

The Update



Issue 2 2012/2013

October 2012

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MEETING DATES

The Fall General Meeting (FGM) is scheduled for 5:00-9:00 p.m., Friday, November 2 (Kelowna Campus Cafeteria, Dinner & drinks at 5 p.m., meeting at 6:30 p.m.).

The OCFA is holding several meetings for specific faculty groups in December and January at the KLO campus. These meetings offer OCFA members an opportunity to bring issues of concern to the association leadership. Please plan to attend.

Business: December 04, 2012, 4:00pm-7:00pm, *Infusions*

Department Chairs: January 11, 2013, 4:00pm-7:00pm, *Infusions*

Non-Regular Faculty: January 18, 2013, 4:00pm-7:00pm, *Infusions*

OCFA Executive meetings are generally held once every two weeks. If you would like to bring forward a particular item for consideration please contact one of your OCFA Exec members (see page 2 for the list).

OCFA Council meetings are generally held once per month. If you would like to bring forward a particular item for consideration please contact one of your OCFA Council or Exec members (see page 2 for the list).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The *Update* welcomes letters to the editor. I encourage you to write either in response to what you read in the newsletter or about other Faculty Association matters. Letters to the *Update* do not represent the opinions of the editor nor the OCFA Executive or Council. Please send letters as e-mail to the *Update* editor Chris Clarkson at cclarkson@okanagan.bc.ca. The preferred format is MS-Word.

DELIVERY OF THE UPDATE

The *Update* is now distributed electronically as a PDF file by e-mail as well as being available on the OCFA webpage at: <http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/administration/ocfa/update.html>

October 22-26 is Fair Employment Week

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President's Report

Sharon Josephson

Greetings, everyone. I hope by now you've found your feet with the new semester and are not too terribly buried in marking.

I have been busy since our last issue of *The Update*. I attended a FPSE Presidents' Council Meeting and a Bargaining Conference, both in Vancouver, in mid-September. At each of these events, special attention was paid to ways we might increase a sense of community and solidarity within and amongst our locals. Please see below for information on upcoming events.

Upcoming Meetings/Socials

I have scheduled a number of meetings/socials aimed at particular faculty groups. I hope these meetings will allow us to better understand the issues and concerns of these groups as well as give us all a chance to get to know each other a little more.

I'll be in touch for agenda items closer to the dates, but until then, please mark your calendars accordingly:

- **Business Faculty Meeting/Social:** December 04, 2012, 4:00pm-7:00pm, *Infusions*
- **Chairs Meeting/Social:** January 11, 2013, 4:00pm-7:00pm, *Infusions*
- **Non-Regular Faculty Meeting/Social:** January 18, 2013, 4:00pm-7:00pm, *Infusions*

I'd also ask you to mark your calendar for our Fall General Meeting. As always, we will enjoy a full buffet dinner and a hosted bar prior to the meeting. Our general meetings are the envy of other FPSE locals; if you've never attended one before, come out and you'll see why.

- **Fall General Meeting:** November 02nd, 5:00-9:00pm, *Kelowna Cafeteria*

Projects Underway

I am also looking for ways to help things run more smoothly at OC and to reduce some of the conflict we see developing in departments and amongst faculty. To this end, I am working with HR on two fairly substantial projects. The **Chairs Orientation and Training** project aims to provide ongoing training to Chairs in order to ensure they have a clear sense of what the job of Chair entails (and what it doesn't) and how to do it. The **Selection Committee Processes** project aims to examine the gradual creep of selection committee work later and later into the summer months. I'll report on these projects as they proceed.

Fair Employment Week

October 22-26 is Fair Employment Week. The OCFA will have a table set up in the E-Building Atrium. The overuse and exploitation of contract academic staff is one of the biggest challenges facing the academic profession. FPSE has joined CAUT and other organizations, unions and activists across the US, Canada and Mexico to organize Fair Employment Week. The goals of the week are to raise contingent academic labour issues nationally and locally in media and policy circles, and to stimulate organizing and support local collective bargaining initiatives. Drop by the table and find out more.

