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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TORONTO -- A symposium that hopes to spark a movement toward interdisciplinary mind research is set to take place at the end of January. The two-day event brings together fields ranging from Computer Science to Psychology, and from Management to Philosophy. In doing so, it taps the rich diversity of expertise unique to the University of Toronto.

Sponsored by University College, The Faculty of Arts and Science, and the Cognitive Science and AI Students Association, 'The Inaugural University of Toronto Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Mind' ('UTism') is the first event of its kind to be held at UofT. Taking its cue in part from the emphasis on interdisciplinarity found in the White Papers of the University's current Academic Planning Process, the symposium will link professors and graduate students with a common interest in the mind, on the grounds that a relevant forum is needed if disciplinary barriers are to be broken.

While the event's keynote speaker, the internationally acclaimed cognitive scientist Stevan Harnad, holds a Canada Research Chair in Perception and Language at Université du Québec à Montréal, the other invited speakers are all based in the Toronto region, the majority from within UofT. Says symposium co-organiser Leo Trottier, "We have at this university a concentration of scholars and research found nowhere else in Canada. We hope this symposium will act as a crystal dropped in a super-saturated solution, solidifying the University's position as a leading international teaching and research institution."

To be held at University College on January 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, the event presents a cross-section of current research in a manner accessible to experts in varied fields. Although run by undergraduates, the organisers' target audience are active researchers within the UofT community. As symposium co-organiser Nick Turk-Browne notes, "We realised that the only way we were going to see meaningful attention paid to undergraduate interdisciplinary programs was if a corresponding degree of enthusiasm was kindled at the graduate and faculty levels." University College Principal Paul Perron sees UTism as a real step toward reaching this goal: "This is an extraordinary student initiative that I wholeheartedly and fully endorse. I trust that it will lead to very positive results during the next planning exercise."

In addition to Professor Stevan Harnad, the symposium presents University Professor Fergus Craik (Rotman Research Institute), Professors Christopher Green (Dept. of Psychology, York University), Geoffrey Hinton (Dept. of Computer Science), Randy McIntosh (Rotman Research Institute), Mihnea Moldoveanu (Rotman School of Management), Keith Oatley (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education), Ana Teresa Pérez-Leroux (Depts. of Linguistics and Spanish), Peter Reich (Dept. of Linguistics), Brian Cantwell Smith (Dean, Faculty of Information Studies), Kim Vicente (Dept. of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering), and Philip Zelazo (Dept. of Psychology).

The speakers are among the top in their fields, and further attest to the depth of UofT's potential for interdisciplinary excellence. As Zelazo, who is also director of the undergraduate Programme in Cognitive Science, confirms, "I'm certain that the symposium will be an intellectually exciting event, but I'm also optimistic that it heralds a new era in which the University of Toronto recognises the need for interdisciplinary research and education in Cognitive Science."

Registration is \$10 if submitted before January 20<sup>th</sup> (space permitting, attendees may register at the door for \$20), and may be done on-line at [www.utism.org](http://www.utism.org). Those looking for more information are urged to email [organisers@utism.org](mailto:organisers@utism.org) and to consult the symposium website.

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