

From the Executive

Kelly Pitman, CCFA President

Inside this Issue:

- 3 Bargaining Update
- 3 What Can We Do For You?
- 4 Whistler or Bust
- 4 Incoming Executive:

Hello, friends.

Well, May is almost out, and the budget process is done. Or is it? It seems to me that many people still don't know exactly what lies ahead. And even when we know, we still have to deal with the details and live out the implications. Though Camosun is not facing any program suspensions or cancellations, we are facing an enormous reduction in offerings that will affect students, staff, and faculty. I have submitted a board report for the June meeting that tries to address the state of things, for it seemed to me that the board got an oversimplified good news message at the May meeting. Of course, I am not sure what goes on behind closed doors. And there are a lot of closed doors.



Behind those doors are our decision makers. Sometimes they come out to play. For instance, when the college administration had a draft plan of cuts, John Boraas and Peter Lockie took their intentions to the affected departments and offered them a month to find an alternate solution. They did. They still face reductions and workload changes, but they saved some programs. Still, Camosun got smaller and now has significant revenue generation to accomplish before the end of the current fiscal year.

CCFA Executive

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I would have liked to see the college administration acknowledge the work that CCFA members and other employees did and will keep doing to make it possible to avoid losing programs. I would also like administration to acknowledge the losses we are still facing. For instance, I estimate that we are losing 65-70 sections in Arts and Science. That's a lot of students not served. A lot of term employees not returning. A lot of senior employees leaving. I guess I'd like our leaders to come out and mourn with us. I know that wallowing won't fix anything, but I do believe that people deserve, and possibly need, to have their contributions and their sadness and their worry recognized before we can move on. Alas, I've heard little from admin since the budget was approved.

Meanwhile, the college is moving ahead with a people plan. Supposedly, it is the employees of Camosun who will determine what the people plan looks like, so if you haven't attended a feedback session yet, I encourage you to go to one of the remaining sessions. There are two on June 3, one at each campus, from 9-11:30 in the Wilna Thomas Cultural Centre and from 1-3:30 in the Helmet Huber Annex. I also want to remind you that the Indigenization Reconciliation and Ceremony Committee is offering talking circles to people who want to speak about their experience of the budget process and budget decisions. There are three more circles scheduled: June 12 from 2-4 in WTCC, June 26 from 2-4 at Interurban (room TBA), and August 21 from 1-3 in WTCC.

A big thank you to the folks who attended the FPSE AGM in Whistler: Darryl Ainsley, Mice Albano, Jacquie Conway, Blair Fisher, Debbie Gascoyne, Judith Hunt, Mark Kunen, Tom Rippon, and Paula Young. We had some great speakers, and I particularly recommend looking into the work of Dr. Thomas Duck, who gave a presentation on "the death of evidence" that outlines the federal government's elimination of major facilities and organizations that produce scientific research on a number of subjects, particularly climate change and environmental risks. It was chilling but enlightening, and would make good study material for students. A place to start your investigation of this issue that should interest all Canadians and particularly educators and research is this website: <http://www.deathofevidence.ca/>.

The AGM also consisted of some interesting debate on how to move our agenda forward provincially, with the federation voting to devote considerable sums to media campaigns that will counter some of what the provincial government is saying about, and doing with, postsecondary education. I hope that as these campaigns get going, CCFA members will participate in spreading the word. We know that the provincial government continues to deprioritize education and has plans to change its goals and methods considerably. We are best placed to speak about this to our fellow citizens, and we should do so.

Thanks also to all who attended our CCFA AGM. It was the last GM I shall chair, and it was good to see so many people in attendance. It's also good to be going into the 2014/2015 year with a strong executive. Seeing so many faces at meetings helps the incoming executive feel more connected and requires us to be more responsive to your ideas and priorities, so please keep coming out to meetings! Consider also ways you might want to serve your union. There are other committees than the executive, or maybe you have an idea for work you could do outside of established committees. You could even begin by writing something for The Confluence. There is room for everyone to contribute if they want to, and the more we contribute, the stronger we become.

And finally, thank you to the many, many people who have supported and engaged me during the last two years. I've heard from many of you. You've asked questions, expressed opinions, suggested direction, provided information and so often taken the time to write or call or drop by just to let me know that you appreciate the work of the association. We all know that having someone take the time to point out what we are doing right as well as what needs work is immeasurably helpful. I could never have done this job without you.



**Congratulations
to CUPE
2081 who are
celebrating their
40th Anniversary this
month.**

News of the province's ongoing tussle with the BCTF has been ubiquitous. Despite its election promise to get a ten-year deal with the BC Teachers' Federation in the name of stability, the Liberal Government has now backed down to offering a six-year deal. While this offer is an anomaly in BC's public sector, the push for longer than normal deals is not. Provincially, the government has approached many unions in the public sector with its "Economic Stability Mandate", consisting of five-year deals that include a 5 ½ percent wage increase (0%, 1%, 1.5%, 1.5%, 1.5%). They are also offering a top-up if real GDP growth goes beyond the projected economic growth predicted by the Economic Projection Council, which for this year is 2.3% and for each of the next four years 2.7%. Any percentage point in real GDP growth beyond this would result in granting a further .5% wage increase. This is the compensation and length of deal that Camosun's BCGEU faculty union, along with other public sector unions, have now at least tentatively agreed to.

