



ACADEMIC VIEWS

June 2025

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Good day, dear colleagues,

As June ushers in the beginning of summer, I extend my warmest regards to each of you. This time of year provides a welcome opportunity to rest, reflect, and recharge.

My term as president concludes at the end of this month, and I want you to know that it has been an honour and privilege to serve you. On July 1, President-Elect Dr. Francine Smith will assume the role, supported by her outstanding new executive and a renewed Board of Directors.

Over the past two years, we have witnessed meaningful and significant change. Under the leadership of the Board of Directors, our union has been reinvigorated. I'll share more on these developments later in this message.

In this message, I'll first update you on some recent matters. We remember and honour Dr. Polly Knowlton Cockett in memoriam. New appointments have been made to the Board of Directors. The Association continues to advance its strategic plan and engage in active bargaining, and the Job Action Task Force has been at work. We are following developments related to academic freedom and the Court of Appeal decision. Concerns have emerged over "secret mandates" in negotiations with the Board of Governors. Following a favourable arbitration award, the Association is preparing a memorandum of agreement for the University.

We also acknowledge the ongoing turmoil—what can only be described as Sturm und Drang—in the Faculty of Arts. We reaffirm our confidentiality commitment to members, and recent changes to the bylaws reflect that commitment. An Association webinar has taken place with more to come, and we continue to monitor the aftermath of the May 9, 2024, police action during the campus encampment. Negotiations with the Steelworkers remain ongoing.

Lastly, I'll reflect on significant accomplishments of the Board of Directors over the past two years.

Let's begin.

IN MEMORIAM:



The passing of Dr. Polly Knowlton Cockett is a profound loss to our Association. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Dr. Robin Cockett and the entire family.

For many years, Polly served tirelessly as a member of the Board of Directors, and was a passionate and unwavering advocate for the rights of sessional members—both at our University and through the Canadian Association of University Teachers. Her voice was clear, fearless, and deeply principled, and it will be sorely missed.

In recognition of her extraordinary contributions, the Association awarded Polly its highest honour, the Order of the Good Servant—established in 1989 to recognize exemplary service to the Association. A donation has also been made in her name to the Alberta Wilderness Association.

NEW APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, PENSION PLAN, AND BOARD OF GOVERNORS:

At the Board of Directors meeting on June 10, Dr. Nicole Wyatt joined as a fully participating member, taking the place of a member who withdrew from the Board. Dr. Teri Balser, Dr. Myles Leslie, Professor Rosalind Carson, and Dr. Bart Beaty were guests at the meeting, and they will take office as Board members on July 1. Our 2025–2026 Board membership is complete and can be seen at [this link](#). The new slate of Association officers was voted in, and they will take their positions on July 1: Dr. Leighton Wilks, Vice-President and Treasurer; Dr. Tavis Campbell, Grievance Advisor; Dr. Karen Then, Grievance Advisor; Dr. Chris Sears, Officer at Large; and Dr. Justine Wheeler, Officer at Large. Dr. Trevor Tombe was voted as both Principal Negotiator and our Association's Trustee on the Universities Academic Pension Plan. Dr. Bart Beaty's name will be submitted, pursuant to the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, to the Minister of Advanced Education as our nominee for the Board of Governors of the University of Calgary.

JOB ACTION TASK FORCE:

Dr. Chris Sears has provided an update on the work of the task force in this newsletter.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Dr. Leighton Wilks has provided an update on the strategic plan in this newsletter.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM (RESEARCH) AND THE COURT OF APPEAL:

Following up on the Association's intervenor application at the Court of Appeal regarding the protection of our members' research notes and emails—and the argument that social action by our members can be, and often is, research—steps have been taken. We filed our documents with the court, and on June 26, the court will hear oral arguments. We were joined in our application by the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Canadian Association of Law Teachers.

