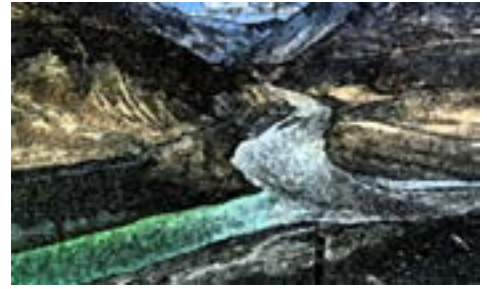


# The Confluence

"Where different waters meet and are transformed"

The Newsletter of the Camosun College Faculty Association

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*Bronwen Welch, President*

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**Infosilem:** Well, we predicted this. Despite the CCFA's efforts to stop the College's implementation, it did go ahead, and now faculty and chairs are suffering with the consequences. Indeed, across the post-secondary sector, faculty are unhappy with this program.

In February, I met with John Boras and Sherri Bell, regarding the results of the College's survey on Infosilem's effectiveness. Not surprisingly, Infosilem proved to be popular with administration but not faculty (and I include chairs in this). The report indicated that, rather than decreasing work for chairs, Infosilem had merely added to the workload of a number of chairs.

The intent behind Infosilem was to create schedules that showed no bias or favouritism. However, the report indicated that faculty members now feel as though the college administration is indifferent to faculty morale. While it is true that Infosilem creates schedules that are "unbiased," individual faculty members now feel overlooked and disrespected. I do suspect that much of the reason behind Infosilem is to "maximize" classroom space, as once the college can do that, it will be more likely to get grants for new buildings on campus. I do understand the practicality of this, but it seems that many faculty and students are suffering as a result.

Just yesterday I met with the College's Infosilem committee to discuss the results of the Infosilem Report that was completed in the winter. I stressed the importance of chairs having more decision making ability when creating schedules and having a longer turnaround time for reviewing first drafts of schedules. Additionally, I spoke to the necessity of more training for chairs, to ensure they understood exactly what kind of changes they could make on their own without having to go through their deans. Finally, I ensured that I (or another member from the CCFA executive) be part of the appeal process, should schedules feel untenable. I do feel that we need a stronger faculty voice, whose job is to represent faculty needs to administration. I hope that being part of the appeal process will help with that.

## 2015-16 Executive

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[Kelly Pitman, Chair: CNC](#)

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[Chris Ayles, Member at Large](#)

[Diane Gilliland, Member at Large](#)

(Term Representative)

[Tanya Kirkland, Member at Large](#)

CCFA Office:

[Peg Ford: Administrative Assistant](#)

Website: [www.camosunfaculty.ca](http://www.camosunfaculty.ca)

**College “Engagement Survey”:** The results of this survey were certainly better than the previous “climate survey” the college instigated back in the early 2000’s. The biggest issue that stood out was that faculty felt there was a lack of communication between the college executive and the rest of the college. I do feel that Sherri recognized the importance of transparency between faculty and administration, and I hope that we will all see an increase in communication from the college executive. I encourage faculty, no matter how busy we all get, to participate in any focus groups, surveys, information meetings, and workshops that come from the College’s administration.

## What I’ve Learned From Being On The CCFA Executive Committee

Diane Gilliland, Academic and Career Foundations

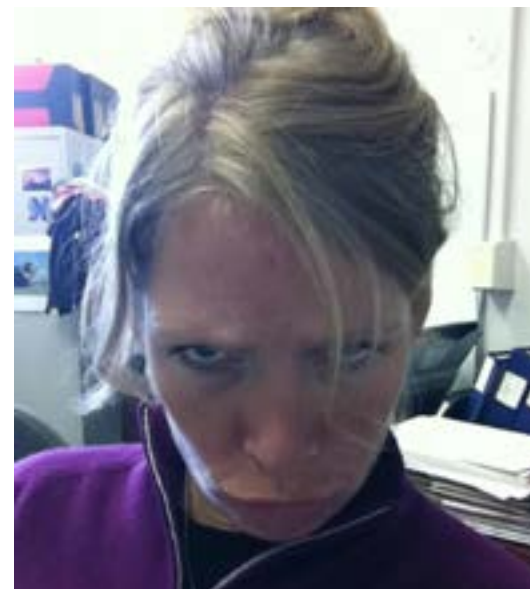
As a non-regular faculty member, working as a Member at Large on the Executive this year was a great way to begin to familiarize myself with the process of the Collective Agreement and the day to day operations of the union. Coming from a non-union, non-profit environment, I was curious about this structure that offers its non-regular and regular members a valuable pension and so much more. The more I learned, the more I realized there is to learn and I greatly appreciate the knowledge base of the members of the executive and their in-depth discussions that value every person’s voice at the table. I was worried about the work load of meetings but found the meetings were usually one hour, twice a month, and the leadership understanding of my workload.

