University of Victoria
Faculty Association

# NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER WELCOME PACKAGE

# 1.0 About the Faculty Association

## 1.1 What is an Academic Union?

An Academic Union is a democratic organization of Academic employees with the legally recognized right to represent its members before management. Through Unions, employees collectively negotiate their terms of employment, advocate for their rights and interests, and ensure that management adheres to the terms of their collective agreement.

## 1.2 The Uvic Faculty Association

The UVic Faculty Association (the "FA") has existed since at least the 1940s (at Victoria College) and has been a recognized organization under British Columbia's "Societies Act" since 1979. In 2014, FA members voted to officially certify as a Union.

The UVic Faculty Association is the exclusive bargaining agent for faculty and librarians at the University of Victoria. We represent approximately 850 faculty and librarians, which includes all research-stream and teaching-stream faculty, librarians and archivists, lecturers, and limited-term faculty whose terms are more than 12 months. Our purpose is to promote the well-being of our members at the University of Victoria and to further the cause of higher education by upholding the principles of academic freedom, tenure, equity, and human rights within the University.

Increasingly important aspects of this work include:

- **Academic Governance** – Monitoring and supporting the strengths and limits of Academic Governance processes and mechanisms (i.e. the Petch Procedures)
- **Equity, Inclusion, Anti-Racism and Decolonization** – Both advocating on behalf of our members and creating spaces for them to self-advocate and organize.
- **Health and Safety –** Ensuring that the physical and mental well-being of our members is protected.
- **Academic Freedom** – ensure this is not eroded through University policy, procedures and agreement language

## 1.3 FA Committees and Structure

### Who is in charge?

The FA, like all Unions, is answerable to Labour Laws and Codes, and any other relevant legislation that govern its activities, rights, and responsibilities. As a democratic organization, it is also fundamentally accountable to its members. As such, all committees report to the General membership, and all major elections, directives, and financial decisions require approval from the General Membership on some level. Ultimately, the members are in charge.

**How is the FA organized?**

Constitution & Bylaws: The FA's bylaws dictate its internal organization and standards of practice. They must adhere to minimum standards provided for by the Societies Act. They are regularly reviewed, with any changes requiring approval by the membership. They can be viewed directly here. Constitution and Bylaws.

Terms of Reference: In addition to bylaws, each standing committee works to develop a terms of reference which build upon (and must remain consistent with) the Association's bylaws. The Terms of Reference (TORS) determine the internal functions of the committee, such as (but not limited to) meeting frequency, processes for the election of committee chairs, detailed committee mandates, and what constitutes quorum for meetings.

Policies: In addition to its constitution and bylaws, the FA is also guided by its own internal policies, developed through the EC and Ratified by Council. Policies provide more specific instructions on items like policy development, budgeting & spending, committee portfolios, and best practice for membership services.

## How do all of the committees work together?

**Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee (EC) are the directors of the FA. As such, they are responsible for the day-to-day and ongoing operations of all FA duties and responsibilities including committee appointments, membership services, labour-relations, budgeting and financial decisions, and staff supervision. The bulk of these responsibilities are held by the Officers Group (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary), along with task-specific portfolios that may be assigned to other EC members. All major financial, hiring, policy, and governance decisions require EC approval.

**Representative Council:** The Council is comprised of democratically elected representatives from each department/school/unit of the University. They provide crucial oversight for the EC, recommend budgetary, bargaining, and governance decisions for General Membership approval, ratify Association policies, and act as liaisons to their home departments.

**Standing/Ad Hoc Committees**: These committees vary in composition, activity, and scope, according to the mandates provided in their associated Terms of Reference or constituting motion. Committees elect their own chairs unless otherwise indicated in their Terms of Reference, and must produce annual reports on their activities to the General Membership.

For a full list of FA committees, please click here**.**

**Staff:** All staff report to the President or their delegate. Their roles, rights, and responsibilities are governed by the Collective Agreement between the UVic Faculty Association (Employer) and the BC Union Workers' Union. Staff provide support to FA administration, communication, governance, membership engagement, and membership services.