“SECRET MANDATES” AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOVERNORS:

On May 7, an unfair labour practice complaint was brought forward by the Association of Academic Staff at the University of Alberta. At the heart of the complaint is the allegation that secret mandates issued by the government to the University of Alberta Board of Governors improperly restricted the ability of the Association and the Board to negotiate monetary matters. It is further argued that this governmental interference constitutes a breach of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms by infringing upon the right to collective bargaining. As a result, the Labour Relations Board has been asked to rule on the constitutional dimensions of the case. On May 23, our Association joined the action before the Labour Relations Board, and on June 2, we filed our supporting materials. We will continue to keep the membership informed as the matter progresses.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT CONCERNING AMHSP AND APL AGREEMENTS:

The arbitrator's decision of May 27, 2024, on the contractual conflicts between the Collective Agreement and the Alberta Medicine and Health Services Program (AMHSP) and Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) agreements entered into with the University of Calgary, were inadvertently breached by the administration in April. In discussions with the administration, the Association is moving forward and has presented a draft memorandum of agreement concerning a letter of understanding entitled “AMHSP and APL Agreements and the Supremacy of Collective Agreement Terms.” Once a memorandum of agreement is finalized, the administration will be required to enter into negotiations with Alberta Health to ensure the supremacy of the Collective Agreement over the existing agreements between Alberta Health and the University. Following that, the Association will engage in discussions with the University regarding the implementation of the memorandum. Further updates will be shared with the membership as negotiations progress.

FACULTY OF ARTS:

Following up from the previous President's Message, it is fair to say that the challenges related to the suspension of programs in the Faculty of Arts continue, as a fourth related grievance was filed on April 29, 2025. The essence of that grievance is the alleged intimidation of members due to their union involvement. Further developments have occurred, but they must remain confidential at this time, as they involve the Office of Protected Disclosure and potential civil proceedings. Suffice it to say, the Association remains confident that the actions of its members were lawful and undertaken in the furtherance of union rights—rights that lie at the very heart of any union. When employers take actions that directly interfere with the legal right of members to express concerns about administrative decisions—especially where such decisions are alleged, through grievance, to violate the Collective Agreement and labour law—our Association's tolerance is zero.

We will respond not only through the grievance process but also, where necessary, by pursuing matters before the Labour Relations Board and, if appropriate, through judicial review in the courts. The Canadian Association of University Teachers and our sister faculty associations across the country stand shoulder to shoulder with us in defence of our contractual, statutory, and constitutional rights. Further updates will be provided to the membership as developments unfold.

CONFIDENTIALITY COMMITMENT TO MEMBERS:

In consultation with the Association's lawyer as well as lawyers at the Canadian Association of University Teachers, it became clear that the Confidentiality Commitment Statement on our website was flawed. The Board of Directors and the officers of the Association have a fiduciary duty to take actions on matters such as grievances that may be moving towards arbitration and in other complex situations that require that information be shared with them as decision-makers acting on behalf of the Association. That was prohibited by the former Confidentiality Commitment Statement. Therefore, acting upon legal advice, the Board passed the following motion on May 13, 2025:

Be It Resolved That:

TUCFA's 'Confidentiality Commitment' statement on its website, which currently states, 'The elected officers of the Faculty Association are not informed of any confidential personal information without the member's consent,' be deleted and replaced with the following.

'The elected officers of the Faculty Association and the Board of Directors are informed of confidential information, when necessary, due to their fiduciary responsibility to the Association.'

CHANGES TO THE BYLAWS:

At a meeting on May 13, 2025, the Board approved the deletion of Bylaw 6.1.3(a), thereby allowing the full participation in our Board meetings of a duly elected member of the Board of Directors who is also the Association's nominee appointed by the Minister of Advanced Education to the University's Board of Governors. That individual is bound by a fiduciary duty both to the Association's Board and, similarly, to the Board of Governors.

Following the Board's passage of the motion, the membership subsequently ratified the amendment to delete the bylaw as follows:

Yes: 458 (96%)
No: 19 (4%)
Total votes: 477

THE ENCAMPMENT AND POLICE ACTION OF MAY 9, 2024:

The March President's Message stated that "our Association calls for the Board of Governors to reconsider its decision and to engage an independent third party for a critical, contextually sensitive, and legally informed review of the administrative decision-making processes leading up to the events of May 9, 2024." This matter will be inherited by President-Elect Dr. Francine Smith.

Our request to the Minister of Public Safety for the unredacted Alberta Serious Incident Response Team Report has not been denied, but the minister has remained silent. This contentious and troubling file will also be inherited by our President-Elect.

