

# THE CONFLUENCE

The Camosun College Faculty Association Newsletter

Volume 8 - Issue 2 - November 27, 2018

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## Message from your President

Greetings, colleagues. It's the dog days of November, and I imagine most of you are crawling toward end of term and the holidays, just like your students. Cold and flu season is upon us. Hang in there, and thanks for taking some time to read this.

Fall continues to be busy for the CCFA, as you will glean from some of the articles in this issue. While the frenzy of September has eased, we are constantly fielding new problems and wrangling some tenacious old ones. Preparation for bargaining is ramping up. Personally, I'm balancing this stuff with teaching, and my weather and climate class has been thoroughly enjoying the unusually dry fall. I also spend a fair bit of time working with FPSE (the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators, our umbrella union.) If you want to read more about this, turn to the next page.

Happy end of term. I hope you have a very restful break.

- Chris Ayles



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

FROM THE CCFA EXECUTIVE AND YOUR FRIENDLY CCFA STAFF

# The View from FPSE



As CCFA President, I have a seat at Presidents' Council, FPSE's governing body. It's a real privilege to learn from and compare notes with faculty union presidents from around BC. To give you some idea of the typical fare, our November meeting in Vancouver included:

- ◆ A promotional appearance from BC Federation of Labour leadership candidates Laird Cronk and Sussanne Skidmore (FPSE is a member of BCFed);
- ◆ Adoption of a new holding-society structure for FPSE to bring it into compliance with the updated BC Societies Act;
- ◆ Q&A with two surprisingly entertaining College Pension Plan board trustees; and
- ◆ Consideration of a multitude of resolutions from various FPSE subcommittees.

It's a great opportunity to build solidarity with other member locals, with whom we may be banding together for common-table bargaining in the near future.

Last month, PC did something completely different: FPSE President George Davison and most of the gang came over to Victoria for a multi-day lobbying event. The concept was to blitz the government with meetings and messaging around major FPSE themes – equity for non-regular faculty, access to funding for indigenization efforts, and improvements to college governance. Some highlights:

- ◆ Our group was introduced at Question Period;
- ◆ We met with Minister of Labour Harry Bains, who expressed his support for labour unions and invited our comments on a new Labour Relations Code review;
- ◆ We met with Premier John Horgan and Minister of Advanced Education Melanie Mark. Both came off as intelligent, open and sympathetic to the needs of educators and students. While emphasizing the difficulty of satisfying everyone's spending requests, they asked us to keep up the lobbying so they know what to prioritize.
- ◆ We held an open reception for all MLAs, with our ranks bolstered by five CCFA volunteers who gamely kept the conversation going. Two of ours were still huddled at a table with Minister Mark at closing time.
- ◆ Frank Jankunis stood in for me at a lunch with the entire NDP caucus the next day.
- ◆ In between times, FPSE delegates had breakout meetings with their local MLAs and notable others such as Andrew Weaver.

FPSE considers the event to have been a huge success; this level of access to governing politicians and key staffers would have been a pipe dream under the Liberal government, and the sense of being among friends was palpable. On the other hand, I cringe at the thought of the bill; it's a very immediate example of the pay-to-play nature of modern democracy. Influence doesn't come cheap. But we have already seen FPSE's government outreach bear some fruit, such as the restored funding for ABE and renewed access for faculty union reps to college board seats. Whether it's all worthwhile is something we can discuss over some holiday cheer one day soon.

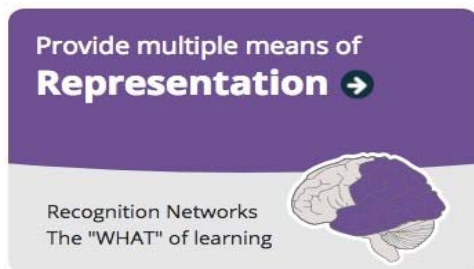
- Chris Ayles

# Pedagogy + Empathy = Universal Design for Learning

As you begin to prepare course materials for next term, may I draw your attention to some great advice laid out in the UDL Guidelines about providing learners with Options for Perception?

## But first, a couple of common-experience questions for empathetic context:

- \* Have you ever cursed the tiny 8-pt font on a Children's Tylenol bottle in the middle of the night when you and your aging eyes were just trying to find the right dosage information?
- \* Have you ever been listening to a radio program, missed hearing what that author's name was (or when that event is happening, or what the URL was for that guest's website), and wished you had the information written down?



