

Election results: UOITFA welcomes some new and returning faces

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Once again April brought the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for our membership and elections for the 2011-2012 year. We would like to thank all those who stepped up and decided to dedicate a portion of their service allocation to the FA. This was an interim election for the Senior Executive spaces, as these positions are normally two years in duration. However, with the premature vacancy created by our founding president who left for UNBC in March of this year, spaces had to be filled. The Faculty Representative positions are only for one year, and are renewed each election.

Of note, we are looking for a Junior Grievance Officer to work with Andrea Slane, our Senior Grievance Officer. This is an appointed position as it is one that has to be mindful of deadlines, be willing to work with administration, but really only in a secondary capacity. The Jr. GO shadows the SGO, but rarely is implemented unless there is a Member to Member grievance (which is rare and there have been none to date). If you are interested in this position, please contact Andrea Slane at andreaslane@hotmail.com or at X2844.

This promises to be an interesting year, and we are grateful for all those who not only were elected, but participated in those discussions to make your concerns heard. Although these results can be seen on the UOITFA webpage (<http://uoitfa.ca/>) we would like to repeat them here so that you have a document to use should you need to contact any member of the UOITFA executive. **



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President's Report

By Hannah Scott



This year has been a busy year for the UOITFA. The year started off with an intense bargaining session. Our very first collective agreement was ratified in May 2010, for a one year period from July 1, 2009 to June 20, 2010.

In sum, twenty-seven (27) articles went on the table, and all but one (1) was meted out in significant detail. It was a significant effort on the part of the previous bargaining team. The end process took eighteen months with much research, effective debate, and determination to make this happen. We will forever be grateful to that first bargaining team: Franco Gaspari, Bill Goodman, Ron Hinch and Ed Waller

The UOITFA also owes a big warm thanks to the executive team, of which I was happy to be a part. The UOIT continues to appreciate all the efforts of Shirley Van Nuland (Treasurer) and Maurice DiGiuseppe (Secretary, and bargaining team member) who continue to serve until next elections in 2012. Their contributions have been significant. Aiding in the wings in support of the team (in no particular order): Marnie Ham – research and analysis, Neil Tudivier – CAUT negotiation assistance, Countless others in the Membership who kept the executive informed on issues

This history-making one-year contract accomplished many things, but most importantly:

- It allowed processes and outcomes to be grieved. Before this contract, this was not possible.
- It formalized elements of our working environment, allowing faculty to have input on changing policies.
- It ensured that no layoffs would occur during the period while that contract was active.

However, because of the short contract duration, UOITFA had the mandate of negotiating a second contract, so soon after the first.

This year, we have another superb bargaining team: Marnie Ham (Chief Negotiating Officer: CNO), Maurice DiGiuseppe, and Ann LeSage. They are faced with a very tough bargaining session. We have strong challenges that they work to meet with diligence, professionalism, and passion. We have been so grateful that they have decided to take on this challenge. We are better because of the work they do. I would like to thank them for all the work they have done, and will do as we are about to start some intense bargaining sessions. We encourage you to show your support in any way you can.

- Provide examples of issues you face in the workplace. These stories will be kept on file, with personal information redacted if brought to the negotiation table.
- Write letters of support to your FA. These letters can be sent to the president of the FA, and/or to the CNO directly.

The Membership was polled to assess what the top concerns were for the next round of talks. The survey revealed that tenure, benefits, and monetary concerns were at the top tier of concerns for our membership. These are the concerns we have brought to the table. We continue to negotiate these items as of this AGM. This year's negotiating team is led by Marnie Ham working with Maurice DiGiuseppe and Ann Lesage.

In March we said a sad farewell to our inaugural president, Raymond Cox. Raymond took advantage of another opportunity that brought him closer to his family. We wish Raymond all the best at UNBC. His effect on this association will not be forgotten. We are indebted for all his efforts and his wisdom in leadership. Although Ibrahim Dincer did step in for a short period of time to help in the transition, Hannah Scott is the Interim President until June 30, 2011. The UOITFA thanks all in their efforts to support the UOITFA.

