

AUFA Communicator

Acadia University Faculty Association Newsletter

Volume 17, Number 3

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Special points of interest:

- AUFA Members participate in a rally and CAUT Forum.
- Consider who you might nominate for the AUFA Award.

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The AUFA President Communicates

Tim O'Neill appointed to review Nova Scotia's University system: *déjà vu* all over again?

On January 22, the government of Nova Scotia announced the appointment of Tim O'Neill, an economist and former Bank of Montreal executive vice-president, to review Nova Scotia's university system. In announcing the appointment, Premier Darrel Dexter stressed the important role Nova Scotia's universities play in the economic and social development of the province. O'Neill also commented on the relationship between universities and the "economic, social and cultural life of the communities in which they operate." Both the Premier and O'Neill emphasized the positive results they expect to achieve through this process, intended to "further strengthen Nova Scotia's world-class university system." It is clear, of course, that the focus is on demographic trends and the financial situation currently facing both the post-secondary institutions themselves and the provincial government. O'Neill's report, which is expected in early summer, will include recommendations on financial

support and policy options which are aimed at ensuring the long-term viability of the university system in Nova Scotia.

This is not the first time the university system in Nova Scotia has been reviewed. In the early 1990s, Janet Halliwell, former Chair of the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education (1992-96), was charged with the task of 'rationalizing' Nova Scotia's thirteen post-secondary institutions, based on the assumption that amalgamation, realignment, consolidation of institutions at the metro- or province-wide level would save money and made academic sense. Among the recommendations put forward by Halliwell was the notion of "consolidation of commonalties". According to this scenario, new alliances or realignments of institutions or their component elements into several new institutions would have been created, such as a college of fine and applied arts or an institute of pure and applied science. Other ideas put forward in the Halliwell report included the consolidation of all the universities in the metro Halifax area, or even the creation of a province-wide University of Nova Scotia. In the end, little was done other than merg-

The AUFA President Communicates (cont'd)

ing TUNS (the Technical University of Nova Scotia) with Dalhousie in 1997. The rationalization exercise itself was highly criticized for its lack of clarity, the amount of time it consumed, and its lack of results.

Teacher education in Nova Scotia has also been the object of ongoing review, starting with the Shapiro report, "Teacher Education in Nova Scotia: An Honourable Past, An Alternative Future", published in 1994. The recommendations of this report prompted the Council of Nova Scotia University Presidents (CONSUP) to create later that same year an Academic Transition Committee (ATC) which eventually led to the closure of several teacher education programs in the province: the Nova Scotia Teachers College (NSTC) in Truro, and the schools of education at UCCB (now Cape Breton University), Dalhousie University, and St. Mary's University. The only institutions where approved B.Ed. degrees could continue to be offered were Acadia, Mount Saint Vincent, St. Francis Xavier and Université Sainte-Anne. Permanent faculty working in institutions that were about to lose their education programs were offered the option of moving to one of the new amalgamated centres or receiving a buyout. Several faculty members currently working here at Acadia in our School of Education came to us as a result of the closure of these other programs.

Despite the government's efforts to restrict the number of institutions where education degrees can be offered, universities whose education programs were closed quickly began exploring alternative ways to continue to attract students. From 2003 to 2009, Cape Breton University had an arrangement with Memorial University of Newfoundland that allowed students to complete Memorial's B.Ed. while studying in Cape Breton. In 2009, CBU launched its own new 16-month B.Ed program which offers students the opportunity of applying upon graduation for Teaching Certification in Nova Scotia. Saint Mary's University has developed a partnership with the University of Maine at Presque Ile that also allows students upon graduation to qualify for Teacher Certification in Nova Scotia. Memorial University and Dalhousie University have recently been exploring a similar partnership. Despite recommendations from the Ministry of Education to end teacher-education agreements with schools outside Nova Scotia, more than 1,000 new teachers graduate each year but fewer than 400 jobs are available.

What can we expect from yet another review of post-secondary education in Nova Scotia? If we look to the past to predict future behaviour, one might conclude that the government will once again fail to act and that universities will be slow to implement any changes that are recommended. However, given the current financial crisis, and the provincial government's promise to reduce the deficit and balance its budget, it seems unlikely that the NDP gov-



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ernment can afford to ignore O'Neill's recommendations altogether. Nova Scotia's universities, on the other hand, will certainly want to resist any changes that could negatively affect enrolment and each will lobby for a change to the current funding formula that works in its favour.

More optimistically, one could hope that this review, unlike the others that preceded it, will look beyond the potential savings that closures or amalgamations of universities in Nova Scotia might achieve, and also examine the economic, social and cultural benefits universities bring to the communities in which they are based. Acadia is not only the largest employer in our region, but also the main client for most of our local businesses. All of these factors should be taken into consideration if the purpose of the review truly is to strengthen the viability of the university system in Nova Scotia and to enrich the economic, social, and cultural life of the communities in which these universities operate.

While it is, of course, impossible to predict what recommendations O'Neill will make, there are some lessons we can learn from the failures of the past. Halliwell's recommendations to rationalize undergraduate education in Nova Scotia failed largely because they did not take into account the liberal arts tradition of our undergraduate degrees. It made no sense to attempt to re-group science programs in one university, and arts programs in another, as students in liberal arts programs are expected to gain a solid foundation in a variety of subjects, and are encouraged to combine their knowledge in a number of fields through the pursuit of minors and double majors. None of this

would have been facilitated by the silo effect that a rationalization of universities by subject matter would have produced. There may be some justification for professional programs at the graduate level such as education, law, or medicine, but none at the undergraduate level.

This is precisely what the Shapiro report attempted to achieve for education programs, and it made some sense to place restrictions on the number of universities that could offer degrees in education, rather than allowing limitless numbers of students to enroll in programs with little hope of ever finding a job in Nova Scotia. The failure of this second attempt at rationalization highlights the problem of a province-wide education system which forces universities to compete with each other both for students and for government financial support in a climate of dwindling enrolment and financial restraint. Several universities simply bypassed the restrictions imposed on education programs by developing out-of-province partnerships in order to increase their enrolment.

