

Order in the House: President's Report

Elizabeth Hodgson
President

Welcome back to a new academic year. At the Faculty Association we've been tidying the desktop, getting through the inbox, and making sure we're well prepared to assist you in your work at UBC.

The Desktop:

Two major restructuring initiatives will be coming to you for your approval this fall:

1) A possible small dues-increase to rebuild our legal reserve fund, which is getting dangerously low even after several years of cutting discretionary expenditures. It's been 13 years since our last dues-adjustment, and our dues are the lowest of the big Canadian associations. We'll send out detailed financial statements & forecasts and hold an information meeting before we ask for your vote on this.

2) A reorganization of our committees so that we are better prepared for collective bargaining, most notably by creating an ongoing Bargaining Preparation Committee to track issues, do research, and help us develop our bargaining proposals and surveys. This change will involve a constitutional amendment, and the Executive has authorized a vote on this in November. Please NOTE: we authorized a vote on this matter in April 2008, but because it was at the end of term, we didn't get the mandate

we needed to make those changes. I also made the mistake of asking for one vote on several amendments, instead of allowing you to vote on each change separately. I've learned my lesson—you'll be free to vote on each change independently.

This important restructuring will make the Association far better organized to assist, inform, and protect you in your work at UBC.

The Inbox:

There are several issues we're working on which may be important to you:

a) Daycare Crisis: Our October 30th Fall Meeting will include a panel on this important issue for faculty.

b) Senate Case: This issue arose last spring when the University argued in an arbitration that Senate policies could and did nullify any part of our collective agreement with which they were in conflict—in other words, we can have a collective agreement, but if Senate ever chooses to implement policies which contravene it, the Senate policy erases our collective agreement provisions and protections. We've argued before the courts that Canadian case-law is quite clear: the employer (UBC) has the obligation to harmonize its various commitments and contracts. It cannot use one constituent

structure (like Senate) to dodge its own legal obligations to abide by the contract it has entered into with us. This case has attracted national attention because of its threat to every association's collective agreement rights. Both CAUT, our national association, and CUPE asked to intervene on our behalf.

c) Student Evaluations of Teaching Protocols: In 2007, the UBC Vancouver Senate approved a new policy on student evaluation of teaching. This policy envisions three innovations: 1) a possible web-based platform for student evaluations; 2) a standardized "University Module" of evaluation questions for every course, with a standardized score; 3) the publication of such scores on a student-accessible website.

The UBC Faculty Association has protested this new policy on several

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grounds, not least because the new standardized module and its published results are explicitly designed to be used as a common metric to assess teaching for the purposes of promotion, tenure, reappointment, merit and discipline, yet have no set guidelines protecting the accuracy, reliability or validity of the data being gathered. Further, privacy issues, our collective rights to consultation around employment matters, and the limitations of student evaluations as the central measure of faculty teaching abilities are all important issues which this policy and its implementation have not yet addressed.


The Faculty Association launched a policy grievance on this issue in September 2007. The University claimed that we could not grieve this policy, arguing that Senate is not bound to honour our collective agreement with UBC. This more funda-

mental question is now before the courts; when it is dealt with, we will move on to address the particular issues involved in this evaluation policy.

The University's implementation of the policy has occurred in stages, with some Faculties using the current University Modules in addition to their regular Faculty and departmental forms, some eschewing the new Module entirely because it doesn't fit their class-structures, and some using the University Module in place of their regular departmental and faculty forms. Web-use is likewise not standardized. The University continues to revise the University Module questions and has not yet attempted to seek permission to publish scores on a student-accessible website.

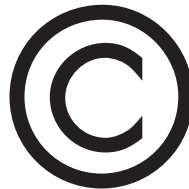
Please note: the University has acknowledged that consent to have

scores published must be active: **that is, if a faculty member does nothing, the scores cannot be published.** Some Faculties have advised their members not to consent to such publication, and some Faculties have declined to use any such data for employment purposes. Since the University has suggested that this policy arose largely from student concerns, we are in discussions with the AMS on how to more profitably address their interest in informed student course-selection. More on this as it develops.

