



### Inside this Issue:

From the President ..... 1

OTD Campaign at Langara ..... 2

FPSE Spring Conference ..... 3

FPSE Committee Reports ..... 3

LFA Elections ..... 5

Special LFA Scholarships ..... 5

AGM & Retiree Social ..... 5

### LFA Board

- Lynn Carter, President
- Scott McLean, Vice President
- Jessie Smith, Treasurer
- Noel Currie, Secretary
- Darrell Kean, Chief Steward
- Alison Curtis, Steward
- Janet Douglas, Steward
- Brian Koehler, Member at Large
- Stephen Phillips, Member at Large

### Co-editors

- Alison Curtis
- Stephen Phillips

### Contact Us

For more information about the **Langara Faculty Association:**

- Contact Amy Kwan, Executive Assistant, 604-323-5343
- Drop by our office in Room A212
- Visit the website: <https://www.lfaweb.ca>



### From the President

I hope you have all had an opportunity to see the LFA ads promoting the restoration of government funding for post-secondary institutions in BC. The ads are on buses and in SkyTrain stations throughout Vancouver. The run-up to an election is a great opportunity to call attention to the significant reduction in government funding that has occurred over the past 16 years. I am hopeful that whichever party wins the election and forms government, they will be responsive to the need to restore support to BC's public colleges and teaching universities.



When the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE) made grants of \$50,000 available to FPSE member faculty unions, a group of faculty at Langara submitted a proposal to develop a local ad campaign as a part of FPSE's Open the Doors (OTD) initiative. Our LFA OTD team is comprised of Jessie Smith, Stephen Phillips, Niall Christie and Janet Douglas. They enlisted the support of faculty and students to develop a creative, engaging and effective campaign that has drawn attention to the over 20% reduction in government funding to Langara College over the past 16 years, and to the increasing burden of stress and economic hardship this has imposed on our students. For a full account of the campaign to date, see the OTD team's report on page 2.

Now on a completely different note, some of you may be aware that I am retiring this summer, effective July 1st. I am so pleased that Scott McLean, current LFA Vice President, will be your new President. I am sure that the many members who have served on the LFA Board these past several years will continue to support the LFA and will support Scott and the members of our new Board in their work this coming year.

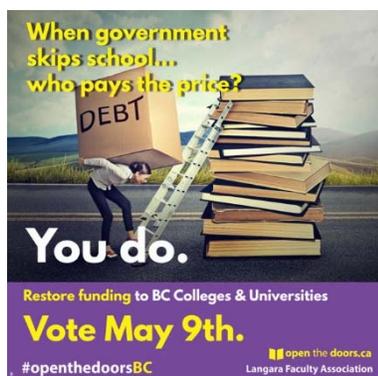
We have a remarkable group of stewards and Board members with whom I have been proud to work over these past years. Given the talent that abounds among our faculty, I am confident the next LFA Board will continue to work skillfully and diligently on behalf of our members.

It has been my privilege to have served as your President. Thank you.

*Lynn Carter*

## Open the Doors Campaign at Langara College

By now you will have seen LFA-sponsored billboards at Skytrain stations and on the sides of buses. The aim of the ad campaign is to draw public attention to Victoria's under-funding of public colleges and universities in the run-up to the May 9 BC provincial election.



Funded by a \$50,000 grant to the LFA from the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE), the campaign is the culmination of efforts begun late last year. In the first phase, the LFA invited faculty to submit ideas for ads that would underscore the effects of declining government grants to post-secondary institutions in BC - a decline that has seen public funding of Langara College drop from 53% of our operating budget in 2001 to a mere 33% today.

After receiving a sizeable number of entries in early January, we created mock-ups of the top five designs and put them on display in the foyer of A Building. On January 9th, about two hundred students, faculty, and staff voted for their favourite design. The three most popular ads were those of **Nancy Pollak** and **Marcela Noriega**. Their winning ad concepts were then brought to life by Samantha Monckton, a professional graphic designer. We're sure you'll agree that the results are simply outstanding.

The LFA's ad campaign was launched with a splash on February 20th with the help of hundreds of students and with the savvy use of social media. Throughout the day, students stopped by our display in A Building to write down their thoughts on the need to restore government funding to colleges and universities. Many of them posed for pictures with their handwritten notices; those messages then were variously tweeted to FPSE and/or the Twitter accounts of the three main party leaders. Messages were also posted to the LFA's Facebook page and shared by other faculty associations in the province. Meanwhile, the LFA's press release was picked up by *Global News* and other media, travelling as far afield as the *Ottawa Citizen*. Since then, the LFA has garnered more media attention, including a feature article by Douglas Todd in the *Vancouver Sun* and *Province* and an interview with LFA President Lynn Carter on CBC Radio.



