



Faculty Affairs

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From the board

The board has had a busy fall term. The LFA membership has grown significantly over the recent years and there are now over 650 members. This growth and the changes at the college, with retirements and many new faculty, has resulted in challenges for the LFA stewards. The weekly board meetings, followed by the steward meeting, help ensure important faculty issues remain at the forefront of the LFA's work. The board started the semester with a one-day retreat in late August. The retreat provided an opportunity to reflect on what we are doing well and to identify areas that require additional attention in the future. One of the key areas we hope to focus on over the coming year is member engagement. The ability of the LFA to shape the place where we work is dependent on faculty engagement and contributions to collegial management at the College. Many faculty represent the LFA on hiring and evaluation committees, on college committees, and FPSE committees, which is essential work. Stay tuned for an LFA member survey, which will focus on communication and engagement issues. One of the standing agenda items at board meetings is contract maintenance. This is an opportunity the board to be briefed (no individual or department identifiers are used)

on the contract issues that the stewards are working to resolve. There have been a wide range of issues and the stewards have been working to support faculty through some difficult situations. If you are experiencing an issue related to your

"please do not hesitate to contact the LFA for support"

work, or if you have general questions about your contract, please do not hesitate to contact the LFA for support. The board has also had the opportunity to provide input on important draft policies relevant to faculty. New policies for concerns about instruction and academic conduct are currently being worked on by committees. The board has been and will continue to put effort towards ensuring that the policies result in a good and fair process and consider the impact on faculty workload and academic freedom. We have made efforts to ensure board representation at College events relevant to faculty work, such as those related to academic structure, internationalization and mental health initiatives. Other initiatives included a submission to the BC Government's Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services and working with the College to ensure an accountable process for upcoming Division Chair position selections.

Contract types

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 are the different types of contracts at Langara?

Your first contract will be either REGULAR (if the work is ongoing) or TERM (if the work is temporary). For most faculty, the first contract is a TERM contract. For instructional faculty, the first Term contract includes one month of prep time, and (usually) four months of teaching. Term contracts are usually given for classes added late, or for replacement work (if someone is on leave). Your monthly pay cheque will include your vacation pay.

Sometimes the first Term contract is an EMERGENCY contract. This means that the department did not know about the vacancy until just before the semester started. An EMERGENCY contract does not include the one month of prep time, and does not allow the faculty member to earn seniority. You can only be on an EMERGENCY contract once – if you get any work after that first semester, then it will be on a Term contract and

you will get your one month of prep time then. To clarify – even if work after the first contract is available at short notice on an emergency basis, your second contract will not be an emergency contract. A person hired on an emergency contract will get the seniority associated with their emergency contract work if they later get a term contract.

After two years on Term contract, if your work is still temporary, you may get a REGULAR-IN-A-TEMPORARY-VACANCY (REG-IN-TEMP) contract. This means that for each four-month teaching semester, you will also get one month of paid vacation and one month of paid non-instructional duty (NID, also often erroneously referred to as PD) time. Your monthly pay cheque will be smaller than when on a Term contract because your vacation pay will be paid in your vacation month rather than during each work-month....but you'll get paid for 6 months. The "IN-TEMP" means that the work is temporary, either because it is not part of the department's base budget, or because someone is on leave. The exact conditions for reg-in-temp are that there are two non-overlapping 12-month periods in which you

worked at least ¼-time in at least 2 semesters in each of those 12-month periods, and the two 12-month periods occurred within a 5-year time interval. Ask your shop steward or department chair if you find this confusing!

When ongoing work is available, you will be appointed to a REGULAR contract (assuming you are qualified, have satisfactory evaluations, and are next in line). Some faculty are hired directly into Regular contracts because ongoing work is available (perhaps due to a retirement, for example, and there are no internal candidates).

After you have worked the equivalent of three full-time years on REGULAR or REG-IN-TEMP contracts, and successfully completed two evaluations while on regular contract, you will get a CONTINUING contract for the ongoing part of the work.

When will I get tenure?

We don't have tenure at the College, but a CONTINUING contract is close. So three years at the earliest, and five years is usual, though it could take longer if you are part time or if you are always doing replacement work. You will not get a continuing contract until there is ongoing work for you.

