

Forum / Tribune

About Us: Expressing the Purpose of University Continuing Education in Canada

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ABSTRACT

This article explores claims made on websites of CAUCE members about the purpose of university continuing education. CAUCE members often claim a role in addressing the needs or goals of learners seeking professional development, personal enrichment, or the furthering of knowledge and skills. They claim to deliver programs and services that promote lifelong learning for adults, whether as individuals or as members of communities and organizations. These programs and services are characterized as enabling access to quality education in flexible and innovative ways. The work of continuing education is often presented as a means to link universities with

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article, l'auteur explore des revendications sur la raison d'être de l'éducation permanente universitaire qui se trouvent aux sites Web des membres de l'AÉPUC. Souvent, les membres de l'AÉPUC prétendent avoir un rôle dans la réponse aux besoins ou aux buts des apprenants à la recherche de développement professionnel, d'enrichissement personnel, ou de perfectionnement de connaissances et d'habiletés. Ils allèguent offrir des programmes et des services promouvant l'apprentissage continu pour adultes, soit comme individus, soit comme membres de communautés ou d'organismes. Ces programmes et services sont car-

communities and with external agencies. This article describes these public claims made by Canadian university continuing education units and endeavours to promote informed reflection and dialogue about the purpose of those units.

actérisés comme facilitant de façon flexible et innovatrice l'accès à une éducation de qualité. Le travail de l'éducation permanente est souvent présenté comme un moyen de relier les universités aux communautés et aux organismes. Dans cet article, l'auteur décrit ces revendications publiques qu'ont faites des unités d'éducation permanente et universitaire, et il tente de promouvoir la réflexion et la discussion informées sur la raison d'être de ces unités.

INTRODUCTION

Members of the Canadian Association for University Continuing Education (CAUCE) reach hundreds of thousands of learners annually through delivering non-credit courses, certificate programs, customized training, public lectures, distance education programs, and degree-credit classes, which are offered in the evenings, on Saturdays, during spring and summer months, or off-campus. Such activities are important to learners, to those learners' communities and organizations, and to universities. Given the diversity and significance of the work undertaken by CAUCE members, it is challenging to express a coherent and compelling purpose for that work.

In recent years, the purpose of university continuing education (UCE) in Canada has been the subject of extensive reflection on the part of contributors to the *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education*. What was, what is, and what should be its purpose? Archer and Wright (1999), Cram and Morrison (2005), Cruikshank (1991, 1998, 2001), Einsiedel (1998), Karpiak and Kops (1995), Kreber and Mhina (2005), McLean (1996), McLean, Thompson, and Jonker (2006), Nesbit, Dunlop, and Gibson (2007), Selman (2005), and Thompson and Lambie (2000) have asked these questions, in various forms, in the pages of this journal. A different approach is taken in this article: I examine how continuing education units across the country actually express the purpose of their work. In other words, rather than pursue the *normative* question of what continuing education units *ought* to be doing, I present the *empirical* record of what those units *say* they intend to do. By building a better understanding of the claims currently being made

by Canadian UCE units, I hope to promote informed reflection and dialogue about the purpose of those units.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Given my research interest to determine the ways in which UCE units in Canada publicly express the purpose of their work, I went to the most publicly accessible source of information about them: their websites. From the CAUCE website of institutional members [<http://cauce-aepuc.ca/en/member-current.asp>], I followed the links to the websites of its 48 members as of July 25, 2007. In cases where an institutional member was not a continuing education unit, I used the website of that member's continuing education unit, wherever such a unit existed. In the five cases where no such unit was evident from the institution's website, I used the broader institution's general website.

From each CAUCE member's home page, I selected the text of what appeared to be the clearest statement of the purpose of its continuing education unit's work. Further, in each case I looked for a link to an "About Us" page and selected pertinent text from that page. Finally, wherever a mission statement was evident from either a home page or an "About Us" page, I selected the text of that statement. Clearly, my selections were based on subjective judgment; I looked for the best possible statements expressing the purpose of the continuing education unit and its work. Rather than seek statements about what the units did (e.g., programs, services, or schedules), I sought statements about the purposes that animated or inspired such activities. Not all websites contained such statements; in those cases, I selected descriptive statements that I believed best approximated an expression of the purpose of UCE.

