



University of Northern BC Faculty Association

Newsletter

February 2013-March 2013

FA Executive July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013

President:	Jacqueline Holler
Vice-President:	Erik Jensen
Past President:	Lee Keener
Secretary & Member-at-Large	
SLI representative:	Julie Howard
Treasurer:	Raymond Cox
Members-at-Large:	
Faculty representatives	Karima Fredj Jennifer Hyndman Stephen Rader
Librarian representative	Gail Curry
Term representative	Wendy Fellers
Grievance Officer:	Kerry Reimer
Executive Director:	Donna Plourde

Upcoming Faculty Association Events:

Spring General Meeting

March 22, 2013
12:00 noon – 1:30 pm
5-123 Gathering Place

Upcoming UNBC Events for Members:

2012-2013 Presidents' Roundtable Series
Future of Humanities (April 2013)



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jacqueline Holler, President

A colleague stopped me on the staircase yesterday and asked "what happened to February?" And indeed, the shortest month seems to have been reduced to about five days in length this year. I hope you're keeping your head above water anyway!

I had a very busy January in terms of association meeting travel. One of the great opportunities of such travel is to get news from across the country—and from abroad—and to see our work as embedded in the broad context of post-secondary education. At the **CAUT Presidents' Workshop** in Ottawa, FA presidents gathered to share institutional updates and useful sessions on themes such as governance, workload, pensions and benefits, corporatization, and new legislation affecting our members and associations. Sharing agreement language and experiences with others in this way increases our knowledge and redoubles our commitment to improving our own institutions. Not surprisingly, some of the same issues discussed in Ottawa came up again at the OCUFA

conference "**Academia in the Age of Austerity**," held in Toronto mid-month, which I attended on behalf of CUFA-BC. Well attended, the conference brought both Canadian and international expertise to bear on the progress and consequences of declining funding for post-secondary education. While this is a depressing topic, everyone agreed that there are great opportunities for faculty members, working in concert with students and the public, to contest both cutbacks and their ideological underpinnings. We heard about the progress of austerity in the UK, where student tuition fees were introduced in 1998 with a modest billing of £1000 (means-tested). Fifteen years on, the average tuition fee at UK institutions is £8000 and rising rapidly. Guest speakers from the UK compellingly described how the austerity model had transformed education there "from a public good to a private, user-paid benefit." All of these meetings confirmed my belief in the good that associations do. As faculty members, we are the ones best placed to defend the values and public utility of the university against reductive views, often narrowly budget-driven.

"Austerity" usually has greater impacts on groups already marginalized. That is part of the reason why some of the most inspired leadership opposing the austerity agenda in Canada has come from Aboriginal people, in particular through the **Idle No More** movement. As many of you already know, UNBC will host an **Idle No More Teach-in** involving at least ten classes and a number of other public events. I urge you to take in as many of these events as you can. Watch for announcements throughout the week. Back in November, when **Idle No More** was just getting off the ground, the Manitoba Research Alliance sent Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Minister John Duncan a letter signed by over 100 academics. That letter expressed:

...our dismay over unprecedentedly deep funding cuts for Canada's Aboriginal Representative Organizations, including the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and tribal councils across the country. This follows the forced closure of the National Aboriginal Health Organization.

As researchers, we work with these organizations and others in research partnerships to tackle some of the most pressing issues Canada faces. Grant funding agencies supported by your government consistently identify Aboriginal research as one of the top priorities for research in Canada. They also make it clear that this research can only be done in partnership with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities.

John Duncan resigned his office in the middle of February, but the issues identified in the letter are still with us.

Issues of equity and justice obviously don't stop at the entrance to the university. Some of you will have read about the conclusion of UBC's three-year pay equity review process. The outcome of the DATA Working Group's study indicated an inexplicable and persistent

pay gap of 2% between male and female faculty members. As a result all female tenured and tenure-track professors will receive a pay increase retroactive to 2010 in an effort to remedy this situation. At UNBC, a Joint Equity Committee was struck this fall. Its first task was to create a faculty **equity survey**, which will launch before the end of the current semester. We hope that all members will participate in the anonymous online survey to give us a better sense of whether you believe there are equity issues on campus, and if so what they are. The survey will only be as good as its participation rate, so you are urged to make your voice heard.

