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The Newsletter Formerly Known as "The Educator"

Hi Everyone,

So we're giving this newsletter another go, but notice that it is yet to be named!

We invite all faculty to try their hands at coming up with a groovy new name for the CCFA Newsletter and submitting it to us.

The person who comes up with the best name wins EITHER a bottle of wine (colour your choice) OR a box of chocolates. Good deal, I think.

This newsletter is open to all faculty – you can submit articles, letters to the editor, photographs, project/SD descriptions, book /movie reviews, or anything else in which you think your colleagues might be interested.

This inaugural edition of The Newsletter Formerly Known as "The Educator" features an article by John Boehme, Visual Arts Instructor, on his participation in a performance art event: Infracution Venice ; an article on wage disparity, by Darryl Ainsley; a report from Nicole Kilburn, regarding her participation in San Francisco's half marathon; committee updates from both Carole May and Al Morrison ; an interview with Jodi Lungren and Kari Jones, two authors in the English department; and our own Erin Willcox has contributed an article on bullying and workplace conflict.

Enjoy, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Bronwen.

Help us Name the CCFA Newsletter:

Send us your idea for a name for the CCFA Newsletter and you could win a bottle of wine or a box of chocolates. Submission Deadline is December 15. Members will vote on the best name and the winner will be announced in our Winter 2012 Issue.

Send your entries to: Erin Willcox: willcox@camosun.bc.ca

Shouldering the Burden?

Bronwen Welch, CCFA President



These days, it seems to me, that in this climate of “doing more with less,” we are all of us, students, faculty, and staff, burning out, slowly but surely. Partly this is due to workload, but I would venture a guess that at least half of the weariness we are feeling is because we feel disenfranchised and overlooked.

Both faculty and students have been doing “more with less” for the last eleven years. The difficulty with this economically parsimonious atmosphere is that it produces a certain grim determination in all of us to pull up our socks, chip in, and help make the college run as smoothly as possible (despite the fact that every year departments are told to cut back three to five percent). I am a sucker for this kind of Spartan, self-sacrificing attitude myself. I admit to a sneaking suspicion that without my efforts, and my efforts alone, the college will crumble into an underfunded pile of rubble (I am kidding—sort of). So faculty teach “nested” classes, organize “independent studies” classes (without extra pay or release time), and habitually overload their classes.

Many of us feel that in an environment such as this, with courses and programs being cut, we must not allow the students to suffer. Students need these classes, these programs, these scheduled time slots. Our students work so hard. Almost all of them have jobs (some full-time) and a lot of them have families of their own. We all want students to receive the kind of education they signed up for. The kind of education everyone is entitled to. So we shoulder the burden.

Over the last fifteen months or so, I have shifted my position somewhat.

Now, don’t misunderstand me, please. As an instructor I am just as commit-

ted to our students, and just as committed to this institution as I ever have been—but the more I hear from faculty as a group, and as individuals, the more I realize how stoic and exhausted we all really are. So I ask myself this question: how can we change the current system if we do not, occasionally, severely inconvenience others? This would mean saying no, making our displeasure felt, and even, hard as it is, perhaps making a nuisance of ourselves by inconveniencing others. Truly, this makes my blood run cold.

Approximately seventy percent of BC taxpayers support paying more taxes towards higher education. Yet the College has been forced to respond to funding shortfalls by offering Adult Basic Education courses at a “100” level so that tuition can be charged for these courses. In combination with reductions in ABE-SAP funding, this will reduce access to ABE, which in turn will result in reduced access to our remaining programming. We have over ten thousand full-time students, and we have over twenty programs with waitlists, and yet we have nowhere to put these students. We can turn them away from individual classes and whole programs; or, conversely, we can overload our classes.

So what is the result of our altruistic impulses? A few individual students are assisted, for a semester or two, but, arguably, the academic climate worsens. If students get what they need, neither students, nor parents, nor the general public has any idea the extent of the funding crisis in education.

In her article, “Wall Street Postcard: Preoccupied,” New Yorker columnist Lizzie Widdicombe illustrates how the Occupy Wall Street movement is inconveniencing local business:

Deutsche Bank employees were having black cars pick them up blocks away from the office; New York stock exchange workers were tak-

ing round-about routes to the trading floors; and the Brooks Brothers at the corner of Trinity Place and Liberty Street had given up hope of selling ties on the weekends. “Something good will come of it, don’t get me wrong,” a Brooks Brothers manager said of the movement. “But it’s not good for business.” [i]

This individual is correct.—spot on, in my opinion. However, I might just ask him/her to be a bit more specific: something good will come of it; it is not good for business; and, ironically, the fact that it is not good for business means something good will come of it.

We hate to disappoint students, yet we will continue to disappoint them more and more if we continue to apply a band-aid solution to this current educational crisis. The government will not pay attention if we continue to make the current unworkable system function by overloading classes and overworking faculty and staff.

How do we do this? For starters, we can stop by temporarily not accommodating a few students, and thus give them a concrete reason to complain, to protest, to occupy.

Inconvenience gets noticed. Shouldering the burden does not.

[i] Street Post Card” Preoccupied.” New Yorker. 44 Oct 2011: 22-23. Print.

FPSE Non Regular Faculty Committee Update



Al Morrison, School of Business

Meetings of the FPSE Non-Regular Faculty Committee (NRFC) take place once a semester in Vancouver. At the first meeting we are encouraged to become involved in other FPSE committees to ensure the NRFC voice is represented; I have chosen to participate on the Contract Administration Review Committee (CARC)...that now equates to two meetings a semester.

The NRFC meetings include representatives from BC public and private post-secondary institutions. All representatives provide updates on the state of fair and secure employment for their non-regular members.

It is apparent that there is quite a variance on the level of support that non-regular faculty receive from their “home” institution, but one thing that is common among us is the need to continue to push our institutions towards a fairer system of compensation; a system that moves away from the current system of secondary scales.

At our meetings, we share our stories and collectively work towards strategies that will lead to full benefits and contractual support programs for all non-regular faculty across the province. One example being the communication campaign that takes place during Fair Employment Week.

Joining our recent meeting was repre-

sentation from the UBCCFA, BCITC-FA, TSSU (Teaching and Support Staff Union), and the Olympic FA (Washington State). This sets the stage for future opportunities to “bring into the tent” other like-minded organizations.

I would invite any members of the CCFA to contact me should you have questions regarding my experience on the FPSE NRF Committee.

Cheers,

Al
morrisona@camosun.bc.ca

Negotiating Chair's Views

Darryl Ainsley, CCFA CNC Chair

I have written previously about the increasing disparity of resources directed to faculty on the one hand and administration on the other. There are no shortages of interesting comparisons, but here are a few:

- Between 2004 and 2009, the average salary of exempt employees rose by a total of 14.1%. In that same time the average salary of faculty rose by a total of 10.2%. More egregious was the fact that in 2008 and 2009, the average salary increase of the highest earning exempt employees was 7.2% per year.
- Between 2004 and 2009, the total cost of faculty salaries increased by 13.6%. Over the same period, the total cost of exempt salaries increased by 34.0%.
- Between 2000 and 2009, the number of exempt employees increased by 46.8%. Over the same period, the

number of faculty increased by 12.1%. It's worth noting that in this period the number of students rose by 69.7%.

