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Co-editors

- Alison Curtis
- Stephen Phillips

Contact Us

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Our office is in Room A212.
Website: <https://www.lfaweb.ca>

Newsletter Name: *Faculty Affairs* Rises Again

In our last issue, we invited faculty to help us choose a new name for the LFA newsletter and by the March 7th deadline, we had received more than a dozen entries. After due consideration, the LFA Board reached a consensus on the name *Faculty Affairs*, the entry submitted by Kelly Sveinson. Older members will recall an earlier faculty publication by that name that appeared intermittently from the 1970s to the early 2000s. Here's hoping the current newsletter will carry on the best traditions of its eponymous predecessor. As you will have noticed, the new (or revived) name is emblazoned on the masthead of the current issue.

For his efforts, Kelly received congratulations from the Board, along with a \$50 gift card. The LFA also wishes to thank everyone who took the time to enter the contest.



Kelly Sveinson receives gift card from Amy Kwan

From the President

The LFA Board has developed a policy outlining the formal duties of our Chief Returning Officer. We are fortunate to have Deborah Blacklock as our new CRO, just in time for our annual Board elections.



It has been a very busy time for our stewards. One of the most challenging issues they deal with is member to member conflict. When our members find themselves in serious conflict with one another we are often contacted to assist in finding a resolution. We try to reach an informal resolution; otherwise, we rely on College policies related to respectful workplace.

The College, the LFA, and other constituent groups recently developed the Respectful Workplace Policy (D1007).

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From the President *(continued from page 1)*

We undertook this task in response to new Workers' Compensation requirements and to comply with our obligations under the Collective Agreement. The purpose of the policy is to create and maintain a respectful and non-discriminatory workplace. The policy is designed to assist faculty and other employees who experience discrimination or disrespectful behaviour in the workplace.



The policy sets out both informal and formal processes for conflict resolution. The informal process includes a "cooperative conversation" between or among the complainant(s) and respondent(s). If this step fails to resolve the problem then the informal resolution process proceeds to the next step: finding someone who can facilitate a resolution. Such persons may be Coordinators, Chairs, LFA Stewards, Human Resource consultants, or anyone else the complainant feels is appropriate. If the problem is not resolved at this stage then the complaint moves to the "Formal Resolution" stage.

The Formal Resolution stage requires the complainant to send a formal written complaint to the Associate Vice President, Human Resources. The AVP HR can try again to resolve the complaint by using processes already mentioned in the policy or she can have an internal or external investigator formally investigate the complaint. When LFA members are being investigated, or are complainants, they can have a support person with them during any interviews with the investigator. Often the LFA is asked to be present when our members are being interviewed.

The results of the investigation can lead to the College taking several remedial actions such as "communication skills training," "diversity education," or "disciplinary actions."

If issues of disrespect or discrimination in the workplace are identified early, Departments or individual faculty members have access to early remediation before the issues become unduly difficult. In the past the LFA has facilitated with the College a formal training process for Departments who may be having problems with faculty to faculty conflict. The earlier the College provides assistance to Departments the more likely it is such conflict can be resolved.

Lynn Carter

FPSE Spring Conference 2016: Faculty Associations in Neoliberal Post-Secondary Institutions

Report by Stephen Phillips

FPSE's annual day-long spring conference features workshops on various subjects of interest to college faculty associations. At this year's meeting, held in Vancouver on 20 February, LFA reps attended sessions on assessing grievances, unions' duty of fair representation, and member engagement.

A highlight of the day was the keynote address of **Dr. Larry Savage**, director of Labour Studies at Brock University. One of the few scholars in Canada specializing in the work of professional unions, Dr. Savage spoke on the challenges facing faculty associations in neoliberal post-secondary institutions. The "neoliberalization" of the academy is a familiar tale by now.

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FPSE Spring Conference 2016 (continued from page 2)

Its hallmarks include the growing reliance of institutions on private funding, thanks to continual cuts in government funding; competitive pressures to direct resources to revenue-generating programmes and activities; and the growing incidence of contract-based teaching—a development which results in a more precarious existence for those affected while producing growing inequality and tension within faculty ranks.

Savage contends that strong faculty associations are crucial to preserving academic freedom, collegial self-governance, and quality education. But the continued existence of such associations is threatened by broader developments in public sector labour relations and by the predominance of neoliberal norms and practices in post-secondary institutions. To counter these challenges, faculty associations need “to re-think their approaches to politics, representation, and advocacy.”