Through the summer and fall we heard repeatedly from members about the new **safety orientation processes**. We have engaged in substantial discussions about these issues with the administration, and I think it's critical that members be informed of the position of the FA with regard to these policies. First, the FA must be consulted on all policy changes that affect our members. When it comes to safety, we still haven't been able to gain clarity from or agree with the administration. Our position is that members are *not* required to conduct safety orientations in the manner that was proposed by the administration. As are any employees, faculty members are responsible for commonsense responsibility for safety and safe practices. Detailed and involved duties with regard to safety are an administrative responsibility, and administrative procedures can be developed to deliver required safety orientation without adding yet another poorly understood task to our members' already overburdened workloads.

Computer policies have also been another issue on members' minds. It's therefore important to state, as we shared with the administration this fall, that members have clearly defined rights based on the current administrative policy and on past practice. You may therefore continue purchasing computers as you have before, using your capital replacement allowance as per the Capital Equipment Replacement-Computer Workstations Policy:

(http://www.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/assets/policy/computing/capital_computing_equipment.pdf).

Please contact the association if you have questions or concerns about computing policy and procedures. In an attempt to understand the computing environment for faculty at UNBC, Environmental Studies students have designed an anonymous online survey. You'll hear more about this in coming weeks. We hope that members will take the survey and inform us about the complexity and diversity of faculty needs in the multiple domains of our work.

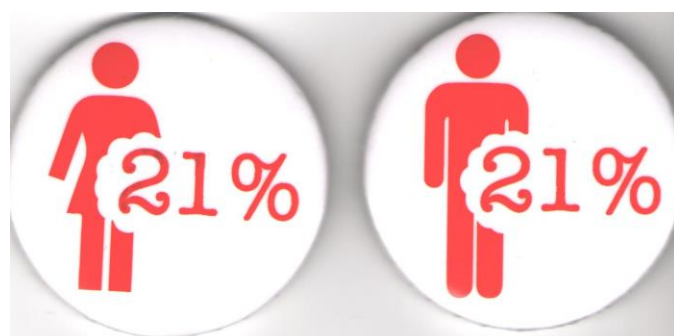
In the fall semester the association hosted a get-together for Contract Academic Staff. Our goal was to understand some of the issues that **contract members** face and how the association can represent their needs better. The members who came out—and some who couldn't, but who sent in feedback—gave articulate and cogent feedback confirming that contract academics face distinct issues and challenges. Some of these are:

- lack of recognition for service
- late contracts, including one case of a member who taught for five weeks before receiving the first pay cheque

- lack of support to attend conferences and build careers and credibility as emerging scholars
- unrecognized and uncompensated support and mentoring of students outside of courses taught
- lack of adequate facilities, equipment, etc. (including long-distance codes, where these might be required for work)
- exclusion from SEED grant funding if term SLI/librarian
- lack of recognition for the unique challenges of distance and regional teaching
- lack of connection and isolation among contract academic staff

The event was an important opening for dialogue between contract and continuing members. Please keep your input coming.

Many members will be looking in this newsletter for an update on **negotiations**, provided by Chief Negotiator Darwyn Coxson below. It's been gratifying to hear from many members who want to support the association's position and signal their displeasure with the status quo. One of our responses has been to create buttons that you can wear to class (or wherever you like) to stimulate discussion and show support. These buttons show stick figures with "bites" out of them representing the average 21% gap between UNBC and national average salaries in all ranks of the professoriate. Buttons are available to all members for pick-up at the FA Office, rm. 3085 Administration Building or, at your request, we'd be happy to send you one through intercampus or interdepartmental mail. They should be conversation-starters!



Finally, as you all know, the university and association lost a founding member last month: Hiroe Wood, a Japanese Language Instructor in the International Studies program. She will be sadly missed, and the association sends its sincere sympathies to her family and loved ones.