I'll pause here to let you absorb the last figure. Yes, an increase of 12.1% in faculty served an increase of 69.7% in students.

In fairness and in answer to a few questions directed my way, I should note that the salaries of the Executive group did not increase between 2009-10 and 2010-11 (which are the latest figures). Of course, the salaries of faculty members also did not increase in that time.

Numbers, numbers, numbers. In brief, the shortage of resources at Camosun College is in part a redistribution of resources of the sort that is currently protested by the Occupation protests. Well, there are a number of messages from the Occupation protests, but that's another

article.

So, is there a redistribution of resources in our province and in our country? If one looks at taxation in this province, it would certainly appear so. A recent report from The Canadian Centre of Policy Alternatives (CCPA) supports the view that there has been a shift in taxation in British Columbia over the past ten years.

The shift began in 2001 with a 25% reduction in personal income tax rates and a three percentage point reduction in the corporate tax rate. This has resulted in a reduction by one third of the proportion of tax revenues collected through personal income tax. At the same time, the proportion of revenues from regressive sources—sales tax, MSP premiums, the carbon tax—has increased.



All this has changed tax fairness in British Columbia. In 2000, taxation was neither strongly regressive (i.e. with the poor paying a higher proportion of their income on tax) or progressive (i.e. with the rich paying a higher proportion): the poorest 10% paid approximately 19% of their income in various taxes and the richest 1% paid just over 16% of their income. However, by 2010, BC's tax system was substantially regressive: the poorest 10% paid just under 18% of their income in taxes while the richest 1% paid approximately 11%. In fact, the tax system is steadily regressive throughout the range of incomes.

That's a surprising finding. We presume that the wealthiest should pay a greater proportion of their income in taxes. We presume this because they have the means to do so. However, it goes beyond this. As Linda McQuaig and Neil Brooks argue in their 2010 book *The Trouble with Billionaires*, the wealthiest benefit most from public expenditures bought through tax revenue. It is impossible to accumulate much wealth at all without the support of infrastructure and laws governing property, contracts, banking,

stock exchanges, copyright, not to mention the extensive resources used for enforcement of these laws. If they benefit the most, one supposes that the wealthiest ought to pay with a greater proportion of their income. It's not so. In fact, it's the reverse.

Back to British Columbia. According to the previously-mentioned CCPA report, in 2000/01, BC's tax revenues were 11.6% of Gross Domestic Product while in 2010/11, tax revenues dropped to 9.9% of GDP. All of this amounts to a reduction in revenue of \$3.4 billion. In other words, if the government had collected the same share of our economy in taxes as they did in 2000, we would be in a substantially different fiscal situation.

The provincial government has been strikingly effective in selling the message that when it comes to public sector bargaining, we all have to share in the pain because resources are few. Thus, the "zero, zero" mandate, quite possibly followed by more zero mandates. However, analyses such as those produced by the CCPA and by McQuaig and Brooks, among many others, lead to a different

conclusion: there has been an accelerating redistribution of wealth away from the poor and away from the middle class. This is not consistent with a just society and, as it turns out, it leads to a very bad economy for all.

So, I don't buy the province's message. Our wage proposals in bargaining are reasonable and in fact would only partially address the growing gap between our wages and those of post-secondary faculty members across the country. They represent no more than what the private sector is getting. University and College faculty members have made a very serious investment in their skills and should be compensated accordingly. After all, as BC Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair pointed out at our recent FPSE bargaining conference, our wealth is created in great part through our labour in providing necessary skills to people. It is hard to grow the economy if there is no one to build bridges, manage stocks, and, well, write property laws.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Bronwen,

I just want to give you some positive feedback...the term faculty I have taken out for coffee/muffins have truly appreciated this gesture. I was able to take the time and have a nice chat with each of them. It was a great time to support their teaching and other needs. It was also an opportunity to really get to know them on a social level too. I highly recommend we do this again next year! Count me in!

Thanks again,

Mary Mavretic, Nursing, Continuing Faculty

Letters to the editor should be directed to either Bronwen Welch at welchb@camosun.bc.ca or Erin Willcox at willcox@camosun.bc.ca

Inaugural meeting of the B.C. Association of Educational Assessment Professionals

Carole May, English Placement Counsellor

On September 29, 2011, Carole May, English Placement Counsellor for the Assessment Centre and Kathryn Foster, Co-ordinator of the Assessment Centre, attended the inaugural meeting of the B.C. Association of Educational Assessment Professionals held in Kamloops, B.C. Cindy James of Thompson Rivers University hosted the meeting at TRU. Representatives from Vancouver Island University, University of the Fraser Valley, College of the Rockies, Selkirk College, Thompson Rivers University, and Camosun College attended. North Island College and Kwantlen Polytechnic University assessment representatives sent contributions. In the

first part of the meeting, each participant presented an overview of assessment in her respective institute. Clearly, the various practices and policies in place reflect the differences in institutional culture and context. In the second half of the day, Kathie Montagnese, College Board Senior Assessment Manager for Canada, gave participants an informative presentation of Accuplacer Diagnostics and its fit with My Foundations Lab from Pearson Education. This approach provides a complete package for remedial diagnosis. First, the tools diagnose areas students need to work on and then customize a path of subsequent work required—all testing and course work done com-

pletely online for a very reasonable price. Accuplacer has designed these new tools for students in post-secondary settings. Accuplacer Diagnostics, partnered with My Foundations Lab, will launch in January 2012. At the end of this first meeting, everyone agreed the new association is a welcome one and should serve the province and post-secondary education well. Next year's meeting will be held at Vancouver Island University.

Nicole Kiburn reports back after her 1/2 Marathon in San Francisco

Erin Willcox, the CCFA admin assistant supported Nicole Kilburn on her recent run in San Francisco. Here is her letter back to the inquiry about how it went:

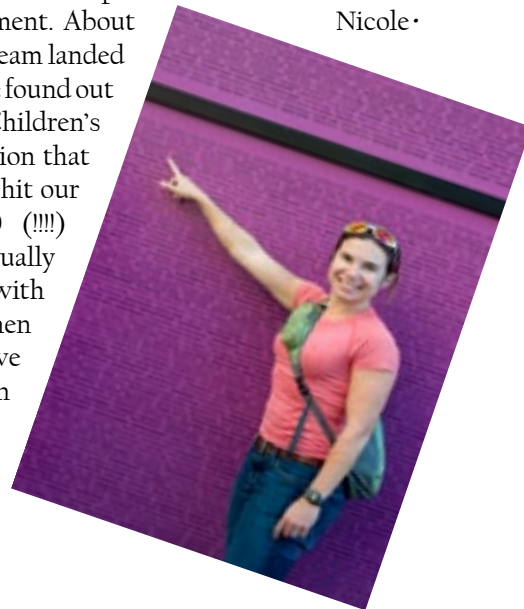
Erin,

Your two names covered over 21km in my run yesterday (plus several days prior to that of walking around San Fran, what a city!!). The henna faded as I sweat, surprisingly enough, but it was kind of fitting to think about shedding the names as I went, leaving them along this incredibly beautiful course. It was an amazing experience personally and as a team. I had 2 CCFA members connect with me through the CCFA community page, which was good. Interestingly enough, I don't know either of them and they are both at the Interurban campus.

