

# the FABric

UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FACULTY ASSOCIATION

April 2019

[www.upeifa.org](http://www.upeifa.org)

Vol. 14, No.3

## State of the Union President's Report

I must admit that I'm often quite excited to hear what our President has to say in the State of the Union report. With our members working on a wide range of tasks throughout the University, around PEI, and across Canada, it's rewarding to read a concise summary from someone who is well positioned to provide a comprehensive perspective. Moreover, I've thoroughly appreciated learning all this from a President who has often benefited from a long tenure as Vice-President with a smooth and perhaps even protracted transition from that position to their current role as the leader of our union.

But even if the President's transition was tumultuous or they lacked the capacity to provide anything in the way of a concise summary of the state of our union, at least I could rest assured that her perspective was the product of a full year of experience. It's not as if she had been President for three weeks and is now in all seriousness suggesting that she is able to provide a full accounting of the state of our union.

All kidding aside, I could never have expected that in early

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March, the Vice-President Academic and Research (VPAR) would be stepping down and that the Interim Dean of Science would be taking his

place. As Chief Grievance Officer, much of my time has been spent in meetings with the VPAR and other

members of senior management trying to address a range of issues facing our membership. Such a shuffle was sure to insert an element of uncertainty into a number of open cases.

But, of course, this change proved insignificant in comparison to the news that UPEIFA President Nola Etkin would soon be appointed Interim Dean of Science and that the UPEIFA Vice-President would now be tasked with leading our union if only for the last few months of Nola's term. I'll never forget Sharon's expression when I congratulated her on her ascendance to the Presidency – an expression that can best be translated as “guess again!” It has certainly been a whirlwind of a month!

What I have learned as Vice-President and Chief Grievance Officer has been thoroughly reinforced during my brief time as President of the Faculty Association. Our institution has a lot of moving parts. These parts cannot be understood outside of the lives that keep this institution in motion from sessional instructors struggling to weave multiple contracts into some semblance of a normal life to concerned colleagues who wonder if democracy, academic freedom, and equity are more than words to be swept aside when it is expedient for the bottom line. Working for the



Mike Arfken and Nola Etkin present a cheque to striking postal workers in November 2018.

Union, I've learned that in these neoliberal times, people too often use putative individual shortcomings as a pretext for obscuring systemic issues. I've also learned that within a unionized context, few things are more difficult than convincing academics to think of themselves not simply as scholars, teachers, clinicians, or librarians but also as workers who have a unique opportunity to play a vital role in larger working-class struggles. But, most importantly, I've learned that the strength of our Union is on display not only when we engage in collective bargaining and job action but also in countless meetings with the employer where our solidarity is pivotal in achieving a positive outcome both for individual members and our Union as a whole.

As you will see from the reports that follow, many of our members have been hard at work building this solidarity,

defending the Collective Agreement, preparing for negotiations (shout-out to Andrea @ CAUT), and struggling to establish a more equitable working environment. For those of you who have devoted your time to this important work, you should be proud of the Union you have built and the positive influence it has had on so many of our members. For those who are new to the Union or who have been with us for some time and are curious about what role they can play, I encourage you to speak to me or the members of the various Union committees to see how you can get more involved.

In Solidarity,

Mike Arfkin

President, UPEIFA



# UPEIFA

UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND  
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

# Annual General Meeting

Thursday, April 4, 2019

Time: 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm, MCDH Rm 242

*FA Time to follow in the Faculty Lounge*

## **The Reports**

Under the Association's Bylaws, the Chair or Co-chairs of each of the Association's committees is obliged to report to the Membership on its activities at least once a year. What follows are the reports of those committees as well as reports from our representatives and delegates on various other committees.

So grab a beverage and a bowl of your favourite snack and get ready for some of the best reportin' you're ever going to read.

