

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELDWORK: Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom

Alberta College of Art + Design Symposium and Exhibition
March 12-14, 2015
Stanford Perrott Lecture Theatre, Main Mall ACAD 1407-14 Avenue, SW Calgary, AB T2N 4R3
FREE and open to the public!

The Alberta College of Art + Design Research Advisory Committee invites you to attend FIELDWORK, a public symposium about Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom. This symposium follows on the success of Research Ethics Week this past November, and will provide an opportunity for extended, public discussion with peers and community members about Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom, key issues at core of what we do at ACAD.

For more information, please contact Diana Sherlock, Symposium Coordinator at diana.sherlock@acad.ca. Full schedule of events available February 24.

FIELDWORK is generously supported by the Alberta College of Art + Design Research Advisory Committee, the Alberta College of Art + Design Faculty Association (ACADFA), the Alberta Colleges & Institutes Faculty Association and the ACAD School of Critical + Creative Studies.

THE FOLLOWING REPORTS WERE PRESENTED AT THE ACADFA WINTER GENERAL MEETING FEBRUARY 4, 2015

President's Report - Alex Link

It's been a busy five months since our last GM. While I imagine there are several reasons for this increase in activity, I suspect the main one is that we have new staff in key administrative positions. The consequence is that we've moved from years of conversations that, when they happened at all, tended to be hostile or simply incoherent, to actual productive dialogue based on mutual interest.

On November 20 ACADFA held a meeting with the Membership to discuss several draft Letters of Understanding that were under consideration. These letters concerned agreements governing graduate supervision workload, Limited Term Appointments, the secondment of Members to academic administrative positions, and Faculty Rank.

Graduate Supervisory Workload

There have been no new developments with regard to this proposed Letter. However, given that the college is now considering beginning the graduate program in September 2015, I imagine ACADFA should be hearing from the administration soon. The College has also expressed interest in developing contract language around work for Graduate Students. In the absence of a Graduate Students Association, consulting with ACADFA seems to be a logical first step.

Limited Term Appointments

After the November 20 consultation with the Membership and repeated consultation with Executives, I signed a Letter of Understanding on February 3 governing the creation of Limited Term Appointments. Put simply, Limited Term Appointments are:

- a) temporary positions that run year-round, that are academic in nature, but that don't involve teaching (e.g. librarian maternity leave). Once the Letter has been signed by the President, a copy will be sent to the Membership.
b) visiting faculty positions as per the ceramics program's long history of offering them

Rank

At the November 20 meeting the Membership passed a motion mandating ACADFA to ensure sessional faculty are included equitably in any Article in the Collective Agreement with regard to Rank. A committee of five faculty met afterward, and produced language that would match sessional and permanent ranks, remaining in "titled" to reflect the separation of your title from any form of compensation. While it is unlikely the administration will accept our language, it can nevertheless function as a statement of position for us.

In the meantime, rank remains exclusively an administrative prerogative.

Hiring and Equivalency

Last fall we asked the college to consider a mechanism whereby it might evaluate the skills and experience of an applicant to a permanent faculty position in lieu of a terminal degree. The main reason for doing so is to ensure that we don't pass up a qualified applicant for lack of a degree.

My most recent meeting regarding this matter was February 3, at which time I suggested we have hiring committees determine what the minimum requirements for consideration, in the absence of a terminal degree, should be before reviewing applications and short-listing. HR seemed comfortable with this suggestion, which leaves the question of hirability in the hands of the hiring committee. Executive will discuss the matter further.

Seconded Academic Administrators

Everyone has agreed that the Letter of Understanding needs revision. The NAC Chair and I met with the Chairs, HR and AVP to discuss what might make the most sense. Three main issues arose:

First, I have been presented with a revision to the LoU that states clearly that only permanent faculty may be academic administrators. If an applicant to one of these positions is not a permanent faculty member, they must be interviewed and deemed acceptable for a faculty position first, then interviewed for the Chair position. The draft revision also states that individuals with previous i.e. sessional experience at ACAD will have an advantage.