In responding to the LFA's point about decreased government funding, Advanced Education Minister **Andrew Wilkinson** cited a nominal increase of 32% in government funding to Langara since 2001. But as the LFA pointed out in an open letter to the Minister, that figure fails to take account of the effect of inflation and the growth of student enrollments over the past the past 15 years. In real terms, there has been a 20% drop in per-student funding. Over that period, Langara's reliance on tuition fees has more than doubled, soaring from 25% to 56% of total revenues.

The LFA's transit ad campaign will continue until April 9th, just before the writ is issued for the provincial election campaign. The LFA's focus will then shift to encouraging students to cast their ballots in the election. In the meantime, we encourage faculty to visit our website or Facebook page to see all the latest news and to share content with your online communities. – *Niall Christie, Janet Douglas, Stephen Phillips, and Jessie Smith*

## FPSE Spring Conference, 18 February 2017

FPSE's annual spring conference is an occasion for representatives of affiliated colleges from across the province to share news and information from their respective locals, to develop policy proposals in standing committee meetings, and to learn about issues of common concern at workshops facilitated by FPSE staff and other subject-matter experts. Workshop topics this year included incorporating aboriginal content into the classroom, conducting advocacy on behalf of union members, and addressing the problem of precarious academic work and secondary scales.



A highlight of the conference was the keynote address of **Igluka Ivanova**, senior economist and researcher with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. In a wide-ranging and informative assessment of the BC government's management of the province's economy, Ivanova described recent economic growth as "uneven and unsustainable", much of it based on spiraling real estate values. Since the real estate boom has enriched government coffers, thanks to proceeds of the property transfer tax, Ivanova suggested this likely explains why the Liberal government has been so slow to take action to address the "untenable shortage of affordable housing." Meanwhile, job growth in BC has been confined to the Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island, aided in large part by the low dollar; yet much of the growth in employment has been in unstable, part-time positions, not "family-supporting jobs."

More generally, Ivanova questioned the relevance of aggregate economic growth figures to the well-being of citizens. She illustrated this point by reference to the under-funding of public services—from post-secondary education to seniors' care—the lack of affordable housing, persistently high rates of poverty in BC, and a long-term shift of provincial government revenues from corporations to households and from progressive income taxes to regressive taxes such as MSP and other user fees. All in all, Ivanova gave members much to ponder as they prepare to go to the polls on May 9th.

## FPSE Standing Committee Reports

*The LFA is a member of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE). LFA reps serve on FPSE standing committees that discuss matters of common concern and make policy recommendations to FPSE's Presidents' Council. Here are this spring's meeting reports.*



### Education Policy Committee

At its Feb 17 meeting, EPC members reviewed a draft survey on the scheduling software used by many local institutions, though not Langara, to schedule course offerings. Once finalized and approved, the survey will be circulated to locals.

There was much discussion of the impact of the growing number of international students (IS) in the college system. While IS enrolments have mainly been confined to larger institutions, reps from smaller locals, such as College of New Caledonia, are now experiencing a sizeable jump as college administrators seek to meet Victoria's ambitious recruitment targets. Delegates expressed concern that many international students lack the language and scholastic skills to succeed in UT courses. They also decried the inadequacy of support services for

faculty and international students alike. Accordingly, EPC members unanimously passed a resolution recommending that FPSE urge college administrations to ensure that international students either have or acquire sufficient language, literacy, and scholastic skills to meet the requirements of UT courses before being admitted to such courses. If approved by Presidents' Council, the resolution will be submitted to FPSE's AGM in May. – *Stephen Phillips, local 5828*

### Professional and Scholarly Development

The PSDC met briefly on the evening of Friday, Feb 17. Results of the Ed Tech survey were presented and discussed. The Applied Research portion of the survey was discussed at length; that part of the survey may be revised and re-run in the future. - *Carolyn Wing, local 5766*

### **Human Rights and International Solidarity**

At the Feb 17 meeting, HRISC members discussed and approved three resolutions. The first resolution requests that Presidents' Council (PC) support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, especially through the development and implementation of educational content on Indigenous themes. The second resolution seeks authorization from PC to form a subcommittee to devise a campaign to advocate on behalf of post-secondary faculty in other countries who are subject to government pressure, intimidation, violence, or imprisonment for exercising their right to academic freedom, including their right to freedom of speech and assembly. The third resolution asks PC to issue two public statements, the first affirming FPSE's support for the Aboriginal Rights of the Treaty 8 First Nations, particularly the Indigenous people of the Peace River watershed, and the second calling for an independent review of the Site C dam by the BC Utilities Commission. – *Valerie Lloyd (substituting for Bradley Hughes), local 5870*

