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Article abstract

This paper examines the creation of the University of Guelph in the early 1960s from the perspective of the Ontario Veterinary College, one of the University's three founding colleges. We argue that although there were concerns that OVC would be overshadowed if it were to join a traditional university, the prospect of the creation of the University of Guelph was greeted largely with enthusiasm and the College benefitted from a close association with a traditional university. Nevertheless the faculty and alumni of OVC were genuinely concerned that joining a traditional university would hamper its ability to train veterinarians and divert much needed funding to other disciplines. In contrast, in its sister school the Ontario Agricultural College, any fears associated with joining a university came from politicians and administrators rather than from within Ontario's agricultural community.

The Ontario Veterinary College and the Establishment of the University of Guelph

By Kevin Woodger
and Elizabeth A. Stone

The establishment of the University of Guelph (U of G) in 1964 was a major milestone in the history of higher education in Ontario. However, the founding colleges, the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC), the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC), and the MacDonald Institute, had been granting degrees from the University of Toronto as early as 1887. Merging three separate colleges and adding a College of Arts and Science was a challenging operation. The question arises as to how the OVC community viewed the founding of the University of Guelph. Did those connected to OVC embrace the creation of a university? How was funding transferred from the Ontario Department of

Agriculture to the Ontario Department of University Affairs? Was there a degree of ambivalence or even opposition to the University of Guelph? What were the perceived advantages to OVC in becoming part of a traditional university; were there any fears of loss of autonomy or of any other disruptions to the way OVC operated?

This paper will begin with a brief examination of why the Government of Ontario would found a new university in the early 1960s. The key legislative debates on the subject of creating a university in the city of Guelph will be emphasized, with a discussion of the arguments for and against the University, as well as the attempts to assuage community con-

Abstract

This paper examines the creation of the University of Guelph in the early 1960s from the perspective of the Ontario Veterinary College, one of the University's three founding colleges. We argue that although there were concerns that OVC would be overshadowed if it were to join a traditional university, the prospect of the creation of the University of Guelph was greeted largely with enthusiasm and the College benefitted from a close association with a traditional university. Nevertheless the faculty and alumni of OVC were genuinely concerned that joining a traditional university would hamper its ability to train veterinarians and divert much needed funding to other disciplines. In contrast, in its sister school the Ontario Agricultural College, any fears associated with joining a university came from politicians and administrators rather than from within Ontario's agricultural community.

Résumé: *Le présent article s'intéresse à la création de l'Université de Guelph dans les années soixante, en adoptant le point de vue du Collège vétérinaire de l'Ontario (OVC), qui fut un des trois collèges fondateurs de l'université. Même si on craignait que le Collège serait éclipsé s'il se joignait à une université traditionnelle, l'idée de la création de l'Université de Guelph fut accueillie avec enthousiasme et par la suite OVC a bénéficié de cette union. Néanmoins, le personnel et les anciens étudiants craignaient que cette association allait nuire à la capacité du OVC à former des vétérinaires et qu'elle détournerait les fonds vers d'autres disciplines. En revanche, dans le cas du Collège agricole de l'Ontario, les inquiétudes associées à l'union avec une université provenaient des politiciens et de l'administration plutôt que des membres de la communauté agricole de l'Ontario.*

cerns. Finally, we will look at the changes that occurred at OVC during its first few years within the University of Guelph. This will demonstrate that while fears surrounding OVC joining a larger university were persistent throughout the process of creating the University of Guelph, the OVC, as well as the Ontario and Canadian veterinary communities more broadly,

viewed the founding of the University of Guelph largely with enthusiasm and, despite some financial uncertainties, the College itself benefitted from the wider association with a traditional university.

The major study of the establishment of the University of Guelph, David R. Murray's *Hatching the Cowbird's Egg: The Creation of the University of Guelph*, focuses on the Ontario Agricultural College and says very little about OVC. This unawareness reflects the broader dearth of veterinary history in Canada. As North America's oldest continuously operating veterinary school, the faculty and alumni of the OVC were genuinely concerned that joining a traditional university would hamper its ability to train veterinarians and would divert much needed funding to other programs in the new university. In contrast, the fears for OVC joining a university derived more from the imaginations of poli-

ticians and College administrators than from a forcefully articulated oppositional stance in Ontario's agricultural community. This study therefore contributes to the literature on higher education in mid-twentieth century Ontario as well as Ontario agricultural history and the understudied field of Canadian veterinary history.

Why Found a New University?

The years immediately following the Second World War saw a brief but significant spike in university enrollments due to large numbers of veterans taking advantage of postwar education benefits. The OVC itself saw an expansion of the student body between 1945 and 1953, with the largest class in its history graduating in 1950.¹ After the veterans passed through the university system by the early 1950s, enrollments declined. However, there were signs that this was just a short lull before the baby-boom generation reached university age. The mid-1950s saw rising numbers of children and youth in Canada's elementary and high schools. In 1956, the National Conference of Canadian Universities predicted that Canadian post-secondary enrollments could reach as high as 133,000 by 1965, a figure that turned out to be far too low. These demographic changes were coupled with changing attitudes towards university education. In 1951, approximately five percent of eighteen-year olds went to university. By 1961, this had doubled to ten percent. Higher education was seen as increasingly necessary in the postwar world and between 1963 and 1968, university enrollment in Canada increased as much as it had in the previous fifty years.²

Solutions to the skyrocketing numbers of potential students included opening new universities, expanding existing ones and turning affiliated colleges into independent universities. In Ontario these policies led to the creation of eight new universities between 1959 and 1965. While discussing the University of Guelph Act (Bill 133) in 1964, Premier John Robarts noted that Ontario was “engaged in an unprecedented and very massive programme of university expansion which is needed to serve the needs of the province.”³

Even with these concerns, the granting of university status to the Guelph colleges was initially met with skepticism. Since 1908, OVC had been administered by the Ontario Department of Agriculture after the provincial government purchased what was until then a private college operated by its founder Professor Andrew Smith. This ushered in what was known as the College's “Civil Service era,” which lasted until the founding of the University of Guelph. As with OAC and the MacDonald Institute, OVCs funding and direction came from the Department of Agriculture and its faculty were all civil servants under the department's jurisdiction. Part of the challenge in creating an autonomous university out of these colleges would be how to transfer administration of the colleges to the

¹ For a detailed discussion of OVC during the postwar period see Woodger and Stone, “The Ontario Veterinary College after World War II: 1945-1953,” *Canadian Veterinary Journal*, 56:4 (April 2015), 299-404.

² Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 178-80.

³ Legislature of Ontario Debates, Second Session of the Twenty-Seventh Legislature, Friday 24 April 1964.

Department of University Affairs without jeopardizing their agricultural research, education, and extension work.

As a preliminary step, the administrations of OVC, OAC, and the MacDonald Institute were combined in 1962 to form the Federated Colleges of the Department of Agriculture, but the government did not believe that the province needed a new university in southwestern Ontario. Although the opposition parties pushed for university status for the Federated Colleges, the government was worried about duplicating facilities and courses already offered in Waterloo and London. Legislators also feared that university status would take away from the rural and agricultural focus of the Guelph colleges. Premier Robarts was not entirely opposed to the idea of a university in Guelph, however he did tell the legislature that the granting of university status to the newly federated colleges was a “very complex question and one that cannot be settled immediately.” According to the Premier, “it is a question that will require a great deal of examination and study.”⁴

The growing enrollment pressures



J.D. MacLachlan, courtesy of the University of Guelph Archival and Special Collections.

the opposition and hinting at the future structure of the University, the premier stated that he could “envisage now a university under an independent board of governors supported by graduates and people in the community and other sections of our society interested in universities.” He was also careful to add that the new University would not interrupt the agricultural work being done by the existing Guelph colleges.⁵ By the early 1960s, this work included a great deal of extension services for Ontario’s agricultural communities, such as an ambulatory and farm service offered by OVC for livestock farmers in southern Ontario.

The site of the Guelph colleges was seen as an excellent (and inexpensive) location for a new university. As University of Guelph’s first president, J.D. Ma-

on Ontario’s university system forced the government to change its position. In late February 1963, Robarts clarified his government’s policy, announcing the formation of a citizens’ committee to investigate the best way to turn the colleges (including OVC) into a formal university similar to Ontario’s other universities. Responding to a question from

⁴ Legislature of Ontario Debates, Third Session of the Twenty-Sixth Legislature, Tuesday 6 March 1962.

⁵ Legislature of Ontario Debates, Fourth Session of the Twenty-Sixth Legislature, Wednesday 27 February 1963.

cLachlan, later pointed out, the Guelph colleges could be expanded into a full university quicker and at less cost than if the provincial government attempted to build a new university from the ground up. By transferring the on-campus agricultural field research sites to other areas, “the Guelph location had excellent potential for a full university.” The campus was situated in a relatively heavily populated area (the city of Guelph), it occupied some 800 hectares of land that was already owned by the province, and it boasted a number of basic educational facilities.⁶ In the view of the provincial government, it was an ideal site for a new university at a relatively low cost.

After months of research by the provincial government and the citizen’s committee, Bill 133, the University of Guelph Act, was introduced in Ontario’s legislature in early 1964. During the second reading of the bill in April 1964, Premier Robarts proudly announced that “this bill to create the University of Guelph marks another substantial step forward in the programme of provincial university expansion.”⁷ To help assuage fears that the new University would take away from the traditional roles of the colleges, the premier gave his “assurance to the people of the province, particularly those living in the rural areas, that no matter what agreements are reached, nothing

will jeopardize the position the colleges hold as the foremost agricultural institutions on the continent.” The Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable W.A. Stewart, informed the legislature that “it is important to agriculture that the ties of the Ontario Veterinary College, the Ontario Agricultural College and MacDonald Institute, remain close to the Department of Agriculture.” According to the minister, “many essential agricultural policies have been developed and administered through the various colleges at Guelph. A sudden break in this linkage that has been so well established, should be avoided.” He also stressed the fact that “the academic aspects of the Guelph colleges have had and will continue to have, complete freedom of expression.”⁸

Debating “X” University

The granting of autonomous university status to the Guelph colleges, which were, at the time, affiliated with the University of Toronto, was debated as early as the mid-1940s. For example, in 1950 the Canadian Veterinary Medical Council, the governing body of the newly formed Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) “reacted negatively” to a suggestion that the Guelph colleges be amalgamated and end their affiliation with the University of Toronto.⁹

The issue was even more widely dis-

⁶ University of Guelph Archival and Special Collections (hereafter UGA) RE1 UOG A0086, Box 1. First Annual Report of the University of Guelph.

⁷ Legislature of Ontario Debates, Second Session of the Twenty-Seventh Legislature, Friday 24 April 1964.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ C.A.V. Barker and T.A. Crowley, *One Voice: A History of the Canadian Veterinary Medical As-*

cussed during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Senior administrators at the Guelph colleges, such as J.D. MacLachlan (President of OAC) and Trevor Lloyd Jones (Principal of OVC) drew up several schemes (and even drafted sample parliamentary bills) to bring the colleges together into an autonomous university or, at the very least, an administrative federation. A key feature of these late 1950s and early 1960s plans was that they all described an institution independent of U of T but still under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Department of Agriculture. In 1959, a proposal, drafted in part by the Federated College's Board of Regents, entitled "A University on the Guelph Campus," argued that the Guelph colleges needed to be reorganized as a university in order to streamline operational efficiency and, perhaps more importantly, acquire autonomous degree-granting power "to allow for more effective avenues to meet educational needs and objectives both present and future." The proposal was careful to add



