

Time for a Tune-Up

Elizabeth Hodgson
President

The Faculty Association Executive has approved a **member vote on an increase to Faculty Association dues** from .528% to .678%. This increase, which is about \$7/month for an associate professor, would be effective July 1, 2009.

We need this increased support for member-services because our legal reserve funds have been dwindling rapidly as we deal with an increasing number of complex issues on behalf of our members. Our reserves are sliding toward 1/3 of our operating budget, and they should be at 1x operating budget. We're going into a major round of bargaining in just over a year, and we don't want to find ourselves unable to protect your interests because we're out of resources.

It's been 13 years since our last dues-increase, and our rates are lower than the association rates at U of T, SFU, and Alberta, our closest comparators. Even AFTER the dues increase, our rates will still

be at or below theirs.

The Association Executive has also approved, for the first time ever, a policy to offer members a **dues-holiday** whenever the reserve funds reach 1.5 x our annual operating budget. We think it only fair that we all reap the benefits if and when we have sufficient reserves to protect us from unexpected events.

I have been on the Faculty Association Executive for six years now, watching us struggle to do more with less every year. We have been cutting costs wherever we can, but we view service to members as our top priority, and we're now beginning to be in danger of not being able to offer the protections we owe to UBC faculty, librarians, and program directors.

You will receive an information flyer to help you vote. Please also see the article on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter which provides you with more detailed financial information. We've posted a complete

analysis and background report on our website as well. We'll be holding an information meeting on Wednesday, November 5th; do come if you have any questions at all.

We do hope that you'll see the wisdom of getting the brakes fixed on the family car before a major road trip, but whatever your thoughts on this, please, please **VOTE**. We've made it as easy as possible for you to do just that, and it's very important that we hear from everyone on this!

Part 2 of the tune-up, and part of the same ballot, will be a ratification vote on constitutional amendments to rationalize our committees and make us ready for bargaining with a specific bargaining committee. We need a 75% majority vote to ratify constitutional amendments, so I covet your views on this issue as well. We'll run these as one voting process, so it'll be very simple. Please watch for the flyer in your mailbox! [FF](#)

Information Meeting on Proposed Dues Increase

UBC Okanagan

Wednesday, November 5, 2008

1:30pm - 3:00pm

UBCFA Office, SSC 005

UBC Vancouver

Wednesday, November 5, 2008

12noon - 1:00pm

CHEM 300, 2036 Main Mall

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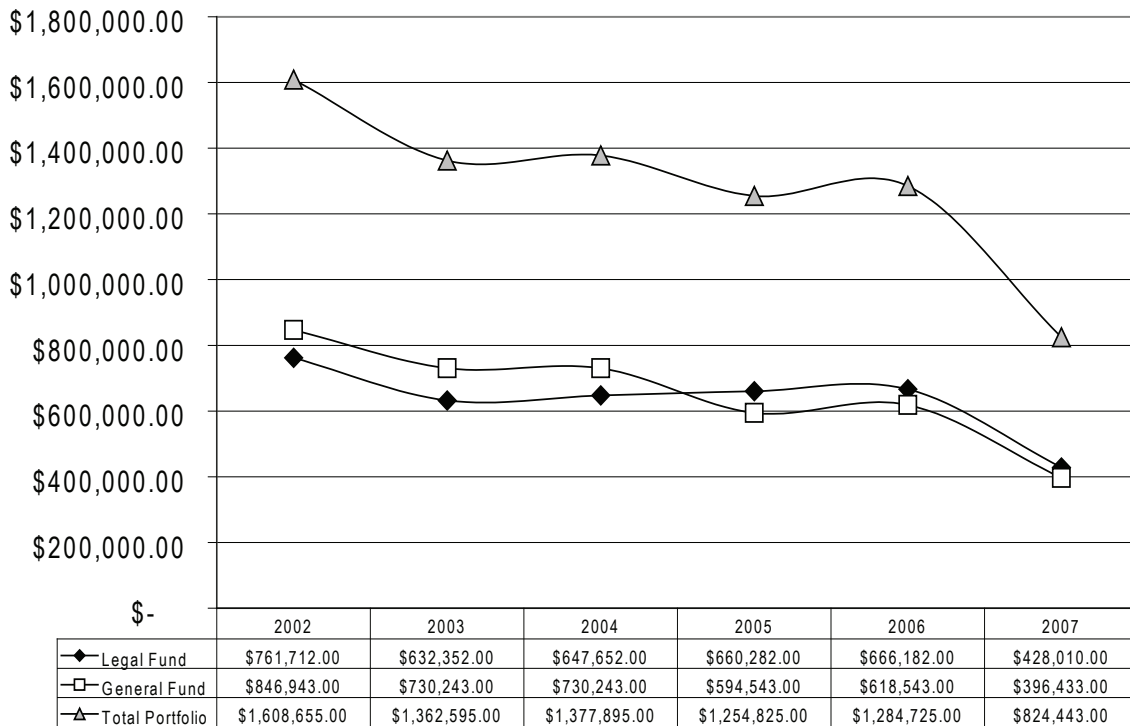
Member Dues & Services: The Need for Action