### **Pension Advisory Committee**

At PAC, the FPSE-appointed pension Trustees reported out that the College Pension Plan earned an annual return of 6.5% ending on August 31, 2016, which is above the plan's long-term rate of return assumption of 6.25%. The plan has outperformed benchmark comparisons for the last 5-year, 10-year and 25-year periods, which is good news for the financial health of the plan. Another good news item was that the most recent actuarial evaluation looking at a 3-year period ending August 2015 determined that the plan funding ratio was at 103.6%; this means that the projected money available is 103.6% of the projected costs of paying out existing pensions. The Trustees also brought attention to a change in the service provider of the post-retirement group benefits (now Green Shield Canada), board activities related to monitoring the governance and oversight of the pension plan investments and management, an increase to the cap for the cost of living adjustment (now at 2.07%), changes to the pension plan website and the appointment of a new Executive Director of the College, Public Service and Teachers' Pension Plans. – *Scott McLean, local 5355*

### **Non-Regular Faculty Committee**

I attended the Jan 27 NRFC meeting, followed by the Jan 28 FPSE conference on secondary salary scales. The number of non-regular faculty at BC institutions continues to grow. At several institutions, NRF now make up more than 50% of total faculty; meanwhile, some administrations are doing their best to avoid regularizing faculty. Morale continues to be low. NRFC members expressed some misgivings about the quality of the Open the Doors campaign, including the fact that post-secondary education pledge cards collected for the campaign had not yet been delivered to Victoria. [*Editor's note: On March 15, FPSE President George Davison delivered 18,000 pledge cards to the Legislature, where they were tabled in the Assembly by Rob Fleming, NDP critic for advanced education.*]

The conference on secondary scales was a success, although it must be said that members of the NRF committee were chagrined that organizers failed to solicit input from the committee. Locals presented reports on the issues facing NRF at their institutions. In a wide-ranging presentation, FPSE staff rep Weldon Cowan described the causes of the increasing reliance of institutions on NRF and identified challenges to be met in order to bring about change. Betty Baxter, a senior trainer, led a brainstorming session on strategies to be pursued in upcoming discussions of secondary scales with the Public Sector Employers' Association (PSEA). – *Niall Christie, local 5832*

### **Status of Women Committee**

At the Feb 17 SWC meeting, locals reported on the status of policies and procedures regarding sexual violence and harassment. While the provincial government required universities and colleges to develop such policies and procedures, there is much variety in the way institutions have gone about this task. Judging from the reports of other locals, Langara has had one of the most inclusive and consultative processes, involving numerous interested parties, most notably students, faculty, and staff. Many institutions reported having received an already finalized set of policies and procedures from administration, with no discernible input from students or faculty. As policies and procedures roll out at member institutions, the SWC plans to monitor their implementation and to discuss progress reports from locals at future meetings. – *Lealle Ruhl, local 5392*

## LFA Elections 2017-18



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 **Deborah Blacklock**, LFA Chief Returning Officer, at [dblacklock@langara.ca](mailto:dblacklock@langara.ca).

	<b>President</b>	<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Board (7)</b>
Nominations	March 1-7	March 20-24	April 6-12
Ballots out	March 13	March 30	April 20
Ballots in and Count	March 17	April 5	April 26

**March 9 update!** Congratulations to Scott McLean, who was nominated and acclaimed President for 2017-18.

## Special LFA Scholarships Awarded to 4 Langara Students

As part of the \$50,000 grant we received from FPSE to run our transit ad campaign, the LFA allotted \$2,000 to student scholarships. These special one-time scholarships were created in consultation with the LFA faculty members who submitted the best design ideas for the ad campaign.

Based on the votes cast by students and faculty in early January, the winning designs were those of **Marcela Noriega**, Chair of Design Formation, and **Nancy Pollak**, Coordinator of Women’s Studies. At their request, the scholarships were created for eligible students in Women’s Studies and Latin American Studies. A total of four LFA scholarships of \$500 each were awarded this spring to two students in each program.



## LFA AGM and Retiree Social Thursday, May 11, 2017

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend!

### Annual General Meeting

1:00 pm (room TBA)

### Retiree Social Reception

Starts at 2:20 pm in the Employee Lounge

Presentations start at 2:45 pm



Layout by the volunteer labour of members of the LFA.

Printing by Printshop Services, members of CUPE Local 15.

