

# School of Public Policy and Administration

## Weekly Newsletter

May 2013 – Volume 1, Issue 7

### Important Reminders

#### SPPA Summer Hours of Operation

Please note that as of May 1, 2013 the hours of operation for the SPPA will change to 8:30am-4:30pm Monday-Thursday and 9:30am-4:30pm on Friday. This change will be in effect until August 31, 2013.

#### F/W 2013-14 Course Enrolment Period

Enrolment access dates and times have been released for the Fall/Winter 2013-2014 academic year. Please check your access date and time at the following link:

<http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/guide/>

### Announcements

#### Public Law I and Public Law II Summer 2013

For those students who are interested in enrolling in PPAS/POLS 3135 (Public Law I) and PPAS/POLS 3136 (Public Law II) for the Summer 2013 session, but are unable to accommodate the 4:00pm start time, there is also a section held at Glendon campus Monday and Wednesday with a later start time of 6:00pm.

For more information, please contact Nicole Lebon at 416-736-2100 extension 88152 located in the Political Science Department at Glendon College.

#### Commentary in The Star.com

By: Daniel Cohn Published on Fri Apr 19 2013

*Daniel Cohn is director of the School of Public Policy and Administration at York University.*

#### RBC's real mistake in the outsourcing uproar was embarrassing the Harper Tories

*A problem at a big bank is now morphing into an embarrassing problem for government*

There is nothing new about outsourcing jobs to lower cost countries. There is also nothing new about using temporary foreign “guest” workers as a way to avoid paying wages that the law of supply and demand would otherwise set for Canadian labour.

However, by bringing these two trends together in the operation of a part of RBC's sprawling information-and-technology empire, the bank inadvertently made the worst mistake a financial institution can ever make: It has embarrassed the government that licenses and regulates it.

By now, the details of the affair are well known. RBC decided it would be cheaper to outsource the IT operations supporting one of its divisions. The company it contracted with primarily does such work from locations in India. The bank then gave 45 of its own employees notice that their jobs would be made redundant and proceeded to bring in the contractor's people to train with the soon-to-be laid-off staffers and begin the transition.

Unfortunately, the contractor also appears to have brought in at least one foreign national (by RBC's own acknowledgement) on a temporary guest worker visa, arguing no one in Canada had the necessary skills to do the work. What about the RBC's now redundant Canadian IT workers? None of them could have been hired by the contractor,

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either immediately or with a short training period? After getting hit by a barrage of bad publicity and customer complaints, RBC CEO Gordon Nixon admitted that this one failed the smell test.

RBC's leaders and damage-control experts are now moving heaven and earth to keep everyone's attention focused on the fate of this small handful of IT professionals, hoping the story will go away if everyone made redundant is given a new job. Nevertheless, the problem that RBC has inadvertently disclosed to the public is far deeper, and I suspect this is why public anger is so great.

The advice almost all experts and government officials have been giving Canadians for many years has been to invest in job skills and ensure that you and your kids are capable of doing high-skill work that the market values. In short, if you cannot seem to get ahead and your kids don't have a future, it is your fault, not the government's fault and not the fault of our business leaders.

The Harper government has been no different in this regard. The last federal budget even had as its centrepiece a new program to invest in skill-upgrading.

However, the RBC affair has now shown the public the truth. No matter how high your skill level, you are vulnerable to unemployment. Unemployment is not just the fault of workers but of governments and businesses, too.

The Conservative government's skills-upgrading program now appears to be something of a cruel joke as it runs counter to their other policies designed to make it easier for companies to reduce wages and shed Canadian workers, such as the guest worker program, and international agreements we have signed that make it easier for corporations to ship work overseas. Thanks to RBC, the argument that we have heard from Ottawa for so long — that the unemployed are responsible for their own fate — now just seems plain silly.

As is often the case, a problem at a big bank is now morphing into an embarrassing problem for government. If Harper has shown anything since taking power in 2006, it is that he remembers like an elephant. Those who help his government are rewarded and those who make difficulties are not.

The public relations price that RBC has paid so far will probably be a pittance compared to the price in "good will" that it is going to pay in dealing with the federal government going forward.

[http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/04/19/rbcs\\_real\\_mistake\\_in\\_the\\_outsourcing\\_uproar\\_was\\_embarrassing\\_the\\_harper\\_tories.html](http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2013/04/19/rbcs_real_mistake_in_the_outsourcing_uproar_was_embarrassing_the_harper_tories.html)

## Seminars/Workshops

*See next week's announcements...*

## SPPA Events

*See next week's announcements...*

## Other Events

### Encounters in Canada: Contrasting Indigenous and Immigrant Perspectives

May15-17, 2013

Venue: Chestnut Conference Centre  
University of Toronto, St. George Campus

The special keynote speaker, the **Right Honourable Paul Martin**, will discuss the *Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative* during the opening dinner. Giller Prize Winner **Joseph Boyden** will read from his book *Through Black Spruce* at the opening reception.

