

FACULTY AFFAIRS



Langara Faculty Association Newsletter

From the board

Since the last newsletter, the Board has been working on a variety of activities. The Board was active in working with the College and Faculty on the selection process for the five incoming Division Chair positions. This process was initiated later than the Collective Agreement stipulates, and took considerable effort on behalf of all involved to come to a good process. Going forward, the LFA will continue to work to remind the College to initiate the process within Collective Agreement timelines.

At our weekly meetings, the Board has the opportunity to hear from the Stewards about work done on behalf of members. Over the last semester, many faculty have contacted the LFA with questions and concerns and have received advice or support. Some of the issues are relatively straightforward, while others are complex. Examples over the past semester involve vacation, workload, and contract status, and College policies such as human rights, respectful workplace and concerns about instruction. If you have a question about anything to do with your work, please contact the LFA for support.

In terms of College policies and committees, the Board has an interest in providing faculty input and direction. The LFA provides this input by reviewing policies and, where possible, having an LFA representative on committees. Over the spring semester, the Board reviewed and provided feedback on the draft Sponsorship and Academic Integrity policies. Work on the draft Academic Integrity policy is ongoing and the LFA rep is Scott McLean. The LFA is also represented on the Internationalization Committee by Board member Jessie Smith. Additionally, the Board periodically invites College representatives to Board meetings to discuss issues; recent attendees include the VP Academic, the Director of Indigenous Education and Services, and a representative from IT. (continued on page 2)

INSIDE

01

From the Board

03

Collegial Management

04

Interview with Alan Brain

05

FPSE Committee Reports
FPSE Book Review

07

Provincial Budget Update
Justice for Janitors

08

Pacific Blue Cross Update
AGM & Retiree Social

FROM THE BOARD (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

Board members have been active on hiring committees for administrators. It is College practice to include an LFA rep on hiring committees, which is an opportunity for faculty to provide valuable input into the hiring of these positions. Recent examples are the ERP Director, the new Academic Dean positions, and several positions within Financial Services, People Services, the Registrar's Office, and IT.

The Board has identified improving member engagement as an area of focus. Over the winter we developed and administered a member engagement survey, which has provided insights and direction on what is working and ways to improve engagement. In early April we held a session with Department Chairs to discuss the full array of issues around faculty working conditions and student success. Throughout the term, many faculty have interacted directly with Board members or Stewards, both individually and in groups. The Board is working on ways to make sure that all faculty are aware of their union, and on ways to bring our collective voices and contributions forward.



In response to ongoing concerns about the working conditions of cleaning staff at Langara, the Board wrote a letter to the College and assembled an information sheet for its members. We continue to liaise with the BC Federation of Labour and allies on best ways to support our janitorial colleagues, and will be proposing employer living wage policies at both the LFA and FPSE AGMs this spring.

And finally, as many will be aware, the current Collective Agreement expires in March 2019. The Board has put bargaining as a standing item on its meeting agendas. To date discussion has been limited, but the summer and fall will see an increase in the amount of time and resources dedicated to

discussing bargaining issues and strategy. The Board keeps updated on public sector bargaining developments through FPSE and various affiliations with organized labour.



LFA BOARD

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Contact Us

For more information about the LFA, contact
 Amy Kwan, Executive Assistant
 604-323-5343

Our office is in Room A212

Website: www.langarafaculty.ca

Ask your union

In this new column, LFA stewards will answer FAQs about the Collective Agreement and contract maintenance. Feel free to send us any questions you would like to see answered here.

WHAT IS COLLEGIAL MANAGEMENT? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

According to Federation of Post-Secondary Educators' Collegial Authority Manual:

Collegial Management, or Collegial Authority, is the influence and involvement faculty members have in the decisions and administration of their institution.... including hiring and selection of new faculty and administrators; successful completion of probation for new faculty; student appeals and entrance; curriculum development; course offerings; individual and department work assignments; peer reviews; election of coordinators and chairs; and allocation of professional development resources.

The principles of collegial authority flow directly from Socrates and the academy of ancient Greece. Collegial authority is based on a set of principles designed to protect academic freedom and promote the highest scholarly and educational standards.

As academics, as faculty members, you therefore have a duty and a right to meaningful involvement and participation in institutional and academic decision making. These decisions can and do have a significant impact upon our institutions, our students, and the working conditions and careers of our colleagues.

In this respect, Langara differs from many other institutions. Faculty at Langara are not just people who provide excellence in the classroom. We also provide leadership and initiative in departmental committees and meetings, in college-wide strategic planning, and as LFA reps on committees such as Selection/Evaluation and Ed Leave. LFA participation on these committees helped to determine the shape of things now, and such committees will help to determine the shape of our workplace in the future. The success of collegial management depends on all of us – whether Temporary or Regular or Continuing – and on our active involvement in the Langara community.