The Problem:

Reserve funds for an organization of our size and scope should be at least one year's annual expenses. Our current reserves are at roughly half the recommended level and falling rapidly.

Total Reserve Fund (comprised of legal fund and general fund).

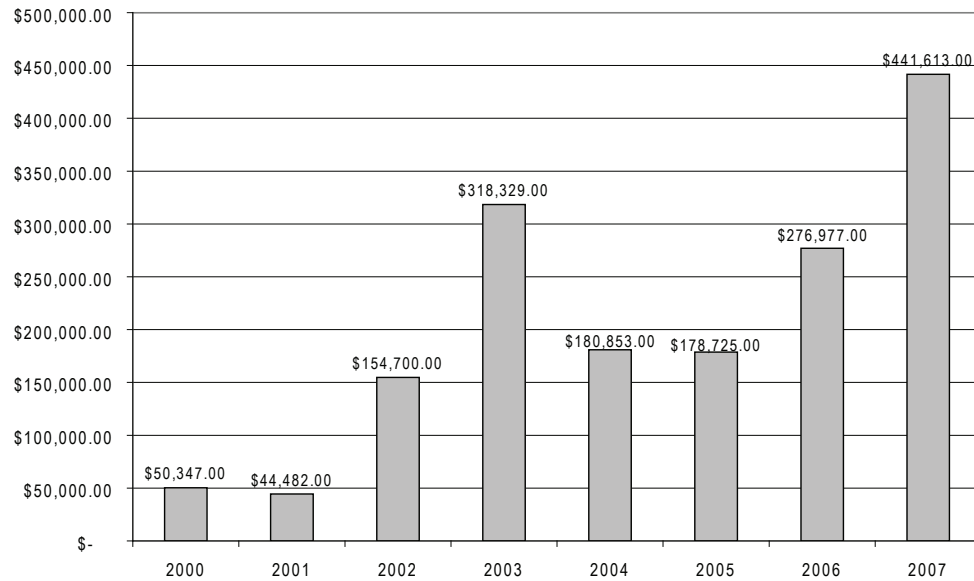
Figure 4 - Face Value of Investments if Held to Maturity



The Background:

- Now that we are under the Labour Code, we have a legal duty of fair representation for our members and are responsible for more issues than in 1995, when the members last approved a dues increase.
- We now have two campuses and several new groups of faculty to represent; our per-capita income has only recently climbed back to pre-1997 levels.
- Our wider mandate has resulted in more member-cases, and more complex cases, leading to an increase in our legal costs.

Legal & Arbitration Fees



These increased legal fees have resulted in a recurring shortfall in our budget, which has depleted our reserve defense funds.

Our Annual Service Costs: What does the money do?

- \$1.48 million = our annual income from dues
- \$1.65 million = our annual service-costs:
 - Staffing for Member Services: ~\$575,000
 - CAUT/CUFA BC: Provincial/Federal Advocacy, Legal Aid, and Research Support: ~\$480,000
 - Legal Expenses: ~ \$350,000
 - Operational Costs: ~ \$250,000

We have carefully managed our operating costs; we have for instance negotiated a discount from our legal counsel and trimmed our discretionary operating expenses. CAUT (our national advocacy organization) has also provided us with \$800,000 worth of legal assistance on three major cases in the past three years.

How much is the increase?

Currently, members pay \$5.28 per \$1,000 in salary. We are recommending a new rate of \$6.78 per \$1,000 in salary. This new rate is less than U of T FA (\$7.80) or SFU FA (\$6.80), our closet comparators. With the new rate we will be considerably below the other employee groups on campus, and we'll be on par with U of Alberta's Faculty Association, which is close to us in size. Faculty Association dues are tax deductible.

