

# AUAFA

## eBULLETIN

FEBRUARY 13 2019

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRIS WILLARD APPOINTED NEW VP

KARIN MCGINN | NEW OFFICE MANAGER OF AUAFA

### CONGRATULATIONS NEW LTAs!

JOHN GAUCHER, RICK KORENKO, BRIAN FLYNN, SILAS KAUFMAN, MICHAEL KERR,  
SUZANNE LEMERMEYER, SONDRÁ MESSAROS, MARK MULLIN, TANYA RUSNAK,  
BARBARA SUTHERLAND

### NEXT AUAFA GENERAL MEETING

April 26th 2019 | 4- 6 PM | RM 340

ALBERTA COLLEGES & INSTITUTES FACULTIES ASSOCIATIONS

<https://www.acifa.ca>

**NEW POLICIES** | 100.02.01 | Form A and B

[https://www.auarts.ca/sites/default/files/Documents/100.02.01-Code-of-Conduct-Policy\\_0.pdf](https://www.auarts.ca/sites/default/files/Documents/100.02.01-Code-of-Conduct-Policy_0.pdf)

***Thank you to HR for providing the FAQ***

<https://www.auarts.ca/sites/default/files/Documents/Code-Of-Conduct-FAQs-March-6-2019.pdf>

**THE FOLLOWING WRITTEN REPORTS WERE PRESENTED  
AT THE ACADFA EXECUTIVE MEETING FEBRUARY 7th, 2019**

**P R E S I D E N T | N A T A L I R O D R I G U E S | [natali.rodriques@auarts.ca](mailto:natali.rodriques@auarts.ca)**

**Negotiations Advisory Committee (NAC)**

I have been participating in the NAC meetings. These meetings happen weekly. In attendance are Chris Frey (Chair of NAC), Justin Waddell, John Calvelli, Brian McCulloch (Labour Relations Officer of ACIFA), and myself. We discuss, research, and strategize issues impacting our collective agreement. It has been gratifying work, especially when reviewing the articles and issues AUAFA members have identified. Should you have any suggestions or concerns that NAC should be aware of please forward them to the committee. I suspect once the AUAFA NAC team is in bargaining it will be an intensive process. My suspicion is founded in the move to University status, graduate programming, and the challenges of the last year.

**FACULTY EVALUATION Policy (400.18.01)**

In the fall semester we began a collaborative rewrite of the Faculty Evaluation Procedure. This was led and chaired by Alex Link in his role as AVP. AUAFA identified concerns brought forward by faculty (through informal and formal means) including: the difference in how the policy is in acted in the four schools, the seeming difficulty in ensuring all faculty receive their assessments within the timelines described in the CA and the policy, and whether or not the process is punitive or one of mentorship, etc. There were some substantive discussions on process, definitions, efficiency and principles. This is a vital policy as it directly impacts our members' remuneration, continued employment, the need for mentorship. Unfortunately, the meetings were stopped, and Alex has informed me the rewritten policy is now with HR. I have not seen the rewrite, and beyond discussing broad strokes issues we in ACADFA/ AUAFA has not been consulted in the rewrite. I look forward to reading the revised policy and continuing the consultation process.

**BOG**

I have been meeting with Carol Ryder and Ian Fitzgerald regularly, to discuss some of the challenges and potential solutions. These have been productive meetings. I continue to attend BOG meetings, though I was unable to attend the meeting on the December 13, 2018.

These meetings are very interesting as they highlight the higher-level governance issues and discussions that the Board and Cabinet are having. I would encourage you all to attend at least one this semester. The majority of the meeting is open to the public.

April 17, 2019  
May 15, 2019  
June 19, 2019

V.P. \ TREASURER | CHRISTOPHER WILLARD | christopher.willard@uarts.ca

As I came onto AUFAFA in Mid February, I do not have much to report. The February balance sheet remains in progress due to a few issues that existed before I arrive and which are being sorted out. I am confident these issues will be resolved soon. The association is also in the process of updating software and data storage. I expect to have a more detailed report for our next e-bulletin.