As usual, we have many issues of importance to you our members to keep watch on. Please let us know if problems or concerns are arising for you in your area of campus; we will be happy to help you out! I can be reached at fa.pres@ubc.ca, ph 2.2651. 

COPYRIGHT & FAIR DEALING IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

Tuesday, October 21, 2008
1:00pm - 3:00pm
Room 147, Geography Building
1984 West Mall, UBC Vancouver



The workshop:

A discussion of the importance of copyright in teaching and research at our universities, the implications of fair dealing, and other copyright issues brought into question by Bill C-61 (An Act to Amend the Copyright Act)

The facilitators:

- Meera Nair, Doctoral Candidate, School of Communication, Simon Fraser University
- Sam Trosow, Associate Professor, University of Western Ontario

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED!

Sponsored by:

Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia
& Canadian Association of University Teachers

JOIN THE PERSONNEL SERVICES COMMITTEE!

We are seeking members to serve on the Personnel Services Committee (PSC). The role of this committee is to investigate complaints by individuals concerning their employment, tenure, salaries, and other conditions of service. Members on the committee will have the opportunity to assist members of the Faculty Association and gain more insight into the functions of the Association. The PSC meets once every month from September to May. Your volunteering effort would provide you with opportunities to meet members of different units across the campus (including both UBCO and UBCV). If you are interested, please email the Faculty Association at faculty@interchange.ubc.ca.

Your Contract: Reading Between the Lines

This column examines various provisions of the Collective Agreement, expounding on member rights and terms and conditions of employment. We will explore what a given provision or set of provisions means for you as a Faculty Association member. Please send us your questions, comments and suggestions.

In the last round of collective bargaining, a new article was introduced into the Framework Agreement. Titled "Notification of Workload," Article 13 says:

The Head of each academic unit shall notify members annually of the unit's general approach to workload. Prior to finalizing workloads, the Head shall offer the opportunity for members of the unit to provide their views and relevant information pertaining to workload.

The question, of course, is, "what exactly does this mean?"

When the language was introduced into the Agreement, it was intended to both provide some indication that workloads arose out of a collegial process and should be more or less standardized within a unit, while also providing the flexibility for units to determine what best works for their own circumstances. It has, however, at times created confusion as members find themselves involved in disputes regarding teaching load. And on a few occasions, the language has needed to be discussed in a formal grievance process.

Unfortunately at UBC Okanagan, which does not have the benefit of long established past practice, a significant number of problems and disputes have arisen regarding teaching loads. As a resolution to some of these disputes the UBCO administration has signed off on a set of procedures to be followed at UBCO, based on best practice procedures that have evolved at UBC Vancouver.

In the view of the Association, the procedures that have been adopted at UBCO represent good departmental practice, and

might serve as a guide for units at UBC Vancouver that have not yet fully developed written protocols for assignment of work, teaching in particular. The gist of the UBCO procedures are as follows:

1) Each Head should consult with all faculty in the unit to collegially develop workload guidelines based on the principle of equitable workload distribution and modeled on a proportion split of duties as follows – scholarly activity, 40%; teaching, 40%; service, 20%. (For those ranks that are not required to engage in scholarly activity – i.e. Lecturers and Instructors – the split will, of course, be different.)

2) Guidelines should specify the norm for members in terms of standard 3-credit courses (eg. 2-2, 2-3), and should be as clear as possible regarding how non-standard teaching is also counted – for example, the equivalent that is provided for lab supervision, coordination, or supervision of graduate students.

3) Guidelines should provide an indication as to how and when teaching assignments for an individual might be modified or reduced. For example, what constitutes a research, service, or teaching assignment of such significance that some form of teaching release is warranted. As at UBCV, we understand of course that teaching should not be assigned punitively.

4) Guidelines should be reviewed annually by the unit as a whole.