What might make more sense if one truly wanted to improve the education system in this province would be to revisit the suggestion made by the Halliwell commission that Nova Scotia universities develop shared administrative and computing systems between institutions in order to allow universities to deploy a greater portion of their financial resources to the academic sector. A shared administrative system would reduce costs, since each indi-

“A shared administrative system would reduce costs, since each individual institution would presumably not need to have its own cohort of senior administrators.”



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The AUFA President Communicates (cont'd)

vidual institution would presumably not need to have its own cohort of senior administrators. There could be one president and one central registrar's office for all the universities in Nova Scotia, rather than eleven presidents and eleven different registration offices. Transfer credit between institutions could be simplified, and students would have greater flexibility in choosing courses and programs. Our current system creates disincentives for students to spend time at other institutions, not just because of the difficulty of obtaining permission to transfer credits, but also because they lose their eligibility for scholarships if they transfer for even one semester to a sister institution. A shared administrative system could also serve to protect individual institutions from the whims of local administrators who would not have the freedom they currently enjoy to embark on expensive and extravagant projects which can cripple a university's finances for years. Rather than competing against each other as they currently do, Nova Scotia's universities could have much to gain through collaboration and cooperation, which would respect the unique features of each of our eleven institutions, while at the same time reducing costs and improving our students' overall education experience.

Is it really *déjà vu* all over again? Only time will tell. In the meantime, there is much for us to do at our local level as we continue to prepare for the next round of collective bargaining. AUFA's pre-negotiating committees have been working hard over the last few months to develop a coherent set of proposals,

based on feedback received from the membership survey we conducted in September and through the open roundtable discussions that were held in November and December. The Proposals Review Committee is now fine tuning these proposals to remove any inconsistencies or ambiguities and to make sure that our negotiating team goes to the table fully prepared to bargain on our behalf. We plan to have the full set of proposals ready for circulation to the full AUFA membership in early March.

Our focus for this round of talks is on consolidating gains made in previous rounds of negotiations, but also achieving improvements in several key areas such as: better integration of our part-time members into all aspects of the collective agreement; further improving and clarifying the renewal, tenure, and promotion process; achieving more equitable working conditions for all our members; and developing measures to ensure that our workforce at Acadia is representative of the diversity that exists in society. We will debate the full package of proposals at our March membership meeting. I hope that as many of you as possible will attend this meeting, and take full advantage of the opportunities you have to participate in this process and make your views known.

Janice Best

AUFA Supports Faculty and Staff at Lakehead Over Closure

Many universities are facing financial difficulties in the current economic climate and are looking for ways to cut costs. As administrators get increasingly aggressive in their tactics, it becomes increasingly important for faculty associations to resist measures that save institutions money in the short term but are detrimental in the long term. In the short term, these measures may save money; however, in the long term they are harmful because they poison the relationship between the employer and its employees, and cause employee morale to decrease, all of which impedes the university's ability to recruit and retain the best employees and tarnishes the university's reputation.

At Lakehead University, the administration decided to save money by closing the university and not paying the faculty and staff for four days in December (December 21 to 24). Although the employer used the term "closure" to describe its actions, the word "lockout" would probably be more accurate and appropriate under these circumstances.



In addition to cutting costs, the administration decided to micromanage the ability of faculty and staff to access the university and its resources. Specifically, if faculty members needed access to their offices or laboratories, they had to submit a formal written request; if the administration approved the request, then faculty members would be granted access to the facilities stated in their application. Upon the re-opening of the university, those faculty members were required to submit a report to attest that they did in fact do the work stated in their request. At this stage, the administration would decide whether the faculty members should be paid for that work and at what hourly rate. It is not clear how this decision to alter working conditions would have helped the university's finances.

Apart from affecting faculty and staff, the administration's actions impacted students and the local community. For example, people were not allowed access to the buildings during the closure. As well, the administration removed the links to academic resources (e.g., library, bookstore, e-mail addresses) from the university's main page.

Because the decisions of the Lakehead administration clearly violated both the language and the spirit of the collective agreement, the Lakehead University Faculty Association (LUFA) filed a grievance against the administration. As of this writing, the case has gone to arbitration and it is expected that the hearings will continue into February. If the administration is successful, the decision will have an important implication for faculty associations across Canada: A precedent will be set whereby administrations will be allowed to disregard collective agreements and save

AUFA Supports Faculty and Staff at Lakehead Over Closure (cont'd)

money on the backs of its employees whenever the administrations deem it necessary. Furthermore, this process could be taken without any consultation with the employees being affected.

For these reasons, faculty associations across Canada are supporting LUFA in this struggle. On Sunday, December 20, 2009, we went to Thunder Bay to attend a solidarity rally that was held at a local community centre. On the morning of Monday, December 21, we attended a march and protest to speak out against the administration's decision. The turnout was excellent, with a large number of LUFA members in attendance. In addition, representatives from approximately thirty faculty associations came out to support



LUFA, including the Executive Director (James Turk) and Vice President (Wayne Peters) of the Canadian Association of University Teachers. LUFA was also supported by local labour organizations, students, and members of the local community.

The protest was a resounding success and we are optimistic about a favourable outcome in the arbitration

hearings. The main lesson from this experience is the importance of colleagues standing by each other whenever an employer decides to violate the terms of a contract whose terms were agreed to in collective bargaining.

Rick Mehta and Erin Patterson

Hard Choices

Negotiations are on us again. Individually and collectively we have decisions to make. Hard choices. Risks whatever we decide.

Many of us have assumed that the financial health of Acadia is guaranteed if we sacrifice enough. How much is enough? The numbers are staggering. Four to five million dollars. That is 45 Associate 5s or Librarian III 5s, with benefits. Fewer if we freeze the grid and take a rollback. More if we want a raise. The assumption that AUFA can sacrifice enough may be correct but should be examined. Acadia's business model seems to be based on small classes and terminally qualified faculty with enough time for individual students. Is this model viable with classes 1/3 larger? Will we be able to attract good new faculty if the salary gap widens and working conditions deteriorate? My school already has difficulty getting applications. Failed Search is already the norm for some disciplines. Other areas may fare better.