Appendix A provides basic data regarding the methods of my analysis. It names each of the 48 institutional members of CAUCE and identifies the number of words selected, from three distinct sources, for inclusion in the analysis.

As Appendix A indicates, 34 of the 48 CAUCE institutional members have unit titles that include the words **continuing education**, **continuing studies**, or **l'éducation permanente**. The words **distance education**, **distributed learning**, or **open learning** appear in the title of 10 units, while 3 unit titles include the words **extension** or **extended** and 3 units have unique titles that mention none of these words. Finally, 5 CAUCE members are universities that do not list a specific unit as the institution's representative. This tally amounts to 55 units, because 7 CAUCE members have unit titles that include the words **continuing** and **distance/distributed**.

Overall, 7,147 words were selected for analysis. The average number of words per member institution was 149, with a regional breakdown of 142 words for Atlantic members, 150 for Western members, and 152 for members from Ontario and Quebec.

Having identified the passages for analysis, I carefully read those passages to identify keywords, phrases, and concepts that indicated the expression of various purposes for UCE. Eventually, 4 thematic groupings and 16 keywords emerged from my reading, as listed in Table 1

Table 1: *Themes and Keywords in the Analysis*

Theme	Keywords
Roles	1. Needs or goals 2. Professional development or career advancement 3. Personal enrichment 4. Knowledge or skills
Audiences	5. Lifelong learning 6. Adult learners 7. Individuals 8. Communities or organizations 9. International or global
Attributes	10. Access 11. Quality 12. Flexibility 13. Innovation
Linkages	14. University 15. Extension 16. Collaboration

The selected passages from each CAUCE member's website were searched in order to determine the number of institutions whose claims about the purpose of their UCE unit included each of these keywords. I did not restrict this analysis to exact matches; for example, the phrase "learning throughout life" was accepted as equivalent to "lifelong learning." I then tabulated the frequency with which these keywords appeared on members' websites and identified specific passages that illustrated how each of them was linked to the purpose of UCE. Both quantitative frequencies and qualitative passages are reported in the next section of this article.

There are some important limitations to the methods of research and analysis that were used in preparing this article. Although limiting my research to a review of CAUCE members' websites allowed me to quickly assemble comparable data from such members, it also prevented me from gathering more comprehensive statements of purpose through methods such as interviews or surveys. Further, since websites are typically designed for marketing and promoting educational programs and services to the public, certain purposes (such as conducting scholarly research or promoting community development) of UCE units are likely under-represented in the findings of this study. My analysis of CAUCE members' websites depended upon subjective judgment; another researcher would likely have selected slightly different passages for analysis and interpreted those passages in other ways. Finally, this study is descriptive rather than explanatory or comparative. I have not analyzed why CAUCE members claim what they do on their websites or how such claims may differ according to variables such as the nature, size, or regional location of respective members.

FINDINGS

Table 2 identifies how frequently each of the keywords appeared in the websites of the 48 CAUCE members. If a keyword appeared one or more times in a given member's website, a frequency of "one" was counted for that member. The percentages reported in Table 2 represent the proportion of CAUCE members whose websites contained at least one reference to each keyword. No attempt was made to count the number of references to the same keyword within a given website. Note that the concept of "individuals" was measured twice: once through specific reference to the concept of serving "individuals" and once through the use of the rhetorical device of addressing the second person ("you") as the reader of the website.

The basic quantitative findings from this analysis are evident from Table 2. The majority of Canadian UCE units identify a role for themselves in meeting needs or goals for professional development and personal enrichment. These units serve adult lifelong learners, whether as individuals or as members of communities and organizations. Over a third of the units explicitly serve international learners. Between a quarter and a third of them associate their programs and services with concepts such as access, quality, flexibility, and innovation. Over half explicitly link their work with a parent institution, and nearly a quarter identify collaborative linkages with external agencies.