They, along with you and a whole host of others, helped me reach my \$4500 total about a week ago, which was awesome and I am very proud of that personal accomplishment. About 2 hours after our team landed in SF on Friday we found out through the BC Children's Hospital Foundation that as a team we had hit our total of \$45,000 (!!!!) and it now is actually at over \$46000, with just 9 of us! When the text came in we were cheering on the street and going nuts, it was really exciting. I had a great run, although

the course was quite hilly, and am now really stiff and grateful that I can sit for the rest of the day in my office and mark.

Nicole •



Change Starts Here: Labour and the United Way

Wendy Magahay, CECT



What's the Labour Connection? United Way and organized labour have a long history of working together. Both organizations are committed to the collective good. For United Ways, it's in our communities, while for labour, it's for working men and women. But both movements also understand that workers live in communities and communities depend on workers. Not surprisingly, both movements see many of the same faces.

In 1988, United Way of Canada signed a formal partnership agreement with the Canadian Labour Congress, the largest umbrella organization of unions and other labour bodies in Canada, representing over three million members. The partnership agreement, which includes the Statement of Principles, was updated in 1999 and is aimed at providing a context for both organizations to work toward goals we hold in common, while respecting our different approaches and structures.

Why should I give? As Labour members we enjoy liveable wages and benefits that many in our communities do not. You do not have to look far to see those in our communities who struggle with addiction, hunger, homelessness, mental illness, and other issues. Sometimes it's just a matter of looking down the corridor of where we work or to our network of friends and neighbours.

What does Camosun do? For more than 15 years Camosun College has shared a similar partnership with the United Way of Greater Victoria. Each year the College provides a Loaned Representative to the campaign on a 4-month secondment. Actions like this help keep the campaign's overhead costs at a very low

14% ensuring that the funds so generously given go to where they are needed. The college also runs a successful campaign each year: in 2008 winning the Spirit Award for Labour and in 2010 winning both the Spirit Award for Engagement and Education and the hotly contested Post-Secondary Challenge (having greater campaign participation than our colleagues at UVIC and RRU).

Seen the new pledge form? This local partnership is seen even more clearly when you look at this year's pledge form. Look at the upper right corner and you'll see there is now a place for donors to identify if they are a member of a union and to specify which one. This is one more step in reaffirming the UW: Labour connection.

What's the goal? For 2011 the college's goal is \$90,000 and a 20% increase in participation and working together I am confident that we can reach those goals and continue to change the future for the tens of thousands of our neighbours and colleagues whose lives are made better, stronger and healthier through the community partners of the United Way.

Where does the money go? Every dollar stays in the community. Last year, 128,000 people in the Greater Victoria region were helped by United Way and 69 community partners who deliver 132 programs and services to our community's most vulnerable people. The United Way has conducted community consultations with donors, volunteers, partners and the general public to make sure that they are addressing the community's key concerns. The results are three impact areas where United Way will focus funding. I can think of no better investment in the health and well-being of our community than these:

All that Kids Can Be: Supporting children and youth with the resources and

opportunities they need to grow up healthy and to achieve well-being

Healthy People, Strong Communities: Developing the capacity of people to care for themselves and their families and build an inclusive community

From Poverty to Possibility: Building people's capacity to move toward self sufficiency and well-being

What difference could just a few bucks a pay make?

- \$5 a pay provides a front door for a new home for a family without safe and secure housing
- \$10 a pay provides 5 emergency food vouchers for a single parent family in crisis
- \$20 a pay provides boots, overalls, traffic vest, hard hat, masks and gloves for two homeless people to help them get their first construction job
- \$35 a pay provides a 6 week prenatal education course for pregnant parents
- \$50 a pay provides 6 months of therapy for a child who has been sexually abused

How can I give? Just fill out the pledge form you received and return it to Terry Sandwith in Finance. Didn't get a pledge form? Contact Finance and they can let you know where you can download one. The campaign runs until November 25 and every dollar really does make a difference.

Thank you. Working together Change Starts Here.

Wendy Magahay has been a CCFA member since 1998. She has served as Camosun's Loaned Representative to the United Way campaign, the 2010 campaign chair and currently sits as the Education Division Chair on the 2011 Campaign Cabinet.

There are writers lurking everywhere

Bronwen Welch, English Instructor

At this time of year, the November blahs have set in: perhaps not as intense as the blues, but every bit as incapacitating. As the days fold us into their wet, gray folds, we must be good to ourselves: eat nourishing soups, wear cheerful socks, buy ourselves flowers, or meet up with two vibrant, enthusiastic writers, who seem to have access to a sort of well-spring of creative energy and optimism despite being busy term instructors.

Jodi Lungren is the author of *Touched*, a novel detailing a young woman's descent into mental illness; her second novel, *Leap*, is a coming of age story about a young dancer. She also teaches full time as a partially continuing instructor in the English department, vibrating back and forth between Lansdowne and Interurban campuses.

Kari Jones' novel, *Storm Tide*, chronicles the adventures of a young boy and his lighthouse-keeping family on Discovery Island; She has also contributed to *Wild with Child*, a collection of short stories; and co-wrote *Hiking Adventures With Children*, a guide to organizing hiking trips with children. Her forthcoming children's novel, *Out of Season*, will be out in Spring 2012. In addition to her writing, Kari manages to teach three sections of English 150.

The following is an interview I did with Kari and Jodi:

B.W.: Is it a challenge being a practicing, published writer, and yet teach, primarily, academic writing?

J.L.: I do think any kind of writing is creative. Maybe most students do not consider themselves "writers," per se, but they want to use creativity as a tool in their academic writing.



J.L.: Also, up at Interurban campus, I teach a Sports Management cohort and also an Exercise and Wellness cohort. My most recent book is about dance, and these students are athletes; I can tie in the two disciplines, writing and athletics, so it works for the students.

K.J.: I teach Sports cohorts as well, and these students are really energetic—they are really open to creative writing exercises where they work in groups. Sports and Wellness students are really interested in working together on projects—on being cooperative and teambuilding. Plus, when you base a classroom atmosphere on camaraderie, students are more engaged and creative, and you will also be a more engaging teacher. You just have to keep an eye on things, as it can get pretty enthusiastic in the classroom!

B.W.: How do you introduce yourselves to students? Do you tell them you are a published writer?

J.L.: I tend not to announce that I am a published writer—at least not in my academic writing classes. I don't want to intimate the students—especially if they are not enrolled as "writing" students.

KJ: I announce to them I am published. It helps me cope with my "imposter syndrome" (laughs). I know this isn't rational.

JL: Overtime, you do cease to feel like an imposter.

BW: (eagerly, and with a touch of desperation) How so?

JL: External validation always helps! (laughs) It is great when you are recognized by your institution as being good at what you do. I was a writer in residence at Thomson Rivers University; it felt amazing to be hired into that position—to know I was trusted and recognized as an artist.

B.W.: Okay, so here is an important question from a Faculty Association Perspective: do you think that Regularization helps with developing and maintaining creativity?