SECRETARY | MITCH KERN | mitch.kern@uarts.ca

Nothing to Report.

NAC CHAIR | CHRIS FREY | chris.frey@uarts.ca

Between March 4 and May 2 (60 days) NAC will provide notice to commence collective bargaining with AUArts Board. Bargaining will commence within 30 days following the delivery of notice, and as outlined in the Labour Relations Code, Article 60(2) bargaining proposals will be exchanged within fifteen (15) days following the first meeting for the purpose of collective bargaining.

Since last report, two general calls have been sent by electronic mail to all members requesting suggestions for changes to language in the Collective Agreement. Seven responses have been received.

Six 3-hour meetings have taken place (one per week), with Brian attending 4 and Natali 3. The meetings include information gathering, historical considerations, plan making for communication with members, review and suggested changes for CA, and other related activities.

John Calvelli and I attended ACIFA's weekend workshop with CAUT on the topic of negotiating (January 26). A mock negotiation with attendees as participants was included; a very useful knowledge and skill gaining experience.

Thanks for your patience and support.

Dr. Christopher (Chris) Frey  
Negotiations Advisory Committee Chair and Chief Negotiator

Applications for Funding of Professional Affairs were reviewed on January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019. Due to a low number of applications, FPAC still has a remaining 22,492.58 to allocate for the final application round of the school year. The committee encourages faculty to apply, and continue to be diligent about the clarity of their budgets. The total amount allocated was 9,552.00 for the January round of applications. Four applications were fully funded, five applications were partially funded, and two were not funded due to eligibility. All three sabbaticals were approved for the 2019/2020 school year – One was a ten-month term, one was six months, and one was four months.

FPAC Report, written by Zimra Beiner

There have been a number of discussions but no new grievance cases at this writing. The ongoing issue of ratio with the administration was addressed on December 21, 2018. The administration chose to approach 9 sessional faculty members; John Gaucher was approached earlier, with Limited Term Appointments. VP Andre Plante suggested all met the following criteria. *“The process for doing so was quantitative, with the number of offers determined by budget funds available, and the conversions selected by an average of teaching load over five years, with the qualifier that ACAD could also anticipate sufficient teaching for the duration of the appointment.”*

The timing of all of this was curious, and within administrations right, ACADFA was happy for the opportunity for our sessional colleagues, but as Grievance Advisor I was concerned about how the timing would add undo stress on faculty candidates during the holiday break. Our Collective Agreement required the faculty to agree to the offers prior to the start of the semester. ACADFA offered support to those requesting more detail and I met with five of the sessional faculty members over the break. The LTA offers were accepted by all faculty approached. I attended Joint Consultation on January 10, the agenda included discussions on the LTA hires, Animation move to SCD and the priority of faculty evaluation procedures 400.18.01 be finalized. Afterwards AVP Alex Link notified our President and myself since I brought it up at JC by email on January 16 that revisions on a draft evaluation procedure are complete and currently with HR, as it's an HR procedure.

The AVP suggested that he would meet with HR the following week to hear any HR feedback, after which he would share. It has been a month, the delays are concerning as these procedures will likely require AUFAFA time to evaluate per Article 9.03 before NAC is initiated.

It is concerning to AUFAFA that this time of transition to university status has had many decisions made, or not, or not always with the collegial consultation of the envisioned new university. Faculty members may be placed in a work environment inconsistent with the intention of our Collective Agreement. If any of my faculty colleagues have concerns or questions, please contact the AUFAFA office and plan to attend the planned meetings to hear updates and provide input.

Jeff Lennard  
Grievance Advisor

After meeting with the AUAFAs new Office Manager, and discussing timelines as they relate to current workloads, we propose that we add onto the Fall Newsletter rather than create an entirely new document.

As such, the remaining content has been planned out, and the reaching out to faculty has already taken place.

We are on track for a published Newsletter by late spring.