These quantitative findings become more meaningful through the following presentation of direct quotations from the passages used in this analysis. These passages were not chosen because they best represent the purposes of the continuing education units with which they are associated; rather,

they were chosen because they illustrate the meaning of the key concepts employed in this analysis. Therefore, simply because a CAUCE member is cited for publishing a passage concerning professional development (for example), readers should not assume that its central purpose is necessarily the promotion of professional development.

Table 2: *Frequency of Keywords within CAUCE Members' Web Sites*

Theme	Keywords	Frequency	Percentage
Roles	1. Needs or goals	25	52%
	2. Professional development or career advancement	37	77%
	3. Personal enrichment	31	65%
	4. Knowledge or skills	18	38%
Audiences	5. Lifelong learning	19	40%
	6. Adult learners	16	33%
	7. Individuals	13	27%
	“You”	30	63%
	8. Communities or organizations	25	52%
	9. International or global	17	35%
Attributes	10. Access	13	27%
	11. Quality	16	33%
	12. Flexibility	12	25%
	13. Innovation	13	27%
Linkages	14. University	27	56%
	15. Extension	11	23%
	16. Collaboration	11	23%

Roles

Meeting the needs of learners and communities is central to the purpose of many CAUCE member institutions. The School of Continuing Studies at the University of Toronto begins its mission statement with the phrase: “To respond to the advanced and diverse learning needs of adults in the

Greater Toronto Area and beyond" [<http://learn.utoronto.ca/PageFactory.aspx?PageID=491>]. The notion of "goals" is sometimes used rather than that of "needs," as in the following passage from the home page of Continuing Education at Wilfrid Laurier University: "Are you interested in personal development, expanding your knowledge, improving your career, or just learning new things? Whatever your educational goals, continuing education at Laurier can help" [http://www.wlu.ca/homepage.php?grp_id=160].

Which needs and goals are addressed through UCE in Canada? Primarily, they are those associated with either professional development or personal growth. Table 3 presents several illustrations of the manner in which personal and professional needs are positioned as the focus of continuing education.

Table 3: *Professional Development and Personal Growth*

Unit	Quotation
Concordia University, Centre for Continuing Education	Investing in your personal and professional growth is the right thing to do and our dedicated and enthusiastic program administrators, support staff and instructors look forward to serving your educational needs. [http://sarno.concordia.ca/conted/director]
Mount Saint Vincent University, Distance Learning & Continuing Education	The non-credit Continuing Education offerings described on this website give you the opportunity to enrich your life through learning, whether to nourish your creativity, to gain new understandings of self, or to acquire essential skills for career success. [http://www.msvu.ca/continuing-ed/Directory-welcome.asp]
University of Northern British Columbia, Continuing Studies	We are proud to offer you a diverse range of courses covering many topics whether you are looking for professional development or personal enrichment opportunities. [http://www.unbc.ca/continuingstudies/index.html]
Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design, Continuing Studies	In an encouraging environment for exploration and development for all levels of artists and designers, we invite you to come and join us for portfolio development, personal development or professional development. [www.eciad.ca/cstudies]

Unit	Quotation
Nova Scotia Agricultural College	The Centre for Continuing & Distance Education delivers lifelong learning opportunities to assist you in achieving your personal and professional goals. [www.nsac.ca/cde]
Brock University, Department of Community Services, Continuing Education	Whether you are looking to enhance your professional expertise, explore personal interests, enrich your children, or experience world-class art and entertainment, Brock's canvas of lifelong learning and enrichment opportunities are a true reflection of its community. [http://www.brocku.ca/communityservices/conted]
York University	Continuing education allows you to pursue areas of professional or personal interest or to enhance your professional qualifications in an increasingly competitive and rapidly changing labour market. [http://www.yorku.ca/web/futurestudents/continuing]