5) Deans should be notified of each unit's workload guidelines but should not

play a role in setting guidelines for either the unit as a whole or for any individual member. A Dean may investigate where there appear to be substantial inequities across units within an individual Faculty.

The Association strongly urges each department to develop guidelines for assignment of workloads and hopes that the above can be helpful in framing some of the issues to consider and providing an indication of how the general language of the collective agreement can be implemented. **FF**

A HEALTHY FOOTPRINT

We invite faculty to UBC Vancouver's 6th annual Health Symposium – A Healthy Footprint – to be held at the beautiful Chan Centre on October 15, 2008. The event is complimentary to all UBC faculty and staff.

You will have the opportunity to hear nationally renowned and engaging speakers like Dr. Greg Banwell and Linda Edgecombe. You can participate in relevant and informative breakout sessions with various field experts including Dr. Milan Khara, Dr. Joti Samra, Merv Gilbert, Kathy Lynn and Rowena List. Pick up free products/goodies and be eligible to win great prizes.

On-line registration for the Health Symposium will be open shortly. Visit www.hse.ubc.ca/health-symposium for program information and to submit your registration.

To learn more about the Health Promotion Program's ongoing series of free events (seminars, presentations, and health screenings) including the Healthy Workplace Initiative Fund, please visit us at www.hse.ubc.ca.

The Provincial Scene: Government Budget Cuts Still a Mystery

Paul Bowles

President, Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia

Universities across the province are still working out how to deal with the 2.6 per cent cut to previously planned budgets announced by the provincial government in March. There has still not been a satisfactory explanation about why these cuts were deemed necessary—certainly the provincial government's budget surplus is healthy enough. Despite numerous stories in the media and direct meetings with the Minister of Advanced Education, CUFA BC is no more enlightened about the rationale for the cuts today than it was six months ago.

When pressed on the issue, the government falls back on two points. The first is the claim that expenditure on post-secondary education has increased by 40 per cent since 2001. Secondly, they argue that expenditure will increase by a further \$68 million this year and that therefore to talk of "cuts" is misleading.

These arguments need to be carefully examined. The government's "40 per cent" figure is drawn from the annual budget estimates documents. In the post-secondary sector, governments often provide one-off payments and fund additional initiatives late in the year so that the money going into the sector can differ significantly from the budget estimates. More accurate are the figures from the Ministry of Advanced Education's service plan reports.

Using these figures, actual government spending on public post-secondary institutions has increased by 24.1 per cent since 2001. This is still a substantial increase, even if it is not as impressive as the government's proffered figure. But, even this amount has been outpaced by the increase in enroll-

ment that has occurred since 2001. The expansion in the number of seats is to the government's credit, but the increases in funding have fallen behind the growth in student numbers. Universities and colleges are receiving fewer dollars per student today than they were seven years ago. Not by much, but still less and this isn't the end of the story.

We also need to take into account the effects of inflation. The consumer price index in BC has increased by close to 15 per cent since 2001, so not only are universities and colleges receiving fewer dollars per student than they received seven years ago, but those dollars now buy 15 per cent less.

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Even this is an underestimate since post-secondary institutions' costs consist mainly of wages, and expensive high-tech equipment, journals and books. As a result, the higher education price index increases faster than the consumer price index. Canada, unlike the U.S. and the U.K., does not calculate a higher education price index, but based on the U.S. index computed by the Commonfund Institution, price increases in the higher education sector have been around 50 per cent higher than the consumer price index over the period 2001-2008. Applying this to BC, the

15 per cent fall in real per student funding since 2001 would then translate into a reduction of over 22 per cent.

Seen in this context, the government's increase of \$68 million in funding actually represents a further real cut to institutional resources. \$68 million out of total spending on public post-secondary institutions of close to \$1.8 billion represents an increase of approximately 3.8 per cent. But inflation is currently running at an annual rate of 3 per cent in BC. Compounding the problem, the government projects there will be a further 7.5 per cent increase in the number of student spaces this year. Admittedly, these enrollment predictions are overly optimistic but, even so, the \$68 million is clearly far less than is needed to restore real per student funding to its 2001 level.

