

QUFA VOICES

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PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Members Continue Concerned About Garbage Issue

QUFA Members have identified numerous negative repercussions of the Administration's recent changes to custodial services on campus

**By Diane Beauchemin
President, QUFA**



I want to start by thanking all Members who have contacted me to express misgivings about the state of custodial services at the University since changes

to custodial services were made this summer. The list of negative repercussions is long and widespread across the University. Here are some examples:

- At 8.30 a.m., there is waste at the lecture podium that, in the past, would have been cleared before the start of the work day.
- Outside doors that would normally be unlocked early in the morning are still locked when the students come

to class or labs.

- Not-quite-confidential material that could go straight from offices into a custodian's bin now have to be shredded, which consumes time and generates much more voluminous waste.
- There is a chronic infestation of fruit flies. All it takes is one apple core that isn't taken out to the end-of-floor bins in a timely fashion, and insects are everywhere.
- The Administration's replacement of full-time custodians earning decent salaries with low-paid temporary employees decreases workplace security. Indeed, as these temporary employees are not there long enough to know people in a unit, how could they know who does not belong? As a result, thefts are increasing.

When Lynne Hanson (QUFA Vice-President) and I questioned the Principal about this issue at a luncheon meeting, he said that this policy has been in place for quite some time at some comparable institutions, that we have been spoiled so far, and that it is a cost-saving measure, which may be revisited when the budget will allow it. However, at the Board meeting of the Ontario Coalition of University Faculty Associations on 26

October 2014, I asked for a show of hands as to which institutions have their faculty empty their own trash: only a few hands went up (Ryerson, York, and RMC). And I know from speaking to the President of the York University Faculty Association that this is a situation they want to change. So, it is not a widespread practice by any stretch of the imagination.

As this is an issue that is common to everybody on campus, I gathered a

ANNOUNCEMENT

QUFA Fall General Meeting

Join us at the Fall General Meeting:

**Monday 15 December 2014
1.15 p.m. – 3.00 p.m.
The Auditorium, Ellis Hall**

The Notice of Meeting will be sent out via e-mail on 1 December 2014, and the full agenda package will follow on 8 December 2014. The Order of the Day will be Bargaining Priorities for the coming round of negotiations. We look forward to your participation in these deliberations.

meeting of Executive members from other unions. Aside from the lack of remuneration for this additional work, which is not part of the job description and is thus an issue, dealing with other people's waste (i.e., garbage in common areas) was highlighted as a major safety issue. In fact, as Members are not provided with training, a uniform, or gloves to deal with garbage from common areas, they should do a work refusal and wait outside the work area until someone from Environmental Health and Safety comes.

All unions also reported that retiring people are not being replaced. As ten custodians are slated to retire, this will not improve the cleanliness situation. The Administration is also keeping casual employees under the minimum number of hours so as to prevent them becoming permanent.

A letter signed by the Presidents of six unions was thus sent to the Principal. The reply just received from Dan Bradshaw (Associate VP, Faculty Relations) does not address the many points raised in this letter (both are posted under Announcements on the QUFA Web site). The six unions will therefore get together to decide on a plan of action. So, stay tuned!

Chairs in Teaching and Learning

Some of you have been asking if the Chairs in Teaching and Learning would be reinstated. When I asked about this issue at a lunch with the Principal and Deputy Provost, the reply was that no decision had been made to cancel them permanently, and that they were simply suspended until the recommendations in the Teaching and Learning Action Plan from the Provost's task force have been considered. This is problematic, as that Plan was not approved by Senate.

Unit Visits Continue

Unit visits are continuing. If you would

like me, Leslie Jermyn (Executive Director), and Elizabeth Hanson (Chief Negotiator) to visit—either for the first time or to follow up—please contact Leslie (jermynl@queensu.ca) to make arrangements. These visits are very useful. For instance, they are revealing differential treatment (in terms of hiring, in particular) among various units, which QUFA will investigate by raising questions at relevant Faculty Boards and at Senate. So, if we have not visited your unit, please consider inviting us.