Frequently, assisting learners to acquire new knowledge and skills is the mechanism through which UCE units enable learners to pursue such personal and professional growth. As one example, the home page of the College of Extended Learning at the University of New Brunswick states:

We are the lifelong learning outreach arm of the University of New Brunswick, bringing higher education expertise and knowledge to adult learners. Whether you are interested in honing your work skills, taking university courses, or embarking on a new hobby, we strive to meet and exceed your needs! [www.extend.unb.ca]

In summary, the primary role claimed by CAUCE members for their work is to address people's needs for professional development and personal growth, often through assisting them to learn new knowledge and skills.

Audiences

For whom do Canadian UCE units provide their programs and services? They provide them for lifelong learners. The notion of lifelong learning for all is central to the welcome message of the website of Continuing Studies at Royal Roads University:

We aspire to support and celebrate the personal and professional development of all citizens in the community. Please join us for a lifelong journey and celebration of learning. [<http://www.royalroads.ca/continuing-studies/about-continuing-studies.htm>]

In a similar manner, Continuing and Distance Education at Acadia University claims that it “is dedicated to offering the best, most convenient education options for students across Canada and around the world because we believe learning is for everyone and learning is for life” [<http://conted.acadiau.ca>].

Adults are the lifelong learners most typically served by UCE units, as expressed in the mission statement of Continuing Education at Bishop’s University: “To ensure continued access to educational programs of the highest quality for adult learners within the Eastern Townships who wish to pursue their studies” [<http://www.ubishops.ca/continuingeducation>]. Similarly, the Centre for Continuing Education at McGill University claims that it is “a multidisciplinary academic unit with the primary goal of meeting the educational needs and aspirations of the adult members of a rapidly changing society” [<http://www.mcgill.ca/conted/about>].

CAUCE member institutions define their audiences variously as individuals, organizations, and communities. The College of Continuing Education at Dalhousie University identifies all three audiences on its home page: “We support individuals, communities, organizations and businesses in a way that develops competence, confidence and good citizenship” [<http://collegeofcontinuinged.dal.ca>]. The individual learner as the focus of UCE is succinctly illustrated by the home page of the Division of Continuing Education at the University of Winnipeg: “Because of our size, we are able to provide individual attention to help you plan your educational goals” [<http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/dce-faqs>]. In a similar manner, the Faculté de l’éducation permanente, Université de Montréal, suggests that its continuing education work « répond aux besoins de formation des individus œuvrant dans les organisations et les entreprises » [<http://www.fep.umontreal.ca/formationcontinue/index.html>].

Although individual learners are the intended readers of CAUCE members’ websites, such members frequently claim that their programs and services are of broader value to the community. As one example, the Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Regina claims that it “makes a significant contribution to the intellectual, economic, social and cultural development of our community by offering high quality, accessible and responsive education and training programs to learners of all ages” [<http://www.uregina.ca/cce>].

At times, the notion of community is defined by CAUCE members in more specific ways. For example, the mission of the First Nations University of Canada is: "To enhance the quality of life, and to preserve, protect and interpret the history, language, culture and artistic heritage of First Nations" [<http://www.firstnationsuniversity.ca/default.aspx?page=124>]. The goal of serving adult learners and promoting the development of particular communities is also expressed in the mission statement of La Direction générale de l'Éducation permanente, Université de Moncton: « La DGÉP a pour mission la promotion d'une éducation aux adultes au service d'un développement social, économique, technologique et culturel des sociétés acadienne et canadienne » [<http://www.umoncton.ca/ep/dgep/dgep.html>].