Second, the college administration is creating a clear Chair position description that will then allow us to decide whether it makes more sense for Chairs to be seconded or, as it seems to be starting to appear, for Chairs to be brought back into the Collective Agreement with added language concerning the managerial nature of their role. AVPs would remain seconded.

Third, it seems quite clear that we need representation from individual programs built into this academic administrative structure. One possibility is to have program co-ordinators changed solely with the task of holding regular program meetings, and acting as program spokespeople for both Chairs and other program co-ordinators.

Workload

I sit on the Academic Planning Group. This group has met weekly since the fall to consider long-term directions ACAD might take. My main role in this group is to speak to any contractual implications of any of the options the group is considering.

The group will report to Academic Council with a series of recommendations, not for approval but for further consultation and exploration. One such recommendation is that we cut the length of semesters by a week. You may have noticed that this Winter term is abbreviated; this abbreviation was neither announced nor vetted by Academic Council. The rationale I have been given is that it corrects a trend in our academic scheduling that would ultimately see us starting classes in mid-August. One could argue that this change impacts curriculum delivery. One could also argue that curriculum delivery and classroom hours are not necessary one-to-one in correlation. Nevertheless, that's not what I'm talking about here. This recommendation would be for a formal and permanent abbreviation. Another recommendation is that we reconsider the fixed 6-hour studio, either by shortening it or allowing for some variation between programs.

Both of these possible changes have contractual implications, as they may affect workload. Put simply, if you cut the number of classroom hours for a studio instructor by around a sixth, you could find yourself with a 4/3 teaching load, given how the contract is currently worded. Long story short, a 3-hour studio could hypothetically see you having a 6/6 load.

The administration recognizes that we can't discuss shorter classes until faculty have some guarantee that an increased class load is in the offing. Therefore, ACADFA has been invited to revise the Workload article of the collective agreement to indicate that instructors can't be asked to teach more than a 3/3 course load. We've drafted language to that effect. It's ugly, because you then have to define what a "course" is and, as the Academic Planning Group has discovered, we have a lot of inconsistencies at ACAD about what a course actually is. Nevertheless, we have a draft letter to work with, which ACIFA has vetted, and sees the Letter as working in ACADFA's favour.

Sustainability Task Force

I'm on this committee as ACADFA representative. It's chaired by advancement, and it's purpose—near as I can tell after our first meeting—is to help put together a long-term plan toward securing additional government funding. The initial step is to make a bid for university status in September, to give the province incentive to alter our funding structure.

FPAC

In Joint Consultation we've begun a conversation around ensuring stable FPAC funding. It seems timely, given the fact that FPAC had to consider 50 months of requested sabbaticals. In January it came to my attention that sabbatical notifications are quite late and, upon investigation, discovered it was due to the lack of a clear process by which to adjudicate so many applications. The applications have since been ranked, and are now with the AVP.

Other Things

We held a reception for the Board in December. It's main purpose was to help build a relationship with the Board. It has several new members, and without regular contact I fear faculty might be merely an abstraction to them, and them to us.

We were asked to expect some future discussion of online learning, and digital recordings of instruction. This area raises plenty of questions, including the retention of faculty intellectual property. This will be a long discussion.

We were asked to consider a potential trimester system in the near future. Again, nothing on paper yet. I attended regular meetings with the President, AVP Academic, HR, as well as Joint Consultation, and the October 18 ACIFA Presidents Council meeting.

On October 1 I went to Saskatoon as an ACIFA delegate to the University of Saskatchewan's Academic Freedom Event. My own presentation at ACAD's Research Ethics Symposium was, in part, a summary of my experience there.

I consulted on a conflict of interest issue in the fall, and a potential security risk in December. I participated in an informal dispute resolution in January. I prevented the re-allocation of a sessional faculty member's course to a permanent member in December.

Lastly

The upcoming provincial budget looks worrisome, and the rumours are flying. I won't add to them here except to say that it looks to be a very difficult year or two ahead.

However, I want to thank all of the executive for its advice, support, and active participation in these matters, and Patti Dawkins who continues to be my anchor.