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### **Social Committee Report**

by Susan Brown and Debra Good (Co-Chairs)

The UPEIFA Social Committee is responsible for organizing regular social events where members may meet one another in a relaxed, convivial environment. This provides an opportunity for members to meet others outside of their discipline as well as welcome new members to UPEI. The committee met in September of 2018 to plan events for the forthcoming academic year. Six afternoon "FA Times" were planned, as well as four FA Coffee Times (scheduled so as to alternate between Wednesday and Thursday mornings with one also scheduled on a Friday morning). The committee wishes to thank Heather Penny for her invaluable assistance in the organization of these events. A successful off-campus holiday social was held at The Culinary Institute in late November and our sincere thanks to Jim Sentance for organizing this well-attended event. These events were advertised in The FABric and through membership emails. Winners of the FA gold, silver, bronze, Master's, and Doctoral medals, as well as recipients of the FA Entrance Scholarships, were honoured at a special FA Time in March. Committee members this year were Debra Good and Susan Brown (Co-Chairs), Pamela Bastante, Laurie Brinklow, Jim Sentance, and Richard Wills.

## **Communications Committee Report**

by Richard Raiswell (Co-Chair)

The Communications Committee is responsible for the Association's website and producing three issues of *the FABric*, our official newsletter.

2018/19 was comparatively quiet on the communications front. The Committee produced three issues of the *FABric*. Work has also begun on overhauling the Association's website. This is on-going. But expect to see our new web presence at the start of the next academic year.

Elected members of the 2018/19 Communications Committee were Sharon Myers (co-chair), Richard Lemm, Laurie Brinklow (*FABric* editor), Sandy McAuley (Website Coordinator), Nia Phillips, and Ariana Patey. I sincerely thank the members of this year's Committee for their work and good cheer.

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### **Research and Advocacy Committee Report**

by Doug Dahn and Brian Wagner (Co-Chairs)

The UPEIFA Research and Advocacy Committee is tasked by the Executive with completing research and making recommendations on issues being discussed by the Executive. In addition, the Committee serves an advocacy function to external groups and organizations, and to governments.

The Committee has no activity to report for 2018-2019, but anticipates much more work in the coming year as the Association prepares for collective bargaining. We will assist with research related to the development of the Association's bargaining position, and provide other support to the Negotiating Team as required. Committee members in 2018-2019 were Amy Macfarlane, James Polson, Tina Saksida, Jason Stevens, Brian Wagner (Co-Chair), Rebecca Reed-Jones (Co-Chair to June 2018), and Doug Dahn (Co-Chair after June 2018).

## **Awards and Scholarships Committee Report**

by Charlene VanLeeuwen,(Chair)

The Awards and Scholarships Committee oversees FA Member and student awards sponsored and co-sponsored by the Faculty Association, as well as the events celebrating FA award recipients. Committee members this year were Lisa Chilton, Nino Antadze, Barry Linkletter, Jean Mitchell, Nasser Saad, and Nola Etkin (ex-officio).

The Faculty Association annually sponsors or co-sponsors a variety of awards and events that celebrate the academic excellence and scholarly promise of our students through:

- two full-tuition entrance scholarships awarded to Island high school students;
- Gold, Silver, and Bronze Medals awarded to the students with the three highest standings in third year;
- Master's and Doctoral Medals;
- the Convocation Awards luncheon;

- the gift of a book or ebook, in honour of the graduating class, for the Robertson Library.

The 2018 entrance scholarship recipients and Medalists were recognized at a recent FA Time on March 15. All but one of the recipients was present and they each spoke to the group, sharing their appreciation for the support and recognition provided through the FA. The two students who received the Faculty Association full-tuition Entrance Scholarships were Kaitlyn Ledgerwood, a graduate of Bluefield High School, and Shruthi Bandi, who graduated from Colonel Gray High School. The entrance scholarships are funded entirely by the FA, including through individual contributions by members (and normally through payroll deduction). If you are interested in supporting our entrance scholarships, payroll deduction forms are available through Heather Penny in the FA office: [hjpenny@upeifa.ca](mailto:hjpenny@upeifa.ca).

Alexandra Campbell was the recipient of the Faculty Association Bronze Medal and a \$300 scholarship, which is awarded to the student with the third highest standing in third year. Our Silver Medal recipient was Jeremy Thompson, who received a \$400 scholarship for achieving



Time: 6:30 pm reception, 7:00 pm dinner

Recipients: TBA

Ticket Prices: Member \$30 (members' guest \$30 each)

\* Registration through the FA Office, [upeifa@upeifa.org](mailto:upeifa@upeifa.org) \*

Deadline to register: Monday, April 15th

Ticket purchase available for pick up and payment after April 8th, 2019.



the second highest standing in third year. Stephanie Cairns was the recipient of our Faculty Association Gold Medal for Undergraduate students and a \$500 scholarship as the student with the highest standing in third year.