Photo courtesy of UNBC



AN UPDATE ON FACULTY ASSOCIATION BARGAINING

Darwyn Coxson, Chief Negotiator

The focus of the Faculty Association's bargaining team efforts have now shifted from that of the face-to-face negotiations with the University (which broke off in early November 2012) to that of preparing proposals for the mediation/arbitration phase of bargaining. These proposals will summarize the position of the Faculty Association when bargaining with the University ended, stating our rationale for proposed changes to terms and conditions of employment as outlined in the Faculty Agreement, and outlining conditions of employment at comparable institutions. The dates for mediation have been set (June 10-11, 2013); however, the dates for arbitration have not yet been determined.

Members should note that the Faculty Agreement 2010-2012 remains in force during this period. The committee process for awards such as the Teaching, Research, Professional Practice, and Service Achievement awards, which the university had insisted be eliminated, will continue as per the terms of the last Faculty Agreement. The Tenure and Promotion process will likewise continue as stipulated in the last Faculty Agreement, notwithstanding changes sought by the University in bargaining. We would refer you to the last several Faculty Association Newsletters (available on the Faculty Association's website) for a recap of the major issues that remain outstanding in bargaining.



PITY THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

*Robert F. Clift, Executive Director
Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC*

I pity modern public university presidents – they are in an untenable situation.

They are expected to satisfy the board of governors, the senate, the faculty, the students, the staff, the alumni, the donors, the pundits and the government.

They seldom have any formal training for their role and are supported by management teams who have little formal training themselves. The guidance that is available is either from the business world, which is largely inappropriate to an academic setting, or from governmental models, which are often simply recycled business-world practices.

They are often several years removed from the day-to-day reality of teaching and scholarly activity. Consequently, they may have only a slight knowledge of the concerns of faculty members, and even less knowledge of the concerns of students.

They have few role models. There are many presidents who have been successful in particular aspects of their jobs, but few who would be considered great presidents.

For all of this, they have my sympathy.

Nonetheless, I hold them responsible for how they deal with these circumstances. They can rise to the challenge or they can be a footnote in the history of their institution.

For a little over a year, I've been working on various projects relating to CUFA BC's "Year of Governance." My initial plan was to focus on structural elements of governance, but as I conducted primary and secondary research, I kept being drawn back to questions of leadership.

What I learned is that no governance structure will work unless the university president supports it. This led me to think about the characteristics of successful presidents.

The result of this research and reflection is a preliminary, and admittedly simplistic, typology of university presidents based on five criteria: competence as managers; relationship with the board of governors; relationship with the senate; relationship with the university community; and relationship with government. Using these criteria, I have identified five broad classes of university presidents as follows:

1. Poor President

- Does not understand and/or cannot apply basic principles of management
- Views the board of governors as the supreme governing body
- Views the senate as an impediment
- Listens to the university community only when it can no longer be ignored
- Slavishly follows government directives

2. Competent President

- Understands and can apply standard management techniques
- Accountable only to the board of governors
- Recognizes, but does not respect, the role of senate
- Consults with the university community pro forma, without much interest in the outcome
- Fulfills government directives in ways beneficial to their institution

3. Insulated President

- Recognizes that the standard management techniques don't always work in an academic setting
- Accountable only to the board of governors
- Views the senate as a tool to advance their own agenda
- Consults with the university community when needed as a means to justify their own agenda
- Interprets government directives in ways favorable to the institution

4. Engaged President

- Adapts standard management techniques to the academic setting
- Accountable to the board of governors and the senate
- Seeks the opinions of the campus community in order to define an agenda

- Seeks to shape government directives prior to their implementation

5. Community-Building President

- Understands that management is in service of the university community, and not vice versa
- Accountable to the entire university community
- Enables the university community to define its own agenda
- Stands up for the university community against negative government directives

Of course, there is nothing scientific about this scheme. As is the case with any social typology, there is a certain amount of arbitrariness to the categories, and the boundary lines are not always so neatly drawn. Nonetheless, I think my clustering is fairly reflective of the reality of university leadership in Canada today.

Most presidents fall into the Insulated President or Engaged President categories. The boundaries between these two categories are perhaps the blurriest. Outwardly, a president may seem to be engaged, but their motivations may actually be those of the Insulated President. Often, the distinction cannot be discerned until they are tested by a crisis.

