

AUFA Communicator

Acadia University Faculty Association Newsletter

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Inside this issue

The AUFA President Communicates	1
Changes to the Collective Agreement	3
Introducing the Numeracy Committee	6
Lois Valley-Fischer Award for Democratic Student Citizenship	7
Report from the Senior Grievance Officer	9
Introducing New Tenure-Track Faculty	10
What's on the Website	11
Dates to Remember	12
Editorial Policy	13

The AUFA President Communicates

Dear AUFA members,

The Executive and Communications Committee are excited to bring back the *Communicator*. This is the first of three issues planned for the 2015-16 academic year that will allow us to update the membership about AUFA activities, explore sections of the 14th Collective Agreement, introduce new (and long-time) members of the AUFA community, and provide information about provincial, national, and international issues affecting organized labour and post-secondary education.

The revival of the *Communicator* is one part of this year's broader objective of strengthening communication and improving information-sharing between and among AUFA's Executive, committees, and general membership. The importance of improving communication became abundantly clear last year as the processes of pension transfer and contract negotiations unfolded and was repeatedly emphasized in our discussion at the May Special Meeting. I'd like to use this space to highlight four of the initiatives we are undertaking to improve communications:

Developing a Communications Strategy. In October, CAUT's Communications Officer Angela Regnier facilitated a workshop with AUFA members to help us develop a communications strategy and develop practical communications skills, such as writing press releases and giving media interviews. Going forward, the Communications Committee will be working with the Executive to develop a plan for how to use and develop our communications infrastructure (e.g., the website, membership meetings, the *Communicator*) as effectively as possible to ensure that members have a good understanding of what is happening specific to AUFA and Acadia University, as well as in the post-secondary sector as a whole. This year's Communications Committee is chaired by Jim Grant, who is joined by Stephen Ahern, Jim Brittain, Lesley Frank, Stephen Henderson, Anthony Pash, Jon Saklofske, and Herb Wyle. Please contact Jim Grant if you are interested in

The AUFA President Communicates (cont'd)

lending a hand on the *Communicator* or the Communications Committee more generally.

Reinvigorating the role of the Departmental Representatives.

One of the suggestions made repeatedly at the May Special Meeting was for the Departmental Reps to play a more prominent role as a liaison between the Executive and individual Departments and Schools. The outgoing and incoming executives agreed wholeheartedly. To date we have had two meetings between members of the Executive and the Departmental Reps. These have provided a space to share information and also have offered space for informal and spontaneous discussions to emerge. We'll continue to hold semi-regular meetings throughout the year. The Executive has also contacted the Departmental Reps with requests to share information or solicit feedback, and this has yielded some productive results so far. I'm grateful to the Departmental Reps for their work so far and look forward to seeing how this initiative evolves.

Reviewing and Redesigning the Pre-Negotiation Surveys.

AUFA's constitution requires the Executive to conduct two surveys in the pre-negotiation year: the first is to identify general priorities that will be subsequently workshopped in the pre-negotiating committees; the second survey, conducted after the proposals have been ratified by the membership, establishes priorities that can inform the strategy of the negotiating team. Redesigning the surveys to make them more accessible and user-friendly is, we hope, a way to encourage more participation in the pre-negotiation process and ultimately to generate more unity behind our final proposals. I am joined on the Survey Committee by Zelda Abramson, John Colton, Glenys Gibson, and, from the Executive, Darlene Brodeur, Cynthia Bruce, Jennifer Richard, and Michael Robertson.

The Numeracy Committee. The brain-child of Darren Kruisselbrink, this is an ad-hoc committee that will be tracking important data and making it available to members on a continuous basis, rather than only in the lead-up to negotiations. Darren is joined on the Numeracy Committee by Cindy Trudel and Zelda Abramson, and together they will track Acadia's publicly available financial statements, enrollment numbers, workforce composition, salary scales of our comparator institutions, course-related information, and information provided through Article 28.10 that allows the Association to get a picture of equity on campus. Importantly, in addition to making data available to members on AUFA's website, the



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The AUFA President Communicates (cont'd)

Numeracy Committee will have a regular spot on the agenda at general membership meetings so they can discuss trends and answer questions.

I am grateful to every member who has agreed to serve the Association as a Departmental Rep or on one of the other committees mentioned here. Their work to improve communications is critical and will hopefully make our deliberations and discussions at general membership meetings more vibrant and productive.