I learned more about the provincial Federation of Post-Secondary Educators and encourage everyone to pass the word on about their “Open the Doors Campaign” to make investment in education a priority in our next election and government’s working plan. [http://www.openthedoors.ca/open\\_the\\_doors](http://www.openthedoors.ca/open_the_doors)

At a FPSE meeting of non-regular faculty representatives from around the province, listening to their experiences and struggles, I felt fortunate for the quality of the working relationship between our Union and Administration at Camosun.



Overall, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with this excellent group of people and I would recommend the experience to anyone who is thinking about taking this step. Succession planning on the Executive is important and starting as a Member at Large is a good way to be mentored into the process to ensure this ongoing quality.



## Some Reflections on 12 Years with the CCFA

As I write my last Confluence submission, I am struck by how much this place has influenced me. I couldn’t be moving on to my new chapter without the wealth of experience, growth, and connections to really cool people afforded me by my years at the CCFA. So...thank you. I am so very grateful for the years I’ve spent among you.

Also, thank you to everyone for your well wishes and support. I go out into the world carrying them with me. When I am in doubt or feeling over my head I will remember how much positivity I am leaving with. It is nice to know that I had an impact for you all certainly had one on me.

Finally, I thought I’d leave you all with a thought for each year of my tenure with the CCFA:

1. Teachers at Camosun have a special kind of patience and empathy. Your commitment to your students has been an honour to witness.
2. When I leave the comfort of Y221 and walk around, I get to see the great things happening at the college. Visiting Interurban on a regular basis was a treat!
3. Right click and save it to your desktop. Open it from there and you should have no problem.
4. The occupants of Y221 are NOT in charge of the young 2nd floor MFD: we don’t have special unjamming powers.
5. The wine and cheese events we hosted where I got to buy the wine were so fun.
6. There are no circumstances under which I would ever sign up for the dunk tank. Those that really know me will attest to the fact that I might sign up for a drunk tank.
7. When you staple your PD claim with a million staples, we have to remove them ALL. There are no exceptions. Do Peg a favour and use paper clips.
8. The PD funding year is April 1 - March 31. You can't use next year's money early, nor can you use this year's money next year.
9. The SD showcase is something I hope the CCFA keeps doing - you all do very cool things during your SD and it is super fun to watch you talk about it.
10. The CCFA is your association and despite differences between departments, schools, campuses, you are (mostly) all teachers. You should get together and talk about teaching more.
11. The CCFA Executive is a group of dedicated people who work on your behalf. Do them a favour and make it easy for them to do the work: come to meetings.
12. Visit the CCFA office and chat with your president and your admin assistants. I guarantee you’ll learn something or at least see or hear something funny.

My very best wishes for a wonderful summer. I’m sure I’ll be seeing you around.

Erin



# Useful Information That You Might Not Know

Judith Hunt

When you are not sure of your rights, or how the employer should handle any particular employment situations, please speak to the CCFA. The information that you need may not be easy to find in the collective agreement, may be interpreted differently by the union and the college, or it may fall under employment law. The members of the CCFA Contract Management Committee would be happy to help you with any questions you might have. In the meantime, here is some information that may be of use to you.

**Overpayments** – If you have been overpaid at work, your employer cannot unilaterally deduct money from your pay. This is stated in the Employment Standards Act of BC. You may provide written consent for this to happen at a schedule agreed by both sides. If you don't provide consent, however, the employer can take you to court to recuperate the wages.

**Childcare and Infosilem** – Any employer that has a large group of employees and flexibility in its scheduling must consider scheduling requests for childcare, following a Federal Court of Appeal ruling. However, the employee has to show that s/he has made a reasonable effort to arrange childcare. The college has told us that all requests will be considered.

**Maternity Leave for Term Faculty** – Even if you don't have a continuing position at the college, you can be granted maternity leave from a term position and apply those terms to right of first refusal or regularization. If you would have been offered the work without being pregnant or at home with a newborn, then you must be offered and accept the work to be able to take a leave from it. The bottom line is that nobody should be disadvantaged in their employment by a pregnancy.

**Bereavement Leave** – You get five paid bereavement days after the death of an immediate family member, with if necessary, an allowance for immediate return travelling time.

**Subbing** – A substitute instructor can be paid for prep and marking time if it's warranted. However, it's best to discuss and settle this with your chair and dean before spending more time than you'll be paid for. If you are a continuing full-time faculty member, then every five hours of subbing will give you an extra vacation day.

**Decision-making** – Only your dean or director can make major decisions about your employment (scheduling, SD, right of first refusal, etc.). Although the administrative staff in your school office have a lot of information and can be very helpful, they should not be interpreting the collective agreement or deciding who gets right of first refusal or when you get your SD. Please confirm that any decision they inform you of is coming from your dean or director.

If you have any questions about this or any other matter, please contact me at [huntj@camosun.bc.ca](mailto:huntj@camosun.bc.ca), or speak to Kelly Pitman, Bronwen Welch, Mandy Hayre, Mark Kunen, Randy Tonks, Melissa Schaefer, Ryan Russell or Chris Ayles.