First Vice-President's Report

Rod Watkins Chief Steward

Collective Agreement Review Committee (CARC) Report Update on FAC12-04

In August, the OCFA filed a policy grievance over the policies and procedures employed by the College in relation to LOU #8 of the new Collective Agreement. According to LOU #8, all members with between 8 and 16 TLUs at the signing of the new contract would gain accrual rights as defined in the new Agreement if they were successful in an internal competition that employed the normal selection process outlined in Article 14 and LOU #8. In September, we agreed to place the grievance in abeyance while we and the College further investigated. In early October, we met with the College to outline a series of abnormalities in the procedures committees followed that we argued are not part of a normal selection process and hence violate the Collective Agreement. We decided to leave the grievance in abeyance for the time being; in the coming weeks and months we expect the College will work with us to correct and clarify the College policy on selection procedures to bring it into alignment with the Collective Agreement.

Other News

On October 26 and 27, I will be attending the FPSE CARC meeting in Vancouver as our local's representative. I will report back what I learn at the FGM in November.

As I mentioned in the September Update, we have invited Jeff McKeil to the College to once again provide for our members some training sessions FPSE has developed. He has accepted our invitation and is scheduled to be here on February 22. He will talk on Collegial Authority, Governance and Member-to-Member Conflict. In a future Update, I'll let you know the times and places for the talks.

Second Vice-President's Report

Nolan Fretz
Negotiations Committee Chair

Provincial Bargaining Climate

Provincially, public sector bargaining has certainly been in the news of late. Settlements for nurses, some GEU workers, CUPE workers at UBC, and PEA at UVIC are showing that it is possible to find a way to get a deal even with the government's "cooperative gains" mandate. Of particular note is that all of these deals show 4% over 2 years. It remains to be seen if this will be carried on in our sector.

Local Bargaining Begins

On the local front, we have served the College with notice of intent to bargain and will begin meeting with them this coming week. We look forward to an energetic and productive bargaining session!

\$\$More Money\$\$

Michelle Nicholson
Secretary Treasurer

PA, PD, GIA, and PR funds sound like so much alphabet soup but what really this is all money you can claim. You just have to know the guidelines, follow the rules, keep receipts and fill out a few easy forms.

PD stands for Professional Development fund. This fund is for support of professional development activities intended to promote teaching excellence, subject area competence and technical competence in an area of professional or instructional expertise. The OCFA and the College both contribute to this fund and it is available to continuing faculty members and term faculty members with right of accrual. As a term faculty member with right of accrual you must apply for PD funds while on active contract.

You must apply for and be approved for PD funds BEFORE spending any money or attending an event. Fill in the PD application form and send it to your Dean or designated supervisor well in advance of the event. The PD committee determines how far in advance of an event the application must be submitted. If you don't know the timeframe for your PD committee then

check with your Dean. You also have to fill in a PD Activity report and an expense account claim after the event. There are PD committees for each portfolio.

There are actually two PD funds; one as per article 23 of the OCFA/OC collective agreement and the other as per LOU #6 of the Common Agreement. To make things easier for members the OCFA and OC have created a single set of guidelines and a single PD Application form for access to both funds.

Under our collective agreement a continuing faculty member can claim up to \$2,000 over a two-year fiscal period commencing April 1, 2012. Under the common agreement a continuing faculty member can claim \$1,500 over the same two-year fiscal period commencing April 1, 2012. That is a total of \$3,500 for PD; a significant increase over the old \$2,000 limit.

For term faculty members with right of accrual the limits and rules are a bit more complicated. Basically you work first and do PD later. If you work more than 50% on average in the Fall of 2012 and the Winter of 2013 and you have right of accrual, you are eligible for a total of \$1,250 that can be used for events between April 1, 2013 and March 31 2014 (that's the College's fiscal year). Plus you have to apply for the funding BEFORE your 2012/2013 contract expires.

If you work an average of less than 50% in the Fall of 2012 and the Winter of 2013 and you have right of accrual, you are eligible for a total of \$625 that can be used for events between April 1, 2013 and March 31 2014 (that's the College's fiscal year). Plus you have to apply for the funding BEFORE your 2012/2013 contract expires.

So the current fiscal year contract level of work determines the PD funds you can spend in the next fiscal year. (The Fiscal year is April 1 to Mar 31 of the following year.)

For guidelines and forms go to MyOkanagan, OC Express – Forms, scroll down Professional Development/Training, click to open the list below this heading, then scroll down and find the Faculty –PD Application Form, Faculty – PD Guidelines, and Faculty – PD Activity report.

GIA stands for Grants-In-Aid of Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity fund. This fund is to support research, scholarly and creative activity. Scholarship involves oral or written activities that reflect a thorough and critical collection of knowledge of one's profession or discipline. Research involves contributing to the expansion of knowledge and the sharing of that knowledge through appropriate professional means. Research includes application of research findings for purposes of practical application. Creative activities involve creative practice, exhibition, performance, composition, multimedia presentations and other similar activities that reflect applied practice of one's profession or discipline. All faculty members are eligible for GIA funds. The new limit is \$4,000 per year each which can be spent all at once or over multiple proposals during the year.