ASSOCIATION WEBINARS:

Two Association webinars were planned but did not take place. In May, a webinar on sexual and gender-based violence and the procedure for protected disclosure was in the planning stages. However, due to ongoing developments in the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy, the webinar was cancelled, with hopes of rescheduling it at a later date. We were prepared to proceed in May with a webinar on grievances under the Collective Agreement. Unfortunately, a severe bronchial virus affected several participants, forcing us to postpone that session as well. President-Elect Dr. Francine Smith will consider the future of these webinars during her upcoming term.

ONGOING STEELWORKERS NEGOTIATIONS:

Dr. Leighton Wilks, our Association's Chief Negotiator, and Dr. Francine Smith, with office support from Dr. Jennifer Garrison, continue negotiations with the Steelworkers Union representing our employees. An update will follow in the fall.

MEANINGFUL AND SIGNIFICANT CHANGE:

Many changes have occurred in the Association over the past while. Here are a few notable ones.

1. The Association has become internally transparent, with the Board now having full knowledge of employees – including that of the Executive Director – salaries. In the past the Board of Directors was prohibited by the Executive Director's contract from knowing the salary of the Executive Director.
2. A new website is under development and near completion.
3. A strategic plan is in development and very near completion.
4. Board retreats have been initiated to address governance and other key matters.
5. A fall social event for the Board and department representatives was held with more such events being planned.
6. Changes to the bylaws have ensured our nominee is properly positioned as a voting member of the Board. Additionally, the president's first term has been extended to three years.
7. The Board Manual—essentially the operationalization of the bylaws—has been revised, placing key decision-making responsibilities in the hands of the membership, the executive, and the Board.
8. The working conditions of our employees have significantly improved. As a unionized workplace, our employees' rights are now protected—for example, they are legally entitled to and receive lunch breaks.
9. The previously flawed Confidentiality Commitment Statement has been revised to properly reflect the fiduciary responsibilities of the officers and the Board.
10. Our newsletter, Academic Views, now offers substantive information for our members. It is under further revision through the work of Drs. Chris Sears and Marie-Andrée Bergeron.
11. Staff hiring procedure is now publicly advertised and filled through a competitive process. Prior experience and expertise are prioritized, with final decisions made by the Personnel Committee of the executive.

12. The Canadian Association of University Teachers, to which we pay over half a million dollars annually, is now fully engaging with our Association.
 13. Our Association's Annual General Meetings, previously discontinued, are being reinstated and will be scheduled.
 14. A review and renewal of the purpose and responsibilities of our union's Department Representatives is underway.
 15. Our current executive director, with her high ethical and professional standards as well as her background as a union organizer and negotiator, has energized our members and fostered a renewed sense of engagement and identity as a union.
 16. Our physical office has been transformed. Previously, it had a locked door, with a surveillance camera and opaque window film to obscure visibility. These barriers have been removed. In their place, we now have a warm, welcoming office to which members are genuinely invited and encouraged to visit.
 17. The Association's office has set an aspirational goal of responding to member inquiries within 24 hours.
 18. Bargaining negotiations are ongoing, over, among other things, extending members' long-term disability coverage from age 65 to 69.
 19. As of October 1, 2025, due to the prudent actions of the Board of Directors, the Association's monthly expenses are being reduced \$28,656.16, with an annual savings of \$343,877.40.
- The leadership of the Association's Board of Directors has been outstanding and has been noticed by other faculty associations and the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

IN CONCLUSION:

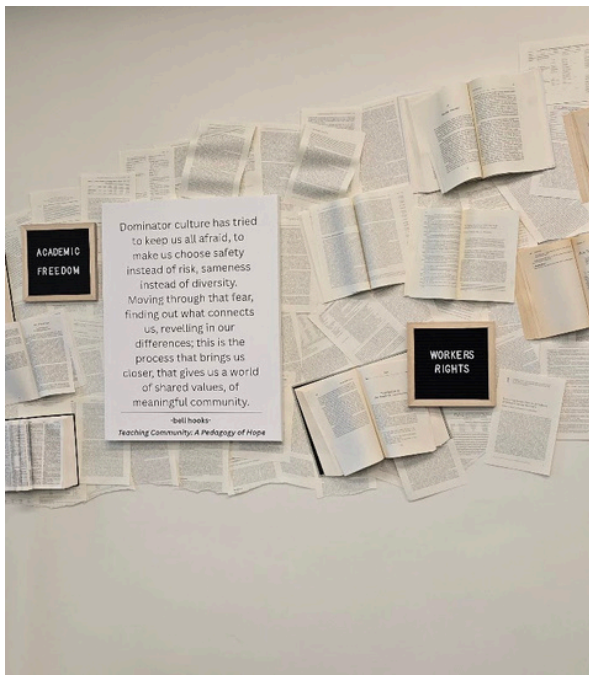
I had considered ending my presidency with the words of Bilbo Baggins—slightly amended—spoken at his final birthday party in the Shire: “Alas, [two] years is far too short a time to [work] among such excellent and admirable [colleagues]. I don't know half of you half as well as I should like, and I like less than half of you half as well as you deserve.”