## How do Committees Function?

**Meeting Regularity:** The frequency and regularity of committee meetings vary according to the bylaws and relevant terms of reference. Most committees are required to meet at least once per Academic Term, but many meet more often than that, usually 2 or 3 times per term. Committees don't normally meet during the summer term.

**Meeting Format:** The Faculty Association relies on Roberts Rules as its formal guide and rulebook for meetings. However, most committees opt to conduct themselves less formally; we want all committee members to feel comfortable to express themselves and their concerns, and we often rely on the shared values of good faith collegiality to guide our conduct. All major decisions are held by vote, with minutes

recorded for official record. Any member may ask that their comments be removed from minutes or logged anonymously.

**Funding:** Committees can advise the Treasurer of their plans for the upcoming year and make budgetary requests when the budget is being developed in early Fall. Operational spending is generally approved by the Officers or Executive Committee groups, and budgets must be recommended by the Executive Committee and Council before receiving final approval of the General Membership.

### Where can I find more information, policies, or other documents?

**Teams:** The FA administers its own Team within UVic's Microsoft Teams license. Depending on which Committee(s) you are involved with, you will have access to the Team and one or more channels within it. We rely on Teams to share documents and resources on an ongoing basis. If you have any trouble accessing this information or navigating Teams, please let one of our Staff know.

**Netdrive:** The FA also relies on UVic's Netdrive file storage system, but these files are primarily used for archival and sensitive, Membership Services related information. Direct access to these files is limited to Staff and Officers, as needed, but you may request any documents that aren't deemed private or confidential.

## 1.4 Building and Contact Information

The general operating hours of the University of Victoria Faculty Association are between 8:00am and 5:30 pm, Monday to Friday. The FA's office is staffed between 9:00pm and 4:30pm Monday to Friday.

| In Person | By Courier | By Mail |
|---|---|---|
| Faculty Association<br>University of Victoria<br>University House 2 RM 103<br>3800 Finnerty Road (Ring Road)<br>Victoria, BC<br>V8P 5C2 | Faculty Association<br>UH2<br>103<br>Sinclair Road, Parking Lot # 5<br>Victoria, BC<br>V8P 5C2<br>Canada | Faculty Association<br>University of Victoria<br>PO Box 1700<br>Victoria, BC<br>V8W 2Y2<br>Canada |

Directions to the Association office can be found here.

## 1.5 Office Staff Contact Info

| Title | Name | Telephone # | Primary Email | Office |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Membership Services Officer II** | Ben Johnson | **Office:** 250-472-4923 | benjonhns@uvic.ca | 105 |
| **Membership Services Advisor I** | Amal Vincent | **Office:** 250-472-4662 | amalfa@uvic.ca | 102 |
| **Administrative Coordinator** | Shona Dion | **Office:** 250-721-7939 | adminfa@uvic.ca | 102a |
| **Executive Assistant** | Faye Lee | **Office:** 250-472-4686 | eafa@uvic.ca | 103 |
| **General Manager** | Nathan Todd | **Office:** 250-721-7208 | uvicfa@uvic.ca | 107 |

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## 1.6 Common Abbreviations

Getting involved in a new organization can be daunting. If you are ever unsure of something, do not hesitate to ask your committee chair, fellow committee members, or staff. For your convenience, here is a list of common terms and abbreviations:

- **AAA** – Abilities, Access, and Accommodation Committee
- **ADRC** – Advising and Dispute Resolution Committee
- **CA** - Collective Agreement
- **CAC** – Collective Agreement Committee
- **EC** – Executive Committee
- **FA** – UVic Faculty Association
- **FALC or FA-LC** – Librarian's Committee
- **JCAA** – Joint Committee on the Administration of the Agreement
- **NT** – Negotiating Team
- **TFC** – Teaching Faculty Committee
- **UGC** – University Governance Committee
- **UVIC FA** – UVic Faculty Association
- **MS** – Membership Services
- **TORS** – Terms of Reference

## 1.7 Important Links

- www.uvicfa.ca
- www.caut.ca
- https://defencefund.caut.ca/
- https://www.cufa.bc.ca/