You must apply and be approved for GIA funds BEFORE spending any money or attending an event. Fill in the GIA application form and send via email to the VP of Education care of ljennings@okanagan.bc.ca well in advance deadline for the next meeting. The meeting dates will be published via email with two planned for each of the fall and winter semesters. You also have to fill in a GIA Activity report and an expense account claim after the event.

GIA funding is no longer linked to PD funding. These two funds have been fully separated and do not overlap. When you are attending a conference or other event you need to decide if this is scholarly, research, creative, or professional development, then apply to the correct fund. For example if you are attending a conference to present a research paper you would apply to GIA but if you were attending a conference to maintain currency in your field or for other PD purposes then you would apply to PD. If you will be doing both at a conference talk to your Dean about how to best split the costs between both funds or which is best to apply for. Since your Dean signs off on these activities you might as well consult with them if you are not sure.

Where applicable, applicants must include documentation that they have consulted their appropriate department budget and/or Library Services and/or Information Technology Services and/or Purchasing and/or Okanagan College Bookstore as part of applying for GIA funds. This is to ensure that OC does not already own the requested item; that other institutional funds do not exist to support the proposal; and that the best price has been identified. Ownership of items purchased with GIA Funds remains with the College. A list of typical items and activities follows:

- Conferences
- Travel
- Tuition fees
- Equipment and supplies
- Computer upgrades, peripherals, and software (but not computers)
- Books and subscriptions to journals (there is overlap with the PA fund here)
- Research assistants

For guidelines and forms go to MyOkanagan, OC Express – Forms, scroll down to OCFA Grants in Aid Guidelines, click to open the list below this heading, then scroll down and find the Grants in Aid –Application Form, Grants in Aid – Guidelines, and Grants in Aid – Activity report.

PA stands for the **Professional Allowance fund** (article 24). This fund is for the purpose of assisting eligible employees to maintain currency and competency and to offset the cost of expenses including but not limited to:

- Professional dues

- Subscriptions to scholarly journals
- Books
- Computer software
- Computer equipment
- Other equipment

The expenses cannot be of the type for which reimbursement is otherwise available from Travel Allowances (Article 42), Professional Development (Article 23), or Grants in Aid of Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity (Article 26). For example the GIA and PA both cover books and subscriptions to journals. So first you would decide if your books or journals comply with the GIA guidelines. If so claim from the GIA which requires prior approval before spending money. If they do not fit the GIA guidelines then purchase them, keep the receipts and claim the expense on from the PA fund in May of each year.

The College puts \$35,000 in this fund each July 1st. As a continuing faculty member you can claim up to about \$350 per year from this fund for expenses you have incurred to stay current in your field. I say about \$350 because the total claims cannot exceed the balance of the fund. This is the only fund that approves claims AFTER you have spent the money. You keep your receipts all year, send in your claim once a year at the end of May, the committee meets in June, all the claims are totalled up and the maximum is adjusted if necessary to match the funds available, then all the claims are paid in July by the College. For guidelines and forms go to MyOkanagan, OC Express – Forms, scroll down to OCFA – Professional Allowance (PA) Guidelines and OCFA – Professional Allowance Application. The application is the claim form that you will use to claim your PA expenses at the end of May. Please read and follow the directions on this application form.

PR stands for Professional Registration and membership costs. Under article 25 continuing faculty members who are required, as a condition of employment, to maintain a current active registration or membership with one or more professional associates shall be entitled to reimbursement of the entire cost of these expenses by applying to the designated supervisor. This is not a fund but rather an uncommon expense that is covered for a few members such as Nurses and Accountants who must maintain their professional registrations as a condition of employment because it is required for accreditation of certain programs and/or for transferability of courses we offer. There are no guidelines and there are no special forms. Just take the bill when you receive it from your association directly to your Deans office. The Dean must approve the payment of the bill. It is then forwarded to the appropriate departments in OC and finance will pay your registration cost directly. You can also pay these costs yourself and submit an expense claim if you prefer.

All together there is nearly \$8,000 available between these various funds so I think this is worth a few minutes of your time to find and read the guidelines and application forms and to plan ahead and get the approvals you need to tap into a pot full of money.