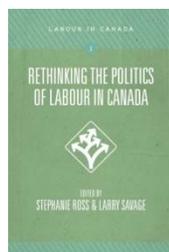
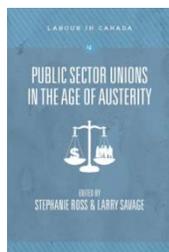
According to Savage, the traditional approach taken reflects a “guild mentality” based on high status and high rewards and a narrow focus on members’ immediate economic self-interest through collective bargaining. As he argues in a recent co-authored article, that approach relied in many cases on faculty associations “cultivating relationships with benevolent senior administrators, often drawn from the ranks of the faculty”; in such an environment, faculty unions saw little need to “develop any sort of culture of membership mobilization or political action.”¹

However the prevailing environment of austerity in higher education points to the need for a new, less insular approach built around three inter-related strategies. The first of these requires faculty unions to develop a deeper understanding of where power lies in the workplace. Most notably, it requires faculty associations “to tear down the self-imposed division between ‘union’ issues and ‘academic’ issues,” he said. Thus faculty unions need to play an active role in university senates, faculty councils, and the like to ensure that such bodies “don’t merely act as rubber stamps for decisions that harm members’ interests.” A second strategy requires faculty unions to build enduring coalitions with campus and community groups based on their common interests. Savage concedes this is a challenging undertaking since faculty, students, and front-line staff often find themselves at odds with one another. Of particular concern nowadays is the phenomenon of “reverse class resentment,” whereby one group of workers misdirects its anger toward better off cohorts.

Finally, Savage stressed the need for faculty unions to undertake political action with a view to reshaping the policy environment. Relevant political issues to address include fair taxation, income inequality, and the role of the public sector. It is no longer tenable, he said, for post-secondary unions to stay on the political sidelines. For example, faculty unions need to counteract the neoliberal narrative—that post-secondary education is a burden on “taxpayers”—by making the case that higher education serves the public good.

If faculty unions are to assume a broader and more active role, they must first overcome their inhibitions. In that regard, Savage noted that research on faculty associations in Canada reveals that the overwhelming majority of faculty recognize the importance of unions in the workplace—more so than does the general public. Yet union executives tend to pay undue attention to the views of the small minority of members who dislike unions!

Savage’s presentation was informative and thought provoking. In an era when higher education is undergoing profound changes, many of them inimical to faculty, students, and society at large, faculty association have much to ponder if they are to come up with effective responses.



Further reading:

Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage (eds.). *Public Sector Unions in the Age of Austerity*. Halifax: Fernwood, 2013.

Stephanie Ross and Larry Savage (eds.). *Rethinking the Politics of Labour in Canada*. Halifax: Fernwood, 2012.

¹ Jonah Butovsky, Larry Savage, and Michelle Webber, “Assessing Faculty Attitudes Toward Faculty Unions: A Survey of Four Primarily Undergraduate Universities.” *Journal of Labor and Society*. 18 (June 2015), pp. 247-265.

FPSE Standing Committee Reports



Professional and Scholarly Development Committee

At last month's PSDC meeting, discussion centred on the storage of PD-related materials — guidelines, forms, documents, processes, schedules — in a central repository to which each local has uploaded its PD materials via Dropbox. The repository accompanies a provincial PD chart we compiled over the past year. After weighing various alternatives for storing these materials, including password-protected options, we decided to continue using Dropbox as none of the material is highly confidential.

Most locals have a PD application process and a PD committee whose chair serves on the FPSE standing committee. On the whole their processes are more onerous than Langara's. Many locals have separate pots of PD funds, with different committees to manage and allocate funds to faculty. Kwantlen, for instance, has about 8 different faculties, each with its own funds and application procedures. Many locals rotate who can apply for PD funds so that a faculty member who received \$2000 last year would not be eligible to apply again for a period of years. Some locals reported running out of funds, while others were working hard to allocate all the funds to avoid claw-back. Okanagan College's sessional faculty recently gained access to PD funds, which is an issue at some locals.

The Committee next turns its attention to the subject of educational technology, with a focus on how faculty receive ed tech training for use in their work. I've asked Langara's Ed Tech office for some history on the department that can be shared with PDSC members before the fall meeting. Compared to Langara there seems to be far less support for faculty wanting to learn to use technology.