Another manner in which UCE audiences are targeted is through the provision of programs and services tailored for specific organizations. The mission statement of the Centre for Continuing Education at McMaster University illustrates this: "We provide quality professional education to individuals and corporate clients, in order to enhance careers and foster workforce development" [<http://www.mcmaster.ca/conted/about>]. In many cases, CAUCE members suggest that they serve international learners. As one example, the mission statement of Continuing Studies at the University of British Columbia claims that it "is an academic unit that inspires curiosity, develops ingenuity, stimulates dialogue and facilitates change among life-long learners locally and internationally" [<http://www.cstudies.ubc.ca/about/mission.html>].

In summary, those served by Canadian UCE units are primarily adult, lifelong learners. These learners are individuals but are often considered as members of communities and organizations. International learners figure prominently for many units.

Attributes

What are the key characteristics of the programs and services of UCE units in Canada? CAUCE members' websites identify four key attributes: accessibility, flexibility, quality, and innovation. Making post-secondary education accessible is a key purpose of some units. In its mission statement, Athabasca University declares that it "is dedicated to the removal of barriers that restrict access to, and success in, university-level studies and to increasing equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide" [<http://www.athabascau.ca/aboutAU/mission.php>]. The Centre for Continuing & Distance Education at the University of Saskatchewan asserts in its mission statement: "We are the University's centre for planning and delivering innovative continuing and distance education programs that assist individuals in overcoming geographic and other barriers to learning" [<http://www.ccde.usask.ca/ExtensionDivision/about/vision.html>]. At Saint Mary's University, the mission

of Continuing Education “is to provide welcoming, open and supportive educational opportunities that enable Saint Mary’s University to fulfill its stated goals of accessibility and outreach” [http://www.smu.ca/conted/about_message.html].

Some CAUCE members link accessibility with flexibility, as in the claim that Open Learning at Thompson Rivers University

specializes in providing mature learners with flexible learning options, open access to education wherever possible, and a wide variety of course and program choices, meeting the needs of its own students and helping other institutions and organizations meet the open and online learning needs of their communities.
[<http://www.tru.ca/distance/about.html>]

Flexibility is a core attribute of programs and services provided by other CAUCE members, as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4: *Flexibility*

Unit	Quotation
University of Guelph, Office of Open Learning	Open learning at the University of Guelph provides you with flexibility and choice in meeting your educational goals. [http://www.open.uoguelph.ca/about/about.html]
Lakehead University	. . . the flexible programming offered through the Office of Continuing Education and Distributed Learning is designed to meet your needs both on-campus and through distance education. [http://cedl.lakeheadu.ca]
University of Waterloo, Distance and Continuing Education	. . . you can study when and where it’s most convenient for you. [http://de.uwaterloo.ca/index.html]

In addition to being accessible and flexible, the programs and services of CAUCE members are trumpeted as being innovative and of high quality. The Faculties of Professional and Continuing Education at Concordia University College of Alberta claim:

Our innovative programs and courses combined with a preference for small class size and growing reputation for teaching excellence provide

our students with the environment and skills needed to succeed in graduate studies or the workforce of the 21st Century.
[<http://pace.concordia.ab.ca>]

The mission statement of the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University expresses a similar claim to quality and innovation: "To be a leader in innovative, quality, lifelong learning that empowers adults to reach their life and career goals"
[http://ce-online.ryerson.ca/ce_2007-2008/default.asp?id=71].

In summary, CAUCE members propose four key attributes of their programs and services: accessibility, flexibility, quality, and innovation. Claims regarding these attributes are combined in various ways by different members. For example, the home page of Extended Education at the University of Manitoba asserts: "Your learning needs are changing to meet new challenges. To help you satisfy the diverse demands of lifelong learning, we extend a wide range of innovative programming and flexible study options"
[www.umanitoba.ca/extended].

Linkages

The work of UCE in Canada is often presented as a means of connecting universities and communities. Table 5 illustrates three mission statements making claims to such linkages.