VP/Treasurer - Mitch Kern

Financial Report was presented and is available in the ACADFA office by request.

Newsletter Editor - John Calvelli

First, my apologies for not being able to attend, as I am still recovering from the illness that smote me as well as several others here at the college. The Fall Newsletter was placed in faculty mailboxes in December. I hope everyone enjoyed reading it. The Winter Newsletter will be my last Newsletter as Editor, as I will be completing my 2nd term and 4th year. I encourage all of you to consider applying for the Newsletter Editor position on the Executive Board of ACADFA. Each Editor puts their stamp on the Newsletter in the way that they see best as serving faculty interests. I hope I have served the Faculty well in this capacity during my tenure. The Winter Newsletter is now accepting submissions. As always, we will be accepting any content that individual members wish to contribute. We particularly are interested in representing faculty research and practice. We also plan on including material related to the symposium ACADFA Executive member Diana Sherlock is organizing, Fieldwork: Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom. This may consist of material presented at the symposium, adapted from the symposium, or simply related to the themes of the symposium. As you know, this symposium is the second event ACADFA has organized as part of the agreement that safely returned our esteemed member Gordon Ferguson back from his administration-forced exile following the unfortunate incident that happened almost two years ago. The issue of academic freedom, and all forms of implicit and explicit threats of censorship is on my mind following the recent tragic incidents in Paris. We encourage artwork, writing and combinations thereof that are engaged in this issue or any other subject relevant to the Fieldwork symposium. Again, I reiterate that we accept any material not related to the symposium, and already have submissions of that nature that we are committed to publishing. The Newsletter represents the faculty's interests. THE DEADLINE IS MARCH 16, the Monday following the Fieldwork symposium. Technical specs: Images should be 300 dpi @ 4" x 6" (or 1800 pixels on the longest dimension). If you plan on writing a larger piece, please contact Patti or myself so we can plan for it. Please don't hesitate to ask any questions or request clarification. Correspondence may be addressed to john.calvelli@acad.ca and/or Patti Davinci@iclus.net

Negotiations Advisory Committee (NAC) Chair - Chris Frey

When the toast jumped from its silver box, Bodoni almost screamed. -Ray Bradbury, "The Rocket" 91952) NAC Chair activity has been steadily since the Fall General Meeting (September 11). I've attended several committee-style meetings including ACADFA Executive, Academic Planning, Curriculum Standing, Joint Council, Graduate Studies, Academic Council Agenda, and Academic Council. I've also had one-on-one meetings regarding college business related to the Collective Agreement with all presidents, Dan, Alex, and Sarah, the new interim-librarian, Rene, and other administrators, including Jill, Carissa, Don, and Russell Penyl. Steady activity is largely due to the drafting of several Letters of Understanding, of particular interest to NAC because there will be expectations that the LoUs will be folded into the CA at the next round of negotiations (Spring 2016). I also recently attended the ACIFA Roundtable meeting for NAC Chairs (Jan.24) and heard reports from the attending 11 Chairs (of 16). All colleges and institutes are at the end of negotiations with most having settled and one or two currently in arbitration. Schools appear generally to have settled on terms similar to those at ACAD. Discussion revolved around grievances, academic freedom being brought into contracts, and seconding faculty for administrative / managerial duties. Most schools see faculty and management as distinct units. My report to ACIFA read as follows: On July 3, 2014 - June 30 2016. The negotiations process was brief, requiring two meetings of the respective bargaining committees with Terry Sway present at both. Agreement was reached on April 23. Memorandum of Agreement was struck. One subsequent and brief meeting took place, between myself and the college's VP Research and Academic Affairs, to witness and agree to housekeeping changes and sign the Memorandum of Agreement (c. June 26). The salary settlement was 0% for year 1 and 2.5% for years 2 and 3, and applies to both permanent and sessional faculty. A 50% per year increase to Professional Development Funds was secured, as were increases to Employer Contributions to Group Life Insurance, from 73 to 100%, Extended Health, from 73 to 85%, and Basic Dental, from 73 to 85%. These changes also apply to both permanent and sessional faculty. I intend to keep things simple for forthcoming negotiations in Winter/Spring 2016 and focus on salary changes that reflect cost of living increases. I anticipate work in the area of finding Letters of Understanding into the Collective Agreement, that define workload and compensation for limited term faculty, faculty seconded for administrative duties, and faculty involved in graduate instruction and supervision (an MFA in Craft commences September 2015).