This year's recipient of the medal for Outstanding Achievement in a Master's Program was Spencer Gallant. The recipient of the Faculty Association Medal for Outstanding Achievement in a Doctoral Program was Kyle Knysch. Both of the Graduate Medal Awards include a \$500 scholarship. Faculty support in drawing the application process for the Graduate Medal Awards to the attention of exceptional graduate students would be appreciated. Applications for the 2019 awards will be due early in the fall semester.

The FA also recognizes the accomplishments of our members with a number of awards:

- the FA Merit Award for Scholarly Achievement, awarded to up to three full-time Faculty members;
- three FA Hessian Merit Awards for Excellence in Teaching plus one FA Merit Award for Excellence in Teaching, with two awards allocated to up to two full-time faculty, one allocated to up to one sessional faculty member, and one award available for full-time or sessional faculty;
- Two FA Merit Awards for Outstanding Service, awarded to up to one FA member;

The Faculty Recognition celebration, recognizing recipients of the Merit Awards for Scholarly Achievement, Excellence in Teaching, and Outstanding Service, and retirees will be taking place this year on April 24 at the Culinary Institute.

The three subcommittees that adjudicate nominations for our FA awards are highly valued for the careful consideration they give to each nomination. We really appreciate their time and contributions. This year, the Merit Award for Scholarly Achievement Subcommittee was chaired by John VanLeeuwen, joined by Sanda Badescu, James Polson, Andrea Carrothers, Edward Chung, Esther Wohlgemut (fall semester), and Anne Marie FitzGerald (winter semester). Janet Byanton chaired the Hessian Merit Award for Excellence in Teaching Subcommittee, and was joined by Amy MacFarlane, Rebecca Reed-Jones, Laurie Brinklow, Richard Covey, and Henrik Stryhn. The Merit Award for Outstanding Service Subcommittee was chaired by Simon Lloyd, joined by Carolyn Peach Brown, J McClure, Gloria

McInnis-Perry, and Ali Ahmadi.

Please be sure to join us for Faculty Recognition night on Wednesday April 24, 2019, as we honour award recipients and retirees, and celebrate this transition time in the academic year. You do not need to be especially connected to any of those being honoured to attend; this is a time for celebration by and for our entire FA community. A reception will start at 6:30 p.m., which will be followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m.

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## ***Equity Committee Report***

by Ann Braithwaite (Co-Chair)

The FA Equity Committee (Nola Etkin, Ann Braithwaite, Ali Ahmadi, Marya Ahmed, Gary Evans, Catherine Innes-Parker, and George Jia) was relatively quiet this year, since two of its members were also on the Joint Equity Committee—which was a very active committee. We recognize many areas of crossover between these two committees, especially during times when the FA is not in active negotiations. Common areas of concern between the two committees are to identify how EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusion) affects our membership, and to work with the administration to implement policies and practices to address those concerns. As the FA looks toward negotiations for a new contract (the current one expires in June 2020), the Equity Committee's activity will gear up, as we work with the executive and the bargaining team to gather information and resources necessary to ensure that equity issues are addressed in our collective agreement.

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## ***Joint Equity Committee Report***

by Ann Braithwaite

As part of our current collective agreement, a Joint Equity Committee was struck, consisting of UPEIFA members Blake Jelley, Ann Braithwaite, and Nola Etkin, as well as representatives of the UPEI administration, Robert Gilmour, Ron MacDonald, and Gulrose Jiwani. (Note that the composition of this committee will be changing, given recent shifts in administrative and FA positions). The committee met monthly, with the aim of both educating ourselves about EDI generally, and considering proposals for policies and practices committed to this goal. In February of 2019, we also worked together with the VPAR's office to submit a grant proposal for a Tri-Council EDI Institutional Capacity-Building Initiative; results of this competition are unknown

at the time of this report (however, if we are successful in this endeavour, the work of this committee would be greatly aided). After some time reading and researching EDI practices at other universities—in terms of their content as well as their institutional structures, the committee turned to identifying what priorities at UPEI should be, highlighting practices around hiring and tenure and promotion as immediate concerns. The committee will resume meetings once the semester is over, and looks forward to generating knowledge about and policies for these important considerations for UPEI.

