

Okanagan Bulletin

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Reflections on UBCO from the President

NANCY LANGTON, PRESIDENT

It's been a busy start to the new academic year. As President, I had my first visit to the Okanagan campus late last month and met with the Alaa Abd-El-Aziz, Provost, Pauline Brandes, Director of Human Resources, and Kimberly Darling, Director of Academic Affairs. Our conversation centred on a shared common goal: to foster a collaborative relationship between the University and the Association through open dialogue. We agreed to continue working cooperatively, and to meet regularly to discuss and resolve issues that are important to you. We also talked about the importance of making sure that candidates have more clarity about the tenure and promotion process. I understand that a number of you are slated for review in the next couple of years, and feel some anxiety about the process. We agreed to jointly sponsor some workshops to address these issues over the coming academic year.

I appreciate the opportunity to have met many of you at our annual September Fall Reception and I look forward to my next visit to Kelowna on October 20 when I will be on a panel of speakers at the Gender Equity at UBCO: Social Justice and Leadership workshop (see page 3 for details). I invite all faculty members to join us to discuss pay equity and other gender-related issues at UBCO.



Photo by Futongrab, WikiCommons

Regarding bargaining, after more than 20 days of negotiations and the assistance of a mediator, the Faculty Association and the University came to an impasse. As our Collective Agreement states, any issues that are still in dispute six weeks after the University receives the "budget letter" from the Province shall be submitted to an arbitrator. We are working to get that set up, although we are also open to resuming face-to-face collective bargaining prior to going to arbitration. For more information on this, please join us for a Bargaining Update at our Fall General Meeting on October 28 at 12:30pm in ARTS 353B. I also encourage you to [subscribe](#) to our [bargaining blog](#) to receive regular bargaining updates.

I look forward to serving you and your Association over the next two years. Please feel free to [email](#) me with any concerns, comments or ideas you may have.

A Primer on Interest Arbitration

JIM JOHNSON, CHAIR, OKANAGAN FACULTY COMMITTEE & CHIEF NEGOTIATOR, BARGAINING 2010

As I think everybody knows, UBC and the Faculty Association were unable to reach agreement on a new Collective Agreement before the deadline which triggered binding interest arbitration as required in our CA. The more senior members of the Faculty Association in Vancouver are well familiar with interest arbitration. At one time almost every single bargaining round at UBC ended up in interest arbitration! Almost none of us at UBCO have experienced it, and might be wondering what it is all about.

Generally speaking bargainers do not like putting the terms and conditions of the Collective Agreement in the hands of a third party. However it is always necessary to have some mechanism for dealing with disputes, or collective bargaining could drag on forever, and at UBC the parties have agreed that that mechanism is binding interest arbitration, rather than the strike/lockout mechanism.

This process is not all that unusual. The University of Victoria has a similar mechanism for settling money issues and negotiations at the University of Toronto have already ended up in arbitration this year. One great advantage of a process that automatically moves the parties into arbitration if agreement is not reached by a given date is simply this: at the end of the process an outcome will emerge. Our Collective Agreement will be renewed – the bargaining process will not go on for ever and ever.

The parties will jointly decide on an arbitrator who will, if the parties want,

attempt to mediate a settlement on as many issues as possible, and then rule on the remaining issues, if any. The arbitrator's ruling (his or her "award") is binding. Arbitrators can rule on any issue before them, whether they are cost items or not. The Arbitrator will certainly take into consideration settlements and contract language at other comparable universities (what we inelegantly refer to as "industry standards").

The process is reasonably flexible. There's nothing to stop the parties from continuing to negotiate while we wait for the arbitration dates to arrive. In the past, UBC and the Association have had several rounds where arbitration hearing dates had been scheduled between the parties but agreement was reached before hearing dates. Faculty Association President Nancy Langton has been very clear to the University about being willing to resume negotiations at any time and seeking the assistance of an arbitrator who can mediate issues between the Parties.