This was my final PDSC meeting as I recently submitted my resignation as Faculty Development Coordinator effective August 31st. I began as LEDC Coordinator in September, so am finishing out this year. - *Giselle Lemay, local 5430*

Non-Regular Faculty Committee

I attended the NRFC meeting held on January 29-30. FPSE's "Open the Doors" campaign, intended to raise public awareness of the chronic underfunding of post-secondary education in the province, will continue over the next year with a view to making it an issue in the provincial election. FPSE will shortly be sending out leaflets/pledge cards to be signed and sent back; once collected, they will be delivered to the government in Victoria. On receiving them I will host a table for this purpose, similar to what I did for Fair Employment Day.

The number of non-regular faculty employed in BC is rising. We are now approaching about 40-50% as administrations increasingly replace retirees with sessionals in order to reduce costs or redirect funds elsewhere (especially positions in senior administration).

Divide and conquer is still the order of the day. In some institutions, regular faculty are happy to bargain away non-regulars' rights in return for privileges, without thinking of the long-term implications. In many cases, non-regulars are afraid to speak up to regular faculty or administrators for fear of not receiving further work in the future.

Some unions have introduced, or are considering, electronic voting as a way to enable non-regulars to have more of a voice while still preserving their anonymity. This also helps to capture votes from the more peripatetic non-regulars. Should we be considering something like this at Langara for issues that are contentious within the LFA? *[Editor's note: a step in this direction is the planned debut of online voting in this year's LFA Board elections.]*

Morale continues to be low among non-regulars, including a feeling that the bargaining at the provincial common table last year let them down. In response, the committee is exploring ways to raise the profile of non-regular issues in the future in order to continue to fight for improvements in the way that they are treated. -*Niall Christie, local 5832*

Pension Advisory Committee

At its meeting of February 26-27, PAC received an important report from one of its sub-committees that reviewed the College Pension Plan's socially responsible investment practices. This report was undertaken to satisfy FPSE policy and is the first installment of what is a planned triennial review process. A focus of the report is the investment practices of the BC Investment Management Corporation (bcIMC), the crown corporation that invests the pension funds. The report finds that overall bcIMC is doing a relatively good job compared to its peer groups. The report also discussed an overview of best practices in responsible investing, divestment, impact investing and worst offenders.

As many will know, the College Pension Plan is jointly-trusted, which results in FPSE-appointed trustees on the pension board. Typically all of the FPSE trustees attend PAC meetings to provide updates on their work as trustees and to field questions from PAC members. The trustees reported that the plan earned a 7.3% annual return as of August 31, 2015 (net of fees) and has performed well compared to benchmarks over the past 5- and 10-year time horizons. The pension plan is currently being evaluated by actuaries with a report due in May. This report will reveal the overall financial health of the plan.

The trustees also reported that improvements are being planned for communication and the Plan website, gave an overview of the plan changes taking effect as of January 1, 2016 (see the "Report to Members" that you recently received), and gave an update on some planned changes at bcIMC. A nomination process for the retired trustee position on the board resulted in the selection of Paul Ramsay from College of New Caledonia. He will join the board in September 2016.

As the LFA representative to the Pension Advisory Committee, I am available to help with questions about the College Pension Plan. If I can't answer them, I will do my best to help find out who can.
- *Scott McLean, local 5355*

Education Policy Committee

The EPC addressed several issues at its meeting of 19 February. A discussion paper on education technology is undergoing revisions, based on input received from locals. In the meantime, given the wide variations across collective agreements in provisions concerning education technology, the EPC is calling on FPSE to urge locals to create or strengthen contract language in this area.

In other news, FPSE staff rep Norman Gludovatz gave an update on the "Open the Doors" campaign, the latest phase of which profiles individual students whose lives have been transformed by post-secondary education. Campaign materials can be customized by local institutions with assistance from FPSE.