Respectfully submitted,

--Rachel Brickner
President, AUFA

Changes to Appointments, Renewal, Tenure, and Promotion in the 14th Collective Agreement

This is the first of three reports on highlights from the new Collective Agreement. Upcoming reports will focus on working conditions and financial benefits.

Part-Time Faculty

The most significant changes to the appointments, renewal, tenure, and promotion (ARPT) clauses in our new Collective Agreement (CA) occur in Article 11, which deals with part-time faculty. The part-time appointment procedures in the previous (13th) CA, while well-intentioned, had the unfortunate effects of rendering precedence almost meaningless and increasing the workload involved in part-time hiring. AUFA's intentions for the 14th CA were to revivify precedence and to streamline the hiring procedures, and we were successful in achieving both of these ends. The amount of detail in the new language may make the process seem complicated, but especially for internal searches, the process should be quite straightforward:

Step 1: Position is authorized.

Step 2: Internal search. Internal candidates are people on the Precedence List and full-time faculty.

Scenario A: only one internal candidate with experience or precedence teaching the advertised course: position filled!

Scenario B: more than one internal candidate, none of them full-time faculty: precedence rules, position filled!

Scenario C: more than one internal candidate, at least one of them full-time faculty: Per Course Selection Committee (PCSC) requests supporting documentation and ranks candidates according to criteria in Article 11.09. If candidates are deemed equally qualified, PCSC conducts interviews. If candidates still deemed equal, equity rules. Either way, Academic Unit votes, Dean approves, position filled.

Changes to the Collective Agreement (cont'd)

Step 3: External search. Only necessary if the position cannot be filled internally.

PCSC determines requirements for position and supporting documents.

HR advertises accordingly.

PCSC establishes short list, consults with Academic Unit, finalizes short list.

PCSC conducts interviews. If candidates considered equal, equity rules. Academic Unit votes, Dean approves, position filled.

For both internal and external searches, there are also procedures for dealing with the possibility that the Academic Unit votes against the recommendation of the PCSC.

There is a flow-chart of this entire process with all its permutations that many people have found helpful on the AUFA website at <http://www.acadiafaculty.ca/agreements/part-time-hiring-flow-chart>.

Full-Time Faculty

AUFA sought very few changes to the ARPT articles for full-time faculty, and neither did the Board of Governors (BoG). Proposals from both teams were mostly of the housekeeping variety, and most were quickly agreed upon. (A detailed list of all the changes, however minor, is available on the members' section of the AUFA website at <http://www.acadiafaculty.ca/portal/members-section/articles/14th-collective-agreement-summary-of-changes>.) The AUFA team's insistence that equity principles apply in the appointment process at the short-listing stage as well as the post-interview ranking stage, and that they apply with reference to the particular Academic Unit and not the institution as a whole, met with considerable resistance, but the BoG team eventually agreed. The major sticking point was the proposal for a formula for grid-step placement for new hires. AUFA proposed to use the formula developed by the joint Pay Equity Committee (PEC), but despite the fact that the BoG had majority representation on that committee and signed off on its report, the BoG team refused to incorporate the committee's formula into the CA and insisted on a different formula. The BoG team contended that with the exception of some rare outliers, the actual results from both formulae are at worst the same and at best more advantageous for new hires. The AUFA team eventually agreed to accept the BoG team's formula (now Article 10.63) in exchange for the BoG team's agreement to drop its demand that AUFA strike the Pay Equity article in its entirety. Although the AUFA team would have preferred the PEC's formula, the BoG

Changes to the Collective Agreement (cont'd)

team's formula is not unreasonable, and is certainly better than no formula at all. Furthermore, the preservation of the Pay Equity article (and thus the PEC) means that the PEC can thoroughly review the BoG team's formula and make appropriate recommendations.

Instructors

AUFA's main objective with respect to ARTP procedures for Instructors was to ensure recognition of the additional qualifications (e.g. Ph.D.) that many of our Instructors have and of the research and scholarly activity that many undertake despite the fact that they are not contractually obligated to do so. At the same time, we needed to ensure that Instructors who do not hold additional qualifications or who do not engage in extra-contractual research and scholarly activity are not penalized. As a result, Instructors applying for promotion must now have their additional qualifications and/or scholarship considered if they choose to include it in their dossiers, and the absence thereof cannot be interpreted negatively. We also sought to make promotion for Instructors fairer and more informed by ensuring that when an Instructor applies for promotion, the Departmental Review Committee shall include another Instructor (this provision was already in place for the URC and UAC).

