



University of Victoria
Faculty Association

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

OGM, DECEMBER 10, 2019

INTRODUCTION

In this report I provide a brief update on some of the issues that we have been focusing on since the spring Annual General Meeting. On top of regular operations, the Association's focus has primarily been on educating the membership about the new Collective Agreement, which was ratified in July. In addition, we have been working with Faculty Relations to ensure that we share a common understanding of a number of articles in the Collective Agreement.

In general terms, the workload of the Association office remains high as demand for Member support continues to increase. This is good news, as more members are recognizing the support that the FA can provide to them, but it does increase the demands on our membership services officers, as well as on our other staff, and on the President and Vice President, both of whom also work on membership services issues.

ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

New CA Implementation

- Helga, our Chief Negotiator, and I have both been working on educating the membership about the new Collective Agreement. There has been considerable frustration that the CA release has been delayed. We very much appreciate the work of Helga and the FA staff in the editing process, and we are very pleased that it is finally out. The delay does mean that some deadlines – for the Faculty Evaluation Policies and for evaluating members – will be extended.
- Helga and I have each gone to different departments to provide short presentations and answer questions about the CA. As of tomorrow we will have visited every department on campus. Thanks for inviting us to provide this information. Department members and Chairs seem to appreciate our visits and are generally very pleased with the new CA. Thanks to Penny Murray, our AO who organized these visits, and members of the negotiating team, officers or staff who accompanied us.
- In late September we held a well attended meeting for Teaching Faculty, to answer questions particular to Teaching Stream Faculty on the new CA.
- We have held two Faculty Feedback Cafés on the new CA, and again, there was considerable interest and lots of questions.

ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

New CA Implementation Continued

- Because we had heard that Chairs were frustrated with the lack of information they had about the CA we also organized two successful Chairs' information sessions on the CA on October 7th and 8th.
- Three sessions for Chairs and Deans on the new CA, jointly led by Helga and Michele Parkin, AVP Faculty Relations, were held in late October and early November. There was a very large turnout at these events.
- We also held two Chairs Forums in late November, that provided further information about the new CA, as well as about the development of Faculty Evaluation Policies
- The FA created (in consultation with Faculty Relations) a set of Guidelines on the development of FEPs and Unit Standards, which was sent to all members, and which we hope will be helpful as these policies and standards are written up. We are also happy to answer questions as you work on them.
- As you work within your Faculties and your departments in developing the new FEPs and Departmental Standards, we encourage you to help ensure that these are collegial processes, where all FA members have a voice (as well as a vote).

ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

New CA Implementation Continued

- There are a few issues in the CA that have needed some clarification, or where LOUs in the CA have indicated that further discussion would be undertaken following ratification (as in clarifying best practices in teaching evaluation). Some of these issues have been addressed this fall in discussions that Helga and I have had with Michele Parkin, and others will be discussed at Joint Committee on the Administration of the Agreement (JCAA) meetings over this year.

Association Luncheon for Indigenous Faculty

- I'm pleased to announce that we will also be working more closely with our Indigenous faculty members. Yesterday we held a lunch meeting to hear their concerns and to discuss the possibility of organizing an ongoing FA ad hoc committee for Indigenous faculty.

ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

Divestment

- the FA held an Extraordinary General Meeting on November 22nd to discuss the development of an FA position on divestment. This meeting emerged both from a motion passed at the Spring AGM, as well as because the FA was receiving requests from our members for support for the current divestment campaign. While we held a vote on this matter in 2014, the Executive felt that both given the changes in FA membership and in public views on this matter, that a new vote was required.
- The meeting included a panel with presentations on this topic from different perspectives, as well as an opportunity for spirited discussion. The FA posted the presentations on our website, as well as additional information we received both from our members and from the university. We are currently holding an electronic vote of the membership on the following motion:

THAT the Association support the campaign for UVic to divest from fossil fuels.

- The vote will close on Thursday, December 12th.



PREAMBLE TO PROPOSED MOTION

- As many of you know, our Collective Agreement allows that in the event of job action by another union on campus, FA members may choose, for reasons of conscience, to not cross the picket lines of other unions. However, the CA also states that if they do not cross these picket lines, they will lose their pay for the days they do not cross.
- During the recent contract negotiations between CUPE 4163 Component 3 (the sessional union) and the University, the Association learned that the University would also not pay the benefit costs for any of our Members who choose to not cross the picket lines of other campus unions, and would instead charge these costs back to the Association.
- As the Association does not currently have a policy on whether we can cover these benefit costs, we hoped that the CAUT Defence Fund would cover them. However, as British Columbia is the only province in the country that allows members of one union to legally not cross the picket line of another union at the same worksite, the CAUT Defence Fund also does not have a policy on this. This means we have to make a request to the CAUT Defence Fund each time this benefit may be required, and there is uncertainty whether the other CAUT Defence Fund trustees support these kinds of claims.

PREAMBLE CONTINUED

- The motion on the next slide, (the principles of which have been endorsed by the Executive Committee), does not take a position on whether our members should cross the picket lines of other campus unions, as that is an individual member's choice. Instead, it is intended as a precautionary measure to protect the benefits of those members who for reasons of conscience, choose not to cross a picket line. It is also intended to protect the Association's finances and to ensure that in the event of job action by another campus union, that the Association does not seriously deplete our Defence Fund.
- **Note:** This motion expires as of April 2020, as we plan to have additional discussions at Council and the AGM this spring that further clarify the purpose of our Defence Fund, both in the event of our own job action and other job action on campus. But the Executive deemed it prudent to put forward this motion now, in the event of any possible job action on campus this spring.

MOTION

THAT in the event of another campus union engaging in job action, the Association will administer the payment of benefit costs to the University for all Members who, for reasons of conscience, choose not to cross a picket line (and who will thus have their salary and benefit payments docked by the University)

AND,

THAT if the CAUT Defence Fund does not cover these costs for our Members, the Association will pay the cost of each Member's benefits for each day on which that Member serves at least a one-hour shift on the picket line, up to a combined limit of 10% of the amount in the Association's 2019-20 Defence Fund at the beginning of the job action

AND,

THAT, if the job action continues after 10% of the amount in the Association's 2019-20 Defence Fund is expended, and in the case where Members do not serve a shift on the picket line, the Association will collect reimbursement for the payment of benefit costs from Members who, for reasons of conscience, continue to choose not to cross a picket line

AND,

THAT this motion is without precedent, and its terms will expire as of the date of the Association's April 2020 Annual General Meeting.

CLOSING REMARKS

In Closing

I just want to note, in closing, my gratitude to Helga Hallgrimsdottir, who continues to patiently answer what no doubt can seem like an endless stream of emails and texts, as she helps to bring me up to speed on the many and various dimensions of this job.

THANK YOU!