CUFA BC's analysis shows a different picture of spending on post-secondary education than that provided by the government. CUFA BC is continuing to challenge the government on their numbers, hold the government accountable, and push to reverse the funding cuts. [FF](#)

Paul Bowles is a Professor of Economics at the University of Northern British Columbia and the current President of our provincial association, CUFA BC.

The Big Picture

Mike Jennings, General Secretary
Irish Federation of University Teachers

30 April 2008: from a speech to the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT)

It is a great pleasure to be here, and it is a great honour for me personally and for my Union, IFUT, to have been asked to address your important conference.

I have extended greetings of solidarity and gratitude to you in three different languages, Irish, French and English.

By taking the time to say the same thing three times in three different languages I am not merely declaring my respect and admiration for three different cultures and three different linguistic traditions, I am also declaring that I am not one of those who values "efficiency" over content and substance, who are obsessed with counting and measuring.

These narrow people with their "workload model mentality" could not understand why I would speak three times when once would do. With their stop watches, their clip boards and their time charts they would be as willing to set a precise number of seconds for my address as they would be prepared to set precise, measureable targets for you to do your imprecise, immeasurable literally invaluable task of extending the boundaries of knowledge and passing on the results to your students.

These people will suck all the vitality and uniqueness out of our Universities because, since they cannot count what is valuable, they simply value what is countable.

This issue has a particular character in Ireland which gives it an especially pointed edge.

Ever since 1987 the pay and conditions of all workers (public and private sectors) are negotiated in National Agreements.

One of the recent unwelcome side effects of this centralized process has been draconian "efficiency measures".

But these "efficiency measures" are often driven by ideological considerations rather than practical realities and they are devised by people who do not understand what it is that Academics actually do.

So we spend more time form-filling and less time educating. More time explaining how we work than working to explain, which is what education is supposed to be about.

These people will suck all the vitality & uniqueness out of our Universities because, since they cannot count what is valuable, they simply value what is countable.

But the challenge to the quality of Higher Education World-wide is not confined to the incursion of administrators doing what administrators do. There is an ideological struggle going on also. It is the struggle to defend Academic Freedom and the pursuit of knowledge and excellence for its own sake against those whose only concept of the value of education is as a narrow, short-term job qualification and economy-server.

In Ireland, this has led to the phenomenon whereby academics in cash-starved Colleges are being encouraged more and more to embrace fields of study and areas for research, not for their intrinsic value but rather on the basis of what will attract more

private and corporate funding and sponsorship.

In one leading Irish University a professor who has a track record of decades of first class work in one area of the Irish economy (an indigenous area) has been denied promotion because his University has installed a requirement that all work has to have an international dimension.

We are in danger of being managed by bad educators, the type who are easily dazzled by the obvious and the easily measured. These bad educators send out bad messages: "forget diversity, forget the pursuit of truth for truth's sake and knowledge for knowledge's sake, forget individuality and originality and innovation. Give us more of the same, the safe. Give us uniformity, give us talents which are easily measureable and achievements which are easily countable."

I beg to differ. My Union begs to differ. And I know that this proud Union, CAUT, begs to differ. **FF**

SPEAK UP!

The university is seeking faculty input on two major initiatives: UBC applying for NCAA membership; and the next Strategic Plan (which the administration wants to use to determine how UBC is organized, hires faculty, and shifts priorities for growth or otherwise). Take 10 minutes to respond so that the university hears from us.

Strategic Plan: www.strategicplan.ubc.ca/
NCAA: www.students.ubc.ca/ncaa/


From this Corner: Sessional Faculty Committee

Karen Needham

Chair, Sessional Faculty Committee

Hello and welcome (or welcome back!) to another fall semester at UBC. Sessional faculty (academics who teach credit courses on contract) now number close to 750 at UBC-V. Because of the contingent nature of our work, issues arise that are unique to us. Pay inequity, no job security, lack of academic freedom, limited access to research grants, and many hours of unpaid work are just some of the things that make life as a sessional at UBC extremely stressful. Although these issues may be unique to sessional faculty, ultimately they affect all faculty and students alike, because everyone loses when anyone at UBC is exploited.