Librarians and Archivists

There is a long-standing principle and precedent for parity of contract language for professors and librarians/archivists to the extent that such parity is possible and reasonable, and this principle has endured into the 14th CA. ARTP changes in Articles 10 and 12 are mirrored in Articles 50 and 51. There are only two exceptions this time: the striking of part-time librarians and the absence of an initial grid placement formula. Striking the entire category of part-time librarians was an AUFA proposal in the spirit of common-sense housekeeping to which the BoG team readily agreed: no one could recall there ever having been a part-time librarian, and no one could envision such an appointment ever being made in the future. The absence of an initial grid placement formula is more problematic. AUFA did not propose one because the necessary groundwork had not been laid. The PEC was established in the 13th CA and its contractual mandate was to ensure pay equity for *all* Employees as defined in Article 1.15, but it confined its consideration to Professors only. Librarians, Archivists, and Instructors were wrongly excluded. The AUFA team fought to preserve the PEC in the 14th CA and hopes it will correct this oversight.

--Erin Patterson (Member, Negotiating Committee)

Introducing the Numeracy Committee

There are a lot of numbers out there that represent various facets of university life. There are so many and they are so ubiquitous that it is easy to pay little attention to them. Then, every 3 or 4 years, as collective bargaining heats up, those numbers suddenly become valuable and there is a rush to get them together. The rush to collate and compile translates into a rush to analyze and distribute them. When the data appear during negotiations, we do not have ample time to digest and discuss what these numbers mean. At least, this has been my experience over the last 15 years. So why wait? Why wait until there is a palpable stress on campus to discuss important numbers?

The Numeracy Committee was formed to collate and compile the plethora of numbers used to represent different aspects of university life, to track them to see how they change over time, and to make these trends continuously available. Our hope is that by having these numbers continuously available we will have an educated and informed understanding of what is happening at our university at all times and be able to discuss them during the years between negotiations.

One obvious source of numbers has to do with the University's finances. Each year the university releases audited financial statements and, additionally, submits financial information to CAUBO. At the time of this writing, the university's revenue and expenses have been collated back to 2005, which correspond to the finances for the first year of the 11th Collective Agreement. Having compiled all these numbers, our plan is to analyze them and disseminate the trends in order to present a coherent picture of trends over time. As the data from the university's financial statements are publicly available, they will be made available to AUFA members on the website should members wish to conduct their own analyses.

A second obvious source of numbers concerns our salary scale, as well as those of other institutions in the region and of comparable size. These are all publicly available within the collective agreements posted on each university's website. Regularly monitoring how AUFA's salary scale compares to others allows us to track how competitive we are, in general and across ranks. Typically this becomes a touchy subject as discussion includes issues such as how much is enough? How much is reasonable and under what circumstances? Saving these discussions until the crunch of collective bargaining adds an emotional charge that makes conflict and division almost inevitable. Appreciating the diversity of opinion and viewpoints of our members would seem easier when members are able to have time to digest and wrestle with ideas. This requires that these data



Introducing the Numeracy Committee (cont'd)

be continuously available.

The third obvious source of numbers has to do with the size and composition of AUFA's workforce and the course offerings we teach. Of interest is the size and composition of the administration workforce as well. Our plan is to track these numbers over time as well.

Of course, not everyone enjoys numbers equally and may not be that keen on searching for answers to data questions on their own. No problem. Questions are the important thing. If you have questions and wish to answer them on your own, fill your boots. We ask only that you share what you have found. Otherwise, submit the question and the committee will do its best to find an answer in the data. We will have a regular spot at our general membership meetings to discuss what we find in the numbers and answer questions from members.

Over time our analyses and the numbers we track will undoubtedly become more comprehensive and complex. For now, however, it would seem that the most important thing is to begin. We hope you will look forward to these discussions.

The Numeracy Committee is comprised of Cindy Trudel, Zelda Abramson and Darren Kruisselbrink.

--Darren Kruisselbrink

The 2015 Lois Vallely-Fischer Award

In 2015, the Lois Vallely-Fischer Award was given, for the first time, to two students. The Lois Vallely-Fischer Award for Democratic Student Citizenship recognizes 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. The winners of the 2015 award, given annually and valued at \$2000, were Stephanie Bethune and Kayla Cunningham.