Faculty Professional Affairs Committee (FPAC) Rep - Tyler Rock

FPAC The FPAC committee met on Wednesday Oct 1st to review FPAC funding applications, and to sit as members of the newly formed Professional Affairs committee. The FPAC committee reviewed eight applications for this current application cycle (Oct 15th 2014 through Feb 14th 2015) and one revised application from the previous funding cycle. All eight of the current applications were found to be complete and funding was awarded to all eight applicants. The application from the previous cycle, for which funds have already been granted, was supported in principle but revisions were requested. The chair of the FPAC committee confirmed that for the next three years administration has allocated funding of \$40,000.00 to \$45,000.00 for FPAC. The issue of unused sabbatical funds funding FPAC was brought forward and it was confirmed that the use of accrued funds to support FPAC is an issue. ACADFA is in discussions with administration about this. The FPAC committee received nine sabbatical applications for 2015/2016, the total months requested for sabbaticals far exceeded the 36 months that FPAC can grant on an annual basis. The committee resolved to develop a ranking matrix (based on the requested content in the guidelines for the application) for use while reviewing the applications. It was acknowledged that this matrix would only be used as a tool to inform the discussion when the sabbatical applications were reviewed. On January 26th FPAC met to review the applications. The committee looked closely at the content of the applications, and while discussion of the merits of the applications was collegial, there were some intense points of debate. The committee's recommendations were sent forward to the Associate Vice President, Research and Academic Affairs immediately after the meeting. The submissions for the January 15th application date for FPAC funding have yet to be reviewed. ACIFA On January 24th I attended the Alberta Colleges Institutes Faculty Association's Professional Affairs committee roundtable discussion on Professional Development. At the roundtable the discussion focused on the allocation of professional development funds, and academic freedom. There was interest expressed by a number of the members of the roundtable about the upcoming Fieldwork: Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom Conference at ACAD, specifically with regard to the academic freedom component of the conference. It should be noted here that ACIFA has contributed funding to support the conference. Another important discussion occurred at the roundtable when it was announced that the Professional Affairs Committee was being charged with writing a position paper on Outcome Based Education. In brief, OBE courses are learner-centered courses being taught to specific targeted and measurable outcomes. Outcome-based education (OBE) is a recurring education reform model. It is a student-centered learning philosophy that focuses on empirically measuring student performance, which are called outcomes. In the ensuing discussion about OBE it was revealed that a few of the colleges have implemented OBE to some degree (often associated with online learning) and indeed in some institutions in the province these outcomes are even being broken down into smaller learning modules for credit. In the ACIFA meeting the bulk of discussion with regard to Professional Development was centered on access to professional and personal development money and it was evident that how this money is accessed, and for what purposes, varies greatly across the institutions present. When I returned from the roundtable I asked the Office of Research and Academic Affairs to provide me a list of the allowable expenses for Faculty Development Funding (our personal PD funds) having noted while reading in the collective agreement that a list of eligible expenses should be provided by the college. I was rewarded by finding out that the document is being developed and updated with less restrictive guidelines. I was invited to be a part of the discussion and there is movement to have this guideline finalized and accessible on infolab in the near future. I https://www.princeton.edu/~achaney/tmve/wiki100k/docs/Outcome-based_education.html

Sessional Rep Report - Diana Sherlock

I am very pleased to be the ACADFA Sessional Representative and encourage you to be in touch if you have questions or concerns about the Collective Agreement, your contract or any other matter related to your ACAD employment. ACADFA is the exclusive bargaining agent for its membership and has lots of resources and information that is yours for the asking. We are here to support YOU! Ongoing issues we have been working on at ACADFA include: LOUs for Tiling, Equivalency, Limited Term Appointments, Ratio, Administrative Appointments Hiring timing and contracting is still of concern for Sessionals. Travel Insurance while away on work or PD, which is addressed below.