If the BoG can obtain faculty, is the model viable? Will students select a small school with large classes and high tuition over a large school with large classes and lower tuition? If they do, does Acadia have the necessary infrastructure? Acadia has few well designed large classrooms. My own computer-based classes are in a room too crowded for midterm exams. We go to KCIC after hours. The projected enrolments next fall will push us into HSH10. The alternative is to change the learning objectives to fit multiple choice exams, like the big schools do. The big class model might work at Acadia but it might not.

We have two choices: send our negotiators with our full support or send them without a mandate. Without a mandate they can only bring back what the BoG dictates. This may

go beyond salary and jobs. It may include working conditions and benefits. Arbitrary dismissal could be back on the table. We can reject what our negotiators bring back but this is risky. Both rejections since I have been here resulted in strike action.

Our other option is to support our negotiating team. With a mandate our colleagues will fight for us. They will have to fight. The BoG pulls no punches and forgoes no advantages. Our team will be subjected to immense pressure. Easier to resist with us behind them.

The biggest risk, in my opinion, is that the BoG underestimates our resolve. If they think they can break us they will demand more. They will pound us until we crumble. The crisis will arrive when they don't stop and we don't crumble. If we are resolved we must be clear.

If we back our team and are seen to back our team, then what? If the BoG can see no solution other than massive concessions from AUFA then there is no solution. If they believe they can get by with less administration they might find savings there. They might sell houses and commercial properties. They might find ways to increase revenue. Alternatively, they may believe that pounding us into submission is their only viable option and proceed accordingly.

We have decisions to make. Should we refuse to support our team and accept whatever they bring back? Will we want to stay at Acadia under the conditions they bring back? What are the risks of supporting them? What are the risks of not supporting them? What, if anything, should we be prepared to defend? Hard choices. We will live with these choices for three years.

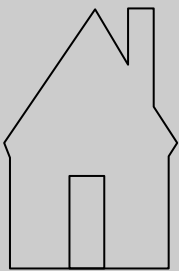
Rick Sparkman

The E-Word

Harry Crowe was a Canadian academic fired in the 1960s for making a negative comment about the president of his university. The act resulted in the resignation of other academics at the university, all of whom have since been recognized by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) as defenders of academic freedom. The Harry Crowe Foundation funds conferences and research dealing with issues of academic freedom. In late January of this year, the foundation supported a conference on outcomes-based assessment in the university system that was attended by academics from Britain, Canada, and the USA, as well as by representatives of student associations and university faculty associations.

Panel presentations and discussion indicated that there is currently an academic regime that promotes the idea of excellence, accessibility, and equity in higher education. These qualities are stringently measured by outcomes-based assessment through government commissions, research granting agencies, review committees, and independent experts, such as the journalistic team that compiles the university rankings for *Macleans* magazine in Canada. Panelists identified many problems with the current system, noting however that the system sets the terms by which each and every institution is branded and ranked. For instance, Acadia is recognized by *Macleans* for its excellence. That branding has given Acadia a high profile nationally and internationally. The brand name brings students to Acadia, seeking the brand stamp, so to speak, enhancing Nova Scotia's image as a 'world class' destination for those pursuing a post-secondary education. Discussion at the conference, however, pointed to some of the problematic characteristics of this 'ratings game'.

The conference featured several papers detailing the imposition of the current academic regime of excellence. While there are different types of assessment and ranking it is nevertheless an international phenomenon. The most extreme case is Britain. From the Thatcher era, cuts to university funding saw the loss of 14,000 jobs. Assessment was a major tool in bringing about this 'structural readjustment' of the British academy. According to Susan Robertson of the University of Bristol, outcomes-based assessment created a 'punitive environment'. Assessment in Britain is based on the measurable impact of research (outcome) rather than output (quantity of publications). Funding to institutions has been tied to performance on the new criteria, resulting in a 'five star' rating system. The institution ratings are based on a compilation of individual academic scores creating a national hierarchy of academic institutions. The rhetoric used to rationalize assessment is that of the knowledge-based economy, with governments placing universities in a globalized market of comparative competitiveness. Increasingly viewed as producers of a commodity, universities are measured by their ability to attract tal-



You can find the AUFA office at room 211, Huggins Science Hall. Regular hours are: 8:00–12:00; 1:00–4:00 Monday–Friday.

The E-Word (cont'd)

ented students and talented staff. Those institutions, departments, or individuals not meeting the outcomes-based measurement are subject to funding cuts and redundancies in personnel. The system was administered by government-appointed subject or discipline panels that created profiles of institutions. Careers were ruined. Programs shut down. The competitive nature of the ranking system applied an economic logic to the academy. For instance, one study pointed out that between 1992 and 2001 the number of five-star institutions in Britain rapidly increased in spite of the fact that staff numbers, in this period, remained relatively constant. The government used these indicators to point to the effectiveness of a competitive market approach to academic research. Others have noted that given that the reviews established new criteria for 'excellence' researchers simply adjusted their research agendas to meet the requirements for excellence.

Managerial assessment is driven by the fact that the universities represent a huge industry. In Canada, the academic industry generates six billion dollars annually in student tuition. In a globalized economy, the industry confronts overseas competitors, such as universities in East and Southeast Asia and more recently in the Gulf States. More of the recruitment energy of universities is oriented toward the lucrative international markets, often at the expense of servicing domestic students. Asian universities offer attractive alternatives in terms of infrastructure, cost, and short duration degrees that fast-track students into the professional markets. These trends result in an overall reappraisal of the academy. The need for competitiveness has driven the assessment industry. Whereas Canada has not witnessed the extreme meth-

ods introduced in the UK, Bill 38 in Quebec has been designed, at least according to its critics, to deprive universities of their

autonomy and to impose a managerial model of efficiency and effectiveness foreign to collegial governance. Elsewhere, the outcome-based assessment regime is apparent in the requirements for tenure and promotion, which are imposed blindly or punitively, which is to say privileging institutional needs over those of the individual professional. Discussion on this issue resulted in the observation that the need for more assessment of academics is not driven by the public, but rather by professional administrators and bureaucrats. Surveys completed recently in Ontario indicate that a very high percentage of those polled said that universities were, in spite of underfunding, providers of an excellent service. Polls conducted by the Canadian Federation of Students Nova Scotia and the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers show similar results.