Table 5: *Linkages*

Unit	Quotation
University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension	To create opportunities for lifelong learning in response to the needs of individuals and society by engaging the university and communities in learning, discovery, and citizenship. [http://www.extension.ualberta.ca/faculty/deansmessage.aspx]
University of Calgary, Continuing Education	Strengthening our university and our communities by providing high-quality educational opportunities to lifelong learners. [http://conted.ucalgary.ca/about/mission.html]

Unit	Quotation
University of Victoria, Continuing Studies	The Division of Continuing Studies seeks to ensure access to the academic wealth of the University of Victoria by a broad and diverse community of adult learners, and provides leadership in the development and delivery of innovative continuing education programs, in cooperation with academic and external partners. [http://www.continuingstudies.uvic.ca/pdf/dcs-strategic.pdf]

The metaphor of a “bridge” between the university and the community is used by the continuing education units at Simon Fraser University and the University of Western Ontario:

The hallmark of Continuing Studies at Simon Fraser University is the leadership role the unit plays in creating a bridge between the university and the community by providing university-level programming that meets community needs and enhances faculty research. The relationships flow two ways as university expertise is extended to the community, and community knowledge and priorities are brought into the university. [<http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/about.htm>]

Continuing Studies at Western is the educational bridge between the university and the communities. Through innovative leadership in life-long learning, we create and deliver responsive and accessible programs which build on the University’s academic strengths. [<http://www.uwo.ca/cstudies/frameabout.html>]

Some CAUCE members use the concept of extension to describe how they link with their communities. Continuing Education at Trent University claims that it “extends Trent’s teaching and research expertise to individuals and organizations in Peterborough and area communities” [<http://www.trentu.ca/continuingeducation>]. At Trinity Western University, Global Learning Connections asserts that it “seeks to extend the mission and core values of the institution to non-traditional learning audiences in non-traditional ways around the globe” [<http://www.twu.ca/glc>].

In addition, continuing education units often claim to connect universities with a range of organizations, including governments, businesses, unions, and professional associations. Through working in collaboration with such external agencies, UCE units claim to develop programs and services consistent with needs in a range of communities. The mission of Cape Breton University is: “To provide leadership and employ partnerships that assist

learners and their communities to meet their educational, cultural, and economic needs" [http://www.cbu.ca/cbu/_main/default_main.asp?topic=welcome&id=mission_statement]. The home page of Distance Education and Learning Technologies at Memorial University of Newfoundland states that "whether you are a current or future distance student, faculty member, graduate student or one of our many valued partners, we look forward to a long and prosperous future of collaboration" [www.distance.mun.ca].

CONCLUSIONS

This article has explored and described public claims made by Canadian university continuing education units about the purposes of their work. A primary role of many of these units was expressed in terms of addressing the **needs** or **goals** of learners seeking **professional development**, **personal enrichment**, or the furthering of **knowledge** and **skills**. Such units claim to deliver educational programs and services to promote **lifelong learning** by **adults**, whether as **individuals** or as members of **communities** and **organizations**. Their programs and services were characterized as enabling **access** to **quality** education in **flexible** and **innovative** ways. Finally, the work of these units was often presented as a means to link **universities** with communities and with external agencies through processes of **collaboration**.

The primary contribution of this article is providing readers of the *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education* with a concise empirical portrait of what CAUCE members claim to be the purpose of their work. Its second contribution is to promote reflection and dialogue on the purpose and future direction of UCE in Canada. In terms of the second contribution, I conclude with a few provocative questions based not on the preceding empirical analysis but rather on my personal experiences as a university continuing educator and as a student of sociology.

Do the claims described in this article accurately reflect the full range of purposes served by UCE units in Canada? There is no doubt that such claims help guide the work of hundreds of academic, professional, and administrative staff or that many of these people sincerely believe in the mission statements, home-page messages, and "About Us" passages quoted above. However, is it possible that such work has unintended consequences or that it serves purposes other than those toward which it is consciously dedicated? I want to briefly explore two possibilities, although there are surely others that could be identified.