Good News on the Pension Front

The Queen's Pension Plan has returned over 17% in the 2013-2014 term to 31 August. This is a stellar performance, which will also be reflected in the performance of the various endowments and other funds at Queen's. Returns such as this (and 14% in the previous year) will make going-concern pension deficits disappear, if that has not happened already.

Caucus francophone?

Suite à ma participation au Congrès des Francophones de l'ACPPU (Association canadienne des professeures et professeurs d'université) cet été, je me demande s'il y aurait un besoin pour un caucus francophone. En effet, deux problèmes furent mentionnés durant ce congrès par des collègues francophones d'autres institutions anglophones: de la discrimination et des demandes pour faire de la traduction sans rémunération pour ce travail supplémentaire. J'aimerais savoir si ces problèmes ou d'autres existent à Queen's. Pourriez-vous entrer en contact avec moi le cas échéant? Comme nous retournons à la table des négociations cette année, nous pourrions essayer de résoudre ces problèmes, s'ils existent.

Diane Beauchemin can be reached at qufapres@queensu.ca.

FYI

“From Talk to Action”

Report from QUFA Member Peggy Lunn on the CAUT Librarians' and Archivists' Conference

By Peggy Lunn
QUFA Delegate



Approximately sixty Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) member librarians and archivists attended

this informative and skill-building conference in Ottawa this past October. The goal was to give academic librarians and archivists an opportunity to learn with and from each other, in the words of the organizers, “to hone the campaign skills necessary to confront the challenges our community faces.”

In his opening remarks, CAUT President Robin Vose recognized the importance of differentiating between how much



QUFA Member Peggy Lunn attended CAUT's “From Talk to Action” conference this past October in Ottawa

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Thanks!

revenue one generates for the academy versus the value one brings, and the critical necessity to demonstrate this value to those with power over working conditions. He encouraged librarians and archivists to organize and participate in campaigns that strengthen the demand that their work and value be articulated in policy and collective agreements. This sentiment was echoed by Karen Jensen, Chair of the CAUT Librarians' and Archivists' Committee, who emphasized that involvement with CAUT can be a key component to personal and collective empowerment.

We heard presentations from CAUT communications staff about the campaign process, elements of design, and effective media strategies. Other speakers discussed creating inclusive campaigns and the importance of seeking out and including student voices in campus-based campaigns.

The fun began in the workshop component, where we came together in groups to work on fictitious—but

plausible—campaign scenarios, including addressing sick buildings on campus, the disciplining of a librarian for critical content on a personal Blog, and the hiring of non-librarian staff to do librarian work.

In one morning, groups were to decide upon and create a core campaign message and devise a communications plan. Later, we presented these campaigns to each other and shared critical assessments of each campaign's strengths and weaknesses. Some participants, including yours truly, channelled their inner newshound by presenting their group's press release in a mock press conference, and were put on the spot to answer questions from journalists. This segment was particularly challenging and at times hilarious, and it provided tremendous insight into how media can work with or against you to communicate the message you want heard. I know I will never watch a televised press conference the same way again!

CAUT did a marvellous job of explaining the complexities of collective advocacy and inviting all of us to become more deeply involved. This valuable conference was a time to connect, to learn, and to build skills, and was time well spent.

Peggy Lunn can be reached at peggy.lunn@queensu.ca.

GRIEVANCE CORNER

Assessment and Evaluation of Teaching

There are many ways to assess and evaluate your teaching above and beyond the USAT



Last month I wrote about grade appeals, but before that you have to have taught the course!

For some reason, most QUFA Members forget that there are various ways to assess teaching. Sure, there is the USAT, but that is only one tool, and there is a whole article in the Collective Agreement devoted to this topic.