But that might be misunderstood!

So instead, let me simply offer a heartfelt thank you—to all of you—for your support and encouragement during what has often been a challenging time. With Dr. Francine Smith as your new President, supported by an outstanding Executive and Board, and with the administrative leadership of Dr. Jennifer Garrison as Executive Director, the union is in very good hands—your hands—and it is stronger than it has ever been.

I wish you all well, and of course, the very best in the years to come.

Sincerely,
Kent Donlevy
President: The Faculty Association of the University of Calgary



Our office is now unlocked and open to visitors from Monday through Thursday, 8:30 to 4:30 (closed between 12 and 1 for lunch).

Please come by to say hello, introduce yourself to the new staff, and see some of the changes we are making in the office. Since our administrative staff work on a hybrid schedule, the office is usually locked on Fridays; however, staff continue to be available via phone and email.

TUCFA STAFF ADDITIONS:



Amy Vansickle (Professional Officer) handles member inquiries and labour relations matters.



Girlie Bacaoco (Bookkeeper) maintains the Association's financial records, processes transactions and prepares financial documentation.



Daniel Tseghay (Communications and Member Engagement Officer) supports TUCFA's efforts to advocate for and engage its membership.

They have joined Jennifer Garrison (Executive Director), Jennifer Krygier (Senior Professional Officer), Sarah McKenzie (Professional Officer), Deletta Dodds (Office Manager), and Ainsley Mathieson (Administrative Professional).

JOB ACTION TASK FORCE:

Christopher Sears and Gavin Cameron

The Job Action Task Force (JATF) was created by the Faculty Association to prepare for and manage job actions that may arise in the future. The JATF's mandate is to advise the Executive committee, the Executive director, and TUCFA Officers regarding preparations for and management of job actions, including strikes or work stoppages by the Association and/or a lock-out by the Board of Governors (as outlined in the [Terms of Reference for the JATF](#)).

Volunteers were recruited for the five JATF sub-committees (Communications, Finance, Picketing, Logistical Support, and Membership Engagement and Mobilization) during the winter semester and all five sub-committees are now fully staffed. Each of the sub-committees have their own Terms of Reference.

An orientation session for the sub-committees was held on May 16. The session was led by Francine Smith (TUCFA President Elect), Dora Tam (TUCFA Vice President & Treasurer), Gavin Cameron (Member, JATF), and Christopher Sears (Member, Board of Directors, and JATF). Hamid Habibi (TUCFA Principal Negotiator) provided an update to attendees on the status of our negotiations with the Administration for a new collective agreement. The JATF sub-committees now have their own chairs, who will be organizing meetings as required in the months ahead.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Leighton Wilks

Strategic planning is a vital process that helps organizations to define long-term goals, respond to institutional changes, and strengthen their ability to advocate for members. In a complex and evolving academic environment, a well-crafted strategic plan ensures that TUCFA remains focused, organized, and ready to defend and advance members' rights.

For TCFA, strategic planning is more than administrative—it's an act of collective power-building. A strong plan enables our union to advocate more effectively, deepen member engagement, and navigate complex university politics with clarity and confidence. By centering democratic participation, long-term vision, and adaptability, our union will grow stronger and more resilient.

In November of 2024 the TUCFA board of directors initiated the strategic planning process, facilitated by Dr. Oleksiy Osiyevskyy of the Haskayne School of Business. This two day meeting focused on creating the initial draft of the following guiding statements:

- Vision: A future-oriented declaration of what the organization aspires to become.
- Mission: Defines the organization's purpose, what it does, for whom, and how.
- Values: The beliefs and principles that guide decision-making and behavior.
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In January the initial draft was share with TUCFA members for feedback via an online survey with 158 sharing their feedback on the direction of our union. A townhall was held with our membership on March 31st to gain further insight and feedback around what is important to our members going forward.