Acting on an EPC recommendation made last year, Presidents' Council has set up a special committee to address the provincial government's retrograde decision to allow colleges to charge tuition fees for adult basic education (ABE) courses. The ABE committee is chaired by Leslie Molnar, President of College of the Rockies Faculty Association. The LFA's rep is Rebecca Friesen, assistant chair of Math and Stats. - *Stephen Phillips, local 5828*

Disability Management and Rehabilitation Committee

While Langara is not a member of the Manulife and Homewood benefit plans discussed at DMRC, it's still valuable to hear about wellness and disability issues raised at other locals. At least two locals now have a Joint Early Intervention Support Programs (JEIP) negotiated into their collective agreements. While the language of JEIP sounds innocuous, concerns have been raised that it serves as an employer attendance management program, to the detriment of members on sick leave. On the other hand another local, the OCFA, has negotiated a beneficial clause in their collective agreement that allows members with prolonged illnesses to receive sick leave days voluntarily donated by other members with unused credits. At the Feb meeting, DMRC Chair Ann Marie Davison was acclaimed to serve another term for 2016-17. - *Alison Curtis, local 5465*

Status of Women Committee

Last fall I organized and found facilitators for an Assertiveness workshop for women students at Langara. On October 26th SafeTeen's Anita Roberts held a two-hour seminar/workshop for 15 students; it combined activities, role-plays, and group discussion on assertiveness, consent, and sexual coercion. Participants shared experiences of sexual intimidation in public spaces, public transit being a perennial problem, with several students admitting to having altered their route to school or mode of transit specifically to avoid harassment. Many of the students expressed interest in seeing future workshops on similar issues. While willing to consider this, the SWC would probably partner with a different organization, as SafeTeen is better suited to a teenaged audience.

I met with the Manager of the Office of Student Affairs, Maggie Ross, and the Chair of Criminology, Cathy Huth, to put together an ambitious grant proposal to tackle the problem of sexual violence on campus in a comprehensive way. The proposal would have us develop a policy on affirmative consent for

the College, partner with local organizations to offer workshops on sexual conduct to an array of student groups, including men-only groups, and initiate a wider campus discussion about sexual consent through presentations and displays. We should know the status of the grant application in the next few months. Along with the Coordinator of Women's Studies at Langara, Nancy Pollak, I have been contacted by SafeTeen to collaborate on the development of an education and awareness programme for which they are requesting funding from an independent source. We are exploring this possibility.

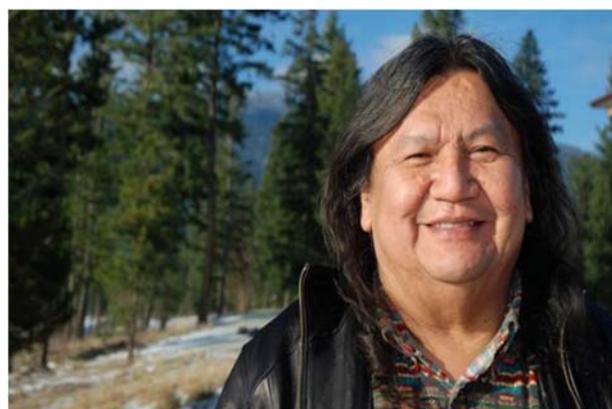


Langara has formed a Sexual Violence Working Group, composed of faculty, the Office of Student Affairs, administrators, and students. We have held two meetings to date to establish priorities, develop a plan of action, and begin work on the creation of a policy and protocols concerning sexual misconduct and violence. - *Lealle Ruhl, local 5392*

FPSE Speakers Tour: Talk by Arthur Manuel

Report by Stephen Phillips and Bradley Hughes

On March 2nd, the LFA's Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee played host to Arthur Manuel, one of Canada's foremost First Nations leaders. Having served for eight years as chief of the Neskonhth Indian Band near Kamloops and six years as chair of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, Manuel currently co-chairs the North American caucus of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Manuel's talk, on the daunting topic of decolonization and reconciliation, was part of a provincial speakers' tour sponsored by FPSE.



Addressing a capacity crowd of students and faculty in Room A-122b, Manuel gave a wide-ranging presentation that began with the need for youth to learn the history of indigenous peoples in Canada—a history that for too long “has been whitewashed.” In that regard he cited former Prime Minister Stephen Harper's assertion, before a G-20 meeting in 2009, that Canada has no history of colonialism. Such a view remains prevalent, Manuel said, because the First Nations of Canada are still not recognized as nations with a right to self-determination. It is for

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Talk by Arthur Manuel (continued from page 6)

that reason that many Canadians continue to “accept [the idea] that pipelines can be built on First Nations territory without our being able to say no.” Manuel said that Canada’s history of colonization involved the dispossession of indigenous people from their land, which placed them in a position of social and economic dependency. Colonialism today is also about oppressive measures by the state, such as court injunctions and police or para-military actions, to combat the efforts of First Nations peoples to achieve some measure of independence.