My contextual reason for asking these questions is this. In our daily quests for information, we all have occasions to **require information be presented to us in multiple or different ways**. We've all appreciated being able to access information we needed, how and when we needed it. But we've probably also all experienced the frustration of a barrier when the information we need is presented in a singular format that is inaccessible to us.



## Information formats and barriers to learning

What if that Children's Tylenol bottle and that radio program are sources of information you need to successfully satisfy a course learning outcome? If 8-pt font is imperceptible to you, or if you don't hear or remember all of the relevant details for information you only receive aurally, then you are missing information that is considered essential for your success in the course. In short, these singular representations of information are going to create significant barriers to your learning.

## Implementing UDL Principles & Guidelines to avoid barriers to information

Consider the difference it would make to your success in the course if your instructor recognized that ***"there is not one means of representation that will be optimal for all learners"***.

Consider the difference it would make to your success in the course if that paper-based information in tiny-font was also readily available in a digital format that allowed you to:

- \* Customize how the information was displayed (e.g. you could enlarge font-sizes, or adjust brightness & contrast between background and text), or
- \* Use text-to-speech technology to hear the text read aloud.

And consider the difference it would make to your success in the course if the oral information was also readily available in a format that allowed you to:

- \* Access visual alternatives (e.g. text, graphics) to the oral information/instructions.

In your role as an instructor, you play a critical part in the selection of course materials. If you provide learners in your course with **Options for Perception** and present *information in multiple formats*, fewer of your students will encounter learning barriers that result when the singular format provided is inaccessible to them.

## Questions about providing more Options for Perception in your courses?

Connect with a working group that is currently focused on this very topic. Contact group via:

Sue Doner (Instructional Designer: doners@camosun.ca ) or  
Erynne Grant (Copyright Advisor: grante@camosun.ca)

- Sue Doner





# Is 'Union' a Bad Word?

In 2016, I completed an elective in my Masters, entitled *Global Labour Education*. The following excerpt from one of my papers was my "aha moment" that pushed me into activism.



## Engineered apathy

A century ago, most wage-earners viewed themselves as members of the working class. An increased emphasis on business management created a separation of blue and white collar workers – factory workers with minimal education requirements (blue collar) and office workers with increasingly mandatory credentials (white collar workers). Socio-economic factors added an element of race to these groups, as education was more readily accessible to the latter group. Merlyn (p.5) notes that when economic and labour conditions improve, positive identification with working class decreases. Education requirements for employment created a sense of elitism within the office group – despite the fact that they

have continued to be wage-earners who are required to comply with the terms of their employer. This lack (or loss) of class recognition is significant because it has weakened the perceived need for activism within that community of workers. It is no coincidence that labour activism declined as neoliberal policies took root. Through systematic changes to education at all levels, government and business have engineered an environment of apathy in the general population.

At the onset of this period when class consciousness began to wane, the labour movement was focused on providing training in the tools and skills of stewardship due to the legislation and rapid development of collective agreements. The need for strike action had dissipated, along with the urgency for activism. As government funding of union activity diminished, the priorities of unions shifted to the lower hanging fruit of steward training for the new swells of members. In recent years, new distractions of the effects of globalism and technology in the workplace have taken priority for union business, along with neoliberal policies that further disintegrated job security in the 1980s and 90s.

## Keys to trade union revitalization

There are sensible, proven methods to revitalize trade unions through labour education. It's essential that participants grasp the \*why\* of labour education, including economic and political history, to increase awareness. Sawchuk (p.49) suggests a holistic approach to pedagogy, where the left and right sides of the brain are provoked. Zullo and Gates (p.184) support experiential learning through Freirian pedagogy as the foundation for 'learning and collective action'. By drawing on experiences of oppression, community is created. Perhaps the language of labour education should shift from 'working class' to 'working people'. This small but meaningful change may help tap into a more recognizable persona for people who do not self-identify with more traditional views of blue-collar work.

- Val Montague



## References

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- Sawchuk, P. H. (2006): Labor Education and Labor Art: The Hidden Potential of Knowing for the Left Hand. *Labor Studies Journal*, 31(2), 49-68.
- Zullo, R., Gates, A. (2008). Labor Education in the Time of Dismay. *Labor Studies Journal*, 33(2), 179-202.

