

"United We Stand"



September 2nd Labour Day March. Photo: Dawn Hemingway



Message from the President

Stephen Rader
Professor, Chemistry
President UNBC-FA

Dear Colleagues,

While it may seem peculiar to welcome our members back to a new semester with an issue devoted to strike preparations, the fact is that preparing for job action is a completely normal responsibility for any union going into



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bargaining. So let me start by welcoming you all back to a new semester, made more exciting by your new colleagues, whom we introduce later in this issue. I hope your summers were productive and rewarding, and that you took time to relax and unwind. I went to Haida Gwaii for some kayaking and the Edge of the World music festival.

Your Bargaining Team resumed their bargaining work in August in anticipation of jumping right back into it in September. Unfortunately, an illness on the administration's team caused several dates to be cancelled, but we were nonetheless able to present our response to the administration's offer of late June. We have two more dates scheduled in October, which brings us to the current preparations for job action highlighted in this issue.

It is important to remember that throughout the relatively short history of working people being able to advocate for better working conditions, the only tool available when reasoned arguments are no longer persuasive is to withhold our labour. The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that the right to strike is protected by our Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and we learned in 2015 that exercising that right is an effective means of convincing a reluctant employer to agree to reasonable proposals.

It is also important to remember that the proposals you have asked your team to promote at the bargaining table are no different from what your colleagues around the country have already obtained for themselves: strong protections for their participation in directing the academy, the freedom to pursue scholarship as they see fit, and wages that attract talented young scholars.

In the pages that follow, your colleagues from various Faculty Association committees describe the preparations they are making for job action. Their work allows you to remain focused on getting the semester off to a good start, while ensuring that should a strike become necessary we will be able to carry it off with the efficiency and strong spirits that carried us through in 2015. Thank you for your continuing support of your Association as we bear down on achieving our long-held objectives.



September 2nd Labour Day Celebrations

Photos: Dawn Hemingway



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Message from the Vice President

Paul Siakaluk
Professor, Psychology
Vice-President UNBC-FA

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to begin by welcoming our new FA members (who are introduced at the end of this newsletter) to UNBC. I hope everyone, new and not-so-new, is having a good and productive start to the semester.

On September 16 and 17, emergency meetings were held for the UNBC-FA membership. At these meetings the membership received a bargaining update from our lead negotiator, Dr. Ted Binnema, and were told by our FA President, Dr. Stephen Rader, that the UNBC-FA Executive unanimously voted to hold a strike mandate vote. We are currently well underway with this vote, and I thank everyone who has thus far participated, and encourage those who have not yet taken this opportunity to do so. A strong strike mandate vote outcome will enable our bargaining team to send the employer a powerful message that we are united in our desire to negotiate a fair, and timely, collective agreement for our members.

As Vice-President of the UNBC-FA, one of my duties is to chair the Action Committee. This committee oversees the preparations and functions of any job action our members take. I thank Dr. Paul Sanborn, my predecessor, for compiling a manual to help us more effectively prepare for and carry out a strike, if needed. The Action Committee is comprised of the following Committees: Strike Services; Picket Line; Strike Finance; and Communications. Below are brief descriptions and current members of these committees. I thank these individuals for their service to the membership, and encourage anyone who is contacted to possibly serve on one of them to consider doing so.

Although the strike of 2015 was tough in many ways, an important and positive outcome was the increased solidarity among our members. Personally, I became acquainted with many of my colleagues whom I did not previously know well or at all, and during the strike many of these individuals became friends. Today I remain grateful for these friendships, which have greatly enriched my UNBC experience.

In solidarity.



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Strike Services Committee

Michael Murphy, Co-Chair
Jonathan Swainger, Co-Chair

The Strike Services Committee is comprised of Kristen Guest (English), Heath Matheson (Psychology), Kealin McCabe (Library), Michael Murphy (Political Science) and Jonathan Swainger (History). Mike and Jonathan are the co-chairs although Mike seems to be doing all the heavy-lifting while Jon seems to think he's eye-candy. Alas, the committee's primary responsibilities pertain to: (1) locating a potential strike headquarters; (2) outfitting the headquarters; (3) the manufacture and recycling of our picket signs; (4) orchestrating transport between the headquarters and the picket-lines on the Prince George campus and downtown at the Wood Innovation Centre; (5) and a broad assortment of smaller duties such as acquiring safety vests, pylons, and almost anything that is necessary to support the strike and keep our members safe. Both Michael and Jon were members of our previous – and dare we say “glorious” – Strike Services Committee, which largely meant that Mike kept the bail money while Jon socialized. In the end, we're ready to go if need be, although like all members, we remain hopeful that our negotiation team secures the day without recourse to a walkout.

Regardless of the outcome, we'll stand strong with *our* Union.

Strike Finance Committee

Catherine Whalen, Chair
Sylvia Barton, Vice Chair

The Strike Finance Committee is comprised of the following FA members that will work diligently to ensure the essential financial planning and preparation is in place to be carried out in the event of a strike: Sylvia Barton (Nursing), Catherine Whalen (Education), Annie Duchesne (Psychology), and Fiona MacPhail (Economics).

The purpose of the Strike Finance Committee is to administer the flow of incoming and outgoing funds. Incoming funds include amounts budgeted by your Faculty Association Executive Committee for planning and operating the strike, donations from other member associations and CAUT Defense Fund payments to cover staff benefits and strike pay.