How can you contribute? Get involved and get informed!

Talk to your department chair or your division chair. Step up when there is a call to help with a grade appeal or to sit on a selection committee. Help out at job fairs and information nights. Taking an active role in your department activities will keep you involved and informed about college matters, and will give you an opportunity to see how faculty contribute and lead.

No matter how long you've been at the College, your department needs your input and insight. Working within a collegial system means more than meeting your classes and holding office hours. We have the right and the ability to provide input and leadership in many aspects of college life. Participate in the collegial model, and we can continue to make Langara the place where we want to work.

Interview with Alan Brain

BY STEPHEN PHILLIPS



How long have you taught at Langara?

I started teaching at Langara in 1989, so more than 28 years.

Can you tell us something about your background?

I was born in England but as my father was in the RAF, we moved about a great deal, including a stint in Singapore in the late 1950s. While studying sociology at the University of Essex, I became interested in the work of Dorothy Smith at UBC. In 1969 I enrolled at UBC, became her T/A, and went on to complete my MA and Ph.D. there. Like many instructors, I had a peripatetic life, teaching at SFU, UBC, Camosun, Malaspina, Douglas, and Capilano. Finally I was offered a job at Langara and I never looked back.

What are some of the most notable changes you've seen at Langara during your teaching career?

Physically the campus has changed immensely [beginning] with the opening of B-Building in the mid-1990s, on what was formerly the site of a soccer pitch. Langara has also changed in the sense that it is more of a commuter campus today than it once was. There used to be a better social life among faculty.

What developments today at Langara give you cause for concern?

The biggest challenge facing instructors in recent years has been the influx of international students. I think it's unfortunate the College has had to rely so heavily on tuition fees to make up for declining government funding. While recruiting foreign students has been lucrative for the College - perhaps too easy an option - there've been unintended consequences.

Why did you come to play a leading role in the annual United Way fund-raising campaign at Langara?

I was inspired by the example of philosophy instructor Don Burbidge, an active supporter of the UW because it addressed the needs of vulnerable members of the community. I'm impressed by the evidence-based research the UW does to identify areas of most acute social need.

How do you respond to those who have misgivings about agencies like the UW inasmuch as they fill the gaps left by government under-funding of vital social services?

In an ideal world, governments would provide comprehensive social services to meet human needs that will never be met by commercial enterprises. But we don't live in an ideal world, so it's a bit of a cop-out to use government shortcomings as reason not to lend a hand. I'd like to see greater faculty involvement in the UW and we urgently need new volunteers on campus. I'd love to see more explicit LFA support in our UW campaigns.

As you look back on your career at Langara, what for you has been the most rewarding or fulfilling part of it?

First, my work with the UW has been gratifying because I know we've made a difference in people's lives. Secondly, I'm proud of having organized the humanities and social sciences seminars for some 15 years. Held three or four times a year, they helped to build collegiality and enrich the intellectual life of the College.

Is there any advice you would offer new faculty embarking on a teaching career at Langara?

Instructors should always remember how lucky we are to have jobs that offer so many rewards, not least of which is the considerable freedom we have over what and how we teach. We enjoy excellent benefits, thanks to the efforts of our hard-working union reps past and present. We must never take those benefits for granted nor forget how we got them in the first place.

Do you have definite plans in mind for your retirement?

I plan to continue with the extra-curricular activities I've always made time for: travel, conferences, film festivals, and volunteer work for the United Way.

FPSE Committee Reports

The LFA is local 14 of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC, a federation of unions representing more than 10,000 faculty and staff in colleges and teaching universities across BC. LFA reps serve on FPSE standing committees that make policy recommendations to FPSE's Presidents' Council. Here are this spring's meeting reports.



Disability Management and Rehabilitation Committee - Tanya Lewis tlewis@langara.ca

The DMRC meeting of January 12-13 was extremely informative, not least because it confirmed the fact that Langara's experience with Sun Life Insurance compares favourably to that of locals that deal with Manulife (e.g., the latter's reluctance to grant disability benefits for mental health issues). Many locals report that they routinely offer support to members dealing with short- and long-term disability leave (STD/LTD), accommodations, and return-to-work issues. Langara's HR has recently agreed to let new applicants for STD know that, as their LFA rep, I am here to support them. VIU has a "good Samaritan" fund which members have access to if they are caught in financial limbo while waiting for STD approval. If the member's application is approved, they pay back the loan in full; if not, they pay it back through payroll deductions. Might this be a good idea for Langara?