Trevor Lloyd Jones, courtesy of the University of Guelph Archival and Special Collections

that "service to agriculture and to the rural youth of Ontario will remain the primary objective of the University."¹⁰

One of the future needs, according to the proposal, was to accommodate the anticipated growth in numbers of young people seeking a university education in the immediate future. It was argued that, "at relatively minor cost," the Guelph campus could be transformed into a university (which was dubbed "X" University in the proposal) and "readily contribute to the alleviation of this problem confronting the Government of Ontario."¹¹ The following year President MacLachlan, in consultation with Principal Jones, decided to press for the administrative federation of the colleges. He argued that federation and the severing of ties with U of T would foster closer relations with the Department of Agriculture and provide "no reason for mistrust on the part of the agricultural public."¹² As noted above, this was achieved in 1962, creating the Federated

sociation (Ottawa: Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, 1989), 53, 71.

¹⁰ UGA, RE1 FED A041. A University on the Guelph Campus, Revised as of 1 November, 1959

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² UGA, RE1 FED A040. Letter from J.D. MacLachlan to the Honourable W.A. Goodfellow, Minister of Agriculture, July 28 1960.

Colleges of the Department of Agriculture, although the Colleges remained affiliated with U of T, which continued to grant their degrees until the creation of U of G.

In 1958, creation of a university in Guelph was raised in the *Canadian Journal of Comparative Medicine*, Canada's leading professional veterinary journal. According to L.C. Swan of the OVC Advisory Board, although

at the present time anything written on the subject of a proposed university at Guelph is certainly in the realm of speculation... the Guelph campus with all its material assets and abundant acreage must often be viewed, by those concerned with the crowded conditions of Ontario universities, with some envy.

He went on to explain that on the opposite end of the spectrum was the fear among the veterinary community that "agriculture and veterinary science might lose some of their identity by being integrated into a university." According to Swan, however, "this need not be so." He cited the potential benefits that could arise from the "broader intellectual associations on the campus."¹³ These broad intellectual associations were a common theme among those who supported the idea of a university at Guelph. For example, in response to a 1957 survey distributed to OVC alumni by the OVC Advisory Board, one alumnus was of the opinion that "the courses... at the veterinary college were... deficient in those

studies which are... intangible in so far as veterinary practice but extremely necessary if one is to lead a full life." As the alumnus concluded, "a doctor is a learned man, not a technician."¹⁴

The principal (and eventually first dean) of OVC in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Trevor Lloyd Jones, was an early and ardent supporter of OVC forming part of an autonomous university. Commenting on the possibility of a Guelph university in a 1962 editorial in the *Canadian Journal of Comparative Medicine*, Principal Jones noted that the "applied aspects of the biological sciences have been dominant on the Guelph campus up to the present." For Jones, the biggest change to the academic environment if a university were to be founded would be the addition of academic programs in the humanities. While acknowledging that the sciences must remain central to OVC, Jones also believed that in order to give students a well-rounded university education, "we must work hard to allow what is the traditional core of a university to find a home—literature, history and the other subjects of the humanities."¹⁵ At the end of his editorial the principal tempered his enthusiasm with the warning that "the kind of university that will result will depend a great deal in the diligence with which we pursue this objective." He also argued that the OVC's focus on "the ways science and socio-economic changes can help to en-

¹³ L.C. Swan, "Modern Trends and Changes in Canadian Veterinary-Medical Practice and Education," *Can J Comp Med*, 22:8 (August 1958), 271.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 269.

¹⁵ T. Lloyd Jones, "Academic Environment" *Can J Comp Med*, 26 (February 1962), 24.

rich the rural community... should continue to characterize our endeavours if our horizons are elevated by achieving university status.”¹⁶

It was not just a belief in the value of a broader university education that led some to support the founding of a university at Guelph. Although formally affiliated with the University of Toronto, graduate training at OVC and OAC was woefully underdeveloped, subject as it was to the whims of U of T, sixty miles away. Lack of graduate opportunities affected other Ontario schools and economic sectors and led to a phenomenon known as the “brain drain,” whereby students and others went to the United States to pursue graduate studies or employment opportunities. Its impact was felt across many professions in Canada, including the veterinary profession, which was particularly alarmed by the trend of veterinary students going to the United States for graduate training. The profession’s biggest fear was that, once they had completed their graduate degrees, these students would stay in the United States, depriving Canadian veterinary schools of future faculty members and the profession itself of highly trained veterinarians and veterinary researchers. In his 1963-1964 annual report, President J.D. MacLachlan lamented the lack of veterinarians in Canada with graduate training, noting that “there are few disciplines in which

there is so great a deficiency of those with postgraduate training.”¹⁷

This problem was taken up in the *Canadian Journal of Comparative Medicine and Veterinary Science* in 1965, soon after the founding of the University of Guelph. A July editorial entitled “The Brain Drain—Whose Responsibility?” argued that there was “unquestionably a great shortage of qualified people to fill the teaching and scientific vacancies in Canadian universities and industry,” and called on the scientific community to “make a far greater effort to avoid the loss of these people from the Canadian scientific community.”¹⁸ Later that year Dean Jones argued that without more support, especially from government sources, “veterinary colleges in this country will be at a serious disadvantage in trying to maintain standards comparable with the United States schools.”¹⁹

The issue of graduate studies at the Guelph colleges had already been raised in the Ontario legislature in the spring of 1962. After consulting with the staff of the Guelph colleges, the MPP for Brant, R.F. Nixon reported that the faculty of the OVC, OAC, and MacDonald Institute felt “somewhat hampered in that their degree-granting privileges stem from, and are fully directed by, the University of Toronto.” In addition, the University of Toronto would not allow the OAC to grant degrees above the Masters,

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1963-31 March 1964.