First, as a continuing education programmer and administrator, I have learned that some members of university communities view continuing education primarily in terms of its public relations value or its financial impact on the rest of the institution. There seems nothing wrong with expecting that

UCE units would build public support for the broader institution or conduct their work in a financially responsible manner. And yet, is there a chance that managing public relations or generating financial surpluses are alternative priorities that could put at risk the expressed purposes of continuing education units? As one example, if promoting lifelong learning is a valued goal, then what obligation do UCE units have to set prices or have admissions policies that promote widespread access to education—even if such prices or policies might run counter to practices or expectations elsewhere in the parent institution?

Second, as a student of sociology, I have learned that universities have a role in the reproduction of inequality in society. Simply put, universities are key institutions in an educational system that enables people with privileges (wealth, social status, education) to pass on those privileges to their children in a manner that seems fair to everyone. Empirically, the level of education and income of one's parents is a strong predictor of whether or not one will graduate from university. Further, university education is a strong predictor of one's subsequent income and wealth. Admission to university is typically a meritocratic competition, based on objective indicators such as high school grades and entrance examination results. Therefore, all people would seem to have an equal opportunity to obtain a university education and enjoy the benefits of that education—as long as they are willing to work hard enough to merit admission. In reality, children of relatively privileged parents have a higher likelihood of doing well in high school, and thus gaining admission to university, than do children with less-privileged backgrounds. Therefore, universities are, perhaps unintentionally, institutions that reinforce and give legitimacy to social and economic inequalities. Do UCE units have an unacknowledged role in this process? Do such units serve adults who were unable to access university education and credentials as youth? Or, do such units provide additional opportunities for the already well educated to build their expertise and credentials, in effect, further distancing them from those who did not have the privilege of attending university in the first place?

I believe that adult and continuing educators have important and positive roles and responsibilities. I have posed these questions not to devalue or undermine the work of my friends and colleagues in this field but rather to promote critical reflection and dialogue about that work. What is the purpose of UCE in Canada? What should its purpose be? What responsibility do we have, as university continuing educators, to acknowledge or address the potential hidden purposes, or unintended consequences, of the work in which we are engaged? I hope that this article has provided an opportunity to reflect upon such questions.

Finally, I hope that this simple and descriptive article might inspire further research and dialogue concerning the purpose of UCE. Researchers could

use other data-gathering methods to add depth to this analysis of CAUCE members' websites. The claims of various universities could be compared according to the nature and size of their continuing education units or the region in which they are located. Particular care could be taken to examine claims to purposes that diverge from the general pattern identified in this article and to explain the reasons for the diversity of purposes among continuing education units. Although this article is largely descriptive in nature, other researchers may wish to apply theories from the social sciences in an effort to explain why UCE in Canada serves the purposes that it does or how such purposes may be changing.

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BIOGRAPHY

Scott McLean joined the University of Calgary as director of Continuing Education in July, 2005. From 1994 to 2005, he was a faculty member at the University of Saskatchewan Extension Division. Scott has a Ph.D. in sociology, and he has published widely in the fields of adult, continuing, and distance education. His professional practice in continuing education has ranged from teaching adult basic education to developing university-based programs in agricultural leadership and health promotion. He has taught graduate courses in the practice and theory of adult education, research methods, and the planning and evaluation of educational programs.

Scott McLean travaille à l'Université de Calgary comme directeur de l'Éducation permanente depuis juillet 2005. De 1994 à 2005, il fut membre du corps professoral à la Division de la Formation permanente de l'Université de la Saskatchewan. Scott a un doctorat en sociologie. Il a beaucoup publié dans les domaines de l'éducation des adultes, de l'éducation permanente et de la formation à distance. Sa pratique professionnelle en éducation permanente comprend l'enseignement de la formation de base des adultes jusqu'à la conception de programmes de formation universitaire en leadership agricole et de promotion de la santé. Il a aussi donné des cours aux 2^e et 3^e cycles sur la pratique et la théorie de l'éducation des adultes, les méthodes de recherche, la planification et l'évaluation de programmes pédagogiques.