2018 Budget consultation

By Alison Curtis

In October, the BC Government's all-party Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services invited submissions on priorities for the 2018 budget. In response, the LFA Board submitted a letter urging the Government to restore funding to BC's public post-secondary education system, and in particular, to increase

funding for post-secondary institutional grants.

The Committee released its Report on the Budget 2018 Consultation on November 15, 2017. Among the 119 recommendations agreed to unanimously by the Committee were 13 targeted specifically to Advanced Education, including a review of funding formulas for post-secondary

institutions. The Committee specifically referenced Langara College's 35% public funding of operational costs and noted concerns that "post-secondary institutions remain mostly government funded and therefore public institutions over the long term." See the LFA website lfaweb.ca for the LFA submission and the Committee's findings.

The perks of being an LFA rep

Bradley Hughes interviewed Stacey Collins, the chair of the department of Modern Languages and the LFA rep on the selection/evaluation committee for the department of History, Latin & Political Science.

Q: What do you enjoy most about being an LFA rep?

A: I enjoy collaborating with instructors from different departments. It helps to foster a sense of community and collegiality within the College.

Q: Does going to these meetings help back in your own department?

A: It helps to remind me of the importance of paying close attention to the details of the hiring and evaluation process of the meetings that I chair.

Q: Do you think our union is

strengthened by having reps like you? In what ways?

A: I think it's good for us to show our solidarity by having an LFA presence during these important meetings/proceedings.

Q: How do you think our new colleagues benefit from your presence on the committee?

A: I'm not sure they are aware of what the LFA is or what my role of LFA rep actually is. So I can make them aware of the fact that we DO have a union that is there to protect them, and I think this should be made clear by each LFA rep when they introduce themselves at a meeting.

Q: How do you think the department whose committee you sit on benefits from your presence on the committee?

A: Basically, they can't run their meeting without me, so I think they

appreciate the fact that I am flexible with my time and I am very willing to accommodate their scheduling needs. I think they also like that I'm from another department and that I can offer a fresh, new perspective on how things are done in my own department.

Q: What would you say to encourage our colleagues to volunteer to be a union rep for a section/evaluation committee?

A: I would tell them that it's important to support our union, to bring awareness to the role of the union at Langara and that being an LFA rep is a great way to feel like you're doing something good in terms of building community and collegiality at Langara. It's a nice way to meet new people as well and to network with people from other departments.

So you've been asked to be an LFA rep on a selection and evaluation committee...

From the LFA stewards

What does this entail?

Ideally, you will be the LFA rep for the next few years for this department or program, so that any time there is a hiring or an evaluation, you will be the LFA rep to the committee. Your main task is to ensure that the processes are fair and equitable, and follow the Collective Agreement. The procedures of your home department may be different from those of this department, and this is a great opportunity for you and others on the committee to share your experiences.

You are probably a faculty member on a continuing contract, so that you

are likely to be around for future meetings of the committee. You are a voting member of the committee, and you should be part of all meetings and discussions concerning selection and evaluation in this department.

Your main task is to observe that the processes are fair and reasonable, and that the processes outlined in the Collective Agreement are followed. You are the representative of the process, not of any individual faculty member. Please refer any faculty member who has questions about his/her specific situation to the Committee/Department Chair. If after speaking with the Chair the faculty

member still has questions, he/she may contact the LFA office to speak with a shop steward.

If at any time you have concerns about the selection and evaluation process, please contact the LFA President, Vice President, Chief Steward or a Steward. And if at any time you find that you really do not enjoy this type of volunteer work, please let us know so that we can find another rep.

For more information, see the Guidelines for LFA Reps on the LFA website under Member Resources www.lfaweb.ca/resources. And thanks for being an LFA rep!

Round up of fall meetings

The LFA is a member of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE). LFA reps serve on FPSE standing committees along with reps from other locals. Here are the highlights of this fall's committee meetings, as reported by your LFA reps.

Education Policy Committee

The sharp rise in international student enrollments at colleges and universities in BC has become a major concern of faculty, who report that many overseas students lack proficiency in English or are unfamiliar with norms of teaching and learning in North America. The EPC is refining a resolution on international education to present to Presidents' Council next spring. To that end, the Committee is gathering information from locals on such matters as admission and course enrollment policies, student success (including completion rates and academic integrity), faculty workload, and support services.