¹⁸ “The Brain Drain-Whose Responsibility?” *Canadian Journal of Comparative Medicine and Veterinary Science*, 29:7 (July 1965), 167.

¹⁹ T.L. Jones, “Letter to the Editor” *Can J Comp Med Vet Sci*, 29:8 (August 1965), 194.

Ontario Veterinary College Main Building in the mid-1950s, courtesy of the University of Guelph Archival and Special Collections.



which meant students who wanted to pursue doctoral-level studies in agriculture had to leave Guelph.²⁰

The Ontario Veterinary College found itself in a similar position with respect to graduate studies. However, due in part to the persistent lobbying by Principal Jones, OVC won some concessions from the University of Toronto by the mid-1950s, especially in support of OVC's increasingly active research program. The University of Toronto had offered the Master of Veterinary Science (MVSc) and Doctor of Veterinary Science (DVSc) degrees for years, but neither program attracted many students. The DVSc degree could be earned by submitting a thesis without a requirement for residency in Toronto, while the MVSc required students to do a period of study at the Toronto campus. The problem with the MVSc, however, was that potential students could not find supervisors among the faculty in Toronto who were qualified to supervise students in veterinary science. As he recounts in his memoir, by the mid-1950s,

Principal Jones had persuaded U of T to allow Masters students to fulfill their residence requirement in Guelph.²¹ However, the number of graduate students remained small at OVC until the founding of the University of Guelph. For example, during the 1963-1964 academic year, the College counted twenty-one registered graduate students. Of these, only two students were enrolled in the DVSc program.²² As will be seen below, joining the University of Guelph allowed OVC to further consolidate and develop its graduate programs, without having to seek the approval of U of T. Indeed, in 1964 the mayor of Guelph told the *Guelph Mercury* that: "of major importance is the fact that the new university will be granting full degrees of its own comparable to those granted by other top-flight Canadian universities."²³

²⁰ Legislature of Ontario Debates, Third Session of the Twenty-Sixth Legislature, Monday 5 March 1962.

²¹ Trevor Jones, *Trevor's Story* (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 1999), 74-75.

²² Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1963-31 March 1964.

²³ "Greet Announcement of Guelph University" *Guelph Mercury*, Friday 24 April 1964.

However, it appears that U of T was not the only burdensome force weighing down on OVC prior to university status. Commenting on the legislature's announcement of university status for the Guelph colleges in February 1963, Trevor Lloyd Jones vented his frustration over his status as a civil servant working for the Department of Agriculture rather than a faculty member and the associated limits to his academic freedom. According to Dr. Jones, it was "not conducive to the best performance for a member of an academic community to be a public employee." Jones argued that "freedom for the university professor goes beyond what can be regarded as the rights of a public employee. There is a distinction between the rights of the latter and the rights of other citizens."²⁴ It would appear that by the early 1960s, Dr. Jones and perhaps other OVC faculty, chafed under the limitations imposed by government service.

The Federated Colleges were joined by the newly established Wellington College (as a faculty of arts and science) to form the University of Guelph on 1 July 1964. In the OVC's last report to the minister of agriculture, the newly named Dean Jones praised the College's new association. Echoing his earlier thoughts on the subject, Jones reported that veterinary students would now have the advantage of a "close association with a major discipline in university educa-

tion: Arts and Science. As the University grows, OVC students will profit from involvement with others in a developing academic community"²⁵

The University's first president, J.D. MacLachlan was careful to stress the key role that the three founding colleges would play in the future of the new University. He looked "forward to these colleges having a major influence upon the character and status of the University of Guelph" and added that "I hope also that their programs will not be encroached upon but rather enhanced by the new developments."²⁶ In the summer of 1963, after the provincial government revealed that it was in favour of a university in Guelph, J.D. MacLachlan, T.L. Jones, OAC President N.R. (Rick) Richards, and the Director of the Agricultural Research Institute travelled to Cornell University, the University of California (Davis), and the University of Arizona. The trips were an effort to find a workable model for the proposed Guelph University; a model that would best accommodate the dual goal of expanding the educational offerings on campus while preserving the vital agricultural work being done. They found that model in the structure of Cornell, which was contracted by the State University of New York to administer four New York state colleges. Especially relevant to the situation in Guelph, Cornell was responsible for the operation of a Veterinary School,

²⁴ UGA, RE1 UOG A0008 Box 1. T.L. Jones, "University Status" *OVC Alumni Bulletin*, 13:1 (Spring 1963).

²⁵ Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1964-31 March 1965.

²⁶ "Greet Announcement of Guelph University" *Guelph Mercury*, Friday, 24 April 1964.

a College of Agriculture, and a College of Home Economics.²⁷ Although U of G ultimately adopted the character of other Ontario universities, if these research trips are any indication, the desire to preserve the founding Colleges' agricultural work was foremost in the minds of the Federated Colleges' (and eventually the University of Guelph's) senior administrators.

In 1965, President MacLachlan, perhaps in an attempt to quell the perceived uncertainties surrounding the proposed university, noted that "unfounded are any apprehensions that developments for the University of Guelph will depreciate the identities and functions of the long established colleges."²⁸ That same year, he re-affirmed his support for the founding Colleges' original role of conducting scientific research for, and providing practical services to, Ontario's rural and agricultural communities in an interview with the *Guelph Mercury*. According to MacLachlan, although the University of Guelph was founded in order to "allow for the acceptance of a proportionate share of the rapidly increasing numbers of students demanding a university education," the responsibility of a university "is to serve the public through higher education and by expanding the boundaries of knowledge, the latter being commonly referred to as research." In terms

of research, MacLachlan announced that the University would continue to "maintain, as in the past, major areas of work on behalf of our agricultural public and rural Ontario."²⁹