Going forward, we are looking to negotiate a contract with the Employer, UOIT. Although we have been successful in finding resolution to two articles, Article 19 (Tenure) continues to be a challenge for our bargaining team. As of this writing, monetary items were scheduled to be introduced in the week following the AGM but have not been put forward. A bargaining meeting will be scheduled to update the membership once these articles have been introduced. The UOITFA Executive would like to wish each and every member all the best in the year to come. *Hannah Scott, UOITFA President ***

Senior Grievance Officer Report By Andrea Slane

In 2010-2011, we have had only one formal grievance, and this was a policy grievance brought by the FA to complain about the loose practice of allowing deans to appoint as many associate deans as they see fit without much justification. We met with the administration to seek resolution, and were successful at getting them to draft some guidelines for deans. They also assured us that they were now aware of our sensitivity to having more than one associate dean per faculty, since this removes senior faculty from the FA membership. However, they refused to put a firm limiting number on associate deans for any given faculty. In the end we withdrew the grievance, with the understanding that we will file another one if the practices continue to be as loose as they have been.

We recently received a complaint about the criteria circulated by a dean in advance of annual performance evaluations. We are looking into getting the administration to issue better guidelines for deans to make these criteria clearer, so that members can know what they need to accomplish in order to get a “satisfactory” rating in each of the three categories (teaching, research and service).

We have dealt informally with all individual member issues. We had two issues arise with regard to compensation. One issue concerned research leave compensation and the terms of repayment for an overpayment, which was resolved in a manner favourable to the member. Another issue concerned the base salary which would be used to calculate maternity leave benefits given our retroactive salary increase in the last collective agreement, and this issue too was resolved in the affected members’ favour.

....deans do have a lot of discretion and can treat members differently. For the most part, unless the inequalities are really egregious and deprive a member of his or her rights under the collective agreement, there is not a lot we can or necessarily want to do about it. What we can do is ensure that everyone gets the baseline set out in the agreement.

*Andrea Slane,
SGO, UOITFA*

We have also had member complaints about delays or other dissatisfaction about assigning office space, mostly connected to construction delays in new buildings. For the most part we have not been able to resolve these complaints in members’ favour. The bottom line is that if you are not deprived of a private office for a full year or more, you will not receive any compensation. Also, members are not entitled to keep an office while on leave, even though some members have done so at the discretion of their dean.

This brings me to my general messages to the membership. The first is regarding what we can and cannot do as a Faculty Association when a member has a complaint. First, formal grievances are only possible where the administration has breached a term of the collective agreement. If it’s not in the collective agreement, or the collective agreement does not prohibit what the administration is doing, we cannot grieve it. We can still sometimes ask

them to address a problem that a member has on an informal basis even where there is nothing grievable about the complaint, but we do not have much leverage if they refuse.

Second, deans do have a lot of discretion and can treat members differently. For the most part, unless the inequalities are really egregious and deprive a member of his or her rights under the collective agreement, there is not a lot we can or necessarily want to do about it. What we can do is ensure that everyone gets the baseline set out in the agreement. If some members can do better, it is not in our interests as a group to take that away from them. Finally, if you have a complaint, you have to bring it to us in a timely manner. You generally have 20 working days to initiate the informal part of the grievance process. If you wait longer than that we will lose our capacity to engage the formal grievance process.

One last note: we need someone to take on the role of junior grievance officer. This person would step in to my role if there is a complaint involving members against one another, in the event that I have a grievance myself, or if I have a conflict (such as if I sit on a tenure committee and a grievance arises out of a decision that committee makes). I would certainly show this person the “ropes” – we get a lot of guidance from CAUT on how to handle nearly every matter, for instance, so the grievance officer never has to do anything without guidance and support. Ideally this person would be interested in eventually taking on my role. Please let me know if you have any interest and I would be happy to talk to you about it.**



OCUFA: Ontarians want their higher education system open to the world, says new poll



TORONTO – The majority of Ontarians want universities and colleges to engage with the world, recruit international students, and bring the best professors from around the world to our province. At the same time, many Ontarians are not aware of the economic benefits produced by international students and are hesitant to support programs designed to attract them.

According to a new study conducted for the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) and the Canadian Federation of Students–Ontario (CFS-O), 54 per cent of Ontarians believe it is important that Ontario higher education institutions reach out to the world and attract more international students to come and study in the province.

In an apparent contradiction, 58 per cent of Ontarians also feel that the primary focus should be on offering programs to students here at home.