Stephen Phillips, local 5828

Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee

The Committee identified two related priorities: promotion of the soon to be released FPSE de-colonization manual and our spring semester provincial speakers' tour, which will feature speakers on the subject of decolonization. If you would like to join either of these exciting projects, please contact me at bhughes@langara.ca.

Bradley Hughes, local 5504

Non-Regular Faculty Committee

The Committee considered resolutions made at the FPSE AGM last May regarding transitions to retirement. This is of course relevant

to non-regular faculty, who are often waiting for positions to become available once more senior faculty retire. The NRFC will strive to keep informed about how locals handle this delicate subject, including what incentives are provided to senior faculty when they are considering retirement.

Fair Employment Week was held

"Term faculty at Langara are encouraged to participate"

October 23-27 to draw attention to the plight of non-regular faculty across Canada. Langara's NRFC hosted a booth that week to gather signatures on a Pledge of Support for non-regulars to be sent to CAUT. Thanks to Valerie Lloyd, Veda Roodal Persad, and Sean Maschmann for help in organising and running the table. CAUT is currently gathering data on the working conditions of non-regular faculty. Term faculty at Langara are encouraged to participate. The survey may be found at <https://caut.limequery.org/151696?lang=en>

Niall Christie, local 5832

Pension Advisory Committee

The meeting included a session, led by Peter Chapman of the Shareholder Association for Research and Education (SHARE), about integrating socially responsible practices and indicators into investment strategies. According to the Trustees, the College Pension Fund has healthy returns: 10.8% over the last year, 6.6% over the last 10 years, exceeding the long term average of 6.25% necessary to

meet the fund's actuarial requirements. The fund is also more diversified as its investments now include infrastructure and real estate. While this added diversification and complexity has occasioned an increase in management fees, the fund is expected to have higher net returns.

Bryan Breguet, bbreguet@langara.ca

Professional & Scholarly Development Committee

Among the main issues discussed was the use of PD funds to meet accreditation requirements. The Committee also considered a white paper on educational technology, the aim of which is to convey to teaching institutions the need to provide sufficient PD funding for instructors as education increasingly integrates web-based technology. Finally, Committee members passed a resolution calling for release time to be made available for scholarly activities independent of applied research.

Christopher Nowlin, local 5818

Disability Management and Rehabilitation Committee

This fall's DMRC meeting featured an interesting talk by labour and human rights lawyer Jon Chapnick. He argued that most employers tend to ask for more information from doctors than is legally required. Medical documentation should, in general, only be required if what an employee is saying seems unreasonable given the nature of the condition. He suggested employers should look at the individual employee rather than taking a 'cookie-cutter' approach to managing accommodations and return to work plans.

Jessie Smith, local 5788

Tuition fees abolished for adult basic education

Shortly after taking office last July, BC's new NDP government abolished tuition fees for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English Language Learning (ELL) programmes. Along with other FPSE affiliates, the LFA had waged a 2-year campaign for the repeal of such fees following their introduction by the previous Liberal government. Their abolition represents an important advance for the cause of public education.

ABE programmes provide primary and secondary education to adult learners in both the public school and post-secondary systems. Most ABE students are high school graduates seeking to upgrade their literacy and numeracy skills in order to gain entry to post-secondary courses or to improve their job prospects. As one of 18 BC institutions to offer ABE, Langara delivers such courses through the English and Math departments and through Continuing Studies. Previous governments recognized the importance of ABE in improving the participation rates of aboriginal people and low-income earners in higher education. In 1989 the Social Credit government abolished tuition fees for school district ABE. In the 1990s the NDP extended that policy to ABE courses taken at the post-secondary level. The BC Liberals reversed course in 2003, re-introducing tuition fees for ABE students who had graduated from high school. By 2008, acting on the recommendation of the Campus 2020 Report, the government reinstated the earlier policy and eliminated all ABE tuition fees. ELL courses for domestic students became tuition fee-free in 2012.

The Liberals' new policy proved to be short lived. In December 2014 the government, now led by Christy Clark, abruptly announced that colleges once again would be free to impose

tuition fees on ABE and ELL courses, to a maximum of \$1,600 per semester for a full course load. Meanwhile the government withdrew \$6.9 million in funding from ABE, \$1.9 million of which it reallocated to Adult Upgrading Grants (AUG) to assist low-income students. Most colleges and universities, including Langara, began to charge tuition fees for ABE courses in 2015.

