

FA Executive

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

President:	Stephen Rader
Vice-President:	Matt Reid
Past-President:	Jacqueline Holler
Secretary:	Paul Siakaluk
Treasurer:	Wendy Fellers
Grievance Officer:	Catherine Nolin
Executive Director:	Donna Plourde
Members-at-Large:	
Faculty representatives	Kristen Guest
	Paul Sanborn
	Paul Siakaluk
Library representative	James MacDonald
SLI representative	Saphida Migabo
Term representative	Monica Mattfeld

Calendar of Events:

New Member’s Luncheon

September 23rd, 12:00 – 1:00 pm

FA Lounge



CAUT Fair Employment Week

October 24th - 27th



Oktoberfest Membership Social

Thursday, October 27th, 4:30 – 7:30 pm

FA Lounge & Patio



Fall Annual General Meeting

October 28th, 12:00 – 1:30 pm

Gathering Place

introduce the Faculty Association to our new members, and perhaps remind everyone else what the Association was created to accomplish, and what we are currently doing.

The Faculty Association Constitution (which can be found at unbcfa.ca) lists the purposes of the Association as: promoting the welfare of its members and the university; acting as the bargaining agent; regulating relations between members and the university; upholding the principles of academic freedom, tenure, equality, civil liberties, and human rights; and supporting and promoting higher education in BC.

This is a broad remit, and it emphasizes the central role that faculty association members play at the university: we are the ones carrying out the central activities for which universities were created and for which they continue to be supported - scholarship and teaching.

You, the members of the FA, are the unique employee group in society that is managed through peer supervision. The only aspect of your job that is dictated from above is how many classes to teach. We decide collectively what should be in those classes, whether you are teaching them adequately, and which classes and degree programs should be offered. If your position includes research, you have complete freedom to study whatever you want, even outside “your” discipline.



Photo provided courtesy of Dr. Ted Binnema, History Program



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Stephen Rader

Professor, Biochemistry Department

With another academic year getting under way, I am excited and optimistic about the future of our university. This is an opportune moment to

This makes universities fundamentally anti-authoritarian, so people with an authoritarian

streak tend to hate this system. From the Premier on down, there is a whole cascade of managers who want to regulate how much time you spend on each task and where you spend it; who want to tell you what to teach and how to teach it; who want to tell you what to study and why to study it.

This authoritarian impulse is easy to understand: consensus is slow, discussions messy, and ignoring our intuition and preconceptions in favour of investigating best practices is frankly un-human. Nevertheless, global comparisons of teaching systems clearly demonstrate that the most effective are those that give the most autonomy to teachers, supported by adequate resources and appropriate training. That is why your Association will continue to defend your right to question authority and execute your responsibilities according to your best professional judgment.



Photo provided courtesy of Dr. Ted Binnema, History Program

From the perspective of academic freedom and professional autonomy, we are in an excellent position. The last round of contract bargaining, while disappointing from a financial perspective, saw us achieve arguably the best faculty contract in British Columbia. Gains include the elimination of post-tenure review (which had rendered tenure largely fictional, inviting abuses by administrators); the creation of formative, collegial reporting and evaluation processes that recognize faculty as professionals; the requirement for management rights to be exercised in a fair and reasonable fashion; seniority rights for part-time instructors, term librarians, and term SLIs; and greatly strengthened language on program redundancy.

It is only through your resolution, solidarity, and commitment to our common goals that we achieved these gains in the face of deep

intransigence and substantially regressive proposals from the administration.

These contractual gains coincided with a new administration that sought to break from the past in a number of ways. Where previous administrations resolved disagreements largely through collegial channels - for example, through one-on-one meetings between the Presidents, or the involvement of the Provost at Joint Committee - the new administration has sought to marginalize the Faculty Association by delegating all matters to Human Resources. The administration's refusal to work with us, or to respect the timelines prescribed in our Collective Agreement, has forced us to file grievances on an unprecedented number of issues. Fortunately, we have recently seen more willingness to adhere to the Agreement, and a number of disputes have been resolved without going to arbitration.

The current north-American trend of administrative managerialism, replacing academic administrators with business-style managers focused on finances, threatens to undermine the values that make universities essential to society. These include promoting critical thought (ie being anti-authoritarian), training the next generation of professionals and leaders, and helping young people become engaged citizens who demand justice for all rather than wealth for the few.

Professors, however, are challenged to promote these societal values when they are overburdened with teaching, committees, and endless paperwork. A strong university is rich in academic discussions. It grapples with new ideas and challenges its members intellectually. It embraces creativity and imagination. Yet none of this can happen if everyone is run off their feet trying to keep up with mundane tasks. Creativity requires space and time for reflection. It requires opportunities to focus on a problem for long periods of time. Teaching and scholarship are fundamentally creative acts that cannot be coerced, regulated, or demanded on a schedule. A university can only prosper in proportion to the time and resources that faculty are given to exercise their talents.