# The Way I See It

Kelly Pitman

Since it's somehow (impossibly) almost May and thus almost time for CCFA elections, I thought I might indulge in a public contemplation about my time on the Executive and on other union committees. Here are my random reflections.

- It's fun to be on a committee with people who are new to the work and who have fresh ideas and attitudes. And when part of my job has been to explain something to someone without background or experience, I've learned it anew myself, which is empowering and interesting.
- It's equally fun to be on a committee with people who are old to the work, so to speak, and whose accumulated wisdom has made them sharp, like good cheese.
- Humor is the glue that sticks hardworking people together.
- And speaking of humor, Judith Hunt has an awesome laugh.
- It's so important that there's a body of people whose job is to know the rules and to speak for fairness. Many faculty members have no idea how fervently and patiently they are defended and honoured, but that's happening, and I wish more people were involved in it.
- The first thing people should do in the case of conflict is to meet. The second thing is to listen. The third is to speak calmly. The fourth is to listen to yourself speaking as if you were the other person. The fifth is to listen again.
- Read the whole email. Then ask questions.
- And speaking of email, double-check everything before you send: the content, the grammar, the address line.
- If there was an award for coolest collection of trousers, it would have to go to Peg Ford.
- People tend to look at most things through the lens of their own experiences. This has implications for people who are part of one association but who have different jobs. Learning about other people's lenses is broadening and one of the gifts that union work has to offer.
- The college does not seem to be, as it has during many of my times doing union work, in crisis. However, there's something going on that concerns me. It's, hmmm, a kind of creeping anti-humanism that takes the form of wielding policy and an inability, or unwillingness, to consider feelings and common sense. I'm worried about it. It discourages people. It discourages me, and I'm hard to discourage.
- Respect is more a matter of action than of proclamation.
- Some days, my rootedness in and love for Camosun is as deep as that I have for my friends and family.
- Lately, I have felt as if admin, particularly HR, is quietly shutting down and shutting out the union. The intentions may not be bad, but the result may be bad.
- All the work of getting a stupid or unjust decision modified or revoked is worth it when you get to make that good news phone call to the person who was feeling confused and alone.
- Although it is characterized as service, I've been really lucky to have happened into union work. It's changed me personally and professionally.
- I talk too much. I'm working on it.
- I am sad that Erin Waugh is leaving. I am grateful that Peg Ford is staying. Sometimes, I guess, the glass is half empty and half full at the same time.



# “Laughter Through Tears is My Favourite Emotion”

*Bronwen Welch*

I hate change. It is a nasty thing that makes one’s world all twirly and weird. I recognize change is part of life. I know this and I hate it. So screw being philosophical about it.

As most of you know, our lovely CCFA Administrative Coordinator, Erin Waugh, is leaving us at the end of this week. I met Erin in my first week at the College, almost eleven years ago. However, it wasn’t until I started as a non-regular faculty member on the CCFA Executive that I knew she was destined to be a friend. I developed what I refer to as a “girl-crush” on her – she was (and continues to be) so smart, witty, sharp, and HILARIOUS. At the end of year at the CCFA Executive party, Erin and I discovered that we could both quote *The Princess Bride* by heart and are apt to break into spontaneous song or dance as a way to dispel negative office energy.

When I was first President of the CCFA, she and I decided what we really really needed in the office was an AURA CLEANSER. This took the shape of a small disco ball that we hung from the ceiling. When grumpiness ensued, we would position the surly/discontented individual under the disco ball and “dust” him/her for negative energy. (We also did a lot of work, just so everyone knows). We got so good that certain people would come in on purpose just to get their auras all spruced up.

Over the past 11 years she and I have worked closely together and she has kept me focused both professionally and personally. She has helped me set up gradebooks, file my detritus, and write SD proposals. Her advice is always sharp and perceptive and she always knows the exact right time to tell me to pull my God-damned socks up.

Outside of work we have had many dinner dates – usually at her house (because my cat Mr. Sammy Badpants attacks everyone) and consumed much wine and paella. Her two children are as remarkable as she is, and I have grown to love them both dearly. In a word, she has become my family and I have become hers. To say I will miss her is a vast understatement.

She also knows everything that goes on in the CCFA office and herds us all into position on an hourly basis. When committee members sink into existential angst or despair, her practicality pulls us back to the surface. When committee disagreements ensue, she has always been part of the solution. We all go to Erin for advice, for coaching, and for badly needed slaps on the wrist. She has been our advocate and our friend.

Her new job as the Finance and Administration Manager at Cycling BC in Vancouver will suit her to a T. Moreover, she will also finally be able to live long-term with her Beloved. It is a fantastic adventure for her and she is a person who loves and even thrives on adventure. For her new life and for the skills she brings to Cycling BC, I can only feel joy.

Dolly Parton once said, “Laughter through tears is my favourite emotion,” and I just have to hold onto that idea. I am joyful for Erin’s new adventure as well as weepy for my loss ... for all our loss. Perhaps the best thing to say is a simple “Thank you. Thank you for everything, Erin.”

I know that life is all about change. I know this and I don’t like it. Not even a little.