JL: Yes! You waste a lot of time worrying as a term instructor, not to mention prepping at the last minute. Regular instructors have so much more opportunity to be creative. You can take field trips with students and bring in guests, because you have time to actually look ahead and plan.

KJ: Yes, Time and Creativity are great

mates. As a writer, I am always struggling for time. Teaching is so rewarding, but it uses up so much energy and time. I have thought a lot about how creative writing and teaching work together. Sometimes they suck energy away from each other, and sometimes they energize each other. It's wonderful to have an engaging job, and I am so grateful for that, but I find myself writing in the corners – like over Christmas break.

JL: The College should encourage professional writers to actually write—both in terms of creative and academic writing. Having published writers teaching only makes the program that much more professional. The reputation of the program really goes up—students want to be taught by professional writers.

KJ: We can show them the process of actually getting a book published and then actually produce the book. But it would be nice to have paid time to write and publish.

JL: It also helps to be a professional

writer because you can demonstrate to students the importance of the editing process. My book needed a lot of revisions before it went to publication. I wasn't offended – it was just part of the process. Students are very resistant to making any changes to their work – but I tell them they won't last a minute as writers if they aren't willing to revise. I don't think it is a sustainable vision to just teach writing without actually going through the writing, editing, and publishing process yourself -- you might lose sight of the current challenges and changes in the field.

BW: So, you are both saying that some Schedules Development time would be nice? I know that a number of administrators wonder about the relevance of SD time...

JL: But SD time is essential as an instructor! You can't really keep up with current publications and research if you don't have those two months!

KJ: It seems to me that SD is impera-

tive if we want Camosun's programs to be innovative and cutting edge. We are practicing professionals – we can model that to students—but we need the time to work at the very professions we are training students to enter.

BW: Thank you both so much for this. I recognize that you are both frantically busy right now.

KJ and JL: Thank you!

Join us for the next CCFA General Meeting:
Friday, November 25, 2011 at Interurban. Watch your
email for an invitation with room details!

Share your views on the Strategic Plan
Join the discussion about the possibility of a CCFA
Discussion forum
The Meeting will be followed by a wine & cheese open
to all faculty.

Venice from Victoria

John Boehme, Visual Arts



I was recently invited to participate in a Performance Art event: *Infraction Venice* in Venice, Italy during the Preview days of the Venice Biennale. I was able to dedicate three full days to visiting the 54th Venice Biennale, it was not enough time to catch everything, but allowed for an overview.

If you haven't heard about the biennale circuit, here is a brief outline: there are about 250 biennales around the world (most of them put together by the same 25 celebrity curators, drawing from the same pool of 100 or so artists). The Venice Biennale was founded in 1895 and is considered the most important. There are 29 country-specific pavilions that make up the Giardini. Scores more are scattered across the city or clustered in the Arsenale, the old shipyards of Venice. A total of 89 countries participated this year, the highest number to date.

The 54th Venice Biennale opened to the public on June 4 with the award ceremony; however, the real activities started May 31st when the doors opened for what are called the "preview days". These days are specifically for the press, major contributors and funders, as well as art dealers, collectors, and other dignitaries. Preview days have a fevered carnivalesque atmosphere with long lines at important pavilions and people carrying bags and merchandise from each pavilion (I was up to 18 bags). The other parallel events that occur during this time are the parties and receptions that are scattered throughout the city of Venice. Jon Tupper, the Director of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and the President of the Museums Association as well as the co-commissioner of the 2001 Golden Lion winning Canadian Pavilion made a few tremendous suggestions about things to

do in Venice during the opening days.

I intend to give a brief overview of some of the works that stood out at the Giardini, Arsenale and collateral events throughout the city.

The US Pavillon featured an overturned army tank topped with a treadmill: part of Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla's exhibition "Gloria." Every 15 minutes, a runner climbed up for a jog as the machine kicked into mad, futile action, making a terrible, clunking racket which permeated the grounds and beyond. The exhibit includes six new works of sculpture, video, sound, and performance including professional gymnasts performing on carved wooden replicas of executive class airline seats (see images below) visitors are also welcome to make use of the fully operational ATM organ that disperses cash.



Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla, *Bodies in Flight* (American), 2011, stained wood, gymnasts chord to the heavens while dispensing cash.

The Egyptian Pavilion is one of the most emotional exhibitions in Venice, paying tribute to Ahmed Basyony, an artist and musician who was killed by snipers in Tahrir Square. Curated by Aida Eltorie and Shady El Noshokaty, "Thirty Days of Running in the Place" is a five-screen video installation that randomly shuffles documentation from one of Basyony's performances with footage he shot during the protests in Tahrir. Although it runs the risk of capitalizing on a colleague's death, it comes across as an exploration of what the body will endure.



The Polish pavilion featured a slick political trilogy of films: "And Europe Will Be Stunned," by Israeli artist Yael Bartana. Bartana's films imagine the formation of a political party whose mission is the return of more than three million Jews from Israel to Europe. Based on the notion that "there are no chosen people", the films follow the creation of the party, its rhetoric and its visual symbols (many of which have disturbingly fascist overtones). Bartana's endeavor is an experimental form of collective psychotherapy, that tackles prejudice, resentment, history and myth, deconstructing the mechanisms of propaganda along the way.

The British Pavilion featured an immersive installation by Mike Nelson. Transforming the tearoom of a building into a maze of interconnected backrooms of the sort you might find in a Venetian

workshop or a Turkish slum. Tools and benches, concrete floors and strip lighting, filthy mattresses and ancient trellis glowing in the windowless gloom, the atmosphere reflects impoverished and unseen lives. Each mise en scène is conspicuously designed to evoke claustrophobia, bewilderment and unease. Nelson exceeds the spectacle of his flawless craftsmanship to transport one to another chamber of the mind.



Mike Nelson, I, Impostor, 2011, interior detail

German Pavilion. The Golden Lion winner for best National Participation went to Germany's theater director, filmmaker offered work by Christoph Schlingensiefel who died last August at fifty- one while developing a project for the Biennale. Following Schlingensiefel's death, the curator and the artist's wife and collaborator Aino Laberenz, decided that instead of realizing his work in progress (which existed only as sketches), they would consult others close to him to assemble past projects in a manner representative of his practice. The main space of the pavilion re-created A Church of Fear vs. the Alien Within, an installation based on the church Schlingensiefel himself attended as a child, coupled with sculptural elements, film, and video to produce a dark and unnerving Guillermo Gomez Pena type of theatrical atmosphere evoking questions of life, illness and death.



Christoph Schlingensiefel, A Church of Fear vs. the Alien Within, 2011, installation view

Canadian Pavillion: As it was my first foray into the Biennale scene I thought it was important to take in all the Canada has to offer from the opening ceremonies of the Canadian Pavilion to the Canadian reception that evening. To summarize my experience of these events as a whole would be far too boring, forgettable and conservative for an event of such international stature so I will quote Milena Placentile writer living in Winnipeg. She is Akimblog's Winnipeg correspondent. Who has far more tact than I do:

"Squeezed between the British and German pavilions is Canada. Oh Canada, what happened? Steven Shearer is a darling of the international scene, ...many international colleagues asking me to explain the pavilion, I tried hard to find positive aspects, yet all I could muster was the idea that a once-in-a-lifetime site-specific project, instead of a conservatively-presented gathering of commercially viable creations, could have been far more compelling."



