

FA Executive July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

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

Calendar of Events:

CUPE & FA Solidarity BBQ

May 1st, 11:30 – 1:30 pm
NUGSS/Conference Centre



8th Annual May Day Dinner & Celebration

May 1st, 5:30 pm
Coast Inn of the North



Retirement Workshop Planning Session

May 15th, 3:00 pm
Faculty Association Lounge

by CUFA-BC in Vancouver in March. More about that in a minute.

Elections and Some Thanks

Thanks to those who attended the Spring AGM last Friday. The FA election results were announced and are shown at the end of this newsletter. I would like to extend a warm thank you to Todd Whitcombe and everyone who allowed their name to stand. The quality of a democracy is only as good as the choices given its voters.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing members of the FA Executive: Paul Sanborn, Kealinn McCabe, and Saphida Migabo, as well as Heather Empey and James MacDonald, who served at various points during this term. All of these colleagues devoted their time and energy to our discussions and decisions. And an especially big thanks to Wendy Fellers, our unflappable Treasurer, SCUB representative, and CAUT Defense Fund Trustee, who always had the numbers at her fingertips, was infinitely patient in explaining accounting to us mortals, and always balanced her budgets. Thanks Wendy, we will miss your steady hand!

Some Good News

I previously shared with you a letter to President Weeks laying out the arguments for why President-to-President meetings should be resumed. While President Weeks has not agreed to regularly scheduled meetings, he has invited me to attend a number of recent PEC meetings, and we have spoken a number of times on the phone. I am grateful to him for his willingness to resume the relationship, and I look forward to building it further. In addition, I appreciate his administration's relatively calm approach to our current enrolment and fiscal challenges: some universities in this position begin laying about wildly with the axe of austerity, so I am grateful that the President has not taken that approach.

In addition, we have successfully defended your rights on a number of fronts. The Administration recently conceded that we are entitled to sixty days of sick leave *per incident* (rather than per calendar year), which hopefully won't affect most of us, but will be a relief for the few who need it. They also agreed to adhere to the language of the Collective Agreement in a workload assignment case and in a Chair's renewal case.

Some Challenges

While my report tended towards the upbeat, your Grievance Officer, Catherine Nolin, brought things back to earth with a reminder that the conflict resolution mechanisms at UNBC remain completely dysfunctional. The Provost continues to refuse to take on his Agreement-mandated role in complaints and grievances, and the Associate Vice President of People/Organization/Risk - to whom these responsibilities are delegated - is unable to deal with them within the timelines dictated by our Collective Agreement. The result is the increase in grievances and costs shown in the figure below.



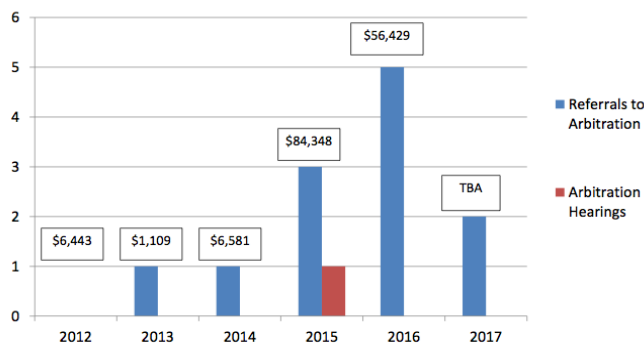
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Stephen Rader, President UNBC-FA
Professor, Biochemistry*

Dear Colleagues,

With the semester drawing to a close (rapidly to some, agonizingly slowly to others), we bring you another newsletter to apprise you of the latest activities of your Association. We are fortunate, in this edition, to have some thoughts about university governance from your colleague, David Casperson, and the CUFA-BC Director, Michael Conlon. These are based on a governance workshop held here at UNBC in February, and the national conference on University Governance hosted

Referrals to Arbitration for Settlement and Number of Arbitration Hearings



That only one referral has actually resulted in arbitration, and that every one of these grievances has been resolved to the Faculty Association's satisfaction, suggests that this process is a waste of our time and resources.

Some Thoughts About the Future

I have come to believe that the throttle on new hires over the last decade has caused serious institutional harm. New faculty members are essential to bring energy, enthusiasm, and new perspectives. UNBC's age demographic is now so skewed towards those on the verge of retirement, and many programs are so short-staffed, that it is challenging to be innovative about updating curricula and re-organizing academic programs. The moment we stopped ensuring the sustainability of our programs through renewal of the faculty complement, we started on a downward spiral of academic malaise.

This leads me to the question of whose job it is to worry about the good of the institution, a question that underlies much of the discussion of university governance. David Casperson provides some historical context, below, for governance questions at UNBC, and concludes that ultimately the only way forward is to stop arguing about who best understands the university's interests and instead work together. Michael Conlon provides some provincial and national context for the debates over the role of Faculty Associations in collegial governance.