In America, the term 'accountability' was applied to educational systems with the 1965 Education Act. The logic was the need to shame some K-12 institutions, particularly those working with marginalized social groups. Standardized annual tests were seen as a means to motivate teachers. While the K-12 outcomes assessment has not been applied to universities, a very similar philosophy shapes the attitudes of academic administrators, which are measured by the national ratings posted annually in *Newsweek*. King

“Concluding arguments at the conference observed that academics have been caught in the language of excellence, without controlling how ‘excellence’ has been defined.”

The E-Word (cont'd)

Alexander, the president of California State University, Long Beach, observed that while his university has increasingly serviced low-income and marginal ethnic groups, principally by keeping its tuitions and entry requirements relatively low, it has also dropped in the overall assessment ratings. Social service and academic 'excellence' are thus not mutually beneficial processes. Universities with a valuable brand name use high tuition fees and entry requirements to protect the excellence of the brand. Servicing out-of-state or international students generates income and positive results in the ratings game. Participants at the conference questioned whether this method of assessment created a 'race to the top' to achieve academic excellence or a 'race to the bottom' in an academy defined by market indicators rather than the old idea of education as a public or social good.

Although unlike the UK funding formula, the rationale of the Canadian research funding agencies are comparable. Government councils on higher education indicate less 'public' (managerial?) confidence in academic self-competence. The prevailing trend is to support research that has inherent value and instrumentality. According to Janet Atkinson-Grosjean, the performance models applied by government agencies, like the three national granting councils, reflect a neo-liberal agenda; in other words they privilege the commercial assessment of research outcomes. As a senior fellow at the University of British Columbia's Centre for Applied Ethics, Atkinson-Grosjean has been developing a model of outcome assessment (she prefers to describe this as 'translating' academic research into public application) that incorporates civic, clinical, and commercial 'pathways'. Because the current outcomes-based assessment model privileges research with a collaborative approach that translates research to socio-economic objectives, it fails to measure practical and civic outcomes, which, she said, are an important part of the 'translational' activity. Civic translation is characterized by values of open access and non-proprietary approaches to knowledge production. As Atkinson-Grosjean observed, academics have a preference for civic and practical application, which suggests a wider accountability that the neo-liberal commercial assessment is not designed to measure. While acknowledging that research has been linked to industry for a very long time (the linkage originated with the National Research Council in 1916), Atkinson-Grosjean said that this linkage has always been challenged by academics defending a 'social contract' between researchers and the public.

Concluding arguments at the conference observed that academics have been caught in the language of excellence, without controlling how 'excellence' has been defined. Representatives of CAUT and the Canadian Federation of Students called for more engagement in shaping the language of assessment. It is not entirely clear how that will be achieved. Academics are both judged according to the new criteria, as well as acting as the judges on review commit-

The E-Word (cont'd)

tees from departmental to institutional and national levels. The conference concluded with several pleas for academics to become more involved in asserting the civic value of the academy as a way to impact upon an assessment regime that to date has been shaped by the socio-economic deliverables of academic research and teaching. Penni Stewart, President of CAUT, observed that the language of excellence and accountability did not reflect 'public' concerns, but rather managerial interests. Academics, she said, need to disrupt the managerial culture of the university administrations and join with other stakeholders to

maintain quality and accessibility and the unquantifiable values of higher education. She also spoke of the need to capture (or recapture) a public space to announce these values, for instance university senates, which have increasingly come under the control, she said, of the managerial mindset. University associations should negotiate with administrators for collegial, inclusive governance, and, finally, academic freedom, so that people are not afraid to speak up.

Jamie Whidden

CAUT Council Report

John Eustace and I attended the 67th CAUT Council meetings in Ottawa on November 27–29. The following is not a full record of the proceedings, but merely a summary of the bits that I found particularly interesting—and that I took decent notes on!

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

CAUT President Penni Stewart gave Council notice of two forthcoming reports. The first, authored by Education International and CAUT Associate Executive Director David Robinson, concerns the status of academic staff in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. The findings are troubling, with serious and persistent violations of academic freedom occurring on a daily basis in the West Bank and Gaza. The second forthcoming report, authored by Jon Thompson, also concerns academic freedom. Thompson was asked by CAUT to investigate Minister of State (Science & Technology) Gary Goodyear's interference with the peer review process of SSHRC. In 2009, Goodyear instructed Chad Gaffield, the president of

SSHRC, to reconsider a peer-reviewed decision to fund a conference at York University on the Israel/Palestine conflict. Goodyear also threatened to withhold funding for SSHRC in the next budget if SSHRC did not bow to Goodyear's pressure. Both reports should be released in the next few months.

AWARDS

Milner Memorial Award

Council is perhaps one of the last places where one would expect to be moved to tears, but the presentation of the Milner award had the whole room choked up.

The Milner award recognizes distinguished contributions to the cause of academic freedom; it has been awarded only twelve times since its establishment in 1969. Past recipients include Bora Laskin, Nancy Olivieri, Don Savage, and Harry Crowe.

CAUT Council Report (cont'd)

Harry Crowe's story is well known. A professor of history, he was fired in 1958 from United College (now the University of Winnipeg) for writing a letter to a friend that was mildly critical of the College president.

What is less well known is that when Crowe was fired, sixteen of his colleagues resigned in protest. Sixteen! Pause you who read this, and think for a moment of what that number might be if you were to find yourself in Harry's situation.