Steven Shearer, 2011, installation view

The Danish Pavilion was titled Pavilion for Revolutionary Free Speech, by Thomas Kilpper and backed onto the awards site and was an ideal viewing platform for the opening ceremony. The pavilion was a group show which addressed freedom of speech and presented many interesting works. It was too crowded to see everything carefully, but Taryn Simon's photography stood out, particularly Zahra/Farah depicting Iraqi actress Zahra Zubaidi in the role of Farah in Brian DePalma's film Redacted based on the true account of a fourteen year old Iraqi girl raped and murdered by US soldiers in 2006.



Taryn Simon, Zahra/Farah, 2007, chromogenic print

The Austrian Pavilion featured the work of Markus Schinwald who negotiates the representation and manipulation of space, time, light, and shadow. He not only alters our experience of space through a moment of disturbance, but also uses the pavilion's architecture and history with all its ruptures, rifts, and blemishes making it his subject. Through the use of suspended walls Schinwald forces visitors to consider the significance of human legs in body language. The Pavilion was proved one of the highlights during the opening week of the Biennale.



Markus Schinwald, Orient, 2011, video

Swiss Pavilion: Thomas Hirshhorn's Crystal of Resistance was built with packing tape, silver foil, q-tips, and polystyrene. It was compelling, shocking, and thought provoking: utilizing explicit internet-garnered imagery of horrific wounds and blown-off limbs contrasted with the raw hardware of consumerism.



Thomas Hirshhorn, Crystal of Resistance, 2011, installation view

French Pavilion: Christian Boltanski's *Chance* was filled with an immense and complex scaffolding around which images of newborns spool at a hectic pace, instantly summoning – the open structure is everything here – a vision of the brain reeling images through its unimaginable interstices.

One born every minute: that seemed to be the thought. The numbers racking up in digital lights were running to the tens of thousands each second. In one part of the pavilion, these images are spliced with those of adults, so that death and birth are appallingly comingled. Press a button and time stops momentarily so that you can look at these faces. But eventually a terrible klaxon sounds and the machine grinds down. The images freeze and it now seems that the babies are not just sleeping but actually may be dead. Imponderable mortality made real, Boltanski's work is profoundly affecting.

Australian Pavilion: Hany Armanious' *The Golden Thread* featured a series of eleven works, mostly new, and a few older pieces.

"Armanious's invocation of ancient forms and cultures, his embrace of a nearly alchemical transformation of one material into another, and his interest in incorporating the processes of making and displaying works of art into the sculptures themselves, underscore his desire to locate the mysterious within the mundane" says curator Anne Ellegood. By arguing that objects in our everyday life – leaf-blowers, vases, teapots, baskets, irons, window blinds, or even a cardboard Burger King crown – can carry as much visual pleasure, as much potential for beauty, as those things designed or deemed to be in the domain of aesthetics, his work is an acknowledgement that there is more to this world than meets the eye.

The New Zealand Pavilion On first looking into Chapman's *Homer* by Michael Parekowhai. There are pianists performing a mix of New Zealand, jazz and classical music on the red enamel carved Steinway piano it reads: He Ko-

rero Purakau mo Te Awanui o Te Motu story of a New Zealand river, one of the pieces which make up the installation.

Music is an integral part of the exhibition. "If the sculptures are a source of visual surprise for visitors, it is the music that will greet them when they arrive," said Venice Commissioner Jenny Harper.

Michael Parekowhai's vision is that visitors are greeted by the sound of the music before they see the object it is being performed on.



Hungarian Pavilion The work is an experimental opera that takes place on the stage of life, relating, and reflecting on the stories of car crashes in a dialogical form. The critical moments are slowed down by memory and related in utmost detail; it relates to a complex relation of no man to driving, and out of his inclination to fetishize our technical objects. Filling the space with an acoustic experience, the piece was presented at the show in the form of a musical film.

The installation is complemented with libretto of the dialogues, the written records of the passive interviews, as well as the real life wreck of a car totalled in a crash. Beyond the individual events that are recorded, sung, or impressed in a chassis, the composed versions of individual life stories suggest the possibility of determinacy with regard to human destiny

The Greek Pavilion: *Beyond Reform* By Dihandi Curated by Maria Marangou. Access to the interior of the pavilion is by an ascending hallway running the length of the building between the surface of water, leading up to sheer light.

I regret missing a vast majority of the

events parties and exhibitions, but there are many things to see, and events taking place simultaneously



Cindy Sherman, installation view

Along with the Giardini and Arsenale, Biennale curator Bice Curiger's *ILLUMInazioni* offered work by eighty-three international artists. The selections mixes of work by past Biennale contributors such as Cindy Sherman and include the Baroque master Tintoretto's *The Last Supper* (1592–1594),



The Stealing of the Body of St. Mark (1562–1566), and *The Creation of the Animals*, (ca. 1550).,

The show failed to generate any dialogue. Omer Fast's video regarding militarism and occupation, *Five Thousand Feet is Best*, was highly engaging in its non linear perspectives of both civilians and post traumatic stress dialogues. Urs Fischer's *Untitled* (2011), which is a giant remodeled souvenir candle of Giambologna's *Rape of the Sabine Women* (1574–82),

The Venice Biennale is a must see event for anyone interested in culture. Take in all that you can during your stay and plan on staying longer than four days.



Erin Willcox, CCFA Administrative Assistant

As the mother of two teenagers and a parent educator, I can tell you that bullying has been

on my radar for upwards of 11 years now. Until recently, it seemed that bullying was something that we really did consider the realm of childhood – something that the bullied and the bullies eventually grew out of. Thinking that bullies will “grow out of it” is ironic on many levels, given the fact that their behaviour is a result of their home life – and so bring it from home to school and beyond. There are many factors that contribute to bullying, but really, who did we think they were learning from?

Effective communication and the healthy resolution of conflict are two things that most of us didn't really learn growing up. In the last 10 years, there has been a shift, but most of us come with our history of poor communication and a belief that conflict means anger, or withdrawal. The result can be devastating in all of our relationships – including those at work. Expectations, projections, assumptions all come together in the word “respect”, which seems to be a catch phrase for how we think we should be treated. When we think we are being disrespected, the exchanges can be devastating. But I digress...

The issue of conflict in the workplace is gaining awareness, if not popularity; particularly in this time of fiscal restraint when job security is precarious, people are being asked to do more with less and not surprisingly, stress is increasing. By popularity, I mean that it is either happening more frequently, OR it is being tolerated less, or it is being handled poorly. Consequently, the Union is regularly asked about our role: what are the Union's responsibilities and what rights to members have when they are either engaged in conflict with a co-worker or

are feeling like they are victim of bullying in the workplace.