The TUCFA Board met again on May 10th for the third full day of strategic planning. During this meeting we were able to refine and finalize our mission, vision and values. These statements provide the foundation for all subsequent strategic decisions and ensure alignment across the organization. Having formulated our strategy, it must be translated into actionable plans. As such the Board then focused its efforts on identifying and prioritizing the strategic goals and actions that will drive our organization for the coming years.

The strategic planning process has laid a strong foundation for the TUCFA's future by identifying clear priorities, engaging members, and aligning the organization around a shared vision. With input from across the membership and careful analysis of both internal and external challenges, the resulting plan

reflects our collective goals and values. The final step is for the board to formally review and approve the strategic plan at a forthcoming up meeting. Once approved, the plan will be shared with all members as a roadmap for the years ahead—guiding our advocacy, organizing, and ongoing efforts to strengthen TUCFA and protect the rights of all members.

DUES:

The following is the Faculty Association dues schedule for July 2025 - June 2026, which is to come into effect July 1, 2025 (for July payroll). In each case below, the member will pay the flat rate plus the mil rate. Take note that the dues are changing by only a few cents this year (based on CAUT dues changes):

<u>Rank</u>	<u>flat rate</u>	<u>mil rate</u>
TUCF11 Full Professor	\$30.79	Monthly compensation x .0067
TUCF12 Associate	\$25.90	Monthly compensation x .0067
TUCF13 Assistant	\$22.43	Monthly compensation x .0067
TUCF16 Part-Time	\$11.53	Monthly compensation x .0067
TUCF01 Sessional	\$11.53	Monthly compensation x .0050

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS:

TUCFA often requires members to serve on University committees as a TUCFA rep. If you are interested in serving on one of the following committees—or being called upon for future committee work—please email the TUCFA office at: faculty.association@tucfa.com

- Indigenous Strategy (ii'taa'poh'to'p Guiding Circle)
- EDI Award Adjudication Committee
- EDI Week Planning Committee

THANKING DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVES:

Thank you to all the Department Representatives for their service to the Association this year:

Jean-Rene Leblanc - Anthropology & Archaeology	Majeed Mohamad - Mechanical & Manufacturing Eng
Susan Cahill - Art & Art History	Ward Flemons - Medicine (Department of)
Cindy Graham - Biological Sciences	Cameron Semper - Microbio Immu & Infect Disease
Maryam Badv - Biomedical Engineering	Kara Sealock - Nursing
Robert Sheldon - Cardiac Sciences	Ken Waters - Philosophy
Lian Willetts - Cell Biology & Anatomy	Sean Stotyn - Physics & Astronomy
Ashley Scott Causton - Chemistry	Ken Lukowiak - Physiology & Pharmacology
Pouya Zanganeh - Civil Engineering	Erica Rayment - Political Science
Elizabeth Rohlman - Classics and Religion	Jeff Caird - Psychology
Rajiv Midha - Clinical Neurosciences	Bev Sandalack - S.A.P.L.
Ron Glasberg - Communication, Media & Film	Peter Balkwill - School of Creative and Performing Arts
Aliya Kassam - Community Health Sciences	Elizabeth Montes Garces - School of LLLC (Fall 2024)
Ben Stephenson - Computer Science	Ben Whaley - School of LLLC (Winter 2025)
Paul Easton - Critical Care Medicine	Dorothy Badry - Social Work
Rajeev Nair - Earth, Energy, and Environment	Janna Klostermann - Sociology
M Scott Taylor - Economics	Lori Helfenbaum - Student and Enrolment Services
Denis Onen - Electrical & Software Eng	Tim Olchoway - Veterinary Medicine
Jessalyn Holodinsky - Emergency Medicine	Kaela Jubas - Werklund School of Education
Pamela Banting - English (Fall 2024)	Bart Beaty - English (Winter 2025)
Nicole Culos-Reed - Kinesiology	Keith Wycliffe-Jones - Family Medicine
Geoffrey Hay - Geography	Beau Cleland - History
Jennifer Koshan - Law	Pablo Moran - Haskayne School of Business
Caitlin McClurg - Libraries & Cultural Resources	
Kathryn Birnie - Anesthesiology, Perioperative & Pain Medicine	