Stephanie Bethune graduated with a BA (Honours) in Sociology, with a minor in Philosophy. Stephanie was nominated for the LV-F award because of her leadership of *The Athenaeum*, for which she served as Editor-in-Chief during the contract negotiations between AUFA and the Acadia Board of Governors. Whereas the ASU insisted that all information on collective bargaining be filtered through its Executive and equated a "pro-student" stance with political neutrality, *The Ath* became a vehicle for genuine democratic dialogue among Acadia students. Under Stephanie's leadership, *The Ath* took the position that students should better understand and become politicized around the issues that affect their campus life and academic experience, rather than remain neutral bystanders. *The Ath* regularly published information about collective bargaining that was informative, accessible, and balanced. *The Ath* also provided an im-

Lois Vallely-Fischer Award (cont'd)

portant forum for contestation among students about contract negotiations. Students across campus responded enthusiastically to this forum for democratic dialogue, publishing columns that represented a wide range of views and submitting thoughtful comments to the online edition. It is easy to take for granted the role of a free press as an important institution for democratic contestation and accountability, but considering that *The Ath* is an internal organization of the ASU, it took courageous leadership on Stephanie's part for the newspaper to take a political stance that ran counter to the ASU's official position on negotiations.

Kayla Cunningham graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration, with a major in Employment Relations and stood out as a student who could make a real contribution in shaping her institution through values such as equity and diversity, both off campus and academically. Not only did Kayla achieve great personal success in her classes, but she also brought a mature intellect, the ability to think critically, and a desire for social justice. Kayla's legitimate contestation in community life and commitment to defending the interests of disadvantaged groups are best illustrated through her co-op work term with the Halifax Regional Police Department. Hired as a human resource support person, looking after small administrative tasks, Kayla took it upon herself to understand and critically assess the Human Resource Department of the police force. In doing so, Kayla recognized that the recruitment and selection processes were not inclusive and had the potential to exclude disadvantaged groups. More specifically, Kayla identified the following as deserving of further attention: the cadet recruitment process, the HRM diversity statement in job postings, and the aptitude-testing component of the selection process. Before the end of her placement, Kayla had rewritten the diversity statement and provided suggestions on recruiting and retaining more diverse employees. Kayla also participated in the Scotiabank Ethics in Action competition at Dalhousie University in 2014, and her team placed second in the undergraduate category against teams from much larger universities with formal business ethics programs.

Congratulations to both winners!

--Herb Wylie (with contributions from Rachel Brickner and Jim Grant)

Report from the Senior Grievance Officer

With the rebirth of the *Communicator*, the Association Grievance Committee (AGC) will be offering regular updates on our activities in defending our Collective Agreement.

I have three items to report for this issue. The first two concern requirements under Article 28.10. Over the summer we filed a grievance to enforce the requirement that the Employer release to the Association all the information required in Article 28.10 (c). The Employer agreed, in August, to release the datum field [age] previously withheld. In October we successfully engaged the Employer, at the informal grievance stage, to release data on the complement number as required under Article 28.10 (h).

The third item I'm pleased to report is that the AGC successfully negotiated a settlement to an on-going arbitration case. The case concerned a CLT contract in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics for the 2014-2015 academic year. After an investigation, and consultation with legal counsel, the AGC determined that the hiring process for the CLT had gone awry. As the Employer was unwilling to settle the matter at the grievance level, the AUFA Executive charged the AGC to take the case to arbitration. Before arbitration began, we approached the Employer with settlement terms but were rebuffed.

We had two days of arbitration in February, 2015. In the past, arbitration cases have not extended beyond two days. In this case, an additional four days were scheduled for September and October. In the spring and summer, the AGC and the Employer met to explore the possibility of a settlement. After many false starts and receding horizons the parties came to agreement on matters pertaining to the case, but the Employer then attempted to link the settlement to changes in unrelated articles of the Collective Agreement, effectively making a settlement conditional on rewriting articles in the Collective Agreement. As it is the AGC's job to defend the CA—the contract reflects the will of AUFA members and is affirmed by a vote of all members—we refused, repeatedly, to engage in such discussions. The grievance process is not a back door to renegotiating the contract. The Employer indicated that without our agreement on changes to other articles, it would continue with the [expensive] arbitration process. We drew the Employer's attention to the terms of the settlement, which, as all settlements are, constituted a compromise by both parties. We highlighted that the financial costs of arbitration exceeded, substantially, the costs of settling and that both parties could discharge their responsibilities within the context of a settlement.

We were disappointed that the Employer indicated its continued interest in moving the case through the arbitration process if the AGC refused to alter articles in the CA. We noted, with a muted sense of the absurd, the Employer's apparent willingness to expend substantial discretionary resources to underwrite this novel negotiating posture.