RANK	MEDIAN ANNUAL SALARY	CURRENT MONTHLY DUES	PROPOSED MONTHLY DUES	INCREASE PER MONTH (pre-tax; NET)
Sessional Lecturer	\$36,432	\$16.03	\$20.58	\$4.55; \$2.73 net
Instructor	\$75,826	\$33.36	\$42.84	\$9.78; \$5.87 net
Associate Professor	\$96,762	\$42.58	\$54.67	\$12.09; \$7.26 net

The Plan:

- With this dues increase, our annual income in 2009 will rise to \$1.8 million. We will be able to erase our recurring annual deficit (due mainly to legal expenses) and fully replenish our reserves by 2013.
- We have approved a new Association policy that we will declare a dues holiday when the reserves hit 1.5 x the operating budget.

For MORE DETAILED information and background, please see www.facultyassociation.ubc.ca.

Your Forum: Issues Management Protocols

Below is an exchange between Stephen Owen, UBC's Vice President for Legal and External Affairs, and a faculty member, on the University's proposed guidelines for Issues Management Protocols. Both parties gave permission to publish their exchange. We offered to publish the VP's proposed revisions, and though we haven't received it yet, we anticipate its dissemination to the UBC community in the near future.

Next month this column will feature Bill Bruneau's analysis of UBC's new Respectful Workplace Statement.

Date: Tue, 23 Sep 2008 11:59:44 -0700
From: Office of the Dean <dean.educ@ubc.ca>
Subject: FWD: Issues Management Protocol

Members of the UBC community can take pride in the important achievements flowing from our teaching, research and service mission. These achievements combine to create a superb reputation for UBC here in BC, in Canada and around the world.

The university encourages its members to engage with news media so that these initiatives can gain wider audiences. In doing so, we more fully contribute to attracting the best students, faculty, staff and supportive resources to UBC.

Inevitably, in an institution the size, scale and complexity of UBC, issues will arise from time to time that have the potential to adversely impact the university's reputation. This memo is simply a reminder that there is a protocol to ensure that in such situations the university is able to communicate with integrity, timeliness and effectiveness. Adherence to the protocol outlined below is, fortunately, widely understood and observed.

When you or members of your unit receive inquiries from news media that indicate the potential for a negative impact on the university's reputation, please gather appropriate information but delay a response until immediately contacting the Executive Director of the UBC Public Affairs Office. Public Affairs will work with you and, if necessary, the President's Executive team, to gather relevant information and coordinate the appropriate media response, including identifying the spokesperson, providing coaching resources and background information.

Your unit's continued support of this protocol will help ensure that UBC's well-deserved reputation is protected and enhanced.

Stephen Owen
Vice-President, External, Legal and Community Relations

Subject: Re: Issues Management Protocol
Date: Sat, 27 Sep 2008 10:08:27 -0700
From: David Creese <dcreese@interchange.ubc.ca>
To: stephen.owen@ubc.ca
CC: fa.pres@ubc.ca

Dear Mr Owen,

I write in reaction to your recent message to UBC faculty about 'issues management' at the university:

"When you or members of your unit receive inquiries from news media that indicate the potential for a negative impact on the university's reputation, please gather appropriate information but delay a response until immediately contacting the Executive Director of the UBC Public Affairs Office. Public Affairs will work with you and, if necessary, the President's Executive team, to gather relevant information and coordinate the appropriate media response, including identifying the spokesperson, providing coaching resources and background information."

Please permit me to express an opposing view. I think that your articulation of this protocol fundamentally misunderstands what a university is. It is not a political party, and it is not a corporation. Its corporate identity is diversity; by definition it does not speak with one voice. It is a community of scholars and students engaged in free and unrestricted study and evaluation of, collectively, everything there is to know in the universe. It is the place in society where disagreement, dissent, argument and challenge are not only the most welcome, but the most fundamental to the nature and identity of the community itself.