Fear that university status would detract from the founding College's rural and agricultural focus was fairly widely articulated during the process of founding the new university. However, at least for the OAC, it was articulated primarily by senior politicians and college administrators. Indeed, there is little evidence that the prospect of OAC joining a traditional university elicited any real anxiety from the province's agricultural communities. For example, soon after Premier Robarts' 1963 announcement regarding the citizens' committee, Minister of Agriculture William Stewart articulated directly to the premier and his cabinet his anxiety over an arts college overshadowing the agricultural and veterinary colleges. The minister was anticipating a negative reaction from the agricultural community that would be demonstrated at the polls during the September 1963 provincial election. However, as David R. Murray notes, the potential Guelph University was not an election issue.³⁰ For agriculturalists as well as OAC alumni, as Alexander M. Ross and Terry Crowley have noted, the biggest concern was to maintain government subsidies for agri-

²⁷ UGA, RE1 FED A021. Organization of the Guelph Campus as a University—a proposal by J.D. MacLachlan, 20 August 1963.

²⁸ Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1964–31 March 1965.

²⁹ "Outline Academic Plans for University of Guelph" *Guelph Mercury*, Tuesday 30 November 1965.

³⁰ David R. Murray. *Hatching the Cowbird's Egg: The Creation of the University of Guelph* (Guelph, University of Guelph, 1989), 77.

culture, some of which went to OAC to fund its teaching, research, and extension work.³¹ As will be seen below, these concerns were placated by large and ongoing research grants from the Ontario Department of Agriculture (renamed the Ministry of Agriculture and Food in 1966) to OAC (and OVC) after U of G was founded.

However, concerns over university status were persistent enough among the OVC and wider veterinary community for J.D. MacLachlan's successor as University president, W.C. Winegard, to directly address the College's alumni twice between 1966 and 1967. According to his 1966 message in OVC's *Alumni Bulletin*, the University's concern for the agricultural community was unique among Canadian universities, and he had no intention of altering this relationship, except in order to strengthen these ties. He called on the University to conduct more research and "help the agricultural industry take advantage of this expanding knowledge." Winegard argued that "communicating our research findings to people who can make use of them is of the utmost importance."³² This same reassurance was given again to OVC alumni in the 1967 edition of the *Alumni Bulletin*. In this message, Winegard noted that, with the OVC's international

reputation, it was "natural... that there should be some concern by graduates about its future in a rapidly-expanding university." His response to this concern was his personal assurance "in the strongest possible terms that the future of the University depends upon the continuing strength of its professional schools." However, he did warn alumni that the coming years would not be easy and that the "College will have to expand to fulfill its obligations to the profession and the University."³³ In that same edition, Dean Jones reported that "perhaps the most concern one hears from alumni members is whether or not OVC will suffer in the expansion program."³⁴

OVC and the University of Guelph

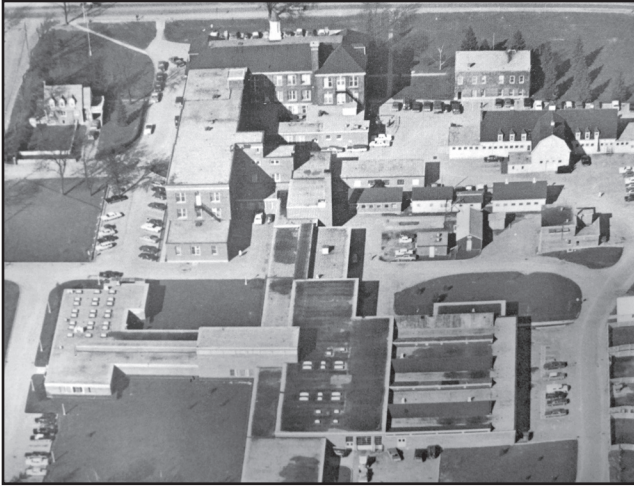
The Ontario Veterinary College largely benefitted from joining the University of Guelph, especially in terms of curriculum and infrastructure improvements as well as in the faculty's ability to influence the University's policy and contribute to the University's research output. Despite this, funding became a major issue for OVC, one that had not been encountered since the Depression and Second World War. These funding issues would have serious consequences for OVC by the early 1980s.

³¹ Alexander M. Ross and Terry Crowley, *The College on the Hill: A New History of the Ontario Agricultural College, 1874-1999* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1999), 140.

³² UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. "President Elect" *OVC Alumni Bulletin*, 15:2 (Fall and Winter 1966).

³³ UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. "Message from Dr. Winegard" *OVC Alumni Bulletin* (1967).

³⁴ UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. "Message from Dean Jones" *OVC Alumni Bulletin* (1967).



Aerial view of Ontario Veterinary College ca. 1967. courtesy of the University of Guelph Archival and Special Collections.

According to Dean Jones, it was hoped that the pre-veterinary requirement would give OVC graduates “some of the broad and basic education which is expected of the university graduate and which is in demand for senior positions in both public and private industry.”³⁶

The biggest immediate change to OVC after it joined the University of Guelph was the implementation of a long considered change in the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program. The last change to the program had been the introduction of the five-year course in the 1950s. However during the 1963-1964 academic year, an OVC curriculum committee was struck to reassess the advantages and look for weaknesses in the five-year program.³⁵ The results of this reassessment were announced the following year. Under the new program, students wishing to graduate with the DVM degree had first to complete two years of pre-veterinary training followed by a four-year professional veterinary course. Potential students could do their pre-veterinary education in one of three courses, a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, or a Bachelor of Science, at a recognized university. Ac-

The other major academic change was the adoption of the PhD and MSc degrees, and the phasing out of the unpopular MVSc and DVSc, in order to align OVC’s graduate degrees with those of the University of Guelph and other universities.³⁷ In an article in the *Guelph Mercury*, Dean Jones noted that the ability to grant PhDs “is a significant contribution to the profession, to Canadian science and to the Canadian economy in general.” Referring to the disturbing “brain drain” trend, Jones noted that before OVC had the ability to grant PhD degrees, Canadian students were often forced to pursue doctoral degrees in other countries and “the loss of those who remain in those countries... has been a concern for sometime.” As Jones concluded, “if funds for equipment, for teachers, and for fellowships can be obtained to support the PhD program, a serious deficiency will have been over-

³⁵ Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1963-31 March 1964.

