

Good Morning

Happy New Year to you all. Once again SCANS is starting the new year right with another wonderful line-up of courses! For this I would like to thank all the members of the curriculum committee, and particularly here in HRM, Mimi Little and Joan Hicks, Anne Chisholm, John Stewart, Bill Li, for getting this all together.

I have several announcements I would like to make this morning. First of all, I would like to introduce our new Office Manager to you, Sue Hawkes. Sue has been with us since early November. Sue is a delight to work with, and I know you will enjoy getting to know her. I would also like to welcome back Alison Cullingham, who has graciously agreed to help out today.

I also wanted to let you know that the SCANS Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday afternoon, March 9, from 2-4 pm at the Saraguay Club. The AGM will be followed by a social event at which time we will be honouring a very special volunteer. We are trying it out on a Saturday afternoon to hopefully ensure participation from SCANS members from all of the chapters. You will be hearing more about this. Stay tuned!

As you know from an email message from Colin Stuttard, our Nominating Committee Chair, we are currently seeking nominations for the board, and encourage you to think about it, or someone you know who has the requisite skills we need on the Board. Know that we have a succession plan in place so that our newest board recruits will be mentored by the more seasoned members on the board before they will be asked to assume a larger role.

We are very excited to be launching a new venue this term, the Sackville Library. This community outreach initiative is an important aspect of our SCANS strategic plan. We do already have approximately 65 members in Bedford, Lower Sackville area, but hope to reach out to the Beaverbank, Kinsec, Fall River, and all the Sackville communities as well. We have been working with the head librarian and the events coordinator for several months now and they are extremely obliging and wanting to promote us as much as possible. I want to thank two of our instructors, Greg Galbraith and Vladimir Sitnikov, who are very strong allies and who are most helpful in helping us promote SCANS in that area,

I implore you too to help us get the word out — it shouldn't be a very difficult sell since we are launching the venue with the offering of the wonderful Spy School course, given by Hugh Williamson and Ian MacVicar! We encourage our existing members to go there as well. The Sackville Library and Acadia Hall are easy to find, and lots of parking is available.

Of course, there's always something! I heard from the library just before Christmas that renovations that were expected to be finished before our classes started have been delayed, and will be proceeding just at the time we will be delivering our course. They have offered instead the use of Acadia Hall, a building just next door to the library, and with whom they share a very large parking lot. I have seen the room and it is large, bright, and the visuals and audio shouldn't be a problem. The library has agreed to provide us with their more comfortable chairs, and all the audio visual equipment we need! The address for Acadia Hall (a white building adjacent to the Sackville Library) is:
650 Sackville Drive in Lower Sackville.

We are very pleased to be using the Tantallon Library again this winter. We do get lots of requests from members in the Tantallon, St. Margaret's Bay, Hammonds Plains area, and the Tantallon Library has been very keen in having us offer more courses there. Please spread the word if you have any friends that way, and if you are from Halifax please consider that it is only a 1/2 hr drive from Halifax, and less than that if you live in the Bedford or Hubbards area. It is only 30 minutes from Chester as well!

An issue we are addressing this term is that because of concerns we heard about not getting into the courses you planned to take, we are introducing a ranking system so that you will be able to rank your course preferences when you register online. I want to give a special shout out to Johan Geldenhuys and Bill LI for working very hard these last few weeks to make sure this happens for online registration this term. I want to reiterate however that we cannot guarantee that you will always get into your number one choice. We are limited by the venues available to us each term and by the number of seats in a particular venue. We are also limited by not always being able to predict in advance which will be our larger classes, and by the fact that sometimes our instructors choose to limit the size of the class to better facilitate your learning experience. Rest assured that we always ask the instructors of courses for which there is a wait list to offer the course again, and as you know, this is usually what happens. We are going to be working on the development of a system to help us better maintain waiting lists. So, we hear you, and are doing our best to rectify the situation. If you are a new member, just registering now for the first time, and are unable to get into the courses you select, we will advance your membership one term, so you can delay taking classes till the next term. We really don't anticipate any problems though this term, and I think the ranking system will help ensure that if you don't get into your number one choice, you will get into others you choose.

We often hear from our members in HRM that it is too bad we don't have any opportunities to socialize with each other. And since we can't do it at the time of our classes, we thought we would launch a **“Meet and Greet”** opportunity at the **Pub at the Dalhousie Faculty Club, on the last Thursday of every month, from 4 till 6 pm.** That, not so coincidentally, lines up with their happy hour, so their already reasonably priced drinks are half price- and there are lots of nibbles available as well. Parking is free, behind the Faculty Club— you access it from South Street, next to the soccer field. Members of the board will be there, and it should be fun to just drop in and see some familiar faces. The first one will be on **Thursday, January 31.**

We offer special thanks to our instructors for all the time and effort they put into their courses, and for being such wonderful ambassadors for SCANS. We also thank all of you who have helped out in facilitating the Information and Registration Sessions in your SCANS Chapter, and particularly our Chapter Coordinators, Phil Warman, Linda Fraser, Judy Savin, Mary MacIntosh, and HRM Faculty Coordinators Mimi Little and Joan Hicks .

As always, as a volunteer organization, we count on your support. In HRM more class managers are needed and if you are interested please contact Sue in the SCANS office and she will forward your name to Jocelyn Hellou, our Class Manager Coordinator.

Enjoy the marvellous winter term courses!