It is important to recognize that many of the long-term challenges that UNBC faces, from crafting an academic plan to deciding how resources will be

allocated, are academic in nature and therefore under the purview of senate. Even so, your Association has an important role to play in working with the administration to ensure you have good working conditions and the administrative support you need to do your job. With your support, I will keep pushing to make UNBC a rewarding and stimulating place to work, which, ultimately, is the only guarantee of its future success.

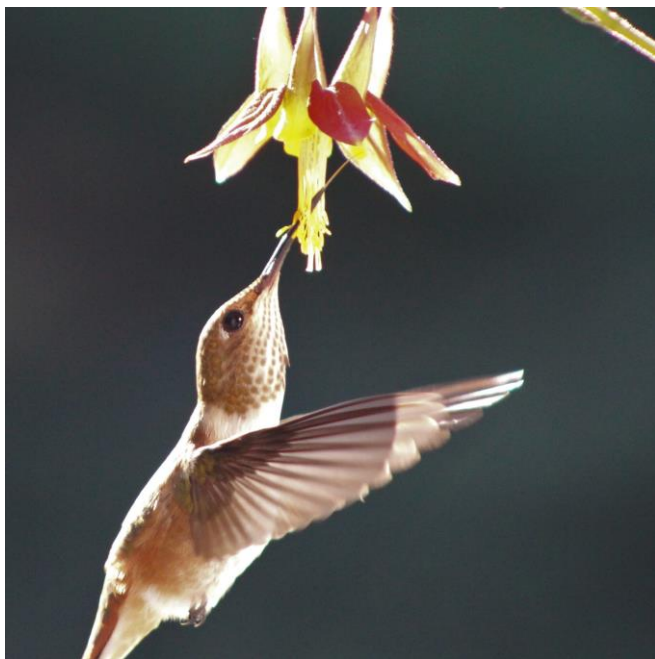


Photo provided courtesy of Dr. Ted Binnema, History Program



A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT
&
CHAIR OF THE GRIEVANCE & APPEAL
COMMITTEE

*Matt Reid
Professor, Physics Department*

The Faculty Association is interacting with the University under a fundamentally new paradigm. I do not mean as a Union, but rather in the way that the University chooses to interact with the Association. Human Resources is now handling all FA matters, including discussions at the Joint Consultation Committee, which in the past would have been a dialogue between the Association and the Provost, or even the President. This represents

a significant change, and as we all know, change is difficult.

The Association continues to vigorously defend your rights under principles of natural justice, defending established past practices, and consultation on policies that have a direct and significant impact on working conditions through recent and ongoing grievances. Indeed, the number of grievances the Association has been working on over the past year has been overwhelming, especially with so many grievances going to arbitration. Nonetheless, the Association has been successful at defending member's rights. The Association effectively represented its members in several cases this summer.

The Association is adapting to this new paradigm, using open dialogue and transparency to move matters forward. Earlier this month, the Association brought in Cam and Janet Morrill to speak on university budgets, and in particular, on the state of UNBC finances. The FA extended an invitation to the Vice President Finance and Business Operations, Robert Knight, who attended the information session. While the picture that emerged shows that there may be some challenges ahead, in particular, with respect to enrollments, I hope that it was informative and helpful in analyzing UNBC's financial position – especially over the past decade.

I am pleased to report that open dialogue and transparency appear to be working under the new paradigm. Many important issues are now being resolved outside of arbitration, and outside of the grievance process.

Is this a sign that an effective transition to the new paradigm is happening? Does this indicate that collegial governance is possible under this administration at UNBC? I certainly hope so.

To request a copy of the handout materials and audio recording of the session: **“UNBC Financial Condition (September 2016)”** by Dr. Cameron Morrill and Dr. Janet Morrill, please contact kjersti.koolegrant@unbc.ca, 250-960-5313



UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE IN THE
21ST CENTURY:

Meeting the Challenges of Openness,
Accountability, and Democracy



Plan to join CUFA BC on March 3 & 4, 2017, in beautiful Vancouver for our national conference: *“University Governance in the 21st Century: Meeting the Challenges of Openness, Accountability, and Democracy”*.

University governance is an increasingly complex and contentious issue at Canadian universities. As institutions try to balance multiple priorities in a competitive environment, critical issues such as transparency, accountability, and democracy are putting many existing governance models under intense pressure.

Faculty, staff, university administrators, and government policymakers from across the country will meet in Vancouver to discuss university governance and to address policy challenges and discuss best practices that could form the basis of more effective models of collegial governance.



SAVE THE DATE

March 3–4

2017



Faculty Association Offices

The Faculty Association Offices are located in
Rooms 3084/3085/3089 Administration Building

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm

Donna Plourde, Executive Director
donna.plourde@unbc.ca, 250-960-5816

Kjersti Koole-Grant, Professional Services Officer
kjersti.koolegrant@unbc.ca, 250-960-5313

visit our website at: www.unbcfa.ca