



University by **Extension**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA **FACULTY OF EXTENSION** – SINCE 1912

In 1908 the first President of the University of Alberta, Dr. Henry Marshall Tory, stated in his inaugural address that “a University should be the most practical of all institutions. It should strive to find answers to the economic and social problems of common everyday people and then share its knowledge with them.”

Four years later the Department of Extension was established, its mandate being “to find out from the people what the University can do for them beyond the classroom and the laboratory.”

The First Decade

The first decade of Extension’s work established its operating principles and themes, which include:

- Representing the University to the general population;
- Responding to the needs and changes in society;
- Utilizing technology to achieve goals;
- Participating in co-operative efforts with groups and organizations.

In the early years, the Department of Extension issued press bulletins, which were sent to principals of high schools, editors of newspapers, Members of the Legislative Assembly and librarians of travelling libraries. There were usually 25 issues a year dealing mainly with subjects of interest to farmers and dwellers in rural districts, such as sewage, roads and power development.



► The travelling library was one of Extension’s earliest outreach activities.

Early Activities

At the time of Extension’s establishment, Alberta was an agriculture-based society with a mainly rural and widely scattered population of 375,000. Consequently, Extension focused its efforts on responding to the needs of the agricultural community. In 1916 the first of many conferences for rural leadership was held on campus, and in 1919, Extension hosted the first educational conferences for young people from farming communities. Co-operative projects with the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) and UFA locals, women’s institutes and literary societies were also undertaken.

Extension lectures were one of the main outreach activities. Each of the 150 lectures noted in the Department’s 1913/14 annual report drew an average audience of 100. Staff members travelled thousands of miles annually by train, car and, in some instances, horses to deliver the lectures.

Extension’s involvement with public affairs began in 1915, with the presentation of a series of discussions on the social problems of western Canadian life in Edmonton and Calgary.

The Extension Library

The Extension Library was established in 1913 and boxes of books were sent as travelling libraries to any settlement in the province on request.

The Library played an important role in supporting various programs and activities undertaken by Extension staff, such as the Department’s involvement in drama. The Library supported this by distributing scripts of plays to groups.

The organization of the Provincial High School Debating League was also supported by the Library’s resources. “Package libraries” on a variety of subjects were mailed out to debating teams so that each side could prepare its case. The most popular topics at this time were women’s suffrage, consolidation of rural schools and prohibition.

Although the price of books rose considerably from the 89 cents per volume reported in 1915, the Library continued to serve Albertans residing in areas where there was no local library, until 1987.

Educational Media

In 1915 a donation of projectors and slides from the Alberta Methodist Lantern and Slide Association gave rise to the Extension’s Division of Visual Instruction. During World War I the slide programs were on subjects ranging from the war itself to geography and history, to milk bacteria. In his report to the President of the University in 1915, A.E. Ottewell, the first Director of Extension reported that “the opportunity for visual instruction through the Department of Extension appears to be almost unlimited, and should be vigorously taken advantage of.” He then proceeded to pursue it ambitiously.

On a trip to eastern Canada in 1917 Ottewell secured a \$4,000 grant from the Goodyear Rubber Company and established the first educational film library in Canada.

Extensive use was made of the slide and film programs in extension lectures. Film viewing was a new experience for many Albertans and one way of attracting a good-sized crowd to a lecture was to announce that there would be “an extension show.”

The Twenties to World War II

The work of Extension from its inception to the end of World War II was primarily devoted to serving rural Alberta in relation to its agricultural, educational and cultural needs.

While some of the programs initiated during this period were discontinued for various reasons, including the depression and war, several trends were established:

- A consistent effort to engage in distance education activities through radio, library, audio-visual material, correspondence and home study courses.
- Utilization of the population’s interest in debating, music, art and drama to enhance social awareness and to foster leadership, the development of social skills and cultural awareness.

The Department of Extension began using radio as a medium for outreach in 1925, presenting a series of lectures on CJCA. This led to the founding of CKUA radio just 3 years later, through the efforts and initiative of Extension staff. There were many popular programs in the first decade, such as: “Citizens’ Forum” and “Science Question Box,” dramatic productions performed by the CKUA players and a variety of organ recitals and recorded music. When a new transmitter was installed a late night test elicited responses from Long Island to Hawaii.

Extension was also responsible for founding the Banff School of Fine Arts. It provided both teaching and material resources and supplied the funds for establishment of the school from a Carnegie grant received in 1933. The first summer course in theatre arts was held in Banff in 1934 and three years later, with the addition of courses in music and art, the Banff School became the Banff School of Fine Arts. Extension continued to expand the range of courses offered at the school, adding a course in choral music in 1938, and offering courses in weaving and design, modeling and pottery in 1941.