The Milner award was presented to these fifteen professors and one librarian. Of the sixteen, only six are still living. Five of these were able to attend Council to receive the award; for the others, surviving spouses or children accepted the award.

I encourage you to read the article in the December 2009 issue of the *CAUT Bulletin* that gives more detail about the recipients of this award. (Just Google "caut bulletin milner" without quotation marks.) I would also recommend the memoirs of one of the sixteen: Kenneth McNaught's *Conscience and History*, available in our library at FC151 .M36 A3 and online at <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/acadia/Doc?id=10200867> (you must be on the Acadia network for access).

Donald C. Savage Award

Dr. Donald Savage presented the award that bears his name to Doug and Joyce Lorimer (Wilfrid Laurier University) in recognition of their outstanding achievements in promoting collective bargaining in Canadian universities. In her remarks, Joyce said that sitting on Council and serving as President were the best learning experiences of her professional life. It was there that she learned the importance of collective bargaining to the academy. University administrators all talk about quality, but then set a bottom line that steadily diminishes it. It is the unionized faculty members who create the conditions in which they can teach well and infuse their teaching with their research and scholarship.

Doug spoke about the role of the chief negotiator, and expressed concern about recruitment and renewal. While he himself is a collective bargaining "junkie," he is aware that the affliction is not contagious and people usually need to be courted and convinced to take on the job. Once they've done so, however, collective bargaining can be "addictive" because of the power to effect change. Doug has been department head, been a senator, and been on innumerable committees, but he insists that the bargaining table is *the* place where you can actually make a difference to the institution.

Sarah Shorten Award

The Sarah Shorten Award was presented to Judy Rebick in recognition of her

CAUT Council Report (cont'd)

outstanding achievements in the promotion of the advancement of women in Canadian universities. Dr. Rebick is a social justice activist, educator, writer, and speaker. She currently holds the CAW–Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice & Democracy at Ryerson University.

Academic Librarians' Distinguished Service Award

This award recognizes outstanding service by faculty (not necessarily librarians) who have contributed to the advancement of the status and/or working conditions of academic librarians at Canadian universities. Recipient Johanna Foster is Information Services Librarian at the University of Windsor's Leddy Library. In 1980, she was the first librarian and the first woman to be President of the Windsor faculty association; she also served as chief negotiator. In her remarks, she recalled her first step into a career of activism: a fight for the right for librarians to wear pantsuits to work. (She won.)

NEW MEMBERS

Council voted on two membership applications. The first, from the McMaster Sessional Faculty Association (CUPE 2906), passed unanimously. The second, from the Concordia University College of Alberta Faculty Association, passed without dissent. One delegate questioned whether a private, faith-based institution should be admitted to CAUT. Executive Director Jim Turk explained that CAUT would be admitting the faculty association, not the university, if the motion passed.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Jim Turk offered examples of the many crea-

tive ways in which university administrations have attempted to seize opportunities afforded by the economic situation to undermine faculty associations and collective bargaining, to centralize power in the administration, and even to reshape the very nature of institutions.

As at last Council, he urged members not to respond passively to the claims, requests and demands of administrations. Faculty associations should ask for (and receive) proof in the form of full access to "the books" that there actually is a financial crisis. If there is indeed a genuine crisis, what are the causes? Turk described some epic failures in administrative judgement that have cost institutions hundreds of millions of dollars: dodgy investments, overspending on capital projects, new football fields, overzealous real estate purchases, to name a few. Finally, regardless of the causes, what are the proposed solutions? Are they appropriate? Are academic staff meaningfully consulted?

CAUT DECIMA/HARRIS POLL

David Robinson presented the results of the twice-yearly CAUT/Decima poll "Post-Secondary Education and Canadian Public Opinion." The fall survey was conducted by telephone with 2,021 adults between November 12 and 22, 2009.

While the economy remains the number one concern for Canadians, there was a significant increase in support for investment in education and training. In a question about what the single most important priority of the government ought to be, investment in education and research came third (14%) after lowering unemployment (25%) and health care (22%). In another question about the single most important way to improve the economy, investing in edu-

CAUT Council Report (cont'd)

cation and research was the number one answer (36%). It was tied with taxes for number two (18%) after infrastructure spending in the April poll.

More than half of respondents say that post-secondary education spending should be increased even if taxes have to be raised (55%). A majority (54%) say that the government is not doing enough for post-secondary education, and wants a stronger federal funding role. 76% think post-secondary education is more important than ever, and 47% agree that the quality of post-secondary education is suffering because of underfunding.

Do university and college teachers earn too much? Only 26% think so; 48% disagree.

David Robinson will provide full results upon request (robinson@caut.ca).

20 YEARS SINCE DECEMBER 6th: THE INTIMACY AND DISTANCE OF 1989

Brenda Austin-Smith, President of the University of Manitoba Faculty Association, delivered a compelling talk on the massacre at École Polytechnique in Montréal. Education and violence are woven closely together in the lives of women all over the world, and now in Canada too. Alternating between personal reminiscence (intimacy) and traditional academic talk (distance), between then and now, Austin-Smith argued that mourning and activism should also be closely woven in the long aftermath of "Poly."

COPYRIGHT

David Robinson warned Council about the misleadingly named Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement. According to Robinson (and many other copyright watchdogs), ACTA is not really about counterfeiting and it's not really a trade agreement: it's a restrictive, maximalist copyright treaty that is completely at odds with the made-in-Canada copyright updates that the Conservative government purports to support. The best source of information on ACTA and its implications is probably Michael Geist's blog at <http://www.michaelgeist.ca>; follow the ACTA links in the leftmost column of the page, or click on the ACTA tab at the top of the page to see all of Michael's posts on ACTA (165 and counting).

As for home-grown reform to the Copyright Act, at the time of Council we expected to see a bill tabled this spring at the earliest. That was before Stephen Harper prorogued Parliament (again).