“In the current economic situation, when Ontarians are struggling to emerge from a deep recession, most are looking at government policies through the lens of ‘how’s this going to help me, my friends, and family get back on their feet,’” said Dr. André Turcotte, professor at Carleton University’s School of Journalism and Communication and principal investigator on this study. “The McGuinty government has to do a better job at connecting their international educational policies with Ontario’s economic recovery. Namely, international students deliver real economic and social benefits to the province and will assist in turning the recession around.”

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**Dr. André Turcotte,
School of Journalism & Communication
Carleton University**

“The contributions of international students are significant and undeniable,” said Sandy Hudson, Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students–Ontario. “They contribute over \$2 billion per year to the Ontario economy through spending on living expenses, education, and leisure.

Moreover, the majority of international students stay in Canada after their studies and become integral parts of the economy. They also save Ontario taxpayers more than \$150,000, since they completed the primary and secondary school levels outside of Canada.”

Other findings from this study reveal: • 65 per cent of Ontarians believe it is important to attract professors from other countries to come and teach in the province.

• 42 per cent think university degrees from abroad should be recognized as equivalent to university degrees granted in Canada, while 31 per cent hold the

opposite views and 27 per cent are unsure.

• More than half of Ontarians (56 per cent) oppose the recent Ontario government initiative to create 75 new scholarships aimed at international students taking PhDs at Ontario universities.

“The presence of international students and scholars on our campuses enhances the educational experience delivered by our institutions by connecting us to other cultures, nations, and economies,” said Professor Mark Langer, President of OCUFA. “This poll demonstrates that some Ontarians are anxious about the quality and accessibility of our universities, and worry that more international students may make the situation worse. But this is not a zero-sum proposal. As a province, we can – and must – do a better job of ensuring that an affordable, quality education is guaranteed for every student, whether they are from Mississauga or Mumbai.”

The complete data on Ontarians’ perceptions of international higher education will be released at OCUFA’s *Race to Globalize Higher Education in Canada* conference on Friday, January 21, 2011 at the Sutton Place Hotel, Toronto.

These results are part of a larger study that includes questions on the broader post-secondary education sector in Ontario. Additional findings, focused on specific regions in Ontario, will be released over the next two months in Ottawa (January 27), Hamilton (February 9), Kitchener- Waterloo (March 2) and Toronto (March 15). The results of this study are based on a poll of 1500 Ontarians over the age of 18 conducted between January 5 and 14, 2011.

CAUT: Federal Budget: Misplaced Priorities

(Monday, June 6, 2011) - The organization representing more than 66,000 academic staff at 124 universities and colleges across Canada says today's reiteration of the March 2011 federal budget ignores the serious challenges facing post-secondary education and research.

"The Harper government is ignoring skyrocketing student debt levels and tuition fees and is failing to provide sufficient funding for scientific research," said James Turk, executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT).

Turk says that while commitments to fund Genome Canada,

climate science and the Indirect Costs Program for university research are a step in the right direction, not nearly enough new funding is provided for the three granting councils that fund most of Canada's vital basic research.

"The increase in funding for the granting councils will not fully cover inflation, let alone restore the cuts made in the 2009 budget," Turk says.

Turk says that the failure to make the needed investments in post-secondary education and research will affect the long-term social and economic health of the country.

"With this budget, the federal

government is showing its misplaced priorities," he added. "You build a better society by investing in education, not in prisons."

Turk reiterated CAUT's concerns that the government is continuing to make political choices to provide new research funding to centres like the Perimeter Institute and the Regional Research Institute in Thunder Bay, bypassing the granting councils altogether.

"The history of scientific progress demonstrates that research priorities are best set by the scientific community, not politicians or other special interests," he added. **

CAUT: Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff, November, 2011

CAUT is sponsoring its 3rd Forum for Aboriginal Academic Staff which will be held November 11-13, 2011 at the Holiday Inn & Suites Vancouver Downtown. Organized with the guidance of CAUT's Working Group on Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education, the Forum will explore challenges our universities and colleges pose for Aboriginal academic staff and students and will discuss solutions to those challenges.

Draft Agenda

Featured subjects will be:

- Recognizing and Naturalizing Indigenous Knowledge in the Academy;
- Promotion and tenure;
- Next Steps Forward.