During the Depression the Extension Library received many grateful letters from teachers returning boxes of books and requesting more, since there was a shortage of books in the schools. Many books would be returned, long overdue, from members of the general public, with a note explaining that they could not return the books on time because they had no money for postage.

The thirst for art was such that in 1933 an art exhibit taken to a village of just 16 houses had more than 325 visitors.

By 1935 movies were overtaking the magic lantern slides as Extension’s most popular visual instruction tool. However, some communities continued to evidence a high demand for slides because watching movies was prohibited by certain religions, whereas watching slides was not.

Post-War Activities

Refresher courses for municipal administrators, initiated in 1940, led to the development of similar courses for a variety of professional groups, including school administrators (1945), sanitary inspectors (1947) and recreational leaders (1948).

The scene in post-war Alberta was marked by rapid changes in society and the economic environment. Changes were further accelerated by the discovery of the Leduc oil field.

During this period Extension continued to serve as the primary liaison between the general public and the University, answering a multitude of requests for information and education from the

general public by drawing on the resources of various Faculties. The Extension Library expanded its reference service and the Department distributed thousands of copies of agricultural publications to individuals and groups throughout the province. In 1946 the 28th Annual University Week for Farm Young People was held, community-based art classes flourished and many new courses were scheduled. Public lectures on “The Development of Atomic Power” were presented in



► Laurence Twigge and the Travelling Library, 1945

both major cities; applied art courses, which were conducted throughout the winter at various locations in the province, were expanded in Edmonton to include weaving and leathercraft; the first Inter-University Drama Festival was held; the Western Board of Music was established; and the importance of short-term courses and classes was recognized, resulting in an expansion in the number and range offered by the Department. Indeed, the 1947 annual report states, “From the standpoint of educational content and the effect on a large number of communities, the University’s short-course program is undoubtedly the most important phase of extension work.”

In 1948 the Department sponsored math and accounting courses in Edmonton and Calgary, in cooperation with the Society of Registered Industrial Accountants.

The Fifties

The fifties brought about increasing industrialization in Alberta. This was clearly reflected in the activities of the Department as it strove to respond to society’s changing needs.

As reported in 1950, the first “mud school” in Canada was held in co-operation with the University’s Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering and a number of oil industry associations. The school was for roughnecks, tool pushers and drillers and its curriculum centered around methods and techniques of handling drilling fluids. The program would ultimately be known as the

Petroleum Industry Training Service (PITS), with a full-time staff of three instructors who conducted courses in petroleum technology, supervision and workplace safety at various sites throughout the Province.

A notable first in this period was a two-week course in post-secondary extension education methods and techniques, attended by 90 outreach workers from five Canadian provinces. At this time the Department of Extension began its involvement in the newly emerging field of adult continuing education. In the late fifties the Department organized the Alberta Adult Education Conferences, featuring lectures by national and international authorities. These conferences led to the development of the Alberta Association of Continuing Education (AACE).

The surge of immigrants from Europe created a need for short courses in business and conversational English. In response to this need, an experimental course was designed in 1950 for a small group from the Netherlands. This course was the forerunner to the current English as a second language program.

Major growth occurred in the development of non-credit courses, classes, seminars and conferences. Although programs were eclectic and highly varied, from music appreciation to “mud schools,” clusters of courses started to emerge. In addition to the diversity of subject matter addressed, courses were offered at several locations throughout the Province. By 1960 the combined annual evening class registration count in Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer and Lethbridge was 2,945. The community art program, unique in Canada and which had started as an experiment in 1936, drew a total of 592 registrations from 34 centers. Short courses for purchasing agents, librarians, hospital administrators, appraisers and real estate agents were also offered.

Certificate programs were started in the late fifties in response to a growing interest in acquiring more extensive training in a specific field and an increasing demand for credentials. The first credential program was a three-year Certificate in Social Welfare, offered in 1957 in co-operation with the Department of Public Welfare and the Canadian Association of Social Workers. In 1958 Extension initiated certificate programs in real estate; municipal administration and assessment; and blood grouping, crossmatching and associated techniques. In 1963 the Management Development Program, initiated in co-operation with the University’s Faculty of Commerce (now the School of Business), became a certificate program.



► University Week for Farm Young People, 1940.

The Sixties

Changes were also occurring in the number of institutions involved in offering adult education. Whereas at one time the Department of Extension was the only provider, the sixties saw the development of continuing education programs at the



► Extension’s educational film library, circa 1953-1954.

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), its southern counterpart (SAIT), the Edmonton and Calgary school boards and some private colleges. As other institutions of advanced education were established (Red Deer Junior College in 1964, Medicine Hat Junior College in 1965, Grande Prairie Junior College in 1966, the University of Lethbridge in 1967, and Athabasca University and Grant MacEwan Community College in 1970), they too became active in the field of continuing education. In Calgary, a University of Alberta campus was developed in 1960, resulting in considerable expansion of the continuing education programs in that city. Six years later the University of Calgary was created as a separate institution, assuming responsibility for the programs in Calgary, and in general, for university outreach in the southern half of the Province. With the establishment of the Further Education Policy in 1975 and the resulting development of further education councils throughout the province, extension activities became more readily available to the residents of Alberta from more locally situated organizations.