The same type of offer may well be coming down the pike for the CCFA, but we're not there yet. The CCFA bargaining team sat down with the employer and PSEA (Post Secondary Employers' Association) earlier this month to sign a protocol agreement in order to start

bargaining locally, but we didn't get very far. We had expected to start bargaining the local proposals which we presented at the CCFA AGM (and thanks to everyone who attended), but the employer wanted to open up both the local and common (i.e. provincial) agreements, which are usually bargained separately. This stemmed from a lack of clarity about if and when there would be a common table for FPSE locals this bargaining round. FPSE has now communicated to PSEA that we will not be negotiating the common agreement locally, and a meeting has been scheduled next month for the FPSE locals to decide how to deal with the present situation and when negotiations may take place.

In the meantime, we will continue to work on refining our proposals, gathering information, and consulting with the membership. All things considered, the coming year should be an interesting one on the negotiating front. And with the government with three years still left in its mandate, the going won't be easy.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Contract Negotiating Committee for all the hard work they've put in this year. Much gratitude to Mark Kunen, Debbie Gascoyne and Kelly Pitman for their insight, intelligence, and vast patience.

What Can We Do For You?

Debbie Gascoyne, CNC Chair

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to continue in the position of Contract Management Chair in the upcoming year. One of the aspects of my job that I value the most is the chance to help people. But we can't help people if they don't come forward, and I'm often surprised at how hesitant people are. Either they think they will be perceived as a "whiner" or a "trouble maker," or they think we are too busy or their problem is too small. Not at all! And what's more, coming to us with questions or asking for help in the early stages of a problem can help prevent those "small" problems from becoming much bigger.

Here's my Top Three wish list:

1. Ask us about right of first refusal or regularization. There's a lot of misinformation out there. Not all chairs, not all deans, not all HR people provide the right information. We are experts! We can tell you if you qualify and what your rights are.
2. When you apply for right of first refusal or regularization, copy the Chair of Contract Management. We can't follow up or even pester HR about your application if we don't know you've applied. I've seen cases of people who applied and got turned down that we would have grieved if we'd known about it – sometimes we don't find out until even years later.
3. Ask us about rights to SD. Sometimes, there's nothing we can do. Sometimes we can help, especially in areas where a dean is trying to impose percentages of "organizational" duties or suchlike, or if a dean or chair wants you to take your SD in small bits rather than one big lump.

There are so many other issues - retirement, leaves, workload, evaluations – really, anything that has an effect on your working life. Talk to any of us. We are happy to help and to advise. Sometimes, there's nothing that we can do, but at least then you'll know. Don't wait until a small question has become a grievance!

Whistler or Bust

This year the FPSE AGM was in Whistler, a frequent location for AGMs hosted by Vancouver locals (this year was VCC Faculty Association's turn). Other times I've been in Whistler in May it's been raining, but this trip was blessed with sun and heat. Of course, we spent most of our hours inside hammering out various decisions and listening to various speeches, but when we could, we got out and enjoyed some spectacular scenery.

It starts on the Sea to Sky Highway, kilometre after kilometre of winding north into the mountains, with the sea on one side half the way there. When I am traveling through such places—cresting the Rockies via Banff,



perhaps, or coming into the Fraser River Valley—I can't help but imagine what they must have been like hundreds of years ago, before the highways and power lines. Certainly in Whistler,

it's impossible not to be aware of the sheer beauty of the mountains, especially when the sun shines on the snow in balmy spring.

So why do I always feel a little uncomfortable in Whistler? Probably because I am usually there for a union event, and it seems strange to talk of workers' rights and human rights, of poverty and discrimination, in this conclave of privilege. There's something about the posh condos, the expensive shops, the well-heeled tourists served by the young people who work in the hotels and restaurants to pay for their sport. If I was a skier or a mountain biker and thirty years younger, I too might be squeezed into a crowded apartment with a bunch of friends to make my wages stretch, heading for the mountain whenever I had a few hours off. But for a middle-aged activist from a working-class background, Whistler looks different. It looks like an illustration of the problem of unequal distribution of wealth. Also, it looks like a Lego village done entirely in brown and khaki, or like it was made all at once, maybe by a machine, and airlifted in. I am always glad to make my way back down the highway, awed by the vistas and troubled by the smell of money.

Incoming Executive:

Effective September 1, 2014:

President	Darryl Ainsley
Vice President	Mark Kunen
Secretary	Paula Young
Treasurer	Brent Wassermann
CMC Chair	Debbie Gascoyne
CNC Chair	Judith Hunt
PD Chair	Jacquie Conway
Members at Large:	
	Kelly Pitman (Past President)
	Tanya Kirkland (Term Rep)
	Tom Rippon

] Please join us in thanking Nicholas Read and Patricia Gaudreault who are on our current executive, but will be stepping back in the fall. Their contributions to the CCFA are much appreciated.