Over the years, I've met a small, but significant, number of university presidents who were Competent Presidents. Generally, they are well-meaning but not well-suited to senior leadership positions.

I'm happy to say that I can only recall meeting two presidents who met the criteria for Poor President. In both cases, they were very good at masking their absence of achievement in previous positions, and very good at telling their boards of governors what they wanted to hear. It took a few years for their true nature to be uncovered and it took several years for the institutions to recover from their terms of office.

The Community-Building President is really more of a wish list rather than a reflection of presidents I have known. Certainly, there are presidents who have had some of these characteristics. But it will be truly an exceptional person who can substantially meet all of these, since it is a truly exceptional person who can effectively lead any large and complex organization.

I think the primary lesson to be learned from this investigation and meditation on public university presidents is that, ultimately, the president's job is about establishing and maintaining relationships. No amount of technical skill, fundraising experience, academic credibility, or political insight can compensate for a president who is unable to engage in a respectful and thoughtful manner with all the constituencies they serve. In my view, this is what distinguishes a competent president from a great president.



Photo courtesy of UNBC



**Just Released:
New UNBC-FA Website**

The Faculty Association has been working diligently on the Association's new website.

Check it out at: www.unbcfa.org.

We trust our members will find this site more useful and user friendly. On the home page of our new website we've included a suggestion box. Tell us what you think of the website, give us suggestions on articles you would like to see in our newsletters, or tell us about a member who should be featured 'In the Spotlight'.



**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND
PROTECTION OF PRIVACY UPDATE**

*Cindy Hardy
Associate Professor, Psychology*

As your faculty representative on the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) Advisory Committee, I am writing to give a brief update about FOIPPA matters directly related to our work as members of the FA. FOIPPA has two main purposes. One is to govern access to information held by public institutions, and the other is protection of private personal information held by institutions. For example, FOIPPA directs the university to release information that might be requested by outside individuals or organizations, such as how many students attend the university. At the same time, it provides a framework for protecting the confidentiality of people's private information, such as whether a particular person is enrolled at UNBC.

As members of the FA, we have access to all sorts of private information about colleagues, students, applicants, and other individuals, whether it is the fact

that someone applied for a particular position, the mark someone got on an exam, or the identities of individuals in a class. FOIPPA directs us to maintain the confidentiality of individuals' private information and it is that aspect of FOIPPA which is the focus of this article.

Recent changes to FOIPPA have serious implications for our work, particularly regarding the use of information technology. The Act clearly states that public institutions such as UNBC are not allowed to use servers outside Canada to store or access personal private information without informed consent of the person to whom the information belongs. For example, Canadian universities are not allowed to use cloud computing because those servers are not located in Canada. Many plagiarism detection sites (such as www.turnitin.com) are not acceptable for the same reason.

In the domain of research, those of us who work with human participants are obliged to maintain standards set out by the Tri-Council Policy Statement; those standards meet or exceed the obligations arising from FOIPPA.

In the domain of teaching and supervision of students, best practices for maintaining confidentiality include the following:

- Release private information about a student only to that student, unless you have the student's prior written consent to release the information to someone else.
- Do not post marks listed by student name and ID numbers (use a code or communicate with students individually).
- Do not use portable electronic devices (such as USB keys) to store class lists, marks, and other confidential information. If you MUST do so temporarily, make sure the key or the file containing confidential information is password protected and encrypted. Failure to do so has led to numerous privacy breaches in the past year.
- Develop and use a system for secure retention and destruction of student work not returned to students (UNBC policy is to keep the documents for one year then destroy).
- Be sure that others working under your supervision, including Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants and Term Instructors, know and follow these same practices.

In the domain of service, best practices for maintaining confidentiality include the following:

- After serving on hiring or admissions committees, return all confidential material including your casual notes about candidates to the chair or administrative staff person for shredding.
- After performing reviews for outside agencies, such as reviews of manuscripts submitted for publication or tenure and promotion evaluations, ensure all documents and files related to the review are destroyed.