Prepared by Jackie Bagley, Communications Officer

Main item to report on was the Trivia Night held January 28<sup>th</sup>. Although attendance was below expectation, the evening was enjoyed by attendees and accomplished most of its rapport-building goals (Daniel knew some video game answers!). 14 people attended, pretty evenly split between ACADFA exec., Board of Governors and ACADSA exec. If something like this occurs again, we can hope for stronger turnout.

Informal coffee meetings with Carol, Natali and I will continue in March and monthly thereafter; little formal business is discussed.

Board meetings and a summit on University structure are set up from now through end of academic year; some of these have been re-scheduled from original due to University status. Last Board of Governors meeting tentatively scheduled for June 19<sup>th</sup> (I cannot attend ... AUArts FA should have representation as a guest at least).

At the General Meeting in January, I was asked about the Risk Management Report (which is a confidential Board document) and one of its highlights that I had mentioned and for specifics on the internally-restricted funds that were released for use on University transition. The follow up on these questions will come through AUArts administration to the AUArtsFA president.

Of late, Board discussions have included uncertainty around the upcoming provincial election and what a change in government might hold for AUArts.

Again, AUArtsFA needs to find a member ready, willing and able to serve as Faculty representative to the Board of Governors, as my second term ends this academic year. The sooner possible candidates are identified, the better ... even for those possible candidates to sit on meetings would be valuable.

Lastly, I am missing the meeting as I am on jury duty.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian FitzGerald  
Faculty Rep. to the Board of Governors

CAUT President James Compton asks in his President's Message from October 2017 whether “**contract academic staff [are] the canaries in the academic coal mine.**” After pointing out that “existential uncertainty” may be particularly acute for contract academic workers, he adds: “they are not alone in their anxiety.” Permanent and tenured academic staffs are increasingly pinched by the neoliberal forces of 21st century PSE institutions. He concludes his remarks with an even blunter statement: “[W]e would do well to remember that striving to improve the working conditions of our CAS colleagues is not an act of charity. Because, we’re all in this together.”

**What is this coalmine called AUArts?** The swelling of the LTA ranks is certainly a way to put pressure on both sessional workers and permanent staff -- and also to put the LTA faculty into a kind of ill-defined academic purgatory. The rumblings of adjustments to ratio rattle the cage of permanent faculty as they see their numbers eroded. As the move to bicameral governance takes shape, sessionals will feel further marginalized from any sense of agency, while LTAs may feel compelled to appease the powers that be to keep their jobs.

After the General Meeting, I spoke informally with a number of sessionals -- interestingly no LTAs have been in touch since the General Meeting. Many sessionals have questions around the LTA process -- and whether LTA positions will poach from sessional positions. Many were wondering how LTA contracts were (and will be) offered -- timeliness, based on experience, etc. **Two people expressed the concern that stratification of employment categories has the potential to create intra-faculty conflict**

Suddenly, I'm not so sure canaries in the coalmine are a good analogy. **After all, it is the canaries' fate to die so that others will live.**

This has led me to reflect on an issue that is more “elephant in the living room” than “canary in the coal mine.” In terms of voting members, contract academic faculty -- sessionals and LTAs -- make up a significant majority in AUFA. Contract academic faculty account for 50% of all sections taught.

**Here's the elephant in the living room:** Contract academic voices are under-represented on the AUFA executive. As LTA contracted staff move into roles on school and institutional committees, taking on more governance and operational responsibilities, it behooves AUFA to ensure its own governance reflects this reality. Further, it behooves the AUFA to be self-vigilant as the three constituencies of its membership -- permanent faculty, LTAs, and sessionals -- may appear at times to have competing priorities. Adequate representation in AUFA's decision-making is one way to mitigate these tensions.

I propose that AUFA seek to:

- Appoint an LTA representative to executive
- Change the AUFA bylaws to allow and encourage contract academic staff to seek and hold any and all executive positions in AUFA
- Demonstrate specific engagement with contract academic members from the whole executive, not just the sessional (and/or future LTA) rep

- Make public a commitment that issues relating to contract academic work will be a priority in this round of negotiations
- Craft messages, both internal and external, that reinforce the fact that AUAFA's desire is to ensure quality of education and research for the benefit of students and the community at large

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I look forward to **consulting with NAC** to advise on what sessional members have identified as priorities.