By now you should all have signed contracts for the Winter semester and should have all received your first paycheck. Take a moment and CHECK the following: Article 22.01 C) Salary Schedule B - grid placement Course assignments Your contract duration as outlined in your Letter of Engagement The new Collective Agreement was ratified in the fall, and hard copies are available in the Academic Resource room, 522, or at ACADFA 547. Be sure to take advantage of: Article 15.01: Professional Development Allowance (Cumulative totals, if applicable, determined by the spreadsheet circulated by Su Soyer). Article 4: Employee Benefits In order to qualify for benefits in the current academic year, you need to be teaching in the current academic year and you to need have taught 3 or more courses in the last academic year. If you have questions about eligibility, ask Amy Lo, she is very approachable and knowledgeable. Article 15.03: Professional Development Fund Applications available through the Faculty Professional Affairs Committee on infolab (Next deadline April 15). Also be aware that you are eligible for other research funds for which you can apply as they come available. Check out possibilities through the Creative Research Initiatives fund or drop by the Research Office. Article 22.04: Salary Administration If your studio course exceeds 22 students, you might be entitled to additional pro-rated pay---contract rate divided by 22, multiplied by 1.5 for each additional student over 22.

Article 22.02 F): Salary Administration Sessional faculty required by their head(s) of majors/areas of study to perform service responsibilities under Article 10 (Workload) during a period which is outside their contract period or who agree to replace faculty who are absent from their normal class as a result of discretionary leave, court leave, or short term illness leave Article 13, shall be compensated on a per diem rate of \$150.00 per day. Please note that after an inquiry by one of our members and the association, some clarity has been reached about the coverage of faculty insurance as referred to in the revised Travel Procedure (200.05.01) Section 6(d): d) Rental car The College has an insurance policy that covers employees, officers and directors while traveling on College sanctioned business in Canada and to a limited extent in the United States. Rental insurance offered by a rental agency for Canada should be declined and will not be reimbursed by the College. Rental insurance for vehicles rented for College business outside Canada is required and will be reimbursed. Don Davert clarified the coverage noted in the Procedure above: The coverage under our insurance policies is quite extensive and cover general liability for claims arising from bodily injury and any civil action arising against the driver of any rental car for damage to persons or property. They also cover any legal liability imposed by law for any contract or agreement signed for loss or damage arising from the care custody or control of the automobiles. Policy coverage includes coverage for medical aid, legal representation and coverage for partners, spouses etc who are authorized to use the vehicle with the consent of the "owner" (who would be the driver of the vehicle I assume), including incidental pleasure use by the owner or authorized driver. It includes liability coverage up to \$5mm per occurrence and up to \$250k for vehicle collision loss or damage. Some exclusions include negligence by the rental company for faulty mechanical breakdown etc. and for failure to grant consent to use by the owner.

Outstanding/ongoing issues that will be followed up on during the coming months are: Sessional hiring - criteria, timetabling, contract timing, course cancellation Rank and Equivalency Ratio Assignment of administrative workload Sessional representation on NAC Advisory Committee Sessional long-term service recognition Encouraging more Sessional involvement in ACADFA affairs Please participate in: FIELDWORK: Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom Alberta College of Art + Design Symposium March 12-14, 2015 Call for Proposals (internal) Due: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 The Alberta College of Art + Design Research Advisory Committee invites brief proposals from faculty, staff and students for FIELDWORK, a public symposium about Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom. This symposium follows on the success of Research Ethics Week in this past November, and will provide an opportunity for extended, public discussion with peers and community members about Artistic Research, Ethics and Academic Freedom, key issues at core of what we do at ACAD. Proposals should include a brief description of the proposed presentation (approximately 300 words), which cites the topic area, key ideas, preferred presentation format, length, any specialized technical requirements and sized JPG images if necessary. Presentation formats can vary (papers, artist's talks, performances, conversations, screenings, etc.), but presentations should not exceed 30 minutes. Collaborations are encouraged. Presentation fees will be paid. Please email all application materials to Diana Sherlock, Symposium Coordinator at diana.sherlock@acad.ca. External participants will be invited to contribute to the symposium and present alongside selected applicants. Proposals will be selected by committee.

