



## Department Representatives Bulletin

*Following is a recap of the Department Representatives meeting of December 15, 2021.*

*The meeting was chaired by Faculty Association President, David Stewart.*

*For further information on any item, please contact the Faculty Association office:*

*Email: [faculty.association@tuca.com](mailto:faculty.association@tuca.com), phone: (403) 220-5722*

### Meeting Modality for the Winter Session

President David Stewart said that all the Association's meetings for the Winter Term will continue to be held via Zoom.

### Pandemic Issues

*The Faculty Association welcomes comments and questions from its members on issues related to COVID and encourages academic staff to raise individual or general issues with the Association office as soon as they are of concern.*

Stewart reported that many of the currently unvaccinated members have contacted the Association about the Administration's threat to put them on leave without pay starting January 1. Due to the legal requirement to represent members in any workplace matter, the Association will file a policy grievance along with individual grievances on behalf of these members.

The policy grievance doesn't suggest that unvaccinated members should be allowed on campus, other than for human rights reasons, but rather that the Administration lacks the authority to impose leave without pay in such circumstances. It must abide by the provisions and protections of the Collective Agreement and instead use

leaves with pay, modified work, the use of vacation time, etc. Also, the circumstances of individual cases must be considered. For example, some are already assigned to teach remotely next term, while others are on Research and Scholarship Leave. Placing unvaccinated members on leave without pay seems to be motivated by discipline rather than protecting people's health on campus.

The Association also continues to work on cases where vaccinated members seek accommodations related to underlying conditions, family responsibilities, or other issues. In most such cases, the members are wanting to be able to teach remotely. Grievances might be filed in some of these cases as well.

Some members are being pressed to deliver courses in more than one modality. Stewart said he's written to the Provost noting that members can't be expected to teach the same course in multiple modalities without recognizing the increased workload.

Stewart met with the President of the Students' Union and the two discussed issues relating to the modality of course delivery.

Meanwhile, he continues to raise issues around modality, masking, testing, etc., with the Provost and the Academic Crisis Task Force whenever possible.

A department representative mentioned that some members who offer in-person instruction want the option for remote exams to avoid being exposed to large numbers of people in a confined space. Stewart said he would bring the issue up with Provost.

The Administration sent an email on December 10 saying that non-medical face masks must be worn in all indoor areas on University of Calgary campuses and that this mandate will remain in effect throughout the Winter Term and be re-evaluated by May 1, 2022.

Stewart acknowledged the stress these issues have had on many members and urged members to seek any supports needed, either through Homewood Health or their own practitioners as per the benefit plan. If people need to take sick time, they should do so as recommended by their health provider.

He also explained that COVID issues are taking up a lot of the Association's resources and asked that people be patient when reaching out on other matters.

### **Strike Updates**

Stewart reported that the strike at the University of Manitoba was settled after 35 days. Both he and the Association's Vice-President travelled to the University of Manitoba as "flying pickets" to support the Faculty Association. The issues included salaries, salary floors and ceilings, and government interference in the bargaining process. Stewart added that it was good to see firsthand everything involved in

planning and carrying out a strike as our Association has not had this experience.

He also reported that the Concordia University of Edmonton Faculty Association (CUEFA) may be the first faculty association in Alberta to go on strike. A vote held on December 1 garnered 90 percent support from members to authorize a strike. CUEFA subsequently reported that the University Administration applied for and received approval to take lockout action against the association.

The University of Lethbridge Faculty Association is in formal mediation with the Board of Governors. A Labour Relations Board appointed mediator held mediation meetings on November 29 and 30 and December 6 and 7.

We are continuing to monitor the situation at a number of other Universities where strikes or lockouts are possible.

### **Bargaining**

Faculty Association Principal Negotiator Hamid Habibi reported on this item IN-CAMERA.

### **Happy Holidays**

Wishing everyone Happy Holidays from all of us at the Faculty Association.

### ***NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING***

***Thursday, February 17, 2022***

***12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.***

***By ZOOM***

***Details of the ZOOM meeting to be distributed prior to meeting.***