- Have discussions with members of committees you serve on regarding the confidential aspects of the committee's work so everyone on the committee is aware of what information can and cannot be shared with others.
- Do not speak about individuals' private information in committee or other settings unless everyone in that setting has the right and need to know that information.

For more information about FOIPPA implementation at UNBC, see <http://www.unbc.ca/foippa>. Feel free to contact me if you have questions related to these matters.



2013 BUDGET FAILS TO MEASURE UP FOR STUDENTS

*Robert F. Clift, Executive Director
Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC*

If students were to measure the effects of the 2013 BC budget, what performance indicators would they use? Here are four suggested indicators and how the 2013 provincial budget measures up to them.

Does it increase opportunities for post-secondary education?

No. Not a single new student space will be created by the 2013 BC budget. In fact, the government's enrollment target drops by 317 full-time equivalent (FTE) students between 2012/13 and 2013/14. This is despite evidence that there is still unmet demand for post-secondary education in BC and that large cohorts of Aboriginal youth will soon be seeking post-secondary opportunities.

Does it make post-secondary education more affordable?

No. Tuition fees will continue to rise by at least the rate of inflation for the foreseeable future. Students who rely on the provincial student financial assistance programs will continue to receive monthly living allowances below the rate received by welfare recipients. Average student debt upon graduation will not be reduced by one penny despite the provincial government's re-announcement of last year's Repayment Assistance Plan, which eases loan repayment for low-income graduates.

Does it help students to complete their programs more quickly?

No. When the Liberals came to power in 2001, they made a big deal about university students taking longer to complete their programs because of the policies of the previous NDP government – a claim based on dubious data. Once the Liberals allowed tuition fees to rise precipitously (99% since 2000/01), discussion of program completion time dissipated for the most part because many students were reducing their course loads to deal with the massive tuition fee increases – thus taking longer to complete their programs.

Does it improve the quality of the educational experience?

No, with one small exception. Skills training programs across the province are receiving grants to upgrade equipment for programs considered high priority for their regions. If per-student funding had kept pace with the growth in student numbers and inflation since the Liberals came to power in 2001, these grants wouldn't have been necessary because institutions would have had the funds to keep their equipment up to date without special election-year handouts. By the end of the 2015/16 budget cycle, real per-student funding will be 20% lower than in 2001/02.



Photo courtesy UNBC



Hot off the press!!

Check out these publications available on loan to Members through the FA Office:

Academic Freedom in Canada – A History

"Without academic freedom, only the independently wealthy or those unconcerned about their financial or professional prospects would be able to pursue research of unpredictable duration and uncertain payoff or to make public comments that might prove unwelcome."

Michiel Horn

The Lost Soul of Higher Education

"Corporatization, the Assault on Academic Freedom, and the End of the American University"

Ellen Schrecker

The Art of University Teaching

"Despite increasingly market conceptions of universities, students are not just 'consumers' of information, they are 'producers' of insight."

George Melnyk & Christine Mason Sutherland

Multiversities, Ideas, and Democracy

"...in the contemporary world, multiversities need to be conceptualized in a new way, that is, not just as places of teaching and research, but as fundamental institutions of democracy."

George Fallis

The Faculty Association now has a new Boardroom located in Rm. 3085 Administration Building.

The Faculty Association Office **has moved** to Rm. 3089 Administration Building:

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm
Drop-in hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30am – 12:00pm
By appointment: Monday–Friday, 1:00pm – 4:30pm

Please note that during Faculty Negotiations, office hours will be limited; we appreciate your patience and understanding.

Contact Donna Plourde at 250-960-5816 or email at donna.plourde@unbc.ca to schedule an appointment. Information on the UNBC Faculty Association is also available on our website at: www.unbcfa.ca

The Faculty Association Office now has a drop-off basket for personal amenities (i.e. shampoo, soap, lotions) that are provided to travelers in most hotels and resorts, and are included in the rate charged per room per day. Please collect and bring any unopened personal amenities to the Faculty Association Office and these will be donated to the Elizabeth Fry Society and other shelters in our community.

We remember our dear colleague....



Hiroe Wood

November 1, 1951 – February 3, 2013

