

FA Executive July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2015

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Librarian representative	Eleanor Annis
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- *Update on Faculty Negotiations*
- *2014 Distinguished Academic Award Recipient*
- *Re-Engineering Education*
- *2014 University Achievement Award Recipients*



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Jacqueline Holler, President UNBC-FA
Associate Professor and Chair, History Program*

With the caterpillars fast retreating into their cocoons, it's a season for metamorphosis in the forest and here at the UNBC-FA. When your overwhelming support turned us into a union, we knew there would be some alterations in our future. Well, we don't have our wings yet, but the changes have begun. First, and most importantly, we are in the process of negotiating our first collective agreement. With only days to go before the old agreement elapses, members have been justifiably concerned about what happens next. In the aftermath of unionization, we sought a Memorandum of Understanding stating that the 2012-2014 agreement would continue in effect until replaced by a new collective agreement. While the Administration proved reluctant to sign that document, the Employer has issued

a memorandum stating that all terms and conditions of employment for faculty will continue while the parties negotiate in good faith (<http://www.unbc.ca/faculty-relations>), The continuation of the agreement, and the Employer's stated support for "a favourable climate in which to negotiate a first collective agreement," augur well for negotiations. Chief Negotiator Ted Binnema offers an update on bargaining progress in this newsletter.

Another change was approved by the UNBC Executive at its most recent meeting: the UNBC-FA will join fifty unionized universities from across the country in CAUT's Defence Fund. The fund, established in 1978, has the primary purpose of providing strike benefits to associations while its members are on strike or locked out. It also offers financial assistance with the costs of mediation and/or interest arbitration, and supports associations that incur costs in pursuing legal action against unfair labour practices. Joining the fund will give the Association insurance in the unlikely event of a lockout or strike.

At the university level there are also changes. Some of you will have reviewed the recent announcement regarding the UNBC Records Management Program, which will bring change to the way the Administration manages its records. I've already heard from a few faculty members wanting to know how this affects them. On that topic, Stephen Rader has an article in this newsletter explaining some of the issues in this evolving area. Please note that the Records Management Program applies only to University records. Faculty research and teaching materials are expressly excluded from the program, and it is the firm position of the Association that most faculty records are *not* within the custody and control of the University. If you have concerns or questions about your records and the concept of custody and control, contact the Association and review the CAUT advisory available at <http://www.caut.ca/docs/default-source/academic-freedom/cautadvisorycustody-controlv2.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.

Finally, at the national level there have been dramatic developments in the area of academic freedom and the defence of tenure. Many of you followed the story at the University of Saskatchewan, where a dean (and tenured professor) was fired after speaking out against elements of the controversial Dickesonian TransformUS program prioritization process there. What started as a faculty-rights issue--Dean Buckingham couldn't be fired as professor, but perhaps he *could* as dean—turned into a sustained discussion among the entire university community about how universities are best served. It was a rare conversation uniting the media, faculty, the public, and most importantly, students, as all grappled with and ultimately affirmed the role of dissent in the building of a strong university and society. U Sask professor (and CAUT Academic Freedom Committee Chair) Len Findlay put it well in his op-ed on the issue:

Collegial governance grounded in academic freedom is the traditional and ongoing basis for a well regarded, vibrant university animated by the desire and capacity to serve the public interest. Such collective institutional action, tempered by informed individual scrutiny, is the sole recipe for

academic success.

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/Ignorance+shown+about+academic+freedom/9887932/story.html>

So with thanks to Len, and in the spirit of spring, here's to collegial governance, academic freedom, and collective bargaining—the surest recipes for a strong and vibrant UNBC. May your summer be productive and peaceful.



WHO OWNS YOUR TEACHING MATERIALS?

*Stephen Rader
Professor, Chemistry Program*

There was a time when ownership of teaching materials was limited by the technology available: the state of the art was a piece of chalk, or, later, overhead transparencies. Students took notes longhand, and photocopies, when they became available, could only be distributed to close friends. No longer. With the advent of digital cameras, YouTube, PowerPoint, and other digital technologies, it has become important to clearly define who owns what, and what uses of the material are permissible.