We have a new website:
www.acadiafaculty.ca

CAUT Council Report (cont'd)

CAUT has been granted intervener status in the judicial review of a Copyright Board ruling that increased the fee paid by K-12 institutions to Access Copyright from \$3.00 per student to \$5.16 per student (Access Copyright had initially asked for \$12.00 per student). Post-secondary institutions currently pay \$3.38 per student, but it is almost a certainty that Access Copyright will be seeking to increase this figure, especially given their recent success at the Copyright Board for the K-12 institutions. Indeed, in 2003, Access Copyright sought to increase the per-student payment to \$15.00!

Intellectual property scholar and lawyer Howard Knopf is acting for CAUT in the matter.

RESEARCH FUNDING

Jim Turk painted a very bleak picture of the state of post-secondary research funding. The last budget included a 147.9-million-dollar cut to the granting councils. Compare this to the 13-billion-dollar *increase* to research funding in the United States. Of the two billion dollars of "knowledge infrastructure," only 41% of the funds allocated to date are actually going to research. CAUT Senior Research Officer Larry Dufay has a detailed Excel file of the allocations broken down by province; contact him at dufay@caut.ca if you would like a copy.

Turk also reiterated concerns about the targeting of research funding. Significant amounts of funding have been allocated with no peer review process to private, faith-based institutions, notably Redeemer University College and Crandall University (formerly Atlantic Baptist University). Turk also drew attention to a growing insistence that researchers must quantify the impact of their research if their

applications to the granting councils have any hope of being successful. This attitude has chilling implications for research; think of all the basic, blue-sky, curiosity-driven research over the centuries that has yielded major discoveries, benefits for humanity, and yes, commercial products too. If those researchers had been forced to jump through today's hoops, they would never have received a penny of funding.

POLICY STATEMENTS AND MODEL CLAUSES

Modifications to several policy statements and one model clause were approved. Of particular interest is the policy statement on Program Redundancy, which was renamed Redeployment of Academic Staff. The changes to this policy move away from the language of program redundancy because program redundancies seldom occur; more usually, there is a reorganization of departments or sub-units. Since these reorganizations do not go through the program redundancy process, faculty members can be vulnerable because the contract does not cover these kinds of program changes. The new policy proposes a no lay-off provision in these circumstances.

The model clause on Entry and Re-Entry of Administrators into the Bargaining Unit was examined and revised in response to the Wightman case at Acadia. Adoption of the model clause was seconded by Acadia, and the motion passed with two contrary votes from Manitoba and Brandon, who asked that their nays be recorded in the minutes.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Jim Turk gave an update on academic freedom cases and issues across the country. He ob-

CAUT Council Report (cont'd)

served that the biggest single threat to academic freedom is the casualization of academic jobs. At four-year degree-granting institutions in the United States, only 27.5% of faculty members are tenured or tenure-track. Earlier, Penni Stewart reported that post-secondary education is now second only to the retail sector for casual employment.

Turk warned delegates about the current administrative infatuation with the notion of policies on “civil conduct” or “respectful workplaces.” Although these policies may appear benign, they are a genuine threat to freedom of expression. Good “no harassment” policies are the proper forum for dealing with the concerns that respectful workplace policies purport to address.

The McPhillips case is scheduled to be heard on March 9 and 10, but the matter will not end there. Regardless of the outcome, the losing side will seek to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada. As you may recall, the McPhillips case started in 2007 with a grievance at the University of British Columbia after the UBC Senate passed a policy on teaching evaluations. The faculty association filed a grievance because they believed that the policy violated the Collective Agreement. Grievance went to arbitration, where arbitrator David McPhillips “declined to rule on the case. He stated that he did not have jurisdiction in this matter as Senate derived its powers from the University Act... [while] the Collective Agreement with the Faculty Association had been signed by the Board of Governors; therefore, given the bicameral governance of the university, Senate was not bound by it.”

The implication of the arbitrator's decision is that Senate has the authority to overrule the Collective Agreement on matters that fall within Senate's jurisdiction. It is also possible that Senate's veto over the Collective Agreement could be interpreted to extend to those areas where both Senate and the Board share responsibility.

Faculty associations and administrations across the country are watching the appeal of the McPhillips decision with keen interest. At least one administration (Memorial's) has already tried to use the McPhillips decision in its favour. Tellingly, the AUCC has applied for and been granted intervener status for the administration's side in the appeal. CUPE and CAUT have intervener status for the association's side.

Erin Patterson

Tensions In Identities: A Reflective Report on the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff

From November 13 to 15, 2009, I attended the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff, held in Saskatoon at the Delta Bessborough Hotel. This forum was, for me, a personal and professional journey.

The journey began this past July when I went to Newfoundland to spend some time with family and friends there, and to recuperate from a radical prostatectomy in April after being diagnosed with prostate cancer in February. Although I had returned to work in June, I felt that I needed some time to adjust to the new identities which had become a part of me that year—person with cancer, cancer survivor. As an academic whose research includes inquiries into identities, I take my new identities seriously; they become opportunities for new inquiries, for new creative research projects. *Notes To My Prostate*, my first chapbook of poetry, which creatively documents, and invites the reader into, my journey from the diagnosis, through the surgery, and to recovery, has now been published.

Another identity awaited me in Newfoundland. While in Newfoundland I stayed at the home of Rita Hagan. Rita is my deceased mother's godchild. While I attended high school with Rita's daughter, Anne Marie, I had never before met Rita. Sitting there in her living room in Aquaforte, Newfoundland, where she now resides, I heard stories about Rita's

growing up in and around the same community where I grew up in Newfoundland—Admiral's Cove. (For a most interesting story of Admiral's Cove, see the cover story of the Winter 2009 issue of *East Coast Living*.) Rita has some wonderful stories. Among her stories are some about my maternal grandmother.