³⁶ Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1964-31 March 1965.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

come.”³⁸ By 1966, graduate students at OVC were conducting a wide variety of research in pursuit of MSc and PhD degrees. For example, by 1967 PhD student J.R. Long carried out research on bovine respiratory diseases with the Department of Avian Pathology, Wildlife Diseases and Virology. In addition, MSc student R.W. Putnam was conducting research in orthopedic surgery with the Department of Clinical Studies to complete a thesis on patella subluxation in dogs.³⁹

The OVC’s faculty found themselves active participants in the academic and administrative life of the new university. Prior to the actual founding of the University of Guelph, OVC faculty played a key role on the Citizens’ Committee struck in Guelph to investigate the needs of the proposed university and the community at large. The committee included Drs. J. Schroeder and C.A.V. Barker as full members and two members of the OVC faculty association (Drs. John Gilman and Don Barnum) and two from the OAC faculty association as consultants. According to Dr. Barnum, the faculty representatives designed a plan for the University that incorporated the strengths of the existing departments which was “an exciting exercise.” The committee also conducted

an informal poll among the members of the OVC and OAC faculty associations and discovered that the faculty members of both colleges were approximately four to one in favour of university status for the Guelph colleges.⁴⁰

A number of OVC faculty served on the University of Guelph’s first senate, and one alumnus, Dr. G.D. Stirk (OVC ‘43) of Brampton, Ontario, was named to the University’s Board of Governors.⁴¹ According to Section 12 of the University of Guelph Act, the new University’s senate was to include the head of each college and the heads of academic departments within each college. The Act also called for members of the teaching staff from each college to be elected to the senate for one-year terms by the teaching staff of their home college.⁴² By the spring of 1964, Drs. J.P. Graham and C.A.V. Barker had been elected to the University senate, alongside Dean Jones and others from OVC whose position secured them a senate seat.⁴³ Section 13 of the University of Guelph Act spelled out the duties of the senate and, as such, the key role OVC faculty members would play in the direction of the University. Among other things, the senate was empowered to “control, regulate and determine the educational policy of

³⁸ “Close Ties Between OVC and Community” *Guelph Mercury*, Tuesday 30 November 1965.

³⁹ “Fellowships Awarded to OVC Students” *Can J Comp Med Vet Sci*, 31:11 (January 1967), 11

⁴⁰ Murray, *Hatching the Cowbird’s Egg*, 65-67.

⁴¹ UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. “Appointed to University Board of Governors” *OVC Alumni Bulletin*, 14:1 (Spring 1964).

⁴² UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. “Bill 133 An Act to Incorporate the University of Guelph” *OVC Alumni Bulletin*, 14:1 (Spring 1964).

⁴³ UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. “Senate of U of G Election” *OVC Alumni Bulletin*, 14:1 (Spring 1964).

the University,” and could “determine the courses of study and standards of admissions to the University and continued membership therein, and qualifications for degrees and diplomas.”⁴⁴

In addition, Dean Jones announced that OVC would contribute to the University “in special fields by teaching such things as physiology and anatomy to existing faculties and to those which may come.” Jones also pledged the College’s support for university-based research that would require “a sound knowledge of animal physiology, anatomy or animal disease processes.”⁴⁵ For example, during the 1964-1965 academic year, OVC faculty provided a series of lecture and laboratory classes in physiology for students in the agricultural sciences and a lecture course in human physiology for MacDonald Institute students. Although done under the auspices of the University of Guelph, these classes reflect the continuing tradition of the Guelph colleges sharing resources and teaching staff, a tradition which OVC had been part of since 1922. According to Dean Jones, OVC staff were to “be commended for their concern and their consideration shown for the welfare of the university.”⁴⁶

Research at OVC increased after the founding of the University of Guelph. Dean Jones later recalled that Principal

McGilvray (principal between the 1920s and the end of the Second World War) had not understood the value research presented to a school like OVC. McGilvray’s successor, Principal A.L. MacNabb, took steps to increase the research carried out at OVC and, by the 1950s, the research programme had expanded. After OVC joined the University of Guelph, the majority of OVC faculty members were required to conduct research as part of a larger university-wide research program. Research during the 1966-1967 academic year included projects on viruses, veterinary bacteriology and pesticide residues.⁴⁷ Research at OVC received a further boost with the appointment of Dr. Dennis G. Howell as the College’s first associate dean (Research) in 1967. His appointment coincided with an effort to better define and coordinate research activity within the College. The “aims and responsibilities” of the College’s researchers was defined as “assisting [the] animal industry in Ontario and throughout Canada generally, in furthering knowledge related to the health sciences and in defining the academic level in terms which enable comparison with other disciplines on campus.”⁴⁸

The publication of research results took on a new importance for OVC faculty who were also faced with the need

⁴⁴ UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. “Bill 133 An Act to Incorporate the University of Guelph” *OVC Alumni Bulletin*, 14:1 (Spring 1964).

⁴⁵ “Close Ties Between OVC and Community” *Guelph Mercury*, Tuesday 30 November 1965.,

⁴⁶ Report of the Dean of the Ontario Veterinary College. Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1964-1965.

⁴⁷ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1967.

⁴⁸ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1968.