Manuel observed that reserve lands constitute a mere 0.2% of Canada’s land base, and that even those lands are deemed to belong to the crown. As a consequence, he said, it is as much as many chiefs can do “to manage their dependency and poverty,” while going cap in hand to Ottawa to make up the shortfall. To underscore the chasm that separates indigenous peoples from the rest of Canadian society, Manuel noted that while Canada was the top-ranked nation in 1996 on the UN Human Development Index, First Nations peoples on reserves ranked 78th.

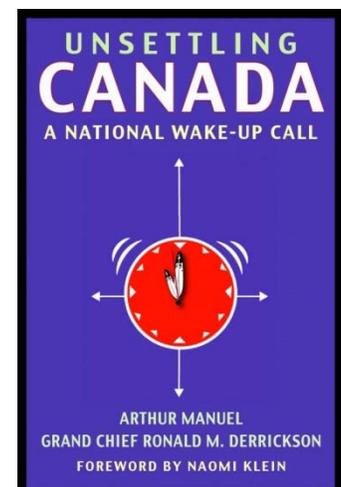
A key theme of Manuel’s address was his contention that the plight of indigenous peoples in Canada is a human rights issue. “When one nation dispossesses another and puts it in a systemic state of perpetual impoverishment, that creates a human rights crisis,” he said.

On the thorny question of land claims, Manuel cited a series of court cases that have affirmed the existence of aboriginal rights, including title to land. However, he noted that there has been only a single case to date, the Supreme Court of Canada’s 2014 ruling in *Tsilhqot’in*, that has resulted in the return of unceded land to indigenous people. Manuel reserved his harshest words for the treaty process, a subject on which opinion among First Nations leaders is divided. Referring to the historic Nisga’a Treaty of 1999, the first modern treaty in BC, Manuel called it the “most rotten deal” since the James Bay agreements of the 1970s because it extinguished the Nisga’a’s title to land. Speaking of the traditional territory of his own nation, the Secwepemc [Shuswap], Manuel said “we refuse to sit down with government if they want to extinguish our rights.” He added that many First Nations engaged in treaty negotiations cover their costs through government loans—currently exceeding \$500 million—that must be repaid as part of the treaty settlement. Such loans enable governments to exert pressure on First Nations negotiators, he said. For these reasons, Manuel does not regard the treaty process as offering a solution to the land question.

Instead, Manuel favours action through the United Nations, which he maintains has yielded some notable gains for Canada’s First Nations. In 1983, Sandra Lovelace was successful in challenging discriminatory provisions of the Indian Act on the grounds they violated the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. That ruling led Parliament to repeal the offending provisions of the Act in 1985.

More recently, the UN Human Rights Committee called on Canada to end its practice of extinguishing inherent aboriginal rights, which it found to be incompatible with First Nations’ right to self-determination. Looking ahead, Manuel suggested that a similar case could be made against provisions of the recently enacted Bill C-51. By expanding the scope of national security to include activities that threaten “the economic or financial stability of Canada,” critics say the new law may be used to disrupt lawful protests by First Nations against disputed energy projects. As Manuel put it, “We have a different relationship with the land. We don’t seek to have it liquefied into cash.”

Many of the points raised in Manuel’s talk are explored in his new book, co-authored by Grand Chief Ronald M. Derrickson, entitled *Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2015. Foreword by Naomi Klein).



LFA Elections 2016-17

Annual elections to choose 9 members of the LFA Board of Directors take place every spring. Faculty wishing to put their names in nomination should take note of the relevant dates below. Elections will be held if the number of nominees exceeds the number of positions to be filled.



For more information, please contact the **Deborah Blacklock**, LFA Chief Returning Officer, at dblacklock@langara.bc.ca.

	President	Vice President	Board (7)
Nominations	March 1-7	March 21-29	April 11-15
Ballots out	March 14	April 4	April 22
Ballots in and Count	March 18	April 8	April 28

March 14 update! Congratulations to Lynn Carter, who was nominated and acclaimed President for 2016-17.

LFA AGM and Retiree Social Thursday, May 12, 2016

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend!

Annual General Meeting

1:00 pm in A130

Retiree Social Reception

Starts at 2:30 pm in the Employee Lounge
Presentations start at 3:00 pm