The Sessional Faculty Committee (SFC) of the Faculty Association was formed in 2001 to address these concerns and others. We work both on specific cases brought to us by our members and on broader initiatives of interest to all. The SFC functions best when we have representatives from many faculties and departments working together to enlighten and assist our members.

The SFC meets approximately once a month in the Faculty Association offices, with lunch provided so that you can make the most of your limited free time. If you are interested in joining the committee, even if just for one semester to see what we are all about, then please feel free to contact me by email at needham@zoology.ubc.ca or by phone at 604.822.3379. I can also answer any further questions you may wish to ask prior to joining our group. 

Join the SFC for
Fair Employment Week
October 27 - 31, 2008

This is a week of solidarity and action for Sessional Faculty at UBC and beyond, a time to highlight the issues facing contingent academics across North America and to work toward solutions.

Details of specific events during FEW will be announced soon.

UBC Quarter-Century Club Annual Dinner

Tuesday, October 14, 2008

The UBC Quarter-Century Club was established in 1996 by President David Strangway to recognize full-time faculty members and librarians with 25 years of service. In 2003, the club began recognizing active members who have reached the additional milestone of 35 years of service. This group is known collectively as Tempus Fugit, or "time flies." Forty-one new QCC members and 10 Tempis Fugit members will be inducted this year.

The annual dinner on October 14, 2008 at the Sage Bistro at 6pm, is a wonderful opportunity for new, active and retired members to keep in touch with each other and the university in a warm, celebratory environment. There is no cost to attend the dinner for new 25- and 35-year members and their guests. For university administration, other club members and guests, the cost is \$35 per person.

Professor Stephen Toope, UBC President, presents new members with a diamond pin at the dinner. Also presented is a membership card, which confers privileges such as free admission to the UBC Botanical Gardens and discounted admission to the UBC Aquatic Centre, as well as the opportunity to attend the annual dinner. There are no membership fees.

As this year's President I extend a warm welcome to all new members of QCC and Tempus Fugit and a hearty invitation to all past members.

Sam Sheps, QCC President

School of Population and Public Health

Your Forum: UBC Farm

Sanja Brkanovic
Faculty of Land and Food Systems

The Centre for Sustainable Food Systems (CSFS) at UBC Farm is currently a flurry of activity, buzzing with student volunteers, researchers and community members. Over the last ten years students have worked hard to revitalise existing farm and forest lands. The Farm is currently growing and selling produce, functioning as a research facility and acting as a host for many community programs. Together, students, faculty, staff, and the local community have accomplished an annual increase in UBC Farm's research and farmland capacity. Students from 14 of the 25 UBC faculties are using the CSFS facilities for academic research.

This July the UBC Farm hosted a faculty retreat. It was a chance for faculty interested in incorporating the Farm into their research and teaching agendas to meet faculty who currently use the Farm. It was an opportunity for networking and concluded with a round-table discussion on increasing the Farm's research capacity. The overall response was astounding. The Farm now plans to host another faculty retreat in the near future. Keep your eyes and ears open or contact the Farm if you're interested in attending, or working the CSFS into your research or teaching agenda.

Now that the Farm has been revitalized and established as an irreplaceable academic facility, it should be labelled as such in the Official Community Plan (OCP). In the year 2000, students began raising concerns over the official label of the UBC Farm (as 'Future Housing Reserve') in the OCP. Since then, UBC Campus and Community Planning has started the Vancouver Campus Plan initiative, due to be completed by 2009, which will serve as a framework for future academic and research

development at UBC.

