a proposal that I had written as the CFC’s Deputy Director of Education that was expected to reach the Commandant later that week. That lasted until about 1615. Knowing that I couldn’t accomplish much more today, I checked my email, packed up, and was out the door with the same academic journal from lunch by 1630. I read until arriving home at about 1720.’¹¹

Our final example is taken from Dr. Falk’s experience as Director of Academics at the CFC, and Head of the Department of Defence Studies at RMC (positions that are necessarily held concurrently):

‘I began my day at the computer at 0500 hours— for two reasons: first, I write best and most clearly with no interruptions, and second because I am completing discussions by email on a chapter in a book edited by two European colleagues, who are available for an email or Skype conversation at this hour. I will not be an academic administrator forever, and my research is still extremely important to me and to my career. Before leaving the house, I drafted two work-related letters and emailed them to the Deputy Director for his consideration.



DND (RMC) photo 2010-05-21.

After arriving at work around 0800, I quickly checked my email correspondence and had a brief discussion with the Department’s administrative assistant about my calendar, an upcoming visit to RMC for a Faculty Council meeting, and her own work priorities. I sent out several emails to my academic colleagues, reminding them of an upcoming deadline for input on their Faculty Assessment Reviews (the academic equivalent to PERs). Each professor must complete a detailed list of their achievements over the last year in the teaching, research, and service categories – including recent publications, interviews with the media, outreach events, and so on. This assists the Director in completing the forms, which then must be forwarded for further comment and approval to the Dean of Arts and Principal at RMC.

I returned a few telephone calls from yesterday – one from a recent PhD graduate looking for a job, another from a university with which we are negotiating a reciprocal agreement to provide our students advanced standing in their graduate programs. I received a telephone call from a colleague at RMC regarding an upcoming departmental promotion committee and reviewed the procedures involved. We also discussed tenure review, advanced consideration toward sabbatical for recently appointed faculty, and an advertisement posted in University Affairs for two new academic positions at the CFC, to be filled in a few months time, as well as the hiring process.

In the middle of catching up with email and telephone calls, several colleagues dropped by with some quick questions. A program officer wanted to confirm academic participation on an upcoming Field Study Exercise. A planner wanted my suggestions on good speakers on Arctic security, and two of my MDS students¹² dropped by with completed drafts of their major research papers for my review (I



Aerial shot of the Royal Military College of Canada.

quickly tucked those into my briefcase to read on the train to Kingston).¹³ The CFC's Registrar dropped by to review the agenda for the Inter-College Committee (ICC)¹⁴ meeting, which will begin at 1030. Finally, a colleague at the University of Toronto phoned to inform me of some upcoming events at the university that our staff and students might be interested in attending, and asked me to chair a panel on a one-day conference on Afghanistan. I accepted, and noted all the details for further confirmation.

I attended coffee in the Armour Heights Officers' Mess, providing me with an opportunity to speak informally with my RMC colleagues prior to the commencement of our meeting. At 1030, we began formal discussions about the development of two new programs – the JCSP distance learning program, and the NSP program. Later in the meeting, I confirmed the discussions I have had with our honorary doctoral recipient, who is drafting appropriate comments for the June Convocation at CFC.

We had lunch with our RMC colleagues – not necessarily typical for me, as lunch is often at my desk, where I endeavour to catch up on reading today's International Herald-Tribune and some book reviews (from which I will invariably clip and send a few suggestions to the IRC to purchase particular volumes relevant to our programs and curricula).

The early afternoon was consumed with the weekly meeting of the senior management of the college – the Commandant's Conference. I reported on the morning's ICC meeting, the progress of this year's MDS students, the upcoming hiring process, and marks moderation of written deliverables.

After 1500 I met quickly with the Deputy Director to go over the draft letters I had sent earlier, and reviewed any conflicts in scheduling that might result in his attendance at upcoming meetings in my place. We discussed some of the details of possible degree accreditation for the new NSP, and whether a review might be required on the creation of the JCSP-DL by the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies, the regulatory authority for all graduate programs in Ontario.

At 1600, I finally had a chance to go over my mail, begin writing my own Faculty Assessment Review brief, jot down a few ideas for the book chapter that have been gelling in the back of my mind all day, and think about the organization of a panel for next year's meeting of the American Political Science Association, which will be held for the first time in Toronto. Before I realize it, it is 1730. I began to organize my desk, made a list of urgent priorities for tomorrow, and sent a few remaining emails before leaving at around 1800.'

