



BC Notaries Enjoy First-Class Education

In 1993, The Society of Notaries Public of BC, under the direction of the University of British Columbia, undertook an ambitious project to completely rewrite the course that all aspiring Notaries Public are required to complete before being commissioned as BC Notaries.

After two years of intense coordination and drafting by educators, Notaries, and lawyers, the new Notary Preparatory Course (NPC) was born.

The NPC is a fully integrated and intensive distance education course consisting of 40 units arranged in eight modules, with in-house study sessions, practical instruction, and an exam component. Students enrolled in the NPC are immersed in a comprehensive, 20-month course designed to give them an in-depth understanding of the legal theory and practicalities of the Notarial profession.

There is one thing constant in life and that is change. Education—if it is to reflect societal needs and expectations—is

no different. The Society of Notaries Public of BC is well aware of the necessity to constantly review the education of its members and students. Revisions are made regularly to ensure that the NPC is kept current.

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In November 2004, a committee consisting of members of The Society, educators, and lawyers met in a retreat for the sole purpose of considering a total revision of the NPC. The result was a completely new look to the course.

The NPC will continue to be delivered over 20 months but the structure of the course will be changed substantially. The committee recommended that more emphasis be placed on creating research and team assignments throughout the course, longer in-house and face-to-face study sessions, and mandatory *practicum* periods with established Notaries. Four face-to-face sessions—from six days to two

weeks in duration—will be added, with *practicums* set up during those sessions.

In general, the committee agreed that the theory part of the course content is first class and that little needs to be changed in that area.

At the end of the assignment portion of the NPC, students are required to attend a five-day intensive mediation workshop, designed to provide a comprehensive overview of interest-based mediation.

Six exams will cover all the material included in the NPC. For students successful in the examinations, the culmination of the course is a five-day post-exam session where students are given a thorough review of the practicalities of the Notarial profession by instructors drawn from the legal profession.

The Society has long recognized that first-class education of its members is key to providing the public with the protection and professionalism it deserves and that it has come to recognize as the trade marks of the trusted tradition of Notaries Public. ▲

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