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## ***BU1 Joint Committee Report***

by Michael Arfken

The BU1 Joint Committee is established, according to Article A-14, to “review matters of concern from the application of [the collective] Agreement [and] to foster better communication and more effective work between the Parties.”

The Association was represented on the BU1 Joint Committee by Mike Arfken and Nola Etkin. The Committee did not meet this year.

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## ***Francophone Working Group Report***

by Carlo Lavoie (Chair)

The UPEIFA Francophone Working Group was formed to report and to make recommendations to the UPEIFA Executive Committee on initiatives that could be taken to advance the diverse professional interests of French-speaking academic staff on campus.

During the past year, consultations were made among the UPEIFA members to form a Francophone Working Group and 5% of the BU#1 FA members answered the call. We formed an ad hoc Francophone Committee to make recommendation on the Working Group Terms of Reference and to start planning activities for next year. Committee members for 2018-2019 are Sami Khedhiri, Christian Lacroix, Mary MacPhee and Carlo Lavoie (Chair). For more information on the Francophone Working Group, please read my report on the CAUT Francophones’ Committee, which follows.

## ***CAUT Francophones’***

### ***Committee Report***

by Carlo Lavoie

I had the opportunity to become a member of the CAUT Francophones’ Committee in 2018-2019. The Francophones’ Committee is appointed by and reports to the Executive Committee of CAUT and its purpose is to advise the CAUT Executive on the concerns of francophone academic staff at francophone, bilingual and anglophone institutions. In 2018-2019, we met twice in Ottawa (24-25 August 2018 and 15-16 March 2019) and once by teleconference (31 January 2019).

Among other matters, the focus of the Committee in 2018-2019 was to analyse the factors which may slow down the career of colleagues working in French at bilingual or anglophone universities. Even with two CAUT policy statements, one approved in 2012 entitled “The Recognition of Increased Workload of Francophones in a Minority Context,” and another one approved in 2013, entitled “The Value of Disseminating Research in the French Language,” it appears that discrimination based on language is still part of the academic life of some colleagues in Canada. For example, when considering tenure or promotion, some post-secondary institutions do not really recognize Academic publications or scholarly communications in French, or give the same status as publications or communications in English. This persists, even though “Canada is a country with two official languages, [and] the members of its academic community have the right to conduct their research activities in the language of their choice.”<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Francophone academic staff at post-secondary institutions are frequently called upon to perform extra duties. This can entail translating documents from French to English (and sometimes from English to French), and it can also include interpretation, representation and communication, among other duties. Such work receives no official recognition and moreover there are significant issues of fairness since Anglophone academic staff are not usually assigned these extra duties. According to CAUT, this work “should be counted as an academic contribution and taken into consideration when applications for tenure or promotion are assessed and in every allocation process based on evaluation of a file (for

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1 <https://www.caut.ca/about-us/caut-policy/lists/caut-policy-statements/recognition-of-the-value-of-disseminating-research-in-the-french-language>

example, for internal research grants, requests for sabbatical leave, etc.).”<sup>22</sup>

In its search for innovative ways to solve these problems and to make sure that faculty members all work under the same principles of equity and diversity, the Francophones’ Committee has met this year with the CAUT Librarians’ and Archivists’ Committee and the CAUT Equity Committee. Our goal is to work together in the up-coming year on various issues affecting francophones at universities and colleges. For more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at [clavoie@upei.ca](mailto:clavoie@upei.ca) .

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2 <https://www.caut.ca/content/recognition-increased-workload-francophones-minority-context>

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### **Harry Crowe Foundation**

by Michael Arfken

In late February, I had a chance to attend an event in Toronto held by the Harry Crowe Foundation (<https://www.crowefoundation.ca/>). Named after a professor whose academic freedom case was instrumental in the formation of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), the foundation supports open discussion on the role of post-secondary education in contemporary society. This year, the event focused on debates surrounding the importance of free speech on campus. While all of us no doubt agree that free speech—and more specifically, academic freedom—is a vital foundation for our work, the notion of free speech has increasingly become a rallying cry for those looking for a platform for spreading hate speech and discriminatory rhetoric. Within this context, Universities find themselves in the difficult position of promoting the free exchange of ideas while also recognizing their obligation to build a more inclusive environment for people who come from a wide range of traditions and life experiences. The focus of this conference was to help academic staff participate in the process of building inclusive learning environments without putting unnecessary restrictions on free speech.