The Faculty Association had hoped to address important rights language issues at the table. We expect that these issues will get addressed during interest arbitration.

However, the primary advantage to the Association in having moved into the arbitration process is simply this: It will encourage UBC to bargain meaningfully on cost matters. At the beginning of the process UBC's bargaining team stated that their mandate was to settle for zero increase in any compensation or other



cost item, whether they could afford it or not. Consequently, UBC has refused to provide any evidence that they lack the ability to pay for our proposed salary increases and other cost items. That's fair enough, considering that they have never made the argument that they lack the ability to pay, but it has completely frustrated bargaining. As far as we can tell UBC is in a very strong financial position, possibly the strongest financial position of any university in Canada. If we're wrong on this, if UBC is in such dire financial circumstances that they cannot afford even a single penny to settle a Collective Agreement with its faculty, we've seen no evidence. The arbitration process may be the only way we'll be able to get UBC to discuss cost issues meaningfully.



Gender Equity at UBCO: Social Justice & Leadership

**Wednesday, 20 October 2010
2pm - 3:30pm | Lib 305**

All faculty members are invited to join us to discuss gender equity at UBCO in relation to UBC's mission as presented in its strategic plan. Gaps in vision and practice, such as those in pay equity, will be discussed and possibilities for addressing these will be identified. The workshop will explore the relationship between universities as leaders for social justice and the communities they serve.

SPEAKERS:

- VICKI GREEN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, EDUCATION
- SUSAN HILLOCK ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, SOCIAL WORK
- NANCY LANGTON ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, SAUDER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & FA
PRESIDENT
- SHELLEY PACHOLOK ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, SOCIOLOGY
- MARGO TAMEZ ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ABORIGINAL STUDIES

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED



PRESENTED ON BEHALF OF UBC FACULTY ASSOCIATION BY: DRS. KAREN RAGOONADEN, CATHERINE BROOM, SABRE CHERKOWSKI & VICKI GREEN
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Promotion & Tenure Workshop

November 3, 1:30 - 4 pm, Room TBA

For tenure-track faculty, the promotion and tenure process can feel daunting as your colleagues, external reviewers, and senior academic administrators will scrutinize your work in a multi-layered process. As you prepare to move through the tenure and promotion process at UBC you can be confident that we work hard to ensure that it is fair and thorough, with numerous checks and balances to protect your rights.

Each year, the Faculty Association, in partnership with the Provost's office, organizes a promotion and tenure information session. Along with other speakers, Susan Boyd, the Chair of the Senior Appointments Committee will be leading a presentation on promotion and tenure at UBC that will break down the nuts and bolts of the process and leave you with a broader perspective on promotion and tenure issues at this University. There will be opportunities to meet colleagues in an informal setting and share tips and information about the promotion and tenure process. If you are a tenure track faculty member, or a faculty member interested in promotion, we encourage you to come and participate in our next Promotion and Tenure Workshop.

Please check our website for updated location information.

FAN Out

The Faculty Association Network (FAN) is a newly established, informal network of faculty members who help the Association stay connected with you. FAN makes it easier for you to talk with us, and hear from us.

We are seeking FAN reps for our Okanagan campus. FAN representatives will relay important information to their colleagues regarding bargaining, meetings, current issues, elections, and so on. In turn, if members have questions or information they wish to pass on to us, the FAN representative can be the first point-of-contact. We do not expect FAN reps to provide advice to faculty members with workplace problems or concerns. Rather, we would ask that those members be directed to the Association for professional advice though you might want to lend a sympathetic ear. We do hope you'd let us know if there are general issues that arise in your units/sectors. We also hope that you will reach out and welcome new faculty colleagues as a way to build support for and engagement with the Association.

Our goal is to ensure that members know someone in their own or an adjacent discipline to whom they can turn to for information and to whom they can provide feedback to for the Association.

If you are interested in becoming a FAN rep, please [contact us](#).

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