Ultimately, the University Act gives faculty great power over the university through our roles at senate, at College Council, and in our programs and departments. In order to wield that power, however, we must educate ourselves about the issues, take clear positions, and build consensus - in other words, we must be engaged. Your Faculty Association will continue to seek ways to train faculty members in effective participation in collegial governance so that we can continue to exercise the powers we have been granted under the University Act.



Contract Academic Staff: Fair Employment Week at UNBC



ROLE OF SENATE IN COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE DECISIONS

David Casperson
Associate Professor & Chair, Computer Science

On Tuesday, February 7, I participated in a Faculty Association & CUFA-BC discussion regarding the role of Senate in governance, and particularly on the University's decision to remove the position of Dean of Graduate Programs without consulting Senate.

I attempted to provide an historical overview of UNBC's history of the role of Senate in governance decisions. The short summary of that history is that it is complicated.

In 1997, Senate approved an academic restructuring that replaced the initial four (or five) faculties with two colleges and the status of the faculty of graduate programs unclear.

In 2001/2002 the Dean of CSAM restructured the College by fiat, resulting in a grievance by the Faculty Association, whose mediated resolution resulted in the "Report of the Task Force on Collegial Governance". This report recognizes the right of faculty to have a formal say in any restructuring of their

academic units, presumably with the ultimate decision-making authority being Senate.

Does the University Act require that faculties have Deans? Clearly yes. Does it require that Deans have faculties? Clearly no. UNBC is not unique in having had Deans without corresponding faculties. UBC had a Dean of Women until the 1980s.

So what should we make of the decision to eliminate the Dean of Graduate programs? Senior Administration has been claiming that everything is a management right since forever—VP Brunt claiming that it justified “temporary” program closures without Senate consultation.

Exactly how labor relations concepts apply to the relationship between Senate and the administration is not clear to me. Regardless of the legalities (and legal clarity is an oxymoron), what is clear is that Senate, the Faculty Association and the administration have far more to gain from finding effective ways of working together than they do through claiming territorial rights.

A copy of the “**Report of the Task Force on Collegial Governance**” can be found on our website:

<http://unbcfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Report-on-Task-Force-on-Collegial-Governance.pdf>



Faculty Association “Oktoberfest” Social Event



A PROVINCIAL PERSPECTIVE OF COLLEGIAL GOVERNANCE

Michael Conlon
Executive Director

Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC

Collegial governance at BC's research universities is hampered by several structural challenges. Political intrusion by the Board of Governors and weakened Senates undermine

the ability of faculty to be true partners in academic decision making.

Though it is common in other provinces for the provincial government to appoint Board of Governors representatives, BC's system is uniquely politicized. BC is the only province in which legislation assures that direct government appointees will always have a working majority on Boards of Governors. All appointments follow a secretive Order in Council process with no public scrutiny or transparency and all appointments are signed off by the Premier.

This politicized process has had predictable results. In 2015, nine of the 11 provincially appointed UBC Board members were BC Liberal Party donors. These nine individuals contributed a combined \$137,395 to the party since 2005, and a 10th donated money through a personal corporation. The provincial appointees were also prominent in corporations that in turn donated to the BC Liberal party, bringing contributions connected to these Board members to a total of \$387,274. At the University of Victoria, Board Member Ida Chong, a former Liberal Cabinet Minister of Advanced Education, was appointed to the Board almost immediately after she lost her seat in the 2013 provincial election.

And of course at the University of Northern British Columbia the Board of Governors, by a narrow 7-6 vote, appointed former Conservative cabinet Minister James Moore as Chancellor. Elsewhere in Canada, universities seek to appoint a well-respected and non-controversial individual to the largely ceremonial position of Chancellor. Moore, by contrast, is an extremely controversial figure within the university sector given that he was the federal Minister-in-charge when grant agency budgets were cut, and the voices of federal scientists were muzzled. In appointing Moore, the BOG at UNBC by-passed consultation with Senate despite explicit provisions set out in the University Act. This clear contempt for the role of Senate is emblematic of a view of collegial governance as an inconvenience and distraction as opposed to the lifeblood of what makes a research university work best for those it serves.

The common pattern in these controversies is that governments and senior administrators are slowly backing away from the academic model of collegial governance, in which faculty have meaningful input into the academic management of universities. This shift away from collegial governance has also fostered mistrust and, in some cases, dysfunctional labour relations. There is also an emergent trend amongst administrators to suggest that faculty associations that make the democratic decision to unionize somehow forfeit their right to participate in collegial governance. Given the increasingly political and tactical maneuvers by university administrators to dilute the role of Senate, the notion that unions are too adversarial or 'political' is properly seen for the hypocrisy that it is. At precisely the moment that Senates and BOG's are in danger of becoming a rubber stamping body for administrators, faculty are told to renounce their collective voice in the spirit of 'collegiality' and 'cooperation'.