An Important Pension Survey

Doug Birtwistle Pension Advisory Officer

As you may or may not be aware, FPSE (the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators) will be surveying all members (us!) about **possible** options for change in the design of our College Pension Plan. Attached is an electronic copy of a booklet that should prepare you for that survey and a related letter from Cindy Oliver, president of FPSE. Required reading, I say! The outcomes of the survey questionnaire will be a valuable and critical tool for the Plan Partners (the group who make decisions about the College Pension Plan) when they look at possible options for change.

The survey questionnaire, designed by Ipsos Reid, is planned for mid-November. It will be an electronic survey. You will be contacted by email, then provided an ID number and a link to the survey itself. I have not seen the survey questionnaire, but I was told that it should take 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Recently, you may have been asked to do a “customer satisfaction” survey issued by the Pension Corporation. This survey is in no way related to that. This survey is much more important.

One could easily argue that this survey is more important for those of us who are farther away from retirement than for those of us nearing retirement. That is because **IF** the Plan Partners do decide to make a design change to the College Pension Plan, any change would only apply to service from the date of change. The rules we presently have would still apply to service earned before the change. So, for those of us near retirement, any changes would have very little effect on us. However, it is important that all members, regardless of age, complete the survey. Retirees from the Plan are also being asked to complete the survey. You will, on the survey, be asked to provide your age. Ipsos Reid will, as is standard statistical practice, provide results based on age groups. How responses differ by different age groups is very important to the Plan Partners as they explore the possible changes to our Plan. Intergenerational fairness in the Plan is very important to the Partners.

There is nothing at all binding by the results of this survey. It is not a “referendum”. It is not a “vote” for an option. The results will serve purely as an informational tool for the Plan Partners. There are other hurdles to clear for any such changes to be made to the design of the College Pension Plan and, regardless of the outcomes of the survey, there is a chance that none of the possible options for change will be implemented.

Having said that, the various trustees of the Plan Partners of the College Pension Plan believe that the four options for change presented and being explored are timely, and provide improvements to the Plan. Our Plan is in sound financial shape. Reasons for exploring the possible design changes are explained in the booklet.

Each of the four options being explored is described in the booklet. Apparently, the questionnaire can be answered so as to indicate the “status quo” as a viable option as well. Why these four options and not more options? What are presented in the booklet are the four options that all four Plan Partners agreed upon as being viable design changes to the Plan. All four Plan Partners need to agree to any design change made to the plan.

If you have any questions or concerns about the upcoming survey questionnaire, please email me. I am also trying to arrange for one of the College Pension Plan FPSE-appointed trustees to come up to our campus later this month and give a presentation on the options, rationale, etc. I cannot promise anything there, but it would help to let me know if you are interested in attending such a presentation. In any case, I encourage you to read the electronic booklet. You should also be receiving a printed version of the booklet soon.

Women’s Resource Centre

Norah Bowman-Broz
Status of Women Officer

Women’s Resource Centre at Okanagan College Kelowna Campus.
Room A149.

The Okanagan College Kelowna Women's Resource Centre is a space and a resource available to all women of the college community. The WRC is part of the broader feminist movement and our goal is to promote a campus environment in which all people can learn and work in atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding, safety, and equality. If you're looking for information, support, advice, or just a safe place to sit for awhile, come on in.

Human Rights and International Solidarity Officer's Report

Marlo Edwards

Quebec Student Leader Visit

On Wednesday October 17th, Éliane Laberge, president of the FECQ (Quebec's college students' federation), visited Kelowna as part of a provincial tour organized by FPSE's Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee, and funded in part by the OCFA.

Twenty year old Laberge is one of the three national leaders of the massive general strike of students that organized over the last few months to successfully stop tuition increases imposed by the Charest Liberal government.

The inspiring Laberge visited several classrooms in Kelowna to meet and talk with students, and then gave a well-attended public talk in the Student Centre Theatre in which she shared experiences, insights, and strategies for achieving change.

Upcoming Events

Sunday November 4th, 7pm, H115. Canadian author Yves Engler will be in Kelowna speaking about his latest book, *The Ugly Canadian: Steven Harper's Foreign Policy*. Organised by the Kelowna Peace Group. FREE

Wednesday November 7th, 7pm, Student Centre Theatre. A public forum will be held to discuss Genetically Modified food, with a focus on the GM apple that is being developed for market here in the Okanagan. Lucy Sharratt, coordinator for the Canadian Biotechnology Network (CBAN), will speak, and there will be a panel discussion with local experts. Organised by the BC Food Safety Network. FREE