



Department Representatives Bulletin

Following is a recap of the Department Representatives meeting of November 17, 2022.

Faculty Association President David Stewart chaired the meeting.

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

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The meeting was held on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

General Faculties Council Bylaws

The GFC Bylaws require that they be reviewed by the GFC at least once every three years. The Bylaws were last modified in 2018.

Noteworthy is a proposed amendment that would obligate members to be familiar with all University policies rather than “University policies applicable to Members” as the Bylaws currently read.

The current Bylaws allow some senior administrators to designate an individual to act in their place for any meeting. Stewart said this provision is an unfair imbalance for other GFC members and suggested all members should be able to send a delegate in their absence.

Changes proposed by Stewart that would allow decisions of the GFC Chair to be overturned by a majority vote (rather than a 2/3 vote) did not make it into the package, nor did a request that future by-law changes be considered initially by a GFC committee rather than the University Secretariat.

Partisan Political Activities Policy

The U of C’s Partisan Political Activities Policy is being updated.

The Association raised several concerns with proposed amendments to the policy, which seemed to go well beyond the policy’s intent.

At the October meeting, Department Representatives shared President David Stewart’s concerns, and some expressed concern that the proposed changes could negatively impact their work as academics and the community.

With the support and examples from Department Representatives, the Association successfully lobbied for improvements to the proposed changes, mitigating most of the Association’s concerns.

Community Service Award

The Faculty Association is currently accepting nominations for the Community Service Award to be given in 2023. Department Representatives are encouraged to participate in the process and nominate colleagues whose service to the community has gone above and beyond their normal academic duties.

The nomination period for the award is extended to January 9th. Information and nomination forms can be found on the Faculty Association [website](#).

Strike Update

This may be another year for significant strike action by academic staff across the country. The Faculty Association has been tracking potential strikes across Canada, including potential strike action by academic staff at Cape Breton, Western Ontario, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, the contract academic staff at Nipissing, the Atlantic School

of Theology, and Guelph. In all cases, the Faculty Association Executive has approved donations in the event of an actual strike or lockout.

CUPE 3912 represents contract academic staff (among others) at Universities in the Halifax area, including Dalhousie. The Faculty Association sent a donation to CUPE 3912, and it appears that they now have a tentative agreement.

The Faculty Association has also been monitoring the situation in Ontario regarding CUPE Ontario and the Government of Ontario using the notwithstanding clause in their back-to-work legislation.

Joint Committees on Merit, Workload, and Benefits

Included in the settlement for the *Collective Agreement* (2022-2024) were three Letters of Understanding establishing joint committees tasked with reviewing the merit process, workload, and benefits.

These committees will begin meeting in December 2022 and will work on these important matters over the coming months. In preparation for the committee meetings, Department Representatives provided feedback about each of these committees for the Association to consider.

The Association will strive to keep Department Representatives apprised of progress made in these committees and may seek further input as needed.

Sessional Travel Grants

The Faculty Association began offering Sessional Travel Grants in 2013 to support the academic goals of sessional members of the Faculty Association of the University of Calgary by providing funding for a portion of travel costs related to scholarly activity in their field. The program was eventually established as the Sessional Travel Fund in the *Collective Agreement*.

In the 2022 Collective Agreement settlement, it was agreed that the Association would take over the administration of the fund while the

Governors agreed to provide the Association with \$30,000 per year to be awarded to sessional academic staff for travel expenses related to their academic work or attending conferences, whether or not travel is involved.

The Association is currently working with the Administration to transfer the funds to the Association, and it is expected that there will be announcements in the coming weeks inviting sessional academic staff to apply for the fund.

Department Representatives are encouraged to ensure that sessional staff in their departments are aware of the opportunity for travel funding.

Faculty Funding Formulas

Department Representatives raised concerns with changes to the share of funds from tuition that are returned to the respective Faculties. The understanding from representatives was that the Faculties used to receive 80% of tuition, and this will be reduced to 70%.

However, Faculty budgets were based on 80%, resulting in a drive from some Faculties to increase class sizes to make up the difference. Department Representatives expressed concern that this will increase the academic staff's teaching workload.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Details of the meeting to be shared prior to the meeting.