My maternal grandmother, Mary Harvey, died when I was one year old; she was the last of my grandparents. Growing up, not having grandparents around, I never felt the identity of a grandchild, but I did hear stories about my maternal grandmother. As the midwife in the community, the stories about her had a mythic quality. My maternal grandmother had, as Rita told me, "borne" most of the people in Admiral's Cove at the time Rita was growing up, and even, perhaps, by the time I was growing up some twenty years later. Rita told me that I resembled my maternal grandmother; she told me that I stood like my maternal grandmother, and that even how I spoke recalled Mrs. Mary Harvey. And then Rita said that my maternal grandmother wasn't from around here—that she was native. It was the first time I had heard that my maternal grandmother was Aboriginal. I telephoned my oldest sister who confirmed what Rita said. In fact, when I spoke to others in and around the community, it seemed that quite a few people knew that my maternal grandmother was Aboriginal. I won-

Regularly scheduled general meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month at 4:30.

Tensions In Identities: A Reflective Report on the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff (cont'd)

dered, and I still wonder, why I had not heard about this before. I reflected back on my ten years of graduate studies where I completed two large studies (my M.Ed. research project and my PhD dissertation) exploring identities, specifically my own multiple identities. I reflected on how knowledge is very much located and temporal, and that new knowledge not only changes what we know, but can also change who we are. The next day, driving with Anne Marie Hagan along the Southern Shore, I said, "I've found my next major research project."

Later in the summer an e-mail from AUFA arrived requesting a participant to attend the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff. "I guess that could be me," I said to myself. I sent Janice Best, AUFA President, a reply, with some of my recent story, and offered to attend the CAUT Forum. Janice's reply was quick and welcoming. Later that evening, I talked with my partner and my daughter, both also of Aboriginal ancestry, about my first act as an Aboriginal Academic—a coming out story. This coming out, like some of my other coming out experiences, is not just one fixed in time, but is layered with repetitions. On the plane going to Saskatoon, I was sitting beside another person going to the CAUT Forum. When she asked me if I was indigenous, I went through my long story, even in more detail than I have above, about discovering this new identity and how I am wanting to learn more about my maternal grandmother's life. "So," she said, "the short answer is 'Yes.'"

On the first day of the Forum, an early-morning Pipe Ceremony was held. We gathered and listened to an elder share some stories and pray while a helper passed the pipe. A number of things struck me that morning, but one that stood out was that I was listening to a man who had experienced Canada's residential schools as a child. The pain of that experience was still present, and still evident, but present, and evident, in a much larger way was the pride in the traditions this man had received from his ancestors.

The Pipe Ceremony was followed by an Opening Ceremony which included drumming. A welcome was given by Penni Stewart (President of CAUT) and James L. Turk (Executive Director of CAUT). I need to say a word here about Penni and James. Having been employed by, or been a member of, a number of organizations, I have attended many conferences; I even organized a few. I have never before been present at a gathering such as this where the president and executive director not only open the event, but also stay throughout the two and a half days. Their presence was a visible, and noted, sign of their support.

A Plenary Session was next on the agenda with the following titles:

"Establishing indigenous knowledge within the academy" by David Newhouse, Trent University.

"The role of elders in colleges and universities" by Charlotte Ross, University of Saskatchewan.

Tensions In Identities: A Reflective Report on the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff (cont'd)

“Negotiating the multicultural classroom” by Cora Voyageur, University of Calgary.

“Making alliances for research and creating research / knowledge mobilization opportunities through program models” by Marie Battiste, University of Saskatchewan.

“Working conditions for Aboriginal academic staff” by Dan MacDonald, Vancouver Island University.

After the Plenary Session that morning, smaller Discussion Circles were held and were repeated in the afternoon. The two Discussion Circles I attended were those led by Dan MacDonald and Marie Battiste. In Dan’s session I learned much about the unofficial workload of Aboriginal academic staff. Sometimes, considered the “experts” on Aboriginal issues simply by being Aboriginal, many are called on to give guest lectures to classes. While these invitations are welcome in that they provide opportunities for deep conversations, they can also become a burden if not carefully managed and if colleagues who are frequently called on for these guest lectures are not given support for those activities. Marie brought her wealth of experience with, and her own program models of, forming alliances within and beyond the academy for research purposes. The formal activities of the day ended with a Plenary Session for Reports from the Discussion Circles. A Cash Bar Reception was held the first evening; this was a wonderful opportunity to make connections and engage in further conversations about our experiences from that first day, and to continue sharing the stories that we were bringing, and that brought us, to this CAUT Forum.

The second day began with a Plenary Session. The topics were the following:

“Career Development—including practical advice on how to get published, how to get tenure, and how to get grants” by Eber Hampton, University of Regina.

“Managing work / life balance” by Richard Atleo, University of Manitoba and University of Victoria.

“Supporting Aboriginal graduate students make the leap from student to faculty member” by Jo-ann Archibald, University of British Columbia.

On the second day, following the Plenary Session, the presenters led Workshops. Jo-ann Archibald and Eber Hampton led the workshops I attended. Both sessions were very much invitations to contribute, and many contributions were made. In the first one, graduate students talked about making that leap to faculty member, and some of the challenges that arise, particularly when graduate studies are ongoing. In the second session, participants shared



Tensions In Identities: A Reflective Report on the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff (cont'd)

their varied experiences, which included successes and failures, with getting published, getting tenure (or promotion), and getting grants. Again, at the end of the day, we gathered together for a Plenary for Reports from the Workshops.

The third day began with Discussion Circles. At tables throughout the room, we discussed our experiences throughout the weekend and we suggested next steps. We then came together for a Closing Plenary which involved a Wrap Up and Next Steps. Again, I want to mention the presence of Penni and James. They took detailed notes from every presenter, particularly when next steps were suggested. I am expecting that a report will be coming from CAUT in the near future.