Education Policy Committee - Stephen Phillips sphillips@langara.ca

Members of EPC and the Non-Regular Faculty Committee held a joint meeting on January 26 to discuss the effects and implications of internationalization on classroom teaching and faculty working conditions. The issues raised will inform a questionnaire on international education that the EPC is developing. If approved by Presidents' Council, the survey will be made available to locals to identify their institutions' policies, and their members' experiences, with regard to internationalization.

Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee - Bradley Hughes bhughes@langara.ca

The HRISC helped to promote the launch of the FPSE decolonization manual, which took place on 15 March at Emily Carr University. We also decided to move the speaker's tour from spring to fall, in order to have more time to plan and promote it. This fall's speaker's tour will feature authors who contributed to the decolonization manual.

Non-Regular Faculty Committee - Niall Christie nchristie@langara.ca

I represent Langara on both the NRFC and Private Sector Policy (PSPC) committees of FPSE. The NRFC continues to focus on the elimination of secondary scales, working from the principle of "equal rights, equal pay." Langara is unusual in that part-time and non-regular faculty are paid on a pro rata basis. Non-regular faculty at most other institutions are not so lucky, having minimal pay, few to no benefits, and no job security.

The PSPC urges the government to regulate agents who recruit international students, in order to eliminate the exploitation of students and institutions. Agents receive a portion of the fees that international students pay (between 15% and 40%; at Langara it is 15%), making it a potentially lucrative business. Abuse by unscrupulous agents is frequent but currently not prosecuted.

FPSE REPORTS (CONT'D FROM PAGE 5)**Pension Advisory Committee - Bryan Breguet bbreguet@langara.ca**

Doug Birtwistle, a trustee of the College Pension Plan, gave a presentation about the Plan's funding policy. He showed that the plan, along with the Inflation Adjustment Account (for cost of living adjustments), are fully funded thanks to the strong markets of the last few years. Despite a decrease in the ratio of active to retired members, the plan is still actuarially healthy. In other news, the redesigned website of the BC Pension Plan Corporation is more efficient and easier to use. Members close to retirement can now apply for retirement online in a step-by-step, guided process.

Professional and Scholarly Development Committee - Christopher Nowlin cnowlin@langara.ca

The PSDC is working on a survey about scholarly activity and applied research across colleges and departments. The Committee is also considering how the aims of FPSE's Decolonization, Indigenization, and Reconciliation Subcommittee might have relevance to the work of the PSDC. Regarding internationalization policies, locals voiced concern about their problematic impact on students and instructors alike. As a result, several resolutions were passed on this subject.

Status of Women Committee - Melissa Roberts mroberts@langara.ca

I took on the role of LFA rep to the SWC last fall. At November's meeting, the SWC called on Presidents' Council to encourage locals to include the SWC chair/rep. on their local executive if this is not now the case. Because women continue to earn less than men for the same work, and because women are overrepresented in precarious work, where salaries tend to be lower, the SWC recommends that local union dues be based on a percentage of the wage scale, ideally on a progressive scale, rather than a flat rate.

Following the example of other locals, I would like to organize an LFA Status of Women Committee. The committee would support events for faculty as well as organizing special events for International Women's Day in March and the December 6th Day of Remembrance. If this is something that interests you, please contact me.

FPSE BOOK REVIEW**WHOSE LAND IS IT ANYWAY? A MANUAL FOR DECOLONIZATION / ARTHUR MANUEL**

March 2018 saw the publication by FPSE of an educators' handbook with Indigenous perspectives on the history of colonialism, current Indigenous activism and resistance, and a path toward reconciliation. It was produced following a speaking tour by Arthur Manuel in 2016 and was begun less than a year before Manuel's untimely death in January 2017.

Arthur Manuel, described as the Nelson Mandela of Canada, contributed two essays to the book. Other noted Indigenous contributors include Glen Coulthard, Russell Diabo, Beverly Jacobs, Melina Laboucan-Massimo, Jeffrey McNeil-Seymour, Pamela Palmater, Nicole Schabus, Senator Murray Sinclair, and Sharon Venne.