8. Why should we matter to the military, and how should you deal with us?

We answer this last question by dividing the "us" into two groups: those of us whom the CF engages directly through institutions of professional military education (such as the CFC), and those who are involved with the CFC less directly as academics at civilian institutions.

With respect to the first "us," the answer is obvious. The CF has identified a series of academic attributes it would like members of the Canadian Forces to acquire, and we have been hired to facilitate the learning process. We do so through our writing (which often becomes student readings), our teaching and mentorship, our supervision of student theses and research projects, and our contributions to the development of the pro-

fessional military education curriculum. The better our understanding of serving members, and yours of us, the more productive and helpful we can be.

We are neither your superiors nor your inferiors. Rather, we are your partners in a collective service to Canada and Canadians. We recognize that you have skills, experience, and expertise that we do not, and, at the same time, we hope you will understand our role in enhancing your ability to function as military professionals at the most senior and strategic levels in an increasingly complex international environment.

The second level of “us” is probably less clear to most members of the CF. Our colleagues who teach at civilian institutions might not interact with you directly, but they do teach the vast majority of Canada’s young people, and an increasing number of Canadians as a whole. As a group, they know little about the military, even if a number of them will end up teaching subjects and courses that involve military history or contemporary Canadian defence and governance issues at least indirectly. We argue that you should look at them as partners as well, and that just as we are using this article to reach out to you, the CF should make every effort to reach out to them – on their terms, and in language they will understand.

In conclusion, at a time when our military has become increasingly important and part of Canadians’ lives, all of us should make the extra effort to understand one another a little bit better. We hope that this article is a first step in that direction.



Officer Cadets pose in front of the Officers Mess at the Collège militaire royal at Fort St-Jean sur Richelieu, 19 July 2007.

NOTES

1. This article was first drafted a year ago, but our message remains the same today.
2. The fact that many academics have only a limited understanding of the life of a CF member will be dealt with in a separate article.
3. In many American and an increasing number of Canadian institutions, the master’s degree is now being rolled into the PhD. As a result, an increasing number of PhD graduates will hold only two degrees.
4. Movement between the academic world and the political stage is not unique to Canada. In the United States, Samuel Huntington (now deceased), Joseph Nye, and Condoleezza Rice have all worked in both environments.
5. Both examples assume that the research meets scholarly standards of respectability.
6. We do not intend to imply that non-tenured faculty do not have the academic freedom that accompanies tenure. Officially, anyone working at an academic institution has the right to produce scholarship on any subject that they wish, as long as it is based on credible research. Academics without permanent positions, however, are more likely to shape at least the agenda of their research to meet the needs of potential employers. In other words, academics without permanent positions are probably more likely than their tenured peers to pursue research that is considered ‘topical’ to improve their marketability.
7. Graduate student education is typically the exclusive domain of more senior, tenured faculty.
8. Additional ranks, like university professor or professor emeritus, do exist at particular institutions to recognize excellence over a career, but they are not particularly important here. Similarly, some universities have instituted a teaching stream, in which the focus of tenure and promotion is on teaching excellence as opposed to research, and such streams might also have different ranks and titles.
9. When academics apply for promotion, their research achievements are typically assessed by other members of the academic community from outside their own institution. Academics that have worked with the candidate for promotion before are typically excluded from playing the role of assessor.
10. Peer review is so important to academic reputation that Canadian evidence law accepts publication in peer-reviewed journals as an important pre-condition for being a qualified ‘expert witness’ in a courtroom. ‘Novel’ or new forms of scientific evidence, or new theories in an accepted field of inquiry, must have been subject to peer-review and publication before their authors can appear as experts testifying in a legal action.
11. When we asked some of our colleagues to review this article, one of them noted that he had much more difficulty ‘taking off’ his academic hat when he worked at home. As a result, using the typical ‘9 to 5’ work day to describe the academic research experience was for him, and is for many others, misleading.
12. Faculty at the Canadian Forces College supervise anywhere from one to eight students who are completing masters of defence studies (MDS) research projects. MDS projects are typically 14,000 to 20,000 word research papers.
13. The CFC is located in Toronto, but, as the chair of RMC’s Department of Defence Studies, the CFC’s Director of Academics has responsibilities that obligate him or her to travel to the main campus in Kingston approximately twice per month.
14. The ICC includes representatives from both the CFC and RMC.

DND photo S2J007-0093 by Corporal Claude Filibotte.