Ontario Veterinary College Main Building, 1961, courtesy of the University of Guelph Archival and Special Collections.

to create research proposals that could attract funding from external granting agencies. The College did benefit from research grants from government and industry partners. For example, in 1969 the Ontario Racing Commission provided OVC with a research grant of \$25,000, and the National Cancer Institute provided Professors J.P. Gilman and P.K. Basrur with a grant of \$45,000.⁴⁹ The following year, industry and government grants to OVC researchers totaled nearly \$500,000 from sources such as the Ontario Hog Producers; the Ontario Beef Improvement Society; the Medical Research Council; the National Research Council; the Ontario Department of Health and the Canadian Department of Agriculture.⁵⁰

While operational funding was administered through the Department of

University Affairs (a branch of the Ministry of Education) OVC researchers were able to take advantage of research funds from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF). Although it no longer administered OVC, OMAF remained interested in veterinary research and continued to provide some funds for animal health research at OVC. This was part of a broader contract between OMAF and the University of Guelph to fund agricultural research, in order to maintain the traditional focus of the founding colleges. For example, the university-wide research funding provided by OMAF during the 1968-1969 academic year was over \$9 million. The University of Guelph reported that the bulk of this research money, divided across fifty major program areas, was dedicated to OVC and OAC researchers.⁵¹ In this

⁴⁹ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1969.

⁵⁰ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1970.

⁵¹ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1969.

way, OMAF helped maintain the long-standing agricultural and rural focus of the University's founding colleges.

Despite this research money, Premier Robarts' 1962 vision of a university under an independent board of governors relying on public support had an impact on OVCs funding for several decades after the founding of the University of Guelph. Securing funding for graduate students, for example, remained a problem for OVC during the early years of the U of G. According to Dean Jones in 1966, the College was able to support only a handful of graduate students from internal sources while at the same time endeavouring to increase the number of graduate students from the thirty-three to fifty within three to four years. With this in mind, Dr. Jones noted that the "entire financial structure of the College gives us increasing concern." The College had to compete with other U of G colleges and provincial universities for public and private research and graduate student funding. One of the dean's solutions was to elicit more financial support from the College's alumni, calling for them to "rally to the support of the College and its parent University."⁵² However, research grants from outside sources remained a key source of funding for the College's graduate students at this time. For example, in 1966 OVC graduate students re-

ceived grants through fellowships such as a \$500 fellowship awarded by the pharmaceutical company Ayerst, McKenna and Harrison, of Montreal; the \$600 Cyanamid of Canada Fellowship; the \$500 Bollard Fellowship offered by Standard Brands Limited of Montreal; and a \$500 fellowship from K-Vet Laboratories in nearby Galt, Ontario.⁵³

During the 1969-1970 academic year OVC began negotiations with the federal and provincial governments to secure capital and operating funding.⁵⁴ The result of these negotiations was a 1974 capital grant of nearly \$6 million, shared equally between the federal and provincial governments, to be put towards additional teaching facilities.⁵⁵ This funding came at the right time for OVC; the College had decided to raise enrollments from 80 to 120 students per year for at least ten years. This decision was partly in response to the large number of applications received every year (approximately 650 in 1972) and the continuing shortage of veterinarians in Canada. Renovations were planned to accommodate the new students but the College was forced to report that there would "be no significant relief from the demands for space," until new teaching buildings could be constructed.⁵⁶ The federal and provincial funding was even more welcomed after the provincial government imposed a

⁵² UGA, RE1 UOG A0008 Box 1. "Message from the Dean" *OVC Alumni Bulletin*, 15:2 (Fall and Winter 1966).

⁵³ "Fellowships Awarded to OVC Students." *Can J Comp Med Vet Sci*, 31:1 (January 1967), 11.

⁵⁴ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1970.

⁵⁵ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1974.

⁵⁶ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1973.

freeze in capital grants to universities in 1972.⁵⁷

Unfortunately, chronic underfunding of Ontario's universities did have a negative (although temporary) impact on the Ontario Veterinary College, realizing the fears expressed by the veterinary community nearly twenty years earlier. The OVC only received a partial accreditation from the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in 1983, which the University president attributed to system-wide underfunding. The Association's inspection team noted deficiencies in classrooms, laboratories, offices, and clinical work. Both the federal and provincial governments reacted relatively swiftly to the news. Ontario's minister of agriculture pledged a special funding package of \$1.8 million a year for three years and, in 1985, the federal government offered an additional \$6.5 million for construction and renovation programs at OVC. The College was also forced to reduce enrollments from 120 to 100 to alleviate its space issues. However, OVC did not see its full accreditation restored until 1988.⁵⁸

According to the University of Guelph's Long Range Development Plan from 1964, the enrollment of the Ontario Veterinary College at the time of the University's founding was limited by the availability of clinical material. The plan, which sought to map out the de-

velopment of the University's first fifteen years, noted that there were "definite limits" to the amount and variety of patients available for students to work with and by 1964 it was "generally believed that OVC has reached that limit." The College had a first year class of seventy-nine students at the start of the 1963-64 academic year and combined with the rest of the student body, "OVC is close to the maximum enrolment it can handle."⁵⁹ President MacLachlan noted in his 1963-1964 annual report that OVC "continues to receive applications far in excess of the number that can be accepted for the DVM degree; the required clinical facilities place a limitation on the number of acceptances." Although the opening of the new Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan in 1964 offered OVC some relief, especially in terms of applicants from western Canada, the situation remained that the "demand for DVM graduates far exceeds the supply in Canada."⁶⁰

Under the University of Guelph's proposed building plan, OVC sought to relieve its space issues. The University's Long Range Development Plan was only preliminary and would be subject to continued amendments but it did lay out a building programme for OVC designed to increase teaching and research space. This included space for physiological science as well as an expansion

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Barker and Crowley, *One Voice*, 152.