This burgeoning shift in the model of collegial governance finds explicit voice in Peter MacKinnon's *University Leadership and*

Public Policy in the Twenty-First Century. MacKinnon has, in effect, written a manifesto designed to encourage and support efforts to blunt the role faculty unions have had in protecting and, in some circumstances, expanding the scope of collegial governance. MacKinnon's ideas have had considerable sway as a clarion call to reign in faculty unions and he has made numerous presentations to senior university administrators across the country on his particular views on governance and faculty unions.

Mackinnon's treatise for university administrators boils down to a few simple(and simplistic) principles:

- i) Faculty unions have become too powerful (read: successful) and have been able to enshrine collegial governance provisions in collective agreements. In Mackinnon's view CAs are no place for collegial governance and they should be removed in bargaining when possible and never be bargained into new agreements. MacKinnon goes further to argue that anyone active within their faculty union should be excluded from all aspects of collegial governance and tenure and promotion committees.
- ii) Working conditions for faculty are so advantageous and generous that faculty have no need of the protections offered by unions. He further argues that labour legislations and human rights codes have become so robust that any concerns faculty have could be addressed through these legislative protections.
- iii) Intimately linked to this argument against unionization MacKinnon also argues that two of the defining features of academic work, academic freedom and tenure should be revisited. MacKinnon argues, in a familiar trope, that academic freedom has become too robust and the only way to save it is to allow University presidents to reign it in. He also suggests that University presidents should have more control over hiring, tenure, and promotion, of both faculty and Deans. MacKinnon further argues: "The question is fairly asked and renewed, whether tenure serves an important public policy piece in Canada in the twenty-first century" (150).

MacKinnon's views are worth reviewing in this context, not because they are new or particularly compelling, but because they are a coherent registry of oft murmured but rarely articulated ideas about faculty unions. However, as the ongoing challenges in university governance in British Columbia demonstrate the adversarial approach MacKinnon adopts toward collegial governance and faculty unions exacerbate rather than solve the problems he purports to resolve.

An active and engaged role for faculty in Senate is a vital first step in resuscitating a truly collegial model of university governance. The starting point for the discussion is the belief that a meaningful role for faculty in the academic and pedagogic decision making process is not merely an aspiration or ideal but it is *the* defining feature of what distinguishes universities from corporations, government, and other institutions. Collegial governance is fundamental to what allows universities to attract the best and brightest scholars, cultivate the next generation of citizens, and develop solutions to our most pressing social and economic challenges. Faculty have both a right and responsibility to share in the academic decision making process. Universities ruled by fiat run the risk of jeopardizing the very thing that distinguishes them from every other institution in society.

CUFA BC is pleased to announce the winner of the
2017 Pat Buttedahl Distinguished Academic Award
for Career Achievement:
Dr. Darwyn Coxson

Named in memory of Dr. Paz Buttedahl – academic, community builder and faculty association leader – this award is for sustained outstanding contributions to the community beyond the academy through research or other scholarly activities by an individual or a group over the major portion of their career.



Dr. Darwyn Coxson is a professor in the Ecosystem Science and Management program at the University of Northern British Columbia. Darwyn has been actively involved at UNBC since its inception, previously holding positions on the UNBC Senate, Board of Governors, and Faculty Association Executive. His research program examines the role of non-vascular plants, such as lichens and mosses, in the ecosystem function of wet-temperate rainforests

Darwyn's scholarship has also been fused with a sense of activism and the need to conduct science in the public interest. His tireless advocacy and internationally renowned research was instrumental in the 2015 establishment in of the Ancient Forest/Chun t'oh Whudujut Provincial Park, a 12,000 hectare area protecting the core cedar rain forest in northern British Columbia. He played a pivotal role in bringing together stakeholders to determine protected areas and ensure enduring ownership and participation by the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation. Darwyn was also instrumental in a recent submission for designation of the Ancient Forest as a World Heritage Site under UNESCO.

One of his nominees described Darwyn's leadership and impact as follows:

"At every face-to-face meeting, community open house, lecture, and radio interview where I have had the pleasure to work with, learn from, and listen to Darwyn, I have been inspired. His consensus building and solutions oriented approach is remarkable and his sincerity and passion is transparent and humbling."



Election of the Executive Committee July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019

Officers:

President:	Stephen Rader
Vice-President:	Matt Reid
Treasurer:	Sylvia Barton
Past President:	Jacqueline Holler

Members at-large:

Bruce Bidgood (Regional)
Jenia Blair (SLI)
Art Fredeen (Faculty)
Trina Fyfe (Librarian)
Kristen Guest (Faculty)
Monica Mattfeld (Term)
Paul Siakaluk (Faculty)



Faculty Association Office

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

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm

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

visit our website at: www.unbcfa.ca