Welcome to our Okanagan Colleagues

Elliott Burnell, President

I wish to extend a hearty welcome to the new members at UBC Okanagan (UBC-O) who will become UBC faculty and therefore members of the UBC Faculty Association (UBCFA) on July 1, 2005. I am happy to report the signing by all interested parties on Friday, June 10, 2005 of a Labour Relations Board consent order whereby the UBC Faculty Association is to represent all UBC faculty members, program directors and librarians at both campuses. While some transition issues are still to be settled by the Labour Relations Board, we are very excited that all UBC Faculty and Librarians will be members of our Association.

After months of discussions, three institutions, two bargaining units, and close to 3,000 members have come together to make the transition from Okanagan University College to UBC-O a reality.

Although many questions remain unanswered and we can expect a great deal of change over the next years, we can now be certain that when UBC-O opens its doors the UBC Faculty Association will be there to assist and represent faculty in Kelowna.

We look forward to serving Faculty in Kelowna as the new institution evolves. The UBCFA Executive Committee held its annual planning retreat in Kelowna, and held an open house with UBC-O members on Monday June 13th. We were delighted to meet and get to know many of our new members.

The establishment of UBC-O opens up a tremendous range of new possibilities for all UBC faculty

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New Committee to Consider Significant Matters, including Retirement Processes

The Executive of the Faculty Association and the UBC Administration have approved the establishment of the following joint committee:

Joint Committee of the UBC Faculty Association and the UBC Administration to Discuss Significant Matters of Mutual Interest

Mandate:

To consider possible improvements to the working relationship between the UBC Faculty Association and the UBC Administration, with the discussion to include, but not be limited to, roles and responsibilities, fairness and excellence, minimizing costs, enhancing morale, and the timing of individual retirement processes, in order to enable our vision of being one of the world’s best universities.

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ulty, and poses exciting challenges as well; the Association is keen to play an active role in Kelowna as our new members embark on the difficult but incredibly promising task of building a University. For the Association’s part, immediate plans include the following:
- There will be a new UBC Faculty Association office located at the UBC-O campus which will be staffed regularly (location to be posted on our web site www.facultyassociation.ubc.ca).
- There will be a local phone link to our office in Vancouver (also to be posted on our web site).
- We will investigate setting up a secure video-conference link between our Kelowna and Vancouver offices.
- Executive and staff members will travel to Kelowna to meet with members, both as individuals and groups, and will hold public forums on topics such as:
  - The Collective Agreement and how it applies;
  - Promotion and Tenure criteria and procedures;
  - UBC Faculty Association member services;
  - The 2006 collective bargaining process, including issues related to salaries and economic benefits.

We encourage faculty at both campuses to become involved in the growth and development of both UBC and the Faculty Association, to provide feedback and suggestions, and to contact us at either our UBC-O or Vancouver office. We are eager to hear suggestions about how we can serve all members, of all ranks and in all locations, in the best possible manner.

We will particularly need our members’ assistance in determining which changes to the structure of the UBC Faculty Association will best enable close, effective and sustainable ties between the two campuses. Our organization must evolve with the University in order to ensure that faculty voices are heard. Over the next year we’ll be planning several visits to Kelowna and hosting forums in both cities so that we can move forward on this strategic project in a spirit of mutual support and close collaboration.

For all members – and particularly for those joining us in the Okanagan – I invite you to explore our web site at http://www.facultyassociation.ubc.ca for information on the Association, its collective agreement, and our member services.

I personally look forward to meeting our new members and discussing any questions or concerns you might have about UBC or the Association. The building of a new university provides exciting opportunities for all of us, in whichever location, and we look forward to a new, larger and stronger UBC community, and a new, larger and stronger Faculty Association.

Welcome!

Elliott Burnell
President, UBCFA
elliott.burnell@ubc.ca
Dear President Burnell:

On behalf of the UBC Committee of the World University Service of Canada (WUSC-UBC) I would like to acknowledge our gratitude for the Association’s recent donation of $10,000 in April 2005. As in previous years, the donation will be used to support WUSC programming on the UBC campus over the coming year including the WUSC Student Refugee Sponsorship program; financial support for UBC students selected to participate in WUSC overseas programs; the annual WUSC-UBC book drive for UBC faculty, staff and students; as well as student-organized symposia, workshops and speaker series. None of this activity would be possible without the strong ongoing support provided by UBC faculty members through their faculty association.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Glen Peterson
Associate Professor and
Faculty Advisor, WUSC-UBC

The recent signing of a peace agreement between the government of Sudan and rebel forces in the south of the country ended more than two decades of civil war in the Sudan, Africa’s largest country. Energies are now being focused on rebuilding the devastated southern region of the country. In honour of the many Sudanese student refugees who have attended UBC since 1981 under the WUSC-UBC Student Refugee Sponsorship Program, WUSC-UBC is undertaking a book drive to support the rebuilding of secondary and tertiary education in the southern Sudan. UBC faculty members, staff and students are welcome to donate their new and used books in support of the book drive. English-language books in all fields are welcome; the only requirement is that they be in good condition and published within the last five years. Collection will commence in September 2005. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Glen Peterson, History at 822-5177 or by email at glpeters@interchange.ubc.ca
Retirees’ Luncheon

The Faculty Association was delighted that 23 retiring members joined us at the University Golf Club for our annual Retirees’ Luncheon on May 11th, 2005. Many thanks to everyone who helped make the event such a wonderful occasion. We offer our warmest wishes to all the retirees.