# Glad to Be United

*"With all their faults, trade-unions have done more for humanity than any other organization of men that ever existed."*

Clarence Darrow

As the CCFA Contract Negotiating Committee prepares for the next round of negotiations, I have had reason to contemplate the purpose and value of unions. I have served the CCFA in several ways, and I have been motivated to do so partly because of self-interest (after all, better working conditions for all means better working conditions for me) but largely because I have faith in and appreciation for what unions have accomplished, what they protect, and what they value.

In our field, where we expect and usually receive respect for our work, some people are uncertain of the value of a union. Some think they would be better able to pursue individual advantages if they were allowed to go solo, and maybe some few would. Still, most people know that even in this environment, employers (especially public employers) do not usually grant increased rights or compensation at a whim. Usually, they offer concessions or improvements because they have something to gain and/or the legal requirement to bargain in good faith. A few rounds of negotiations have shown me this. Thankfully, in our little world, both union and employer tend to make relatively reasonable proposals, but I maintain that if employees were aware of the gains the employer seeks in each round, they'd be thanking the fates that they are union members. Some, I know, already are.



The gains made, or losses resisted, in bargaining are not, however, the only reason I support unions. When it comes to daily working conditions, unions take on the task of ensuring that where employment rules are violated, employees have fair and unbiased representation. The BC Labour Code states that "A trade union or council of trade unions must not act in a manner that is arbitrary, discriminatory or in bad faith." This does not mean that the union must agree with everything one of its members says or wants. However, it does mean that the union cannot refuse to investigate a complaint because they don't like someone or because they have a covert interest in misrepresenting them. What's more, employers listen more carefully and act more swiftly when dealing with a mandated representative. At least, that's what I've seen on the job.

Good faith bargaining and fair representation are to me essential to a society that recognizes the dignity of the worker. But my gratitude for the union and my faith in its value really boil down to my regard for the potential of a healthy community. A community's health can be judged by its solidarity, which often requires valuing the interests of the many over the interests of the few. Happily, these two categories usually coincide, but when they don't, a union has the responsibility to consider both the nature and the extent of potential risks and benefits, to consider what will do the most good to the most people (leaving aside catastrophic harm to the few, but that's another issue). From what I've seen, the union approaches this work with sincerity and logic. Nothing is perfect, but in a world that seems to be corrupted and exhausted by conflicting personal interests, I am glad to be part of a group that sees itself as moving ahead together.

- Kelly Pitman

(This is NOT Kelly Pitman. No known photo of Kelly Pitman exists, so instead we've used a photo of Ginger Goodwin.)



# SD Ideas Exchange

Before you head off for a well-deserved vacation, why not get a head start on thinking about your SD activities for 2019? On December 11th we are hosting an opportunity to get together with other faculty from across the college to share ideas about possible SD projects.

- ⇒ Are you not sure what you want to do for your SD time?
- ⇒ Do you have some thoughts about something you might like to pursue, but wonder where to start?
- ⇒ Would you love to collaborate with other faculty on a project but don't know how to find colleagues with a common interest?
- ⇒ Are you just curious about what others might be up to and looking to get inspired?

Join us for an afternoon of collegial dialogue. Hear from some fellow faculty members about collaborative SD projects that have occurred and check out a list of suggested activities. Creatively brainstorm and explore possibilities. Get a peek at the new SD Connect platform (called Faculty Connect). Meet others and get inspired!

This activity is a collaboration between CETL (Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning) and the JCSD (Joint Committee on Scheduled Development, which has representatives from the Faculty Association and from Administration).  
December 11, 1:30pm-4:00pm; Lansdowne, LLC 151

- Martha McAlister

## Manulife Drugwatch

Have you noticed a prescription medication that used to be covered but isn't any longer? Our benefits provider, Manulife, has implemented something called DrugWatch. If over the past couple of years you've noticed a change in what our extended health benefits cover, or a prescription that you think should be covered but isn't, please let me know by emailing me at [jankunisf@camosun.bc.ca](mailto:jankunisf@camosun.bc.ca).

- Frank Jankunis



## Local Love



For thirty plus years I have had the privilege to work in a post-secondary environment. That's two different cities and three different institutions. All have had long and wonderful connections to the community they serve and work in. All three have also had deep connections with their local United Way organizations. Why? Because they know the donations raised stay local and have an impact.

