



Bonnie Bobryk Photography

Susan Stuttard, president of SCANS, Harry Whittier, professor, Blanche Potter Creighton, registrar, and Bob Anderson, chair of the curriculum.

Seniors' College redefining lifelong learning

By **Melanie Furlong**
Special Features Writer

When the Seniors' College of Nova Scotia set the minimum age for students at 50, they redefined the term 'senior' and gave a whole new generation something to get excited about.

The Association of Retired Dalhousie Professors (ARDP) created a taskforce to explore the possibility of starting a Seniors' College similar to those out of UPEI, UNB and McGill in early 2007.

A board was put together in October and the four first courses were offered to seniors from September to December 2007.

The courses were Islam: Peace and Terrorism, Interpretation of the King

James Bible, Writing for Life, and Managing Your Money. The cost for taking one or more of these courses was \$60 in total.

Dr. Robert Anderson, curriculum chair for the Seniors' College, says: "We hoped for 20 registrants when we started, but on the day of registration we had more than 100 students registered in about 90 minutes. The response from the local people was very positive."

Dr. Anderson says adult education is now the most rapidly growing form of education in the U.S. and Canada.

"This generation of seniors really takes advantage of any opportunities," says Dr. Anderson.

"There are a lot more seniors who are much more active physically and intellectually certainly more than two

generations ago. Many of these people did not have the opportunity to get the education they desired as younger people, but they saw their children educated. In the retired situation, they find they have the time and they still have the curiosity they had when they were younger."

Dr. Sid Sodhi, communications officer for ARDP, says the college will be offering six more courses in February 2008.

"The Islam course will be offered again because of the big demand and there will be Creation of Small and Big Ideas, Women in Politics, Addiction Counselling, Shakespeare, and a writing course," says Dr. Sodhi. "Two courses will be held at Alderney Landing, one at the Keshen Goodman Library, and four

at the Bloomfield Centre in downtown Halifax."

These 20-hour courses will be spread over 10 weeks and cost \$120 in total. This membership fee entitles members to take all the courses offered in 2008, including mini courses in May and June and a whole new slate of courses in September. There are no books to buy or exams to take.

Dr. Anderson, a retired cardiologist and professor at Dalhousie's Medical School, attended all four of the courses offered this September.

"These courses were very well attended and presented," says Dr. Anderson.

"I expect a gradual expansion, but we have to make sure it's not too fast. We have to maintain satisfaction and quality."