⁵⁹ University of Guelph Long Range Development Plan, 1964. Prepared by Project Planning Associates Limited, Toronto, Ontario, and Richard P. Dober, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁶⁰ Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1963-31 March 1964.

of the existing spaces for anatomy and pathology through renovations to OVCs Main Building.⁶¹ The shortage of space for physiology was especially acute. By 1963 it was recognized that a “most urgent need for facilities now exists in the Department of Physiological Sciences.” Indeed, many of the staff of this department were forced to “work in buildings originally designed as animal holding units, with equipment and services improvised for a short term.” More generally, although “applied aspects of the College program... have adequate facilities,” there was a serious lack of facilities for even the most basic research. Dean Jones reported that “though a dedicated staff continues to work under these conditions, there is no question that the unsatisfactory quarters have a harmful effect on morale and thus on this work [research].”⁶² These space shortages would be partially relieved in the years after OVC joined the University of Guelph.

By 1967, OVC was able to report that building had begun on a new dissection laboratory for the Department of Anatomy and that plans were being drawn up for a new building for the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology. According to the University’s Department of Physical Resources, plans were in place for additional space for all OVC depart-

ments, at an estimated cost of \$3.5 million.⁶³ Also in 1967, the Clinical Studies Department, in an architectural brief, outlined its plans for an animal holding facility, designed to be an extension to the clinical barn. The rationale behind the building was to increase the number and variety of animals held on campus in order to “effectively demonstrate particular disease entities and syndromes at the undergraduate level.” The Department of Clinical Studies, which felt that the ideal student to animal ratio was 1:7, sought to create enough space to hold 65 cattle, 35 horses, 30 sheep and goats, 30 pens for swine and 300 dogs and cats. In the case of cattle, the proposed building would double the number of cattle that could be held on campus in 1967.⁶⁴

The College’s building programme was beginning to see results. By the 1975-1976 academic year, OVC reported that on 19 June 1976, new facilities were opened for all of the College’s departments, as well as an addition to the OVC Library. The new “quarters” included accommodations for the Department of Pathology; an undergraduate teaching laboratory and other space for the Department of Veterinary Microbiology and Immunology; and surgical and radiographic facilities for the Department of Clinical Studies. Renovations to the

⁶¹ University of Guelph Long Range Development Plan, 1964.

⁶² Annual Report of the Federated Colleges, 1 April 1963-31 March 1964.

⁶³ UGA, RE1 UOG A0008, Box 1. “Message from the Dean” *OVC Alumni Bulletin* (1967).

⁶⁴ Animal Holding for Clinical Studies Building Program and Brief to Architect, 1967. Brief Prepared by Dr. D.G. Howell, Associate Dean, OVC, Dr. J. Archibald, Chairman, Department of Clinical Studies, Dr. R.A. Willoughby, Department of Clinical Studies, and Mr. W.A. Rauch, Engineering Services Department.

Main Building allowed for radiobiology and histology laboratories for the Department of Biomedical Sciences and 3,000 square feet for the Library. The old library space was so overcrowded that some of its collections had to be put in storage to create more space. Furthermore, “408 DVM students, to say nothing of other on-campus personnel, competed daily for the 50 work study places in the crowded facility.” The new Library could house the library’s full collection and also featured 110 study carrels and tables, a reading lounge, and a larger work area for the library staff.⁶⁵ The proposed building programme under the University of Guelph was another way in which OVC benefited from the University’s expansion process. It also demonstrates the University’s continued investment in the work of the founding colleges.

Conclusion

The founding of the University of Guelph ushered in a new phase in the history of the Ontario Veterinary College. For the members of the OVC community, the debates leading up to creation of the new university were met with a mixture of enthusiasm and apprehension. Those, such as Dr. Trevor Lloyd Jones, who supported OVC joining a traditional university, cited the numerous educational benefits university status would bring. These benefits included the exposure of DVM students to a broader educational experience through access to a much broader variety of courses in the arts and sciences. This

was achieved through the introduction of a pre-veterinary requirement for all incoming DVM students after the OVC joined the University of Guelph. The other main educational benefit was the improvement to graduate studies at the College. Prior to university status, the graduate program at OVC (and OAC) was woefully underdeveloped, with only the unpopular MVSc and DVSc degrees offered through the University of Toronto. Hand-in-hand with this underdevelopment was the fear that veterinarians seeking graduate training would go to the United States to pursue an advanced degree, some of whom chose not to return to Canada afterwards. After the University of Guelph was founded the College’s graduate degrees changed; the MVSc and DVSc degrees were phased out in favour of MSc and PhD degrees that began attracting more and more graduate students in the years after 1964.

Of those who were less than enthusiastic about university status, one of the most pervasive fears was that the arts and science programs of a traditional university would overshadow the vital agricultural focus of OVC and the other founding colleges. Those with an interest in turning the Guelph colleges into a university worked tirelessly to reassure the agricultural community and others with an interest in agriculture that the work of the founding colleges would in no-way be impaired by the transition to university status. While these fears were more apprehended than real with regards

⁶⁵ UGA, RE1 UOG A0068 Box 1. Annual Report of the University of Guelph, 1976.

to the OAC, there was genuine concern amongst the OVC community, which tempered the enthusiasm of those such as Trevor Lloyd Jones. Unfortunately, funding did remain an area of difficulty for OVC throughout the decades immediately following university status.

Finally, the Ontario Veterinary College benefitted greatly from expansions to the College's infrastructure. In the years leading up to university status it was widely believed that OVC had reached its maximum enrollment based on the available space and clinical material. Furthermore, departments such as the Department of Physiological Sciences were in desperate need of new facilities

in order to carry out their teaching and research responsibilities. Within a decade of the founding of the University of Guelph, concrete steps had been taken to alleviate the shortage of space suffered by OVC. These steps took the form of new buildings and renovations to existing facilities, in order to create new space for every department within the College.

The decades after 1964 would see their fair share of growing pains as OVC adjusted to operating as an integral part of a traditional university. Through these years of growth OVC forged ahead with a teaching and research program that would make it a world leader in veterinary science.