THE FOLLOWING REPORT WAS PRESENTED AT THE ACADFA EXECUTIVE MEETING FEBRUARY 11, 2015

President's Report - Alex Link

Not very much has happened since the GM. I will, however, reiterate some of that report here for the sake of any discussion that might arise. Also, by the time we meet I will have met with the President informally, in a meeting which is tomorrow at the time of this writing but this morning at the time of this presentation. How suspenseful (now, writing this, which will be then when I read it, so it no longer will have been suspenseful).

In no particular order: I've heard casual mentions of a desire to possibly move to a lecture/seminar format in SCD and CCS. That can't really happen without collective bargaining. Just something to keep in mind. I signed the LTA LoU on February 3, which was distributed to the membership. We haven't received a response with regard to our proposed revisions to the proposed LoU on Rank or Tiling. Sabbaticals, to my knowledge, have not yet been announced. I intend to discuss this matter with the President tomorrow / this morning. Regarding hirability equivalency in the absence of terminal degrees, I suggested we have hiring committees determine what the minimum requirements for consideration, in the absence of a terminal degree, should be before reviewing applications and short-listing. HR seemed comfortable with this suggestion, which leaves the question of hirability in the hands of the hiring committee.

Regarding academic administrators, I have been presented with a revision to the LoU that states clearly that only permanent faculty may be academic administrators. If an applicant to one of these positions is not a permanent faculty member, they must be interviewed and deemed acceptable for a faculty position first, then interviewed for the Chair position. The draft revision also states that individuals with previous i.e. sessional experience at ACAD will have an advantage.

On February 9 I participated in an open group discussion on program representation. While there is a diversity of opinions on the matter, I suggested we dispense with associate chairs, pool the savings to hire administrative support and divide the tasks expected of a program co-ordinator among multiple faculty (permanent and sessional) within a program to organize the work that, in most cases, is already being done in a haphazard fashion anyway.

ACIFA Climate Survey The climate survey is an effective tool for representing faculty issues to the college. Participation in the survey this year bounced back from last year's all-time low to a healthy 47%, which is a somewhat higher participation rate than the provincial average. The survey numbers themselves show the following: On the whole, when compared with last year's results, there is little change. It might be worth noting that for 13 of the 22 responses to questions asked regularly, there is improvement. Six of the questions show a trend of improvement across the past 4 years or longer; in fact, while none show a downward trend of equal duration. Despite the marginal improvement across the board, when compared with results across the province, our scores are at the very bottom in 5 of the 13 commonly shared survey questions. In three cases, we have been at the bottom for consecutive years: whether the institution demonstrates a commitment to improving faculty teaching skills, to improving discipline-specific knowledge, and to providing resources to enable faculty to work effectively. We remain below the provincial average in all but 3 instances.

The response that showed the greatest degree of negative change over the past year regarded having enough time to attend to professional development needs; it's worth noting, however, that the score is higher than any other preceding year on record. The response that showed the greatest degree of positive change over the past year concerned the recognition of outstanding faculty performance, bringing it to an all-time, if still negative, high. It is important to note that responses indicating neutrality (a score of 3) might actually reflect significant polarization among the respondents as positive and negative scores balance each other out. For example, the replies to questions 17, 19 and 24 are quite split. To conclude, the ACIFA climate survey is a useful, if perhaps somewhat crude, barometer of faculty morale. It is effective in tracking broad trends among faculty, and its results have been validated by its minimal variation from past, independent institution-wide surveys. It is less useful at pinpointing the precise cause of this climate. I say this only because of past discussions. I have had based on vague, unsupportable generalizations about the participants (i.e. "those who didn't fill out the survey are happy and can't be bothered" vs. "those who didn't fill it out are despairing and see no point"). Such conversations are not productive. I would simply suggest that it be read as indicative of general trends of opinion among faculty.