*... continued on page 5
see "Issues Management"*

"Issues Management"
...continued from page 4

While it is important that the university maintain a good public image, and thus essential that it possess a proactive public affairs office, that office can and should be only one voice among many. Every member of the university retains the right to speak thoughtfully, carefully and honestly in public, whether about relatively trivial things or about larger issues which affect the university's self-definition and role in society. To attempt to restrict that right cuts at the very foundation of what the university community exists for. The wider public, who are through taxation investors in the university, also have the right to see that the university is a diverse community capable of self-criticism. To direct members of the university to speak to the public freely only when the message is positive, and never when the 'issues' (an unhelpfully vague term) 'have the potential to adversely impact the university's reputation' denies the public the right to see their university as a fully reflective and self-critical institution.

I put on record that I do not support your protocol, and in the unlikely event that I should be asked questions by the media, I shall answer them, or not, according to my own judgment, without feeling bound to consult the public affairs office.

Sincerely,
David Creese
Assistant Professor, Department of Classical, Near Eastern & Religious Studies

Subject: Issues Management Protocol
Date: Sun, 28 Sep 2008 03:40:41 -0700
From: Owen, Stephen D <sdo1@exchange.ubc.ca>
To: noah@quastel.com, dcreese@interchange.ubc.ca, fa.pres@ubc.ca
CC: Macrae, Scott <smacrae@exchange.ubc.ca>, Stevens, Patricia <patricia.stevens@ubc.ca>, Lai, Hubert <hubert.lai@ubc.ca>

Thank you for your thoughtful responses to the broadcast email sent out on Sept 23rd.

You are quite correct in noting that some of the wording could be interpreted as restricting academic freedom and freedom of speech. This is not its intent, and it will be amended to make this clear.

Please accept that the intent of such a protocol is to provide accurate information, coordinated where appropriate, to assist members of the UBC community in responding to the news media. Neither UBC Public Affairs nor any other member of the administration is directing any particular response.

I am away from the campus this week. Please feel welcome to contact Scott Macrae, Executive Director of Public Affairs, if you would like to discuss this in the meantime.

Again, thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention and please feel welcome to distribute this reply to those who might feel similarly.

Regards.
Stephen Owen
Vice President, External, Legal and Community Relations

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.

Who's the Boss?

The Faculty Association represents members with diverse responsibilities. We have been concerned for some time now about what occurs when a Head, Associate Dean, or the like is required to investigate or discipline another member of the Association.

The Association has been seeking to develop its understanding of these situations, and we'll be consulting our colleagues on possible guidelines or solutions. The factors we have to weigh include the following.

The Association's statutory role is to represent all members non-arbitrarily, fairly, and in good faith. Our key task is to assist and represent members who find themselves in conflict with the administration. This means that our first concern is for the person who would otherwise stand alone against the University. Where the University is represented by a Head or Associate Dean, we may then be challenging decisions of a member acting on instructions from a higher level. We must act strongly to protect the interests of the person in trouble while also being sensitive to the rights of the member doing the investigating or handing down the discipline.

Thinking in terms of roles can be helpful here. If a Head disciplines a member, that Head in that action represents the employer. That Head might then work as part of an employer-side team to defend the discipline. The Association for its part must not shirk its legal responsibility to represent the member being disciplined. This is just as true for tenure and promotion decisions as it is for discipline. Heads and Associate Deans enjoy all the rights of any faculty member,

but the Association may have to challenge decisions made qua employer.

Of course, the University's fundamental collegiality means these lines are never precise. Many Heads consult widely, and decisions are often achieved through consensus. Where this works at its best, the conflict described above is rare. However, even in these cases, should one member find her/himself afoul of a policy or guideline agreed to by all the others, the Association may still need to become involved to represent that one individual. (Think of promotion cases).

Some observations and conclusions:

1) the breadth and depth of collegial decision-making is crucial to preventing and resolving conflicts among members.

2) all members – regardless of administrative position – are full members of the Association with all the rights that entails, including the right to seek advice and be represented in any dispute with the University.

3) Academic-administrative roles (heads, assistant and associate deans) are intended to provide leadership within the bounds of collegial governance rather than to be employers (deans, senior administration). Indeed, under law Association members cannot be employers of others or be ultimately responsible for employment decisions; they can only provide input into those decisions. That is why the Dean writes offer-letters and the President and Governors approve appointments. The

line between collegial leadership and the employer role is not always an easy one to navigate, however, and those who provide input may see that input open to scrutiny or challenge in the event of a complaint or grievance.

4) Heads and Associate Deans who feel uncomfortable with their role in disciplinary action or investigations may seek advice from the Association and from the University to determine whether there are others who might play this role instead.