With the backing of the AUFA Executive, we didn't blink. Faced with our refusal to engage in such discussions, at the eleventh hour, the Employer agreed to terms of settlement. Chalk one up to patience and resolve.

--Paul Abela
Senior Grievance Officer
Association Grievance Committee

Introducing Acadia's New Tenure-Track Faculty

This is the first of a series of articles in the *Communicator* this year featuring additions and changes to our faculty complement. The series will start by introducing the six -- count 'em! -- faculty members taking up tenure-track positions at Acadia this year. The profiles below will help give you a sense of our new colleagues and what they do.

Anne Sophie Champod is a clinical neuropsychologist and neuroscientist who completed her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at McGill University and her postdoctoral work at Dalhousie University. Her current research work involves the development of new assessment tools and rehabilitation interventions to improve cognitive health in aging and in neurological populations. Dr. Champod teaches Neurodegenerative Disorders, Cognitive Assessment, and Health Psychology in the Department of Psychology.

Erin Crandall teaches about Canadian politics, law, and government in the Department of Politics. Her primary research interests include Canadian constitutionalism and the courts, as well as electoral policy in Canada and the UK. Before coming to Acadia, Erin was a postdoctoral fellow at Queen's University.

Lesley Frank is a critical health sociologist specializing in family food practice, household food insecurity, infant feeding, family and child poverty, and social policy. She is also a research associate of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (Nova Scotia Office). She teaches courses in health, family, food studies, and social research methods in the Department of Sociology.

Wenxia Guo teaches Marketing Strategy and Introductory Marketing in the F. C. Manning School of Business. Her primary research area is consumer behavior, and her main research interests are cross-culture consumer behaviour, retailing, and online shopping. Before she joined the School of Business, she worked as an assistant professor at City University of Hong Kong.

Ryan MacNeil teaches courses in entrepreneurship and innovation in the School of Business. His research is about post-industrial economic development and currently includes work on the evolution of Nova Scotia's ocean science and technology innovation system, the sociology of knowledge and technology, and Canadian community economic development practices. Prior to joining Acadia, Ryan had a career as a professional economic developer and community economic development

Acadia's New Tenure-Track Faculty (cont'd)

consultant. He is currently completing his doctoral thesis at the Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University.

Said Mekary teaches Human Physiology and Fitness programming and is the director of the Acadia Active Aging program at the School of Kinesiology. His primary research area is healthy aging, and his main research interests are cardiovascular physiology, chronic disease, neuronal responses to exercise and cognition. He also is the assistant coach of the women's varsity soccer team.

Please join us in welcoming our colleagues to their new positions! Congratulations to all.

Next up, the *Communicator* will be profiling Acadia's new continuing instructors.

--Herb Wyile

What's on the AUFA Website

While the *Communicator* strives to keep AUFA members informed on developments both locally and nationally, please take note that there is also a wealth of information available on the AUFA website, including:

- A full list of all the AUFA Committees.
- Links to articles on matters of academic freedom, collective bargaining, legislation affecting higher education, and academic labour relations, reports on post-secondary education, and much more.
- A full calendar of all the important dates and deadlines related to the collective agreement.
- An archive of past collective agreements and of documents pertaining to the present collective agreement.
- Links to AUFA membership and claims forms and forms from the present collective agreement.
- A list of the various services offered by AUFA to its members.



Dates to Remember

November 15

DRCs to review all applications for renewal, tenure and promotion and make recommendations to the URC for renewal. [Art. 12.21(1)]

Decisions announced for research funds [Art. 25.55(c)]

December 15

LRCs to review applications for continuing appointment and promotion and make recommendations to the URC according to the following schedule: Joint Continuing Appointment and Promotion or Promotion to Librarian III/Archivist III. [Art. 51.21(a)]

December 31

Employees to confirm acceptance of an offered leave. [Art. 24.20]

February 1

Deadline for receipt of applications for research monies. [Art. 25.55(c)(ii)]

A more comprehensive listing of dates can be found on AUFA's website: <http://www.acadiafaculty.ca/calendar>



Have any ideas for future newsletter articles? Drop us a note and let us know what's been going on.

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 three times during the academic year and serves the following purposes:

- to provide a means for the free exchange of ideas, views, information, and issues relevant to AUFA and the Acadia community;
- to provide feedback and information useful to AUFA to maintain its effective operation in fulfilling the objectives of AUFA and its membership;
- to provide documentary records of matters pertaining to AUFA;
- 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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