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**My research and reading into current labour conditions in Canadian PSE shows a range of successes and setbacks relating to sessional issues.**

**Successes, at least to some degree, have been leveraged by making contract academic work central to bargaining**, and to both member and public engagement. In the recently settled contract at Western, concerns regarding conversion, right of first refusal, access to research resources, and institutional acknowledgement were the "wins" touted by the union, but they were couched in terms of promoting academic integrity for the institution. (It might be noted that the Past President of UWOFA was the first contract academic at UWO to hold that position; the president previous to her, CAUT's James Compton, was a tireless promoter of contract academic workers.) The Ontario College Instructors' strike of 2017 was fought and won on issues of contract labour. The recent yet-to-be-ratified agreement by Association of Part-time Professors of the University of Ottawa (APTPUO) was achieved partly because the union maintained a focus on the values of teaching and learning as the principles of their negotiation -- and they received public support from students and tenure-line faculty.

**The setbacks, alas, have been marked at least partly by the administration being able to drive a wedge between classes of faculty.** This has often happened when the admin steers the negotiations to fight hot button clauses (for example, post-tenure review at URegina and MUN), or resorts to hardball tactics (York). In such cases contract worker issues are steam-rolled over or shelved. Just last week the URegina FA requested an arbitrator. It is the case that both MUN and York have separate unions for (some) contract staff, which makes the divide-and-conquer somewhat easier for the admin (and perhaps easier for the permanent faculty to wring their hands, but refrain from acting in solidarity). Other recent news from NSCADU reflects the long-term damage to an institution resulting from abuse of contract academic labour.

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I can report **one small gain: sessional faculty teaching Spring semester courses will have their benefit coverage (if they are already eligible) through the end of the Spring contract.** I was able to point out that while formerly spring contracts were offered through Continuing Ed, all contracts are now offered through ORAA with the VP Provost's signature; therefore it was reasonable to expect the conditions of employment should be consistent without regard to semester. Admin agreed.

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In June, I will be participating at a roundtable panel, "Bullshit Academic Jobs," at the ACCUTE conference, part of the annual Congress of the Humanities. The focus of the panel is precarity for workers in PSE in Canada.

Prepared by W. Mark Giles, Sessional Representative

The Academic Council of ACAD met for the last time on January 30, 2019. In February, as the Alberta University of the Arts, we will convene the first General Faculties Council (GFC). At the last meeting, there was much discussion and questioning on the transition to a GFC. There was a presentation on the transition given by the person (Kimberly Neutens) hired by the Administration to assist with this task.

Kim emphasized that it could take several months to make the transition and to the GFC. Their plan is for the first official meeting to take place at the beginning of the 2019-20 Academic Year. It should be kept in mind, however, that as a University, we are required by the PSLA to convene a GFC, and it is in the interest of Faculty to insist on it.

Administration is well aware of the increase of power of Faculty over all academic decisions, which are ultimately driven by and answerable to the GFC. Justin Waddell, the interim VP of the Alberta University of the Arts Faculty Association (AUFA) asked several questions to clarify and assert the rights of the Faculty in regard to the GFC.

We are at a turning point that necessitates strong Faculty involvement, and we have an opportunity to address the dysfunction between us and the Administration by participating in the transition and asserting faculty rights. To do this effectively, we should all be conversant with the Post-secondary Learning Act (PSLA), which articulates our legal rights and responsibilities. The February 1, 2019 PSLA is available at:

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/p19p5.pdf>

I would encourage as many faculty as possible to participate in the GFC workshop that will take place on Friday during Reading Week, and preparing for it by reading at least the section of the PSLA that deals with the General Faculty Council, beginning on page 23 of the document just cited.

Prepared by John Calvelli