5) When the Association questions or challenges input by a Head, Assistant or Associate Dean, its only function is to ensure that the collective agreement and rights of members are protected.

Faculty who serve in administrative roles take on a largely thankless, stressful, and time-consuming responsibilities. Unfortunately, those responsibilities can create conflict with members who may then be represented by the Association of which they are also members. However, none of this diminishes their general rights or their particular right to representation. Whoever has the need of our support in a given situation will get it, though we must always be aware, as are any of us in administrative positions, that our roles are complex and may change before we've even realized it. If you would be interested in talking further with us on these issues, please let us know: faculty@interchange.ubc.ca. **FF**

The Value of an Academic Education

Robert Cliff

Executive Director, Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC

Devaluing Universities: Now that the smoke has cleared, we finally know the magnitude of the surprise cuts made last March to post-secondary institution operating budgets.

The Ministry has cut \$47 million from the expected funding levels for universities, colleges and institutes. The six public universities (as they were at the time) suffered cuts of \$28 million.

The Province continues to assert that they increased funding by \$62 million between 2007/08 and 2008/09, which is true. But the Government had told us in 2007 that the funding would increase by \$92 million in 2008/09. This number includes \$62 million to cover the cost of government-mandated salary agreements made in 2006, and \$30 million for growth in student spaces.

In other words, the Government paid for the salary increases of 2006, but forced institutions to create 3,500 student spaces in 2008/09 without a dime of new funding.

This sleight-of-hand is typical of how the Government has dealt with the issue of post-secondary funding. When they first announced the cuts, they tried to pit the universities against the university-colleges, colleges and institutes by claiming the funding reductions were all due to a reallocation of student spaces from the universities to the other institutions. CUFA BC has calculated, though, that only 20% of the university funding reductions were due to the reallocated student spaces.

When post-secondary institutions, students, and the public got wise to the depth of the funding cuts and understood that shifting student spaces didn't tell the whole story, the Government changed tactics and claimed the problem was that

the institutions had foolishly relied on budget projections. WE've pointed out that the institutions relied on those projections because Government had urged them to do so for several years.

When the Government found that blaming the institutions for relying on budget projections wouldn't fly, they then claimed to have increased total funding. But when CUFA BC compared actual per student funding, we discovered that per student funding had actually dropped by 16%.

We all expect governments to paint themselves in a positive light, the actions by the BC Government following the budget cuts look more like whitewashing.

Although we all expect governments to paint themselves in a positive light, the actions of the BC Government following the budget cuts look more like whitewashing. CUFA BC will continue to hold the Government accountable for the funding cuts. At the same time, we continue to work to have the budget cuts reversed, if not this year, then in 2009/10.

New Universities? In May of this year, the University Act was amended to create a new type of university – a “special purpose, teaching university”. Over the summer, University College of the Fraser Valley, Kwantlen University College, Malaspina University College, Capilano College and Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design were

all officially designated as special purpose, teaching universities.

Unlike RRU, SFU, UBC, UNBC and UVic, these new universities (with the exception of Emily Carr) will continue to offer a substantial number of non-academic and non-degree programs. Unlike the other universities, these new universities have a limited research mandate. They may only conduct applied research “to the extent that [the university’s] resources from time to time permit”.

The lack of an appropriate research mandate at these new universities undermines the essential nature of a university. CUFA BC has taken up this matter with the Government in conjunction with the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (which represents faculty at the new universities) and the Canadian Association of University Teachers. The Government has resisted, but we will continue to advocate for necessary amendments to the legislation.

Making the Case: A common theme that permeates the Government’s recent actions in the post-secondary sector is a lack of appreciation for the value of academic education.

To address this, CUFA BC is launching a new website – www.ouruniversities.ca – to communicate to the public the real value of an academic education. The website will feature short articles about universities and academic education and video interviews with students, employers, faculty members and the public. The website should be operational by mid November. **FF**

The UBC Faculty Association
invites you to join us for our

End of Term Celebration

UBC Okanagan

Wednesday, December 3, 2008

3:00pm - 5:30pm

Arts Atrium

UBC Vancouver

Friday, December 5, 2008

3:30pm - 6:00pm

Sage Bistro, 6331 Crescent Road

If you **do** plan to attend, RSVP by Friday, November 28th to
faculty@interchange.ubc.ca.



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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.