Can a student take a video of your class and post it on YouTube? Can they share your PowerPoint slides with other students? Can the university use your teaching materials to make money through online classes without your permission?

In some places, the answers to these questions are yes, yes, and yes, but, fortunately, in Canada, academics still have some control over the use of their teaching materials. Importantly, the UNBC Faculty Association is working, even as you read this, to ensure that UNBC implements strong policies enforcing faculty rights over intellectual property in the classroom.

So what should you do, and when does it matter? One important area is your teaching materials: your class notes, reading lists, homework assignments, evaluations, etc. The Faculty Association believes that these are your intellectual property. They should not be used without your permission, nor should they be distributed without your express consent. To help the community promote this standard, the Faculty Association encourages you to use consent forms whenever you do wish to allow someone else to use your material. That way, it becomes unambiguous when there is a dispute over consent: if no form was signed, no consent was granted.

Another area is the recording of classes (as well as performances, demonstrations, and other pedagogical activities). A number of colleagues have told me, "I don't care if students want to record my class - it doesn't bother me." Well, it doesn't bother me either, but, for the reasons given above, it seems prudent to explain to students that recording of classes should only be done

with the written consent of the instructor, and should only be done for personal use. If, in our eagerness to allow students to share our classroom brilliance, we establish a culture that allows students to record and distribute our work as they wish, it would be trivial for the university to claim a right to our work, and to sell it as they see fit. As with fair use of copyrighted materials, we can only maintain our rights as long as we exercise and protect them.

We are hoping UNBC will agree to a policy under which the administration is responsible for enforcing intellectual property rights for teaching materials, and under which there would be academic penalties for students who violate these policies. Naturally, there are many situations in which it makes sense to allow recording of classes or sharing of class notes, for example when students are sick, but in these situations written consent should be obtained. I encourage you to contact me or the Faculty Association if you have any questions or concerns about ownership of your teaching materials.

All the best for a productive summer!
Stephen



CHIEF NEGOTIATOR'S REPORT *Ted Binnema, UNBC-FA Chief Negotiator Professor, History Program*

In my last bargaining update I mentioned that I would soon be providing you with a summary of the presentation we made at the negotiating table on the 11th of June. Here, in broad brush strokes are the main principles upon which our proposals are based.

Our first major principle is that much of what exists in the 2012-14 Agreement can simply become part of the first Collective Agreement. The 2012-14 Faculty Association Agreement at UNBC is as comprehensive and detailed as most collective agreements at unionized universities in Canada. We did know from the outset that, because this is a first collective agreement, no article in the 2012-14 Faculty Agreement will automatically roll over into the collective agreement the way articles did from agreement to agreement in the past, or will in the future. However, on 20 May we informed the Employer's bargaining team that we believed that many articles in the 2012-14 Faculty Agreement can simply be incorporated, virtually unchanged, into our first Collective Agreement. We did this because many of the articles in our agreement have stood the test of time for many years. We also did this because we have heard from you—our Members—that many of the articles in the Faculty Agreement have been working very well. Some have been in place since the very first agreement. We expected that the Board's bargaining team would view our suggestion as a sign of goodwill. Usually Employers dread negotiating an agreement from scratch with newly unionized employees.

The second main pillar of our position at the table is that where provisions of the 2012-14 Faculty Agreement are

inconsistent or incompatible with collective agreements in the unionized university sector, we are proposing changes—some quite substantial. We reminded the Employer’s team that our Members unionized with the expectation that they would get a collective agreement that features working conditions, compensation, and benefits typical in the university sector, and that our proposals would accomplish that. We also emphasized that collective agreements in Canadian universities are normally based on the principle that members of the Faculty Association—librarians, senior laboratory instructors, and faculty—are highly trained, highly competent, and highly motivated professionals. Members of the UNBC Faculty Association have proven to be so. We are proposing a collective agreement that reflects that fact and ensures that it will continue. Term Members at UNBC—the most vulnerable of our extraordinarily talented Members—will also be pleased to know that we have heard loud and clear that you expect rights and protection that term members enjoy at universities across Canada. Our proposals are geared towards accomplishing that for our Members.