"This volume will help both Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators and their students understand the history of colonization in Canada. The contributors provide a valuable perspective on what decolonization and reconciliation can mean for our country," writes Tom Friedman, President of Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association. *Whose Land Is It Anyway? A Manual for Decolonization* is freely available as an e-book at: http://www.fpse.ca/decolonization_manual_whose_land_is_it_anyway



News

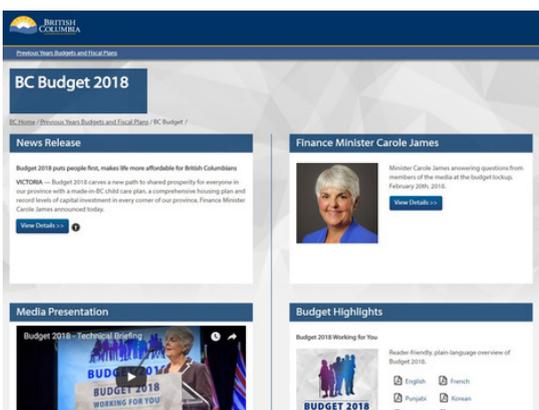
2018 PROVINCIAL BUDGET AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Since taking office late last summer, BC's NDP government has taken a number of steps to address issues in the post-secondary system. To date it has: reduced interest on BC student loans, introduced a \$1000 grant for graduating students, waived tuition fees for former foster children, and abolished domestic student tuition fees for Adult Basic Education and English Language Learning. According to Michael Koke, Langara Director of Financial Services, the College is being compensated to cover eliminated fees.

Unfortunately, February's provincial budget failed to alter government under-funding of public post-secondary institutions. At Langara, the 2018-2019 College budget projects that Victoria's \$47.2 million contribution will account for only 30% of the operating budget, while tuition fees will account for 62%. As Koke observed, the provincial budget made "no significant increase to [Langara's] operating budget."

For this reason, the LFA, through FPSE, will continue to press the provincial government to review the funding formula for post-secondary education.

For the latest BC budget news & details see <http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/default.htm>



LANGARA JANITORS' UNIONIZATION DRIVE

In December and January, the LFA posted information on our website about a Justice for Janitors organizing drive by SEIU Local 2 to win union representation for cleaning staff at Langara. For those details, see <https://www.lfaweb.ca/node/17525>. During the campaign, SEIU alleged instances of intimidation by the employer and filed 50 complaints of unfair labour practices with the BC Labour Relations Board (LRB). The results of the SEIU certification vote have not been released, pending an LRB review of outstanding complaints.

The unionization drive at Langara is part of a wider effort to improve the wages and benefits of poorly-paid workers at five BC campuses: Langara, BCIT, VCC, Capilano, and UBC-Okanagan. The campaign brought together a coalition of cleaners, students and faculty to demand an end to poverty wages on campus. At a one-day conference held last March at VCC, participants called on administrators to adopt a socially responsible tendering process, to ensure a Living Wage for all workers on campus, and to respect the right of workers to freely choose a trade union. On April 4th, delegations delivered petitions on all five campuses, including Langara, calling on administration to commit to these goals.

See more information and updates on the campaign at Best Workers Deserve Better <http://www.bestworkersdeservebetter.com>.



News cont'd

PACIFIC BLUE CROSS UPDATE

Last year, more than 600 employees of Pacific Blue Cross (PBC) were locked out as their employer sought concessions on wages and benefits. The employees, members of CUPE Local 1816, spent two months on the picket line before finally reaching a settlement. Last September, members voted to ratify a 6-year contract that provides for annual wage increases and protects retirement benefits.

To avoid a repetition of this bitter experience, CUPE nominated a slate of progressive candidates to run for positions on the PBC Board of Directors at the fall AGM. In a remarkable display of organizational muscle that enlisted the support of the BC Federation of Labour and many unions, including the LFA, CUPE bussed in some 800 plan members to the PCB's AGM at the Westin Bayshore Hotel in Vancouver.

As a result of these efforts, all 7 members of the union slate were elected to office. Beth Miller, president of CUPE 1816, said "We look forward to working with the new board to seek a new leadership model that will return PBC to its progressive roots."

Events

LFA AGM and Retiree Social Thursday, May 10, 2018

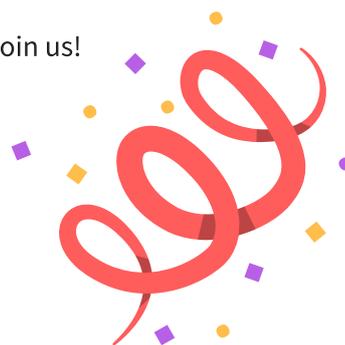
Annual General Meeting

12:45 in T001

Retiree Social Reception

2 :30 in the Employee Lounge

Please join us!



Newsletter Committee: Alison Curtis, Bradley Hughes, Stephen Phillips, and Joyce Wong

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YOUR UNION - THE LANGARA FACULTY ASSOCIATION

The LFA is the union representing faculty employed by Langara College. We

- negotiate and maintain collective agreements
- defend workplace rights
- represent faculty on college boards, councils, and committees
- host workshops, seminars and social events
- champion accessible, quality post-secondary education
- advocate through provincial and national labour organizations

We seek to empower faculty and your voice is important to us. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you need our support and/or would like to get involved.