For complete conference information and to register, please visit

<http://encountersincanada.wordpress.com/>

Follow on Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/EncountersinCA>

LinkedIn Conference Group:

[http://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=4846926&trk=anet\\_ug\\_hm](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=4846926&trk=anet_ug_hm)

## 2013 European Group for Public Administration Annual Conference and Ph.D. symposium

Professor Dr. Wim van de Donk, President of the European Group for Public Administration (EGPA) and Professor Charlie Jeffery, Chair of the Local Organising Committee and Vice Principal for Public Policy and Impact University of Edinburgh are pleased to announce that the 2013 EGPA Annual Conference will take place in **Edinburgh, Scotland from 11 to 13 September** and will be preceded by a PhD Symposium on **9 and 10 September**.

The conference will be taking place in both the *Radisson Blu Hotel*, Edinburgh and *The Scotsman Hotel*.

The PhD Symposium will be taking place at the *University of Edinburgh*.

The conference website is now on line: [www.egpa-conference-2013.org](http://www.egpa-conference-2013.org)

## Policy Studies Conference: Policy Research in Times of Austerity and Uncertainty, May 8-10, 2013 @ Ryerson University

The Policy Studies Conference: Policy Research in Times of Austerity and Uncertainty, hosted by the PhD Program in Policy Studies and the Yeates School of Graduate Studies at Ryerson is just around the corner!

Registration is now open. The cost is \$50.00 for faculty and \$25.00 for students and registration is available online at: <http://www.ryerson.ca/policyconference/registration.html>

Full conference details are on the website: <http://www.ryerson.ca/policyconference/>

## Call for Papers

### Call for papers - 2013 EGPA Annual Conference

The call-for-papers for the PhD Symposium, the permanent study groups and for the French Speaking Seminar are available on the Conference website: [www.egpa-conference-2013.org](http://www.egpa-conference-2013.org).

#### Deadlines for submission

- Deadline for online submission of abstracts proposals: **15 May 2013**
- **!** Deadline for decision and selection by the co-chairs: **1 June 2013**
- **!** Deadline for submitting the complete papers: **5 August 2013**

**!** The EGPA Conference is open to academics, young researchers and practitioners. You are invited to submit an abstract for proposal on the topics addressed by the different groups.

## Contests

*See next week's announcements...*

## Employment Opportunities

*See next week's announcements...*

## Volunteer Opportunities

*See next week's announcements...*

## Internship Opportunities

*See next week's announcements...*

## Other

### May Activities at the Career Centre

The Career Centre is pleased to provide you with a PDF of the calendar of activities for the month of May 2013. Alternatively, you may refer to our online calendar.

<http://www.yorku.ca/careers/calender/events.asp>

**Whose Degree Is It Anyway?** - on Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-2:50pm, the Career Centre will be offering a webinar

[http://www.yorku.ca/careers/calender/events\\_response.asp?event\\_id=2158](http://www.yorku.ca/careers/calender/events_response.asp?event_id=2158)

This webinar is designed for students who feel that their career decisions are being influenced by family, cultural or external expectations. During this webinar, students will learn the ways in which "career" can mean different things to different people; how other's expectations may impact their thoughts and feelings or beliefs about work; and become more empowered and confident when making career decisions.

**Job Search Success Days for New Grads** will take place on May 13, 14 and 15.

#### Job Search

<http://www.yorku.ca/careers/students/jobsearchprogram/index.htm>

and

#### Professional Etiquette

<http://www.yorku.ca/careers/students/etiquetteprogram/>

This is an ideal time for students to take advantage of our full roster of workshops and immerse themselves in their career development. Students can sign up for one or all of our most popular workshops through the Career Centre's online registration system. The schedule for **Job Search Success Days for New Grads** is as follows:

Monday, May 13:

-10:30 am - 12:30 pm: Identifying Skills and Accomplishments

-2:00 - 4:00 pm: Suit Yourself: Personality and Career Choice

Tuesday, May 14:

-10:30 am - 12:30 pm: Job Search Strategies and E-Networking with Social Media

-1:30 - 3:30 pm: Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Wednesday, May 15:

-10:00 am - 12:00 pm: Making a Great First Impression and Interview Skills

-2:00 - 4:00 pm: Dining Etiquette

**Individual Appointments** will be offered throughout May. Students can book appointments for Job Search Advising, Interview Practice Sessions, Resume and Cover Letter Feedback Sessions, PhD Job Search Support Sessions, and Post Grad Application Support Sessions.

**Career Counsellor** - If students aren't sure where to start, they can meet with a Career Counsellor for a 20-minute Career Consult to get help determining their next steps, including which services best meet their needs.

#### **TASTE Program – Take a Student to Eat**

York alumni who have graduated from Kinesiology, Psychology, Economics, Political Science, Social Science, Business, Law, Geography, Biology and Health Studies have expressed interest in Taking A Student To Eat (**TASTE**) for a bite-sized mentoring opportunity. These TASTE lunches are a great way for students to learn about their career of interest from someone who is thriving in that field. Please share this unique opportunity with students and if you know an alumna/us who might be interested in sharing their career story, please encourage them to take part in TASTE!