For myself, the experience was one layered with emotions and further layered by my own research. My research is poetic inquiry; it is also narrative, autoethnographic, and queer. I draw on my experiences as a gay child, a gay adolescent, a young (and older) gay adult, a gay educator, and a gay academic. In addition, I now, as an Aboriginal man, identify as Two-Spirited, and that identity also informs how I write. Given the context of the CAUT Forum, academics gathered under the title *Transforming the Academy*, the silence around, and resistance to, Two-Spirited realities reminded me of my days growing up in a Roman Catholic community and of my years as an out gay man working as an elementary school educator—both of those experiences were steeped in silence, in oppression, in learned self-hatred and fear, and in isolation. My writing, as a poet and as an academic, has been a journey to voice, to free-

dom, to love, and to community. It was work; at times, it was damn hard work. Did I now want to join a community where that work could begin again? Could I?

A number of times during the Closing Plenary, I felt like leaving. "I can't do this," I said to myself. "I have a choice now about what communities I join. I can leave." And then I thought of my maternal grandmother. Having so recently discovered her, and, through her, also discovered myself, could I now turn away from her and from myself? I thought of my daughter and my partner. What would I say to them about their Aboriginal identities if I turned away from my own? It was clear that I could not turn away, but rather that I must embrace my identity as Aboriginal and as Two-Spirited. Embracing means more than simply saying, "This is who I am." Embracing means more than wearing my name-tag, or having my name on a contact list, or authoring a publication. Embracing means facing the challenges that having this identity brings forward. Embracing means speaking to and through the silence, to and through the oppression, to and through the hatred and the fear that would have me deny who I am, to and through the isolation that would cut me off from my communities. As I sat in the circle for the Closing Pipe Ceremony and Prayer, I called on my grandmother to guide me.

John J. Guiney Yallop

Tensions In Identities: A Reflective Report on the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff (cont'd)

Acknowledgements:

I am grateful to AUFA for sponsoring my participation in the CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff and to CAUT for sponsoring the Forum, as well as to all of the participants who brought so much to the circle. Gratitude is also expressed to my colleague, Dr. John Sumarah, for his thoughtful response to an earlier draft of this report. I am, and will remain, grateful to my grandmother, Mrs. Mary Harvey, for all that she has given, and continues to give.

About the Author:

John J. Guiney Yallop is a parent, a partner, and a poet. He is also an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at Acadia University where he writes poetry and teaches literacy.

***Do you need to contact someone on a committee?
Look them up at
<http://www.acadiafaculty.ca/committees>***



Dates to Remember

The following are some important dates to keep in mind as quoted from the *Twelfth Collective Agreement*:

March 1

Elections [for Sabbatical Leave Committee] shall take place annually on or before 1 March. . . . [Art. 24.14 (c)]

March 15

The Employer shall mail Offers of Employment by . . . 15 March for the Spring/Summer Intersessions. . . . [Art. 11.10 (g) (i)]

March 31

The URC shall complete its work. . . [for] Tenure/Promotion (Assoc.) [promotion], Promotion (Associate), Promotion (Full Professor), Promotion (Librarian III), Promotion (Librarian IV) [and] Promotion (Instructor II) [by] 31 March. . . . [Art. 12.41]

The President shall communicate the Board's decisions on . . . tenure - no later than 31 March. . . . [Art. 12.75(b)]

The President shall communicate the Board's decisions on . . . continuing appointment - no later than 31 March. . . . [Art. 51.75 (a)]

Unspent [Travel and Professional Allowance] funds revert to the appropriate Dean or University Librarian on 31 March of each year but at the same time departments may submit requests for the use of same. . . . Art. 25.54]

April 1

The Employee shall have to make a formal request prior to 1 April preceding the approved period of Leave for any major changes to the Employee's plan for Leave. . . . [Art. 24.24]

Three Weeks Following Grade Submissions

The Head/Director shall review the [course] evaluations and return a copy of the Summary Data Sheet and the unit's Summary Data Sheet to the Employee within three weeks following submission of grades for the course. . . . [Art. 15.55]

Lois Vallely-Fischer Award for Democratic Student Citizenship

The Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA) has instituted an annual award, valued at \$2,000, for a student in her or his final year of undergraduate study at Acadia. The Lois Vallely-Fischer Award for Democratic Student Citizenship will recognize the contributions of a senior baccalaureate student who has contributed to the quality of democratic discourse, critical thought, and legitimate contestation in campus or community life, and who has demonstrated leadership in defending student political rights and the interests of disadvantaged groups.

Nominations may be made by students and/or AUFA members. Award recipients will be selected by a committee of AUFA members, and will be presented with the award at the Association's annual general meeting in April. In addition to the cash component, recipients will be awarded a memento, and her or his name will be embossed on a plaque in a permanent location in the Student Union Building.

March 15, 12:00 noon is this year's deadline for receipt of nominations for the Lois Vallely-Fischer Award for Democratic Student Citizenship. Nominations should be mailed to the AUFA Awards Committee, c/o Jane Longley, AUFA Office, Acadia University or dropped off at Huggins Science Hall, room 211.

Please note that the nominators are responsible for providing information and comments in support of their nominee, which are the basis upon which the decision is to be made. To make a nomination, the nominator will submit an original letter outlining the reasons why said nominee should be considered. The letter must be signed and accompanied by at least four signatures of others supporting said application (for a total of five signatures).

Editorial Policy

The *AUFA Communicator* is the newsletter of the Acadia University Faculty Association (AUFA) and is intended to keep its members and the Acadia Community up to date and informed. The *AUFA Communicator* is published quarterly during the academic year and serves the following purposes:

1. to provide a means for the free exchange of ideas, views, and issues relevant to the AUFA and the Acadia community
2. to provide feedback and information useful to the AUFA to maintain its effective operation in fulfilling the objectives of the AUFA and its membership
3. to provide documentary records of matters pertaining to the AUFA
4. to serve all the functions of a newsletter

The Communicator Committee, under the direction of the AUFA Executive, takes responsibility for the contents of the *AUFA Communicator*. The opinions expressed in authored articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Communicator Committee. **We encourage your contributions (letters, articles, article summaries, and other pertinent information).** Anonymous material will not be considered for publication; however, under special circumstances, the *AUFA Communicator* may agree to withhold the author's name. The Communicator Committee retains the right to edit and/or reject contributed material.

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