Where we propose changes to our agreement, we are proposing provisions that have been operating well at other universities in Canada. This is the third major principle of our bargaining position. Rather than table entirely novel and experimental provisions that have not been tested at other universities, the UNBC FA bargaining team has spent many hours researching collective agreements across the country, so that we could present provisions that are proven to work well to guide the relationship between Employers and Faculty in universities. At the table, we called this the “tried, tested, and true” principle.

Your team believes that we have put together an excellent proposal for negotiation. We acknowledge that the collective agreement that eventually is put before you for ratification will be subject to compromise. We won’t get everything we are asking for. We also expect that we will agree to reasonable proposals put forward by the Board’s team. That’s what negotiating is all about. But we firmly believe that the natural relationship between Employer and Faculty Association at universities is one of alliance, *not* hostility. We are confident that, if the Board’s team engages constructively with us in negotiations, we will soon arrive at a collective agreement that ensures that UNBC’s future will be bright.

On behalf of the UNBC FA negotiating team, I thank you for being attentive to the progress of negotiations. You do have a role to play in the process now unfolding. The very fact that you are keeping yourself informed makes the job of the UNBC FA’s team easier.

On behalf of the entire team, I wish you all the best.
Ted



Photo provided courtesy of the University of Northern British Columbia



2014 DISTINGUISHED ACADEMIC
AWARD RECIPIENT:
DR. MATIAS E. MARGULIS

On April 23, 2014, once again honored guests and dignitaries, university administrators, and academics representing the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, the University of Victoria, the University of Northern British Columbia, and Royal Roads University gathered to recognize three very deserving recipients of the annual CUFA-BC Distinguished Academic Awards.

The UNBC-FA congratulates **Dr. Matias Margulis** as the recipient of the **2014 Early In Career Award** for his research on the global land grab as a symptom of the triple crisis.



Matias E. Margulis
Assistant Professor, International Studies

"...my work on food insecurity, the human right to food, and land grabbing address key issues in International Development; my research on food and agriculture and environmental governance directly speak to debates in Global Environmental Policy, and my work on international trade agreements and governance of the global economy cuts across the fields of Regional (and Transnational) Relations."

The purpose of the Distinguished Academic Awards is to acknowledge outstanding accomplishments in research and scholarly work that benefit communities and the public. The **CUFA-BC Early in Career Award** recognizes outstanding contributions made by scholars at relatively early stages in their careers and was first awarded in 2010.

Dr. Margulis joins the list of previous UNBC-FA award recipients:

- 2013: Kathy Lewis (Academic of the Year)
- 2012: Chris Opio (Academic of the Year)
- 2010: Margo Greenwood (Academic of the Year)
- 1997: Winnifred Kessler (Academic of the Year)



EDUCATION DOESN'T NEED TO BE RE-ENGINEERED

*Todd Whitcombe
Associate Professor and Chair, Chemistry Program*

On April 29 the provincial government unveiled its plan to re-engineer education and training in the province of British Columbia.

It is an attempt to socially engineer the educational system to produce the workers that the economy needs or the government thinks that the economy will need for the next ten years.

It is a plan that stresses up front that the LNG sector, alone, has the potential for nearly \$175 billion in industry investment over the next decade. This is anticipated to support up to 100,000 jobs of which 23,800 will be permanent direct or indirect jobs for operations.

Putting aside the very notion of permanent when it comes to the job market, this sort of demand might sound good. Certainly it makes for a great press release.

But in an economy that the government is forecasting to require 1,000,000 workers in the same time period, 23,800 permanent jobs is nothing to write home about.

Furthermore, the government is estimating that only 530,000 young people will enter the job market over the next ten years. In other words, we will need to import 470,000 skilled labourers to meet demand.