Other key topics to be discussed include:

- The role of elders in colleges and

universities;

- Managing work/life balance;
- Negotiating racial diversity in the classroom;
- Working conditions for Aboriginal academics.

Forum organizing committee is:

- Jo-ann Archibald, Associate Dean for Indigenous Education, University of British Columbia;
- Marie Battiste, Academic Director, Aboriginal Education Research Centre, Professor Department of Educational Foundations, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan;
- Jean Becker, Senior Advisor: Aboriginal Initiatives, Wilfrid Laurier University;
- Corinne Jetté, former Director of Native Access to Engineering, Concordia University;
- Dan McDonald, Professor, Vancou-

ver Island University; President, VIU Faculty Association; President, Mid-Island Métis Nation;

- David Newhouse, Chair of Indigenous Studies and Co-Chair of the Trent Aboriginal Education Council, Trent University; President, Trent University Faculty Association;
- Charlotte Ross, Coordinator of Academic Programs for Aboriginal Students, University of Saskatchewan;
- Wanda Wuttunee, Head, Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba.

For more information about this event please visit <http://www.caut.ca/pages.asp?page=781>. **



Ontario voters want postsecondary education to be a high priority



Toronto – Almost three quarters of Ontarians want universities and colleges to be a high priority for the Government of Ontario, according to a new poll released today. At the same time, many Ontarians are concerned about the affordability of postsecondary education, particularly young Ontarians between the ages of 18-24.

The poll, commissioned by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) and the Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario (CFS-O), found that 74 per cent of Ontarians want postsecondary education to be a high priority for the provincial government.

Respondents are also more worried about the affordability of the postsecondary education system than unemployment, reducing taxes, or crime. Two thirds of Ontarians – and nearly 90 per cent of Ontarians between the ages of 18-24 – believe tuition fees are too high.

“These results send a clear message to Premier Dalton McGuinty and his government,” said Dr. André Turcotte, professor at Carleton University’s School of Journalism and Communication and chief investigator for this study.

“Ontario voters want the Government of Ontario to continue investing in the quality and affordability of our institutions to ensure an exceptional experience is affordable for every potential student.”

In Ontario, tuition fees have risen by an average of 28 per cent over the past five years. Ontario now has the highest tuition fees in Canada – an average of \$6,307 per year for an undergraduate student and \$6,917 for a graduate student.

“The poll shows that the people of Ontario are deeply worried about the cost of college and university education,” said Sandy Hudson, Chairperson of the CFS-O. “The government needs to hear their voices and take action to ensure the accessibility of our post-secondary education system. Ontario needs a tuition fee freeze, and it needs it now.”

Other important findings indicate that parents of university or college students are more critical of the McGuinty Government’s performance in improving the quality of the postsecondary education sector than the population at large. Parents with students in high school are the most skeptical of the government’s record, indicating anxiety over the future educational prospects of their children.

“The poll shows that the people of Ontario are deeply worried about the cost of college and university education... The government needs to hear their voices and take action to ensure the accessibility of our post-secondary education system. Ontario needs a tuition fee freeze, and it needs it now.”

Sandy Hudson,
Chairperson of the CFS-O.

“There is an apparent contradiction here: the McGuinty Government has invested heavily in universities and colleges, but parents aren’t aware of the results,” said Professor Mark Langer,

President of OCUFA. “I think parents and students of Ontario understand that five-year investment plans just aren’t enough to ensure an affordable, high-quality postsecondary system.

We need sustained, long-term investment to achieve best results for students, our economy, and our province as a whole.”

The results of this study are based on a poll of 1800 Ontarians over the age of 18 conducted between January 5 and 14, 2011. The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 2.9 percentage points within a confidence interval of 95%.

This is the sixth wave of poll findings released. Previous releases include data from the Ottawa Region, the 905 belt, Southwestern Ontario, and Northern Ontario. Results examining Ontarians’ attitudes towards the internationalization of post-secondary education were released in January. For more details and complete results please visit <http://www.ocufa.on.ca>.

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations is the voice of 17,000 university professors and academic librarians across Ontario. The Canadian Federation of Students – Ontario unites more than 300,000 college and university undergraduate and graduate students studying at post-secondary institutions across the province. To read the full report please go to <http://ocufa.on.ca/OCUFA/docs/OCUFACFS2011%20-%20Ontario%20Findings%20-%20FINAL.pdf>. **