First, I think it is important to distinguish between these two very different scenarios: member to member conflict is simply that: disagreement between specific members of the group. This is often the result of different belief systems about best practise and rises out of difficult or negative communication. Often, there has been a misunderstanding about the intent of a message. With proper mediation, and if both parties come to the table with the intention of resolving the conflict, member to member conflict can usually be resolved with respectful and open communication about the issue at hand. The union is often asked to be present at these kinds of meetings; the CCFA's role here is simply to facilitate a resolution unless there has been a violation of the Collective Agreement.

According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, Workplace Bullying “usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It is very important to understand that bullying can be overt or quite subtle. It always makes the victim feel unsafe, either physically or emotionally. If bullying is taking place, it can be both difficult to identify, and difficult to deal with – the victim often does not feel safe in confronting the issue and the behaviour is rooted in issues deeper than a difference of opinion. Providing a safe workplace is the responsibility of the employer; however, with the increased use of social media, workplace bullying has moved beyond the workplace. The anonymity of sitting behind a computer screen makes it easier for people to make derogatory, threatening, or slanderous comments intended to intimate or harm.

SO, what about the union role? What IS

the CCFA responsible to enforce when it comes to conflict among our membership or when a member is feeling bullied?

It is important to note that workplace safety is the responsibility of the employer – so in cases where actual bullying is taking place, the union can support members in bringing their concerns to the attention of the college, and then supporting the member through the resolution process. The important thing here is that the Union can assert your rights to a safe working environment, but victims of workplace bullying have to be willing to launch a formal complaint.

As for member to member conflict, as I stated earlier, the union regularly helps with mediation when there is a clear issue between two faculty members. The Contract Management Committee's role is to defend working conditions for all members and they will almost always be involved when there are issues that could potentially result in disciplinary action. Besides, your CCFA CMC team are experienced at mediation and can offer a neutral viewpoint when tensions run high.

The CCFA is looking at our Code of Ethics to determine if it can be improved and serve as a reminder that we are all professional educators – and we can learn from one another. Toward this end, the Code of Ethics Committee is reviewing models from other faculty associations.

As individuals, we can always learn something new. Here are some things to consider in all of our interactions:

- Effective communications, free from blaming others for our feelings, is a place to start. Consider using “I statements”: If there is an issue, state the facts (free from judgement), state how you feel (not what you think...), state what

you need (not what you need the other person to do), and make a request. For example: When you commented on my marking, I felt upset. I need autonomy over my classes, and trust from my co-workers. Can we discuss our difference of opinion on marking?

- Be careful not to triangulate. Triangulating means seeking support

from others in your department (or at the college) when you are in conflict with a co-worker. This sets the other person up for feeling bullied and tends to escalate the conflict. Always think about how you would like to be addressed.

- Try to keep things professional - don't bring your personal differences to work.

- Trust one another – we are all educators and we have a shared purpose. Keeping that in mind might help us to hear each other in a more compassionate way.

- When all else fails: Just be Nice!

Call for submissions:

Interested in contributing to the CCFA newsletter: We welcome letters to the editor and articles from all faculty . The deadline for submissions for the next issue is January 6, 2012. Send your article, suggestion, letter or pictures to Erin Willcox at willcox@camosun.bc.ca

Bill C-10: The Omnibus Crime Bill (Or, alternatively, Why Education Continues to be Underfunded)

from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Bill C-10, an omnibus bill, contains nine separate pieces of previously failed legislation. In addition to creating a number of new mandatory minimum sentences for a wide variety of offences, it increases the use of denunciation and longer sentences for young offenders, makes it easier for the Minister of Public Safety to deny Canadians incarcerated in other countries transfers back to Canada to complete their sentences here, and would delay or deny pardons outright for hundreds of thousands of Canadians with a criminal record.

As well, the Bill calls for a minimum sentence of nine months in jail for anyone found growing six or more pot plants, and would impose the same sentence for someone caught giving away as little as a single joint (which would count as trafficking, even if no money was involved).

The federal government and its supporters have not introduced any evidence to support its claims that Bill C-10 will reduce crime – and are simply ignoring 30 years of evidence from the United States showing that locking up more people, for longer, does not reduce crime.

Although it was introduced by the Federal Government, if passed, Bill C-10 would force the provincial governments to lock up more inmates, increasing overcrowding in provincial jails and further clogging up the courts. John Howard Society of Manitoba has calculated that three-fourths of the increased costs resulting from this Bill will have to be borne by the provinces

and only one-fourth by the federal government – and of course 100 percent of the cost will ultimately be borne by tax-payers.

The government has not released any credible figures in terms of the costs; however, based on previous legislation, the John Howard Society of Manitoba calculates the costs to be about \$2 billion a year in total (including both federal and provincial costs), or \$1400 per tax-payer.

The Provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec and Ontario have all spoken out against the Bill, as has the official opposition in British Columbia. Even New Brunswick, which supports the Bill, has said it can't afford to pay the costs.

In brief, Bill C-10:

- Will not reduce crime, while diverting billions of dollars from healthcare, education, social services as well as strategies already proven to be effective at reducing crime.
- Will make it harder or even impossible for someone with a criminal record to get a pardon and move forward with his/her life in a positive, crime-free way.
- Will dramatically increase violence in prisons and jails, increasing risks for both inmates and staff. It will also make it harder, if not impossible, to offer programs in jails and prisons to help inmates rehabilitate themselves.

Other Voices

"I went from robbing 7-11 stores, robbing drug dealers, escaping from jail, to becoming a good father, a good member of society, a good taxpayer, a role model to other individuals that are facing the same challenge that I am," said Chris Courchene, a 29-year-old Aboriginal man from Winnipeg, Canada's violent crime capital according to Statistics Canada. "I feel that the proposed legislation paints everyone with the same brush. I think that the pardons should be for people who have clearly demonstrated without a doubt that they have reformed." (At a press conference in Ottawa, ON October)

Wilma Derksen told the committee that finally hearing the truth about what happened to her daughter was a relief but the sentencing did not satisfy her need for justice. "The trial brought out the truth and it was the truth that healed us and set us free, not the sentencing. I still find no satisfaction in thinking that the man will be sitting in prison for the next 25 years. There is nothing life-giving about that. It's just sad. And it's going to cost us \$2.5 million, probably." (November 3, 2011, speaking to a House of Commons Standing Committee).

"If there is one common feature of these bills, it's the ignoring, marginalizing and mischaracterizing of the evidence. The Government holds out the crime bill as a purported means of crime reduction, yet studies show that the resulting prison overcrowding and use of mandatory-minimum sentences will ultimately result in more crime."

(Irwin Cotler, Member of Parliament for Mount Royal and the Liberal critic for justice and human rights – Montreal Gazette, November 4, 2011)

About 13 per cent of the male inmate population is 'double-bunked' – housed in cells built for one person – and, under Bill C-10, that will increase to 30 per cent. "Prison overcrowding undermines nearly everything that can be positive or useful about a correctional environment," Pierre Mallette, the head of the Union of Canadian Correctional Officers, said. "It is linked to increased levels of institu-

tional violence, is a contributing factor to the spread of infectious disease and reduces already limited access to correctional programming and delays the safe and timely reintegration of offenders into the community." (Montreal Gazette, November 4, 2011)

"If the prime minister's tough-on-crime rules end up creating more ex-cons, and more hardened ex-cons, increasing the portion of our population with mental illnesses, poorer health, chronic unemployment, homelessness and family break ups, those are costs that are going to hit the provinces

harder in their health care budgets and social support program budgets – and for years longer than the actual incarcerations." (Kevin Libin, National Post, November 4, 2011)

Felix Collins, Newfoundland's province's justice minister, said he has never seen a study that favours more prison time as a way to cut rates of re-offence and improve public safety. "Incarcerating more people is not the answer," Mr. Collins said (Globe and Mail, November 3, 2011).