So, why are we re-engineering the education system in the province? Not just at the university or college level but all the way down to kindergarten.

If we have more jobs than applicants, then it is a seller's market and their skill sets can be as varied as necessary to meet demand. Who knows what that demand will be?

I would argue that the education system that we have right now - from kindergarten to Ph.D. - does an excellent job of providing the right sort of mix of people for the province. After all, it is driven by market forces and one of the central tenets of right wing economics is that the market is always right.

But Advanced Education Minister Amrit Virk sees the labour market in a slightly different way. He was recently interviewed on the CBC by Steven Quinn. The interview is over seven minutes in length and explored a number of areas associated with government's plan.

It got interesting, for me, when Mr. Quinn asked about the not-so-in-high-demand professions - historians, writers, choreographers, et cetera.

Minister Virk's response: "Well, I will tell you that this is about creating opportunities ... we are going to target 25 per cent of the grants we provide universities to high demand occupations and the remainder of that programming, the universities, depending upon the region, the type of university, will do the analysis of what's in demand, what are students looking for, and what kind of opportunities there are in the workforce and it is based on that analysis that they will decide to continue or not continue programs."

Interesting response as the Minister completely neglected to comment on the programming at the Colleges throughout British Columbia. It could be that they are already only delivering programming targeted at high demand professions. Or it could be that he doesn't consider them relevant.

In any case, it really does beg the question of what sort of society do we want - one where universities are simply about trying to fill labour market demands? Is that the point?

Mr. Quinn asked what the impact would be on students that want to be historians or choreographers. Can they just expect to pay more of their load?

Minister Virk's response: "I think that the public wants us to use our funding in the wisest and most economical way so when you have funding coming... when the public is paying... some 66 per cent of the student's tuition comes from public funds. They expect that to be used in programs [that are] going to take a person from being a learner to an earner. How novel a concept that we are actually trying to graduate taxpayers."

Mr. Quinn asked if that is what university is about - graduating taxpayers?

Minister Virk's response: "We are trying to graduate individuals that are going to contribute to British Columbia. At the same time I have a great deal of

respect and acknowledge the fact that we are doing incredible research at our university. That it's cutting edge. It's cutting edge world-level research.

"So we have to have an equilibrium and a balance. A balance between insuring that we continue to do the traditional kind of work that we are doing at universities - the research that betters our life, our health, our ability to be more innovative, our ability to have better technology - but at the same time, the balance that we are graduating individuals that our economy requires."

I couldn't agree more. But I would also argue that is exactly what the universities are doing right now - graduating the students that we need for an uncertain economic future.

After all, an education will last a lifetime. It doesn't need to be re-engineered.

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<http://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/opinion/columnists/education-doesn-t-need-to-be-re-engineered-1.1057258>



Photo provided courtesy of the University of Northern British Columbia



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
2014 UNIVERSITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
RECIPIENTS!

In the third year of the University Achievement Awards (UAAs), Members of the Association were recognized for their outstanding achievements and contributions in the areas of research, teaching, service, and professional practice/mentorship/stewardship. The strengths and achievements demonstrated by all of the nominees for these awards are truly outstanding. The Faculty Association congratulates all nominees for these awards, and especially the recipients:

Achievement Award for Professional Practice, Stewardship & Mentorship

Margot Parkes (Health Sciences)

Achievement Award for Research

Jianbing Li (Environmental Engineering)

Ken Otter (Ecosystem Science & Management)

Mark Shegelski (Physics)

Mark Shrimpton (Ecosystem Science & Management)

Achievement Award for Service

Tina Fraser (Education)

Art Fredeen (Ecosystem Science & Management)

Dawn Hemingway (Social Work)

Mark Shrimpton (Ecosystem Science & Management)

Achievement Award for Teaching

David Connell (Environmental Planning)

Ami Hagiwara (International Studies)

Luke Harris (Health Sciences)

Dana Wessell Lightfoot (History)