Above (L-R): Lynn Beattie and George McWhirter
Right (L-R): Geoffrey Herring, Alan Storr and Hans Schuetze

Photos by Janis Franklin, UBC Media Group
2004/05 Honorary Life Members

Andrew Adler, Mathematics
Trent Appelbe, Sauder School of Business
Jean Barman, Educational Studies
David Barrett, Wood Science
Lynn Beattie, Medicine
William Black, Faculty of Law
Paul Burns, Classical, Near Eastern & Religious Studies
Sander Calisal, Mechanical Engineering
James F Carolan, Physics & Astronomy
Iain GM Cleator, Surgery
Andrew Daues, Music
Kenneth G Denike, Geography
Derek deSa, Pathology
David Dolphin, Chemistry
Michael Gerry, Chemistry
Lynne Greenwood, Teacher Education
David Haley, Forest Resources Management
Judith Hall, Paediatrics
Walter Hardy, Physics & Astronomy
Ronald Hatch, English
Geoffrey Herring, Chemistry
John Heywood, Mathematics
Veda Hotel, Educational & Counselling Psychology & Special Education
Kieran Kealy, English
Kee Yuen Lam, Mathematics
Al Lebedoff, Teacher Education
Donna Logan, Journalism
Kyung Hee Lynn, Asian Studies
Donald McAdam, Mechanical Engineering
George McWhirter, Theatre, Film & Creative Writing
Jim Mennie, Curriculum Studies
Bernard Mohan, Language & Literacy Education
John Newton, Theatre, Film & Creative Writing
Nicholas Omelusik, Library
Ross Petty, Medicine
Ian Pratt, Theatre, Film & Creative Writing
Ernest Puil, Pharmacology Therapeutics
Richard Rosenberg, Computer Science
Hans Schuetze, Educational Studies
Dietrich Schwarz, Surgery
Lucy Scott, Teacher Education
Richard Spencer, Civil Engineering
Alan Stor, Chemistry
F J R Taylor, Earth and Ocean Sciences
Alan Thrasher, Music
Antonio Urrello, French, Hispanic & Italian Studies
Juergen Vielkind, Pathology
Michael Walker, Pharmacology Therapeutics
John Wood, Political Science
James Zidek, Statistics

Below: Elliott Burnell
Bottom Right (L-R): James Carolan, John Heywood, Martha Piper and Michael Gerry
Bottom Left (L-R): Donald McAdam and Sander Calisal

Photos by Janis Franklin, UBC Media Group
The current two-year Collective Agreement with the University Administration expires on June 30, 2006, and it is time to make plans for the next round of bargaining. Various joint committees with the UBC Administration have been working on Collective Agreement issues and we expect that their reports will form the basis for new language and conditions of appointment in the next round of bargaining.

The last round of bargaining saw the implementation of new procedures resulting from our voluntary recognition under the Labour Code. Our collective bargaining takes place under the Code. The Faculty, Sessional, Librarian and Program Director component agreements, as well as any subsidiary agreements, are bargained and agreed to before we enter into master bargaining which commences after the provincial operating grant notification has been received in April or May of 2006. This main round of bargaining includes any unfinished business from component and subsidiary negotiations as well as the main salary and economic benefits issues. If the master negotiations succeed, the new tentative collective agreement goes to all members for a ratification vote.

It is important to note that our collective agreement permits matters in dispute to be submitted to binding third party arbitration: this is the trade-off to having the no-strike / no lockout clause in our Collective Agreement.

For more details of the bargaining process as well as associated deadlines the reader is referred to the lead article in the June 2003 Faculty Focus http://www.facultyassociation.ubc.ca/newsletters/jun2003.pdf.

Our plans for the coming round of bargaining include the continuation of face-to-face meetings with interested members around both campuses as well as the holding of a web-based survey of members in order to get your views on the important issues that need to be raised in bargaining.

One issue that members may wish to reflect on over the summer is our salary structure which includes nine different pools of salary-increase money: general salary increase, Career Progress Increment, Performance Salary Adjustment, merit, minimum scale, compression, market, productivity, and retention. Not all members have access to all pools, and most pools are awarded at the discretion of department heads, deans, or the senior administration. Should we be looking at changes to the salary policy to ensure that it is fair to all and easy to understand and administer?

The time line is:

- Sept - Nov 2005: a series of face-to-face meetings with Departments, Faculties and groups of members both in Vancouver and the Okanagan, to consult about bargaining issues and priorities
- Oct 15, 2005: deadline for Faculty Association approval of requests to bargain subsidiary agreements
- Jan 2006: Bargaining survey of members
- Jan 2006: Bargaining of any component agreement can be requested by either party and will commence no earlier than Jan 1/06
- April - May 2006: Master bargaining may begin but may not be concluded until after provincial operating grant notification is received.