Article 29.1.3 and 29.1.4 give the broad context:

29.1.3 Assessment and evaluation of teaching shall be based on the effectiveness of the instructor, as indicated by command over subject matter, familiarity with recent developments in the field, preparedness, presentation, accessibility to students, and influence on the intellectual and scholarly developments of students.

29.1.4 Any person or Committee reviewing a Member's teaching shall

QUFA VOICES ■ NOVEMBER 2014 ■ VOLUME 10, NUMBER 3, ISSUE 51

QUFA Voices is published by the Queen's University Faculty Association (QUFA), 9 St Lawrence Avenue, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 3N6, Canada (qufa@queensu.ca). It is distributed electronically to all QUFA Members via the QUFA-NEWSLETTER-L listserv. Past issues are archived on the QUFA Web site at <http://www.qufa.ca/publications/>.

QUFA Voices publishes QUFA-related news and information for QUFA Members and provides QUFA Members with a forum to express their QUFA-related ideas and opinions. We want to hear from you! Please send your QUFA-related story ideas, news items, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, photographs, and other submissions to the editor at robert.may@qufa.ca.

QUFA Voices is edited by Robert G. May (English). He can be reached at robert.may@qufa.ca.

seek to balance all aspects of teaching as well as the Departmental/Faculty context within which the Member works.

What follows in the Article is a list of various things to consider:

- There is a section devoted to what items could appear in a teaching dossier;¹
- There is a section devoted to the USAT, which is administered through the Registrar's office via student representatives;²
- There is a section about how you can administer your own course survey.

If you have questions about any of these items, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the QUFA office.

Article 29 is relevant not only when you are going through assessment for major personnel processes, but also every year for the Annual Performance Review (Article 28).

Make sure your teaching is being adequately assessed, that it is not being reduced to a single number on a student evaluation tool.

Notes

¹For help in developing your own teaching dossier, the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) has assembled a set of additional resources:
www.queensu.ca/ctl/resources/topicspecific/teachingdossier.html

²For additional information, please see
www.queensu.ca/registrar/facultystaff/usat.html

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ANNOUNCEMENT

QUFA: The First 20 Years



For new QUFA Members, it isn't always obvious why Queen's Faculty, Librarians, and Archivists decided to certify 20

years ago.

Nancy Butler is collecting stories about what motivated that decision and how things have changed since that time.

Please contact Nancy (nancybutler@kos.net) if you have a story to tell!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Help Us Build a Stronger QUFA



The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) will be on campus on 9 December 2014 for a workshop on how we can build a stronger faculty association.

If you're already involved with QUFA, or hoping to get more involved as we gear up to bargain a new collective agreement, plan to attend this full-day workshop.

Please indicate your interest by contacting qufa@queensu.ca.

ANNOUNCEMENT

QUFA Job Action Committee Chair

As we approach the end of our current collective agreement (30 April 2015) and get ready to bargain a new one, we need to prepare for the possibility of job action (e.g., strike or lockout).

Job action is never a first option, but we have to be in a position to respond appropriately should job action become unavoidable.

The QUFA Job Action Committee is primarily responsible for two things:

1. managing the off-campus QUFA Job Action Headquarters
2. coordinating picketing and/or other forms of job action

The Chair of the QUFA Job Action Committee is supported, in part, by one unit (half-course) of teaching release, paid by QUFA.

In addition, QUFA has prepared a Job Action Manual and a list of volunteers to draw on from the last round of bargaining (2011). The Committee also has a QUFA staff support person assigned to it.

To get some sense of the last round of bargaining, please see the QUFA Bargaining Archives Web site: www.qufa.ca/bargaining/archives.php.

If you are interested in becoming Chair of the QUFA Job Action Committee or would like to nominate someone, or if you are interested in serving on the Committee, please contact **Leslie Jermyn** (Executive Director) at jermynl@queensu.ca, or **Lynne Hanson** (Chair, Nominations) at lh2@queensu.ca.