Canadian Association of University Teachers launches campaign to Save Library and Archives Canada

(OTTAWA: November 2, 2011) - The Canadian Association of University Teachers today unveiled a national campaign to protect Library and Archives Canada (LAC).

The "Save Library and Archives Canada" is being launched by CAUT in response to funding cuts and internal managerial decisions that are threatening the quality and integrity of Canada's only national public library and archives.

"Badly conceived restructuring, a narrowing of its mandate, and financial cutbacks are undermining LAC's ability to acquire, preserve and make publicly available Canada's full documentary heritage," James L. Turk, executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers said at a news conference in Ottawa today.

These changes, Turk added, have already led to a reduction in the number of spe-

cialist archivists and librarians, reduced public access and services, and the loss of rare and important materials.

Liam McGahern, president of the Antiquarian Booksellers of Canada, said a growing number of Canadian materials are not being collected by LAC because of reduced funding and a change in its acquisitions policy.

"Canadians recently lost a unique and irreplaceable set of journals chronicling late 19th Century stories of settlers and First Nations people of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Labrador Coast. This is just one of many examples," McGahern explained. "Rare military documents, sheet music, and literature that would otherwise have gone to Library and Archives Canada are quietly all slipping away."

CAUT is calling on the federal government to amend the LAC Act to ensure its mandate includes developing a com-

prehensive, not selective, collection of Canadian material.

"Our nation's artistic, historical, and cultural heritage is at stake," said Turk. "Genealogists, historians, researchers, graduate students, Aboriginal communities, and the general public are all affected by what is happening at LAC."

The Canadian Association of University Teachers is the national voice of 66,000 academic and general staff at 120 universities and colleges across the country.

More information on the campaign can be found at www.savelibraryarchives-canada.ca.

Contact:

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Canada's universities adopt new Statement on Academic Freedom

October 25, 2011

MONTREAL – Canada's universities have adopted a new Statement on Academic Freedom that clarifies the importance and definition of academic freedom on campuses across Canada. The new Statement on Academic Freedom was accepted unanimously by university presidents at the centennial meetings of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada today in Montreal. It replaces the statement members had agreed to in 1988.

Affirmation of this statement by institution's is expected to become part of AUCC's criteria for membership.

The new statement is as follows:

Statement on Academic Freedom

What is academic freedom?

Academic freedom is the freedom to teach and conduct research in an academic environment. Academic freedom is fundamental to the mandate of universities to pursue truth, educate students and disseminate knowledge and understanding.

In teaching, academic freedom is fundamental to the protection of the rights of the teacher to teach and of the student to learn. In research and scholarship, it is critical to advancing knowledge. Academic freedom includes the right to freely communicate knowledge and the results of research and scholarship.

Unlike the broader concept of freedom of speech, academic freedom must be based on institutional integrity, rigorous standards for enquiry and institutional autonomy, which allows universities to set their research and educational priorities.

Why is academic freedom important to Canada?

Academic freedom does not exist for its own sake, but rather for important social purposes. Academic freedom is essential to the role of universities in a democratic society. Universities are committed to the pursuit of truth and its communication to others, including students and the broader community. To do this, faculty must be free to take intellectual risks and tackle controversial subjects in their teaching, research and scholarship.

For Canadians, it is important to know that views expressed by faculty are based on solid research, data and evidence, and that universities are autonomous and responsible institutions committed to the principles of integrity.

The responsibilities of academic freedom

Evidence and truth are the guiding principles for universities and the community of scholars that make up their faculty and students. Thus, academic freedom must be based on reasoned discourse, rigorous extensive research and scholarship, and peer review.

Academic freedom is constrained by the professional standards of the relevant discipline and the responsibility of the institution to organize its academic mission. The insistence on professional standards speaks to the rigor of the enquiry and not to its outcome.

The constraint of institutional requirements recognizes simply that the academic mission, like other work, has to be organized according to institutional needs. This includes the institution's responsibility to select and appoint faculty and staff, to admit and discipline students, to establish and control curriculum, to make organizational arrangements for the conduct of academic work, to certify completion of a program and to grant degrees.

Roles and responsibilities

University leadership: It is a major responsibility of university governing bodies and senior officers to protect and promote academic freedom. This includes ensuring that funding and other partnerships do not interfere with autonomy in deciding what is studied and how. Canada's university presidents must play a leadership role in communicating the values around academic freedom to internal and external stakeholders. The university must also defend academic freedom against interpretations that are excessive or too loose, and the claims that may spring from such definitions.

To ensure and protect academic freedom, universities must be autonomous, with their governing bodies committed to integrity and free to act in the institution's best interests.

Universities must also ensure that the rights and freedoms of others are respected, and that academic freedom is exercised in a reasonable and responsible manner.

Faculty: Faculty must be committed to the highest ethical standards in their teaching and research. They must be free to examine data, question assumptions and be guided by evidence.

Faculty have an equal responsibility to submit their knowledge and claims to rigorous and public review by peers who are experts in the subject matter under consideration and to ground their arguments in the best available evidence.

Faculty members and university leaders have an obligation to ensure that students' human rights are respected and that they are encouraged to pursue their education according to the principles of academic freedom.

Faculty also share with university leadership the responsibility of ensuring that pressures from funding and other types of partnerships do not unduly influence the intellectual work of the university.

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Topics: AUCC News

Open Letter to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

November 4, 2011

Professor Stephen Toope

Chair

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

600-350 Albert Street

Ottawa, Ontario

K1R 1B1

Mr. Paul Davidson

President

Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

600-350 Albert Street

Ottawa, Ontario

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Dear Prof. Toope and Mr. Davidson:

We are writing on behalf of the Canadian Association of University Teachers to express our surprise and dismay with AUCC's recently released "Statement on Academic Freedom." There is a certain perverse irony that AUCC chose its 100th Anniversary to attempt to undo many of the advances that have been

achieved in the understanding of academic freedom over the past 100 years.

In 1915, the American Association of University Professors adopted its influential “Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure” – the first and arguably most important statement on academic freedom in North America. One of its key contributions was recognition that academic freedom includes “freedom of extramural utterance and action”. This has been a key component of academic freedom since that time. But it finds no place in AUCC’s new 2011 Statement on Academic Freedom.

Perhaps the majority of the famous academic freedom cases involve extramural speech, such as Bertrand Russell’s firing at Trinity College Cambridge and at Columbia University or the foundation academic freedom case in Canada – the firing of Harry Crowe at United College (now the University of Winnipeg).

Apparently, according to AUCC in 2011, extramural speech rights have no place in statements on academic freedom.