“Committee Mandate”
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Membership:

Lisa Castle (Associate Vice President Human Resources), Lorne Whitehead (Academic Vice President and Provost), Rosanne Hood (Executive Director UBCFA), Elliott Burnell (President UBCFA). At the appropriate time the UBC Administration membership may be expanded to include additional representation from UBCO.

Method of operation:

Deliberations of the committee are confidential and any conclusions will be released only by mutual consent of the UBC Faculty Association and the UBC Administration.

We will keep you informed as appropriate.
The results of the 2005 BC provincial election mean Premier Gordon Campbell and his BC Liberal Party will have another four years to pursue their vision for the future of the province. The voters also returned a revitalized New Democratic Party under the leadership of Carole James to form a significant opposition in the provincial legislature. Throughout the campaign, both these parties (as well as the Greens) emphasized the importance of post-secondary education, but what do the election promises really mean and what does the future hold for BC’s public universities?

In the lead up to the provincial election Premier Campbell placed considerable emphasis on post-secondary education. In the February 2004 Throne Speech, he committed to adding 25,000 post-secondary spaces to the public system by 2010. When it was pointed out that creating spaces also involved fully funding them, he allocated more money in the budget plan for 2005/06 (but unfortunately, still not enough). The Liberal government also created new universities in Kamloops and Kelowna by transforming existing university-colleges. In the weeks leading up to this election, the Premier toured the province announcing new buildings and other facilities for universities, colleges and institutes.

NDP leader Carole James focused her promises on her core constituency: a tuition freeze for students, new funding for a revitalized trades training system, and restoration of the student grant program cut by the Liberals in their 2004 budget. It was also apparently her intention, although not trumped in the campaign literature, to follow through on the Campbell government promise to add more seats to the public post-secondary education system between now and 2010.

Despite the Liberal promises of new funding, they continue to let real dollar per student funding drop.

Where these differences may have resulted in an interesting debate between the parties on the priorities for the province’s universities, colleges and institutes, the leaders chose instead to focus on specific election “angles.” Carole James attacked Campbell for allowing tuition fees to double and cutting grants for needy students, and Campbell blamed the previous NDP government’s five-year tuition fee freeze for all the problems in the post-secondary system.

To reduce the positions of the parties to their core messages, Campbell was telling British Colombians that he knows they want a university education for their children, and James was telling British Colombians that trades are important and that she understands that many families are having trouble paying for college and university.

So, who’s right? They both are. Although the new student spaces created last year and this year have begun to reduce the number of qualified high school graduates turned away from the public universities, at the same time, the public colleges and university colleges are having trouble filling all their available spaces. Apparently this is because tuition fees and living costs have risen beyond the ability to pay for families outside the Lower Mainland and Southern Vancouver Island. Moreover, changes to apprenticeship education apparently have resulted in confusion and lower demand for apprenticeship programs at a time the province is desperately in need of skilled tradespeople (the Liberal government claims the number of apprentices is at an all-time high, while the BC Federation of Labour claims the provincial government has changed its method of counting and there has actually been a drop).

While both parties had some of the right answers, their platforms fell short on others. Despite the Liberal promises of new funding, they continue to let real dollar per

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student funding drop. By capping tuition fee increases they have constrained university budgets, and their plans for improvements for student financial assistance remain vague. The NDP, meanwhile, failed to address the problems in the Liberal funding plan -- a plan they have tacitly accepted -- and they have no sustainable plan for dealing with the affordability of higher education. Both parties said little about two key issues for the universities: research and graduate education.

So, where do we go from here? Campbell’s plan to expand the number of student spaces will proceed apace. At the same time, though, he will continue to be pressured to fully fund his plan. This means not just replacement funding for capped tuition fees, but also inflationary increases for existing base operating grants. There will also be increased pressure on the government from colleges and university colleges outside of the Lower Mainland and Victoria to deal with their difficulties in filling the new seats. With their much larger numbers in the Legislature, the NDP will vigorously pursue the Liberals on the issue of affordability, and probably concentrate a great deal of criticism on the apprenticeship system.

In the universities, CUFA/BC and the University Presidents’ Council will continue to lobby for vital increases in base operating grants, and try to bring both government and the opposition to a new understanding about the importance of graduate education and research. CUFA/BC will continue to act as watchdog over the still young degree approval process for private and out-of-province institutions, and encourage a more systematic and reasoned approach to dealing with the problem of providing sufficient financial assistance to students.

What does all of this add up to in the end? With any luck, it will mean that government will take on its fair share for funding the public post-secondary system, that financial barriers for qualified students will continue to be eased, and that both the Liberals and the NDP will understand that importance of those distinct features of a university, research and graduate education. If we don’t manage to achieve these goals, it will mean reduced education quality, disenfranchised students, and a stifling of the province’s capacity for innovation.

It will be a busy four years.