Appendix A: *Number of Words Analyzed from CAUCE Members' Web Sites*

	Home page	"About Us" statement	Mission statement	Total words analyzed
ALBERTA				
University of Alberta, Faculty of Extension	49	59	26	134
Athabasca University	0	170	51	221
University of Calgary, Continuing Education	84	0	106	190
Concordia University College of Alberta, Faculties of Professional and Continuing Education	70	0	0	70
BRITISH COLUMBIA				
University of British Columbia, Continuing Studies	72	53	59	184
Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design, Continuing Studies	150	0	0	150
University of Northern British Columbia, Continuing Studies	61	0	0	61
Royal Roads University, Continuing Studies	27	147	0	174
Simon Fraser University, Continuing Studies	41	143	0	184
Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning	39	153	0	192
Trinity Western University, Global Learning Connections	102	0	0	102
University of Victoria, Continuing Studies	35	0	47	82

	Home page	"About Us" statement	Mission statement	Total words analyzed
MANITOBA				
University of Manitoba, Extended Education	52	181	33	266
University of Winnipeg, Division of Continuing Education	97	62	0	159
SASKATCHEWAN				
First Nations University of Canada	0	0	114	114
University of Regina, Centre for Continuing Education	132	0	0	132
University of Saskatchewan, Centre for Continuing and Distance Education	78	0	58	136
Western subtotal (17 members)	1,089	968	494	2,551
ONTARIO				
Brock University, Continuing Education	80	0	0	80
University of Guelph, Office of Open Learning	0	224	114	338
Lakehead University, Office of Continuing Education and Distributed Learning	104	0	0	104
Laurentian University, Student Affairs	103	0	68	171
McMaster University, Centre for Continuing Education	43	130	19	192

ONTARIO (con't)				
	Home page	"About Us" statement	Mission statement	Total words analyzed
Nipissing University, Centre for Continuing Business Education	0	112	0	112
Royal Military College of Canada	140	0	0	140
Ryerson University, G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education	44	196	19	259
University of St. Michael's College, Continuing Education	0	84	0	84
University of Toronto, School of Continuing Studies	29	0	56	85
Trent University, Continuing Education	114	0	0	114
University of Waterloo, Distance and Continuing Education	125	0	0	125
University of Western Ontario, Continuing Studies	0	210	35	245
Wilfrid Laurier University, Continuing Education	27	0	0	27
University of Windsor, Centre for Teaching and Learning (Note: The Web site for the University of Windsor was being updated on July 25, 2007.)	28	0	0	28
York University	0	203	0	203

	Home page	"About Us" statement	Mission statement	Total words analyzed
QUEBEC				
Bishop's University, Continuing Education	90	0	0	90
Concordia University, Centre for Continuing Education	42	163	0	205
McGill University, Centre for Continuing Education	129	182	0	311
Université de Montréal, Faculté de l'éducation permanente	59	67	0	126
Central subtotal (20 members)	1,157	1,571	311	3,039
NEW BRUNSWICK				
Université de Moncton, Direction générale de l'Éducation permanente	0	62	49	111
University of New Brunswick, College of Extended Learning	77	83	0	160
NEWFOUNDLAND				
Memorial University of Newfoundland, Distance Education and Learning Technologies	92	0	0	92

	Home page	"About Us" statement	Mission statement	Total words analyzed
NOVA SCOTIA				
Acadia University, Continuing and Distance Education	36	0	0	36
Cape Breton University	0	0	20	20
Dalhousie University, College of Continuing Education	98	0	0	98
Mount Saint Vincent University, Distance Learning and Continuing Education	112	136	0	248
Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Centre for Continuing and Distance Education	78	0	0	78
NSCAD University, Division of Continuing Studies	125	101	0	226
Saint Francis Xavier University, Continuing and Distance Education Department	0	171	0	171
Saint Mary's University, Continuing Education	289	0	28	317
Atlantic subtotal (11 members)	907	553	97	1,557
Grand total (48 members)				
	3,153	3,092	902	7,147