Another significant omission is that your 2011 statement makes no mention of academic freedom including the right to criticize the institution where one works – perhaps a not surprising omission from the organization representing the executive heads of Canada’s universities – but a troubling omission nonetheless. CAUT has long defined academic freedom as including the right “to express freely one’s opinion about the institution, its administration, or the system in which one works.” This is a central aspect of academic freedom as it has been understood in Canada, and internationally as expressed in the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel. It is also part of the great majority of academic freedom clauses in Canadian university collective agreements at the institutions whose presidents voted unanimously for a statement that does not mention this right.

AUCC’s new statement also fails to recognize that all three of academic staff responsibilities – teaching, research and service – come under the protection of academic freedom. Your statement fails to make reference to service, even though, most collective agreements have long recognized that academic freedom includes freedom to engage in service to the institution and the community.

Equally of concern is your statement’s conflation of academic freedom with institutional autonomy. It is absolutely true that academic institutions must not restrict the freedom of academic staff because of outside pressure – be it political, special interest group, religious – and institutions need to be autonomous in that sense. But to pretend that building a moat around the university protects academic freedom is disingenuous and ignores the reality of internal threats to academic freedom. The 1915 AAUP statement arose partially in recognition of internal threats – from boards, administration, colleagues and students. As the CAUT policy statement on academic freedom says, “Academic freedom must not be confused with institutional autonomy. Post-secondary institutions are autonomous to the extent that they can set policies independent of outside influence. That very autonomy can protect academic freedom from a hostile external environment, but it can also facilitate an internal assault on academic freedom. To undermine or suppress academic freedom is a serious abuse of institutional autonomy.”

We are troubled that your 2011 statement introduces qualifications for academic freedom that open the door to its abuse:

“Academic freedom is constrained by the professional standards of the relevant discipline and the responsibility of the institution to organize its academic mission. The insistence on professional standards speaks to the rigor of the enquiry and not to its outcome.

The constraint of institutional requirements recognizes simply that the academic mission, like other work, has to be organized according to institutional needs. This includes the institution’s responsibility to select and appoint faculty and staff, to admit and discipline students, to establish and control curriculum, to make organizational arrangements for the conduct of academic work, to certify completion of a program and to grant degrees.”

AUCC is correct that academic freedom is a professional right but your statement fails to acknowledge any of the nuance that is now commonplace. “Profession” is both the basis for academic freedom but can be a source of its abuse. Hence the need to understand “professional standards” as heuristic devices that themselves are always contested. None of this subtlety appears in the

AUCC statement, leaving a rigid notion of “professional standards of the relevant discipline” that could countenance repression of academic freedom for ideas at the margin or ideas that are critical of the mainstream.

As well this section gives incredible power to the “constraint of institutional requirements” without once affirming them as collegially determined rather than administratively handed down. This is especially disturbing as your 1988 statement is careful to note that any parameters that guide the exercise of academic freedom must be developed internally, and collectively. It also acknowledges that institutional decisions rely upon a collective engagement with the intellectual enterprise by the practitioners of that enterprise. This nuance is lost in the 2011 statement, which omits reference to the collective project.

In light of the above, we are concerned about the AUCC claim in the 2011 [not present in your 1988 statement] that “The university must also defend academic freedom against interpretations that are excessive or too loose.” By whose definition of “excessive” or “too loose?”

Your 2011 statement’s qualification of academic freedom continues: “Universities must also ensure that the rights and freedoms of others are respected, and that academic freedom is exercised in a reasonable and responsible manner.” The administration’s notion of “reasonable and responsible” exercise of academic freedom has been at the base of some very serious violations of academic freedom for decades upon decades. The examples are numerous.

We also see danger in what might be intended as innocuous language in your statement: “Faculty have an equal responsibility to submit their knowledge and claims to rigorous and public review by peers who are experts in the subject matter under consideration and to ground their arguments in the best available evidence.” However innocuous the intention, the effect can be chilling. Do you mean that if peers view one’s work negatively, one no longer has the academic freedom to pursue the idea? Some ideas are beyond the bound of any serious scientific basis – that the world is flat or that humans were created 6,000 years ago. But many other scientific ideas were broadly panned but proven right (e.g. the bacterial basis of ulcers). And what of Harvard’s president, during the cold war years, saying that no communist could teach at Harvard because they could not, by definition, be independent thinkers? We could go on and on with examples. There is a grain of truth to the importance of peer review and the professional basis of academic freedom, but your statement’s crude description opens the door widely to the kind of abuse we have seen for a hundred years.

On the positive side, we are pleased with the statement’s affirmation: “Academic freedom does not exist for its own sake, but rather for important social purposes. Academic freedom is essential to the role of universities in a democratic society. Universities are committed to the pursuit of truth and its communication to others, including students and the broader community.

To do this, faculty must be free to take intellectual risks and tackle controversial subjects in their

teaching, research and scholarship.” We also welcome the statement’s reference to the importance of academic integrity.

Overall, though, the statement, as we said at the outset, would reverse 100 years of advancement in the understanding of academic freedom. With the growing pressures on universities to compromise their defense of academic freedom in the quest for financial support, we need a more expansive notion of academic freedom, not a more restrictive one. A major problem in Canadian universities is not that too many people are asserting their academic freedom, but that too few are. AUCC’s rendition of academic freedom will only worsen this problem.

We would be pleased to discuss this matter further with you, should you wish. Yours truly,

Wayne D. Peters
President

James L. Turk
Executive Director

FPSE: Draft Resolution, Re: Bill 18

Whereas the BC government has introduced the Advanced Education Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 18), and

Whereas Bill 18 will fundamentally undermine the Charter rights of faculty by disallowing elected members of a faculty association from serving on the Board of Governors of their local institution, then

Therefore Be It Resolved that FPSE condemns the provisions of Bill 18 that strip our members of their freedom of association rights, and

Be It Further Resolved that FPSE will mobilize support by working with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) to challenge the constitutionality of Bill 18, and

Be It Finally Resolved that FPSE will work to build opposition to Bill 18 by working in solidarity with the labour movement here in BC and across Canada to denounce the injustice of this legislative attack on the rights of our members to fully participate in the governance of their local institution.

CCFA President's Response to Bill 18:

In response to Bill 18, I am writing, as President of our local faculty association, to the Minister, with a cc to the Deputy and our local MLA in which I express opposition to the amendments in Bill 18: These amendments will effectively exclude local faculty association executive members from standing for election as the faculty representative on the institution's Board of Governors.

My reasons for writing are threefold:

- These amendments will undermine long-established collegial governance.
- These amendments will effectively dictate who faculty members can and can't vote for.
- These amendments will polarize relationships on our campuses.

Given that the Legislature is not in session next week and the Bill in question may not be up for debate until mid-week November 14-17 or the following week, I encourage faculty to write individually to protest the bill. I do believe we need to keep a steady flow of emails from faculty members as well as from local presidents. I encourage us all, as much as possible, to reinforce the three points above.

Below I have copied in the email addresses for the Minister (both her email as MLA and as Minister; be sure to use both) and the Deputy. I have also included the link to the Legislative website where you can get the email addresses for your local MLA.

Any questions, don't hesitate to call or email.

Bronwen Welch
CCFA President

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