The Early Seventies

The seventies were characterized by rapid developments in the north as oil exploration and production activities increased. Extension responded with the first Arctic Summer School in 1971, to provide southerners with information on, and first-hand experience with, the north. In 1977 the Yukon Summer School was opened, followed a year later by the Arctic Winter School. Similarly, the Department responded to northern development by offering management development courses in Whitehorse, Fort McMurray, Inuvik and Yellowknife, in addition to those

already offered in Hinton and Edmonton. New programs such as airphoto interpretation and the Whitehorse-based inventory management course were also developed.

1975 to the Present

Some programs and services that were initiated in the seventies have continued on into the twenty-first century. Notably, English as a second language (1973); Spring Session for Seniors (1974); the Legal Resource Center (1975) and adult education as a field of study and practice (1977). A forum series on issues in local government lead to the establishment of the Government Studies Program, which is still expanding today.

On November 1, 1975 the Department of Extension was granted University of Alberta Faculty status. While there was no immediate significant change in the programs and services provided, there was an increased feeling of responsibility to assume the functions and roles of a Faculty, particularly in terms of academic research and scholarship in support of instruction.

In the eighties, Extension continued to experience dramatic growth in course and class activities. In addition to 16 certificate programs, one citation program, agricultural home study courses and a myriad of courses in the fine arts and liberal studies, programs were offered for adult educators, architects, engineers, lawyers, nurses, safety personnel and town planners. In 1980/81, there were a total of 35,423 student registrations. These programs and courses were offered in addition to the outreach activities facilitated by Educational Media, the Extension Library, Legal Resource Center and Women's Program Resource Center.

In the 21st Century, Extension continues to pursue new initiatives to answer the always evolving needs of individuals and society at large. In 2002, the year of Extension's 90th Anniversary, the first students graduated from the primarily online Master of Arts in Communications and Technology program. Addressing the rapidly evolving field of privacy protection in an information society, the innovative Information and Access to Privacy Protection Certificate program graduated its first students in 2004.

Engaged with the community throughout its history, Extension is bound to flourish in the University of Alberta's new city centre facilities. Enterprise Square, located in the renovated, historic Bay building, is envisioned to be a downtown hub where form and function celebrate learning, research and partnership. Located in the heart of Edmonton, Extension will continue to meet and exceed its mandate "To extend opportunities for lifelong learning, based on the needs of individuals and society, and the resources of the University." 🌱



► Enterprise Square will be home to Extension beginning in Fall 2007.

A Brief Chronology of Extension Highlights

1912	Department of Extension is established, with A.E. Ottewell as Director
1913	Travelling Library is established
1914	Magic Lantern slide service begins
1916	Educational film library is established
1919	First University Week for Farm Young People
1925	First radio lectures broadcast on CJCA
1928	Founding of CKUA Radio
1932	First art exhibit travels throughout Alberta
1934	Summer arts courses in Banff begin
1940	First refresher course in Municipal Affairs
1950	First evening courses are offered; Petroleum Industry Training Services (PITS) is established
1956	Banff School of Fine Arts becomes a separate university division
1961	Management Development Certificate Program launched
1965	First certificate programs in banking, personnel administration and local government
1969	Museum art tours to Europe are established
1970	Occupational Health & Safety Certificate Program launched
1973	Supervisory Development Citation Program is launched
1974	Spring Sessions for Seniors is established, now offered through the Edmonton Lifelong Learners Association
1975	Department of Extension is granted Faculty status, with Charles Lockwood as its first Dean
1981	Local Government Studies Program is established
1985	Summer Youth University is established
1987	English Language and Cultural Seminars are launched
1991	Extension moves into University Extension Centre
1993	North America's first university-based Certificate in Medical Acupuncture is offered by Extension
1994	Access to Justice Network (ACJNet) is launched on the Internet
1996	Professional Sales Citation Program is established
1997	Certificates in Fine Arts, Spanish Language and Environmental Resources Management are launched
1999	Master of Arts in Communications and Technology (MACT) is established
2002	First three students graduate from the MACT program
2003	Extension begins hosting the annual Access and Privacy conference
2004	First students graduate from the Information Access and Protection of Privacy Certificate Program
2005	Extension hosts Transformational Networks: Creating Learning Communities national conference
2006	City-Region Studies Centre is established
2007	Extension hosts the 54th annual Canadian Association of University Continuing Education (CAUCE) conference
2007	Extension moves to Enterprise Square, 10230 Jasper Ave.