## **New Activist Workshop /**

### **CAUT Council Report**

by Mike Arfken

At the end of last November, CAUT Council met in Ottawa to discuss a range of issues affecting academic associations throughout Canada. While Nola Etkin served as our delegate to Council, I had an opportunity to attend as an observer and to participate in a CAUT New Activist Workshop that was held right before Council.

The New Activist Workshop brought members from a variety of academic associations together to discuss both strategies for responding to our Employer’s encroachment on our collective agreements and the importance of building union solidarity, not only during, but also before and after collective bargaining. Through a simulated campaign, we learned the importance of drawing on the different skills of our members to resolve important issues.

At CAUT Council, union representatives throughout Canada voted on a number of issues including welcoming new members into our organization, and the development of policies surrounding academic freedom, equity, and harassment. We also worked on developing model clauses on a range of issues including care provider leave, pay equity, and whistleblower protection.

Of particular interest was a presentation by Grahame McCulloch who has played a central role in the national organization of academics in Australia. In his presentation and our conversation afterward, he repeatedly stressed how impressed he was with the strength of organized academic labour in Canada, suggesting that our steadfast commitment to academic freedom and equity serves as an inspiration to academics the world over.

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### **Senior Grievance Officer Workshop**

by Michael Arfken

Every December, the Senior Grievance Officer Workshop engages with a topic that is relevant to a wide range of academic associations. This year, we focused on issues that emerge against the background of mental health. This includes members who have been disciplined for problems that can be traced to mental health as well as an employer’s legal obligation to provide accommodation for members struggling with depression, addiction, or other challenges.

One issue that was overlooked at this forum but that was a topic of discussion among my colleagues was the role that the discourse of mental health not only plays in securing important support for our members but also how these discourses can obscure systemic problems by focusing exclusively on individual pathology. I'll have more to say about these issues in my Grievance Officer Report at the Annual General Meeting this April.

As always, it is great to have an opportunity to gain a sense of the range of grievance issues faced by our colleagues throughout the country. From these conversations, it is clear that we have a robust and effective grievance team and that our efforts to not only defend but also strengthen our Collective Agreement are impressive within a national context.

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## **Your FA Needs You!**

The FA Executive invites you to participate in the following workshops, some of which will be offered on campus this summer. If you are interested in participating, please contact [upeifa@upeifa.org](mailto:upeifa@upeifa.org)

### **Building a Stronger Association**

This workshop helps association leaders and members explore ways to strengthen their organization. Course material on association legal, organizational and contractual frameworks, and on ways to encourage greater member involvement, is presented through individual and group exercises, role-playing and group discussions. *(Course length: 1 day — offered locally)*

### **Grievance Handling**

Introduction to dealing with members' complaints and to determining whether filing a grievance is an appropriate option. Through a series of exercises, participants learn how to proceed with a grievance through the step process — initial fact-finding, drafting the grievance, and settlement discussions. The course concludes with a brief introduction to the arbitration process. *(Course length: 1½ days — offered locally)*

### **Media and Communications**

A one-day workshop that prepares participants to communicate effectively with the media and to develop in-house communication strategies. The course combines a mix of instruction, modelling exercises, and taped questions and answers to simulate a variety of interview situations. The

workshop is offered both individually and in groups.

## **Equity workshop**

This workshop is for associations seeking to advance their work for equity. It is a one-day, on-site facilitated workshop that identifies key equity issues in the post-secondary sector and at your institution. It provides strategies to help associations, association leaders and individual members address the equity issues identified. Designed for association leaders and activists, this workshop is an opportunity to strengthen the association's ability to advocate more effectively for equity as an association as well as within the broader institution.

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## **UPEIFA Executive**

### **President:**

Miike Arfken (Psychology)

### **Vice-President:**

Vacant

### **Treasurer:**

Debra Good (School of Business)

### **Members-at-Large:**

Andrea Bourque (Pathology and Microbiology)

Douglas Dahn (Physics)

Carlo Lavoie (Modern Languages)

Sharon Myers (History)

Charlene VanLeeuwen (Applied Human Sciences)

### **UPEIFA Office Manager/Professional Officer:**

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Richard Raiswell

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