Critics feared that the new tuition charges would be unaffordable to students of modest means, especially as the yearly income ceiling under the AUG programme was set so low. Indeed, despite heavy demand for the AUG, provincial enrollments in ABE dropped by 35% between 2014 and 2017.

Educators throughout the province decried the government's cuts to ABE and the return of tuition fees. FPSE responded by folding its demand for full ABE funding into its larger "Open the Doors" campaign. These efforts paid off with the change of government. As Premier John Horgan put it: "By eliminating these fees, we're tearing down the roadblocks to the basic education and skills people need to improve their lives."

Meanwhile, the government allocated \$19 million for ABE and ELL for the remainder of the current budget year. Faculty reacted favourably to the government's announcement. "We were absolutely delighted," enthused Kina Cavicchioli, Chair of the English Department. "We see these courses, and easy access to them, as key to Langara's mission as a community college, offering educational opportunities to as diverse a population as possible." That view was echoed by Nora Franzova, Chair of Math and Stats. "Faculty in the Math department are happy the fees are abolished," she said.

The effect of tuition fees on ABE goes

beyond enrollment numbers alone. As Kina Cavicchioli explains, the cost of education can also adversely affect its quality:

[R]ising costs contribute to students' tendency to "rush" their education - to take only the most essential courses with transfer credit, in the shortest time, which in turn contributes to a reductive, overly utilitarian view of education as a series of hoops to jump through, rather than a formative process. Language development in particular is a process that can't be rushed.

Restoration of ABE funding is an important first step. Next spring's provincial budget will disclose what further steps the NDP intend to take to reverse years of declining government contributions to public colleges and universities. That, after all, was the central message of the LFA's, and FPSE's, Open the Doors campaign earlier this year.

Take Pacific Blue Cross back to its progressive roots

Seven candidates running on a slate for the Pacific Blue Cross Board of Directors are committed to returning the company to its roots as a progressive, non-profit extended health benefits provider that respects both plan members and employees.

Pacific Blue Cross will hold its Annual General Meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, December 13 at the Westin Bayshore Hotel in Vancouver. Because of the current board's treatment of the company's 600 employees—including its agreement to lock out those workers for two months this year—the race has become hotly contested.

All LFA members are members of Pacific Blue Cross and are eligible to vote at the AGM.

Full article at CUPEBC: bit.ly/cupepbcc

The Langara Faculty Association presents:

Wine and Dine on the Rhine

Friday, December 15

BAR: Employee Lounge 4:30 - 6:00 pm (free admission)

BUFFET DINNER: Student Cafeteria 6:00 - 10:00 pm

TICKETS: Contact Jo-Anne at Facilities - 604.323.5511

**Enjoy an evening filled with food, drink, music, and dancing.
This is the event of the year!**

Photo (CC BY-NC 2.0) Barabra Ann Spengler

Stay tuned! 2018 FPSE HRISC Speakers Tour this spring

Each year the FPSE Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee sponsors a cross province speaker's tour; this year's theme will be Reconciliation. Stay tuned for more details in the new year!

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Your union - The Langara Faculty Association

The Langara Faculty Association (LFA) is the union representing instructors, counsellors, and librarians employed by Langara College. Certified under the BC Labour Relations Code, the LFA has been the registered bargaining agent for Langara faculty since 1974. We are an affiliate (local 14) of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (FPSE).

The LFA aims to promote the professional and occupational interests of faculty. To that end we:

- conclude, maintain, and seek improvements to collective agreements with the College;
- defend the rights of faculty, filing grievances where necessary to seek redress for violations of those rights;
- represent faculty on various college boards, councils, and committees;
- educate members about the terms of their employment and their rights under the collective agreement;
- provide a voice for faculty in provincial and national organizations to which the LFA is affiliated;
- host social events, including the annual LFA Presidents' Bar and Dinner in December.

Current and archived information of interest to members can be found on the LFA website: lfaweb.ca. Or contact Amy Kwan, Executive Assistant, at 604-323-5343 / akwan@langara.bc.ca. Our office is in room A212.