I am privileged again to work on this year's Camosun College United Way 2018 Campaign and know that donations made will go to help those in the greater Victoria and Gulf Islands region. It's not hard to "Show your Local Love" – bid on one of our wonderful on-line auction items. Purchase a 50/50 ticket from a committee member, or more importantly sign up to become a payroll donor. For the price of a latte a month you can make a difference right here at home.

Just added to the UW online auction: [https://](https://www.camosuncollegebookstore.ca/uwauction.asp)

[www.camosuncollegebookstore.ca/uwauction.asp](https://www.camosuncollegebookstore.ca/uwauction.asp)

Four tickets - Slovakia vs Sweden Game on Tuesday, December 27th (afternoon game 15:30)

Thank You! - Al Morrison



# Spotlight on Professional Development

The PD Committee has been busy this fall at their regular biweekly meetings, approving 53 short-term and in-house PD activities so far since September and has conducted its yearly review of the PD Guidelines and forms. Unlike the Committee's busiest time in the spring when, for instance, the Committee reviewed a record 52 applications at one meeting, the fall is typically the slowest time of the year for PD applications since most faculty members are teaching. This gives the Committee necessary time for the yearly review. The updated PD Guidelines are now complete and are posted on the CCFA website for your use: <http://camosunfaculty.ca/professional-development/pd-forms/> Your PD Committee and CCFA Administrative Services Coordinators deserve a hearty round of applause and great thanks for the work that they do. The PD Committee members, representing all schools in the College, volunteer their time for the Committee work, so they are engaged in this above their regular College work. In addition, the Committee includes two exempt members who also contribute to the work. The Committee members take their mandate in 10.02 of the Collective Agreement to "receive and assess the merits of all requests for use of professional development funds and [to] direct the Bursar in the allocation of the funds" very seriously, so the CCFA faculty members can be confident that the PD funds are in good hands. Peg Ford and Autumn Frimann also ensure that the PD budget is in good order, that individual applications are recorded, and that they are processed through Finance in a timely manner.

- Blair Fisher



## Long-Term PD

Long-term Application Deadline is:

**Noon, January 25, 2019 submissions to Y221**

For faculty members who are intending to apply for Long-Term Professional Development for the next fiscal year (April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019), please note the application deadline above and other relevant information below:

### PD Guidelines and Application Forms:

The Long-Term PD application forms have been updated, so please use the most recent forms. If you have questions about this, please contact Peg Ford or Autumn Frimann. If you are planning or considering planning a new long-term PD Application please take time to meet with Blair Fisher [fisherb@camosun.ca](mailto:fisherb@camosun.ca) (local: 3335) or with Peg or Autumn in Y221 to discuss the process and allow us to anticipate the number of applications we will be receiving.



## FPSE- Professional Development & Scholarly Activity Committee

This Committee meets twice yearly to discuss issues, concerns and successes in the use and allocation of professional development funds as well as informs practices for the common and individual bargaining agents at each of our twenty-two member institutions. This year we have been researching employees' rights to release and funding when doing applied research projects, the scope and use of PD funds, and a working definition of scholarly activity.

**Upcoming dates for PD Meetings:**

December 4, 18, January 8, 22.



## Your 2018-19 Executive

<a href="#"><u>Chris Ayles</u></a>	A&S	President
<a href="#"><u>Susanne Thiessen</u></a>	BUS	Vice President
<a href="#"><u>Frank Jankunis</u></a>	A&S	Contract Management Chair
<a href="#"><u>Valerie Montague</u></a>	T&T	Contract Negotiation Chair
<a href="#"><u>Janice Shewey</u></a>	A&S	Secretary
<a href="#"><u>Katie Waterhouse</u></a>	A&S	Treasurer
<a href="#"><u>Blair Fisher</u></a>	A&S	PD Committee Chair
<a href="#"><u>Al Morrison</u></a>	BUS	Member At Large
<a href="#"><u>Darren Alexander</u></a>	ACCESS	Member At Large (Term)

### CCFA Administrative Services

Our Y221 office is open Monday-Friday

Phone: 250-370-3655

[Peg Ford](#)      FordP@camosun.bc.ca

[Autumn Frimann](#)      FrimannA@camosun.bc.ca

Please visit our [CCFA website](http://www.camosunfaculty.ca) at [www.camosunfaculty.ca](http://www.camosunfaculty.ca)