Within this process, the current land use status of the UBC Farm is also being reviewed. Currently, 22 of the 24 hectares of farm and forest land belonging to UBC Farm are labelled as 'academic reserve.' Land under this title may be slated for future academic housing developments. Thus, there exists a real possibility that the UBC Farm will be shrunk or re-located as a result of the Campus Planning process. Presently, the OCP is reviewing various campus plan options and developing evaluation criteria. The result of this review will directly decide the future of the UBC Farm.

Parallel to this, the faculty of Land and Food Systems (Formerly Agricultural Sciences), in collaboration with Lees and Associates, has released a document outlining a set of recommendations for land use needs on the UBC Farm. Although it will be considered as a guide, the Lees report is not binding, and the final option submitted to the Board of Governors will come directly from the Vancouver Campus Plan process.

Moving or shrinking the UBC Farm greatly limits its scope and productivity as a production-scale enterprise. As with any ecosystem, heavy infrastructure additions will also impact native plant growth and will result in changes to the micro-climate, limit honey bee productivity, and result in the loss of soils which have been worked on for over 40 years. The UBC Farm is currently a working research facility, and the only functioning farm in Vancouver; Imagine the benefits UBC Farm will have in securing future on-campus research in land use planning, energy deficit adaptation, health, and climate change mitigation.

The Campus Planning initiative is

encouraging many positive changes to UBC campus design, such as better eco-density principles and more affordable living spaces. The academic community's role is integral to guiding this process responsibly.

The planning process is still ongoing, and faculty concerns stand to greatly influence the final decision. The greater the response received from the community, the more heavily this will be weighed against other external pressures to develop on the UBC Farm. We invite all faculty and students to address your concerns to:

- Stephen Toope, President of UBC
103 - 6328 Memorial Rd, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2
E: stephen.toope@ubc.ca
- The UBC Board of Governors
c/o Reny Kahlon, Acting Secretary
6328 Memorial Road, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2
E: reny.kahlon@ubc.ca
- UBC/GVRD Joint Committee
c/o Paulette Vetleson, Corporate Secretary
4330 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC, V5H 4G8
E: paulette.vetleson@gvrd.bc.ca
- Nancy Knight, AVP Campus & Community Planning
102 - 2210 West Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2
E: nancy.knight@ubc.ca
- Stephen Owen, VP, External, Legal and Community Relations, UBC
6328 Memorial Road, Vancouver BC V6T 1Z2
E: stephen.owen@ubc.ca
- Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier
3615 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6R 1P2
E: Gordon.Campbell.MLA@leg.bc.ca
- UBC Farm
2357 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z4

Faculty Focus accepts submissions from UBC Faculty Association members on issues of interest. Unless otherwise stated, the opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the Association or its Executive Committee.

UBC Faculty Association

Fall General Meeting

Thursday, October 30, 2007 @ 12:30pm

UBC Vancouver: IT Services/ Telestudios, Room 112, 2329 West Mall

UBC Okanagan: SCI 331

Short business meeting, including notice of two motions:

- THAT Loewen Stronach & Co. be reappointed as auditors for the Faculty Association
- THAT the special resolutions to amend the bylaws be accepted

followed by a panel discussion:

Where Do All the Children Go? The Daycare Crisis at UBC

Panelists:

- Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom, Assistant Professor, Political Science & VP Advocacy, Daycare Council
- Lynell Anderson, Senior Research Fellow, Early Learning & Child Care Research Unit (ELCRU) at Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP)
- Mark Rheault, Assistant Professor, Barber Arts & Sciences Unit 2, UBCO

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Adam Frankel, Pharmaceutical Sciences, 2.7146

Hugh Neary, Economics, 2.4505

Chris Orvig, Chemistry, 2.4449

James Tansey, Centre for Applied Ethics, 2.8625

Jim Johnson, Economics, 7.9391
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Kenny Kwok, Cellular & Physiological Sciences, 2.6228
[Chair, Personnel Services](#)

Karen Needham, Zoology, 2.3779
[Chair, Sessional Faculty](#)

Mira Sundara Rajan, Law, 827.5339
[Chair, Status of Women](#)

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