In the event of Strike Action, the roles and responsibilities of the Strike Finance Committee include: (1) accurate record keeping of all strike expenditures; (2) arranging for efficient processing of expenditures; and (3) distribution of strike pay to members. The Strike Finance Committee will also inform local financial institutions of the strike and the possibility of members experiencing financial hardship in meeting mortgage payments, rent, child care, and/or day-to-day living expenses.

Our Faculty Association Executive Committee and Bargaining Team were thoroughly prepared for the strike in 2015. FA members received strong support from CUPE members, which resulted in being unified in solidarity for the first time in



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the history of UNBC. Please do not hesitate to contact us regarding questions or concerns in the event that we are positioned to be on strike in the near future.

Best regards and stay strong in solidarity.

Strike Picket Line Committee

Art Fredeen, Co-Chair
Dawn Hemingway, Co-Chair

Picket lines are the most visible, public representation of the Faculty Association during any strike; thus, the Strike Picket Line Committee and each Faculty Association picketer plays a critical role in the success of job action. The picket line is also a place for creating and strengthening solidarity amongst members, with other unions and with the general public. Should we end up going on strike, the Strike Picket Line Committee would be in charge of: (1) identifying the picket line locations and times; (2) appointing picket captains for each location and time; (3) organizing the schedule for members for pickets (4) meeting with and training of picket captains and picketers (5) ensuring proper picket line conduct; (6) reviewing daily incident reports; and (7) when necessary, taking appropriate action. Members must take on picket duty in order to receive strike pay (normally one 4-hour shift per day).

Strike Communications Committee

Brian Menounos, Chair

During our job action in 2015, social media became an important part of the UNBC-FA's communication with faculty, students, colleagues at other institutions, and our community. Since then, we have maintained our Twitter account (@UNBCFA) and have added an Instagram account (also @unbcfa). We have used these social media streams to communicate the work of our FA executive and to encourage other faculty members in Canada and the United States during their negotiations and job action.

In the coming weeks as we once again face uncertainty in our contract negotiations we will continue to post links to bargaining updates, stories and photographs from our members, and expressions of support from other faculty unions. If you are on either Twitter or Instagram, we encourage you to follow and interact with the UNBCFA feeds to help you stay informed and connected.

The members of the Communications Committee are: Brian Menounos (Chair)(Geography), Zoë Meletis (Geography), Dezene Huber (Forestry), and Joseph Shea (Geography). If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact the Chair.



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May 17th Solidarity BBQ

Photos: Dale Laluk



It was the worst of times, it was the best of times....

Zoe Meletis

Associate Professor, Geography

Hitting the pavement for 10 days in March of 2015 was not how we had planned our semesters. Many of us were stressed about finances, families, food bills and more when we struck together as UNBCFA members. The future was uncertain, and we left behind precious classes, data, experiments, papers, research and service to stand our ground literally and metaphorically.

But... let's not forget all that was gained in addition to our eventual collective agreement. We got to know about colleagues as humans(!) with lives outside of UNBC walls. We walked outside in the sunshine for hours. We chanted, sang, wrote, commiserated, laughed and danced together (oh yes—the picket line downtown at the old BMO building had some serious tunes and moves). Our picket lines got way more honks and cheers from the PG community than insults and jeers. We were joined by union members from near and far, from the amazing CUPE 3799 support at UNBC, to other local union members and leaders who would swing by with speeches, coffee, mushroom risotto balls (true story!) and donuts (I have never eaten as many donuts before or since), to “flying pickets” visiting from universities across the country.



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Melanie (L), a UNBC student, visits us on our St Patrick's Day line.

Photo: Zoe Meletis

Despite the fact that a major and painful rift between us and our employer is what propelled us into a strike in 2015, many bridges were built during the strike—bridges between faculty, staff, and students (remember the crowded and powerful rallies and sit-ins that students organized?); bridges between people “up the hill” and “down the hill”; bridges between UNBC and CNC union members; and bridges between people we wish we got to chat with more often—our very own members.

While it certainly wasn't all bread and roses, we have many heartwarming memories (haikus, limericks, and buttons too!) from the lines. So, we might not want to go there (AGAIN!) but if we do, we know that we will be in the best of company, with strong bridges supporting us.



Phil Mullins dances with his dog Baxter on the line.

Photo: Zoe Meletis



Our picket lines were even visited by strange mythical creatures like this Scottish leprechaun.

Photo: credit unknown...maybe it was take by a unicorn?



I never set out to be a union member....

Stephen Rader
Professor, Chemistry

Growing up, I knew almost nothing about the role of labour unions in forcing employers to be concerned about worker safety, to guarantee weekends off, to provide parental leaves and paid vacations... indeed, to obtain for working people many of the things that make our workplaces safe, productive, and worth working in.

So it was with some apprehension that I found myself on the bus heading up to my first picketing stint in March 2015, although I absolutely supported what our Association was fighting for. My colleagues were nervous too, unsure about the wisdom of slowing the cars trying to get onto campus, frightened about possible negative reactions from students and the public.

I needn't have worried.

The labour movement is a well-oiled machine when it comes to job action, and I remember the thrill and relief when the Pulp and Paper Workers showed up at our lines, during a break in their conference, to show us how to set up proper pickets. And when CAUT's flying pickets arrived from all over Canada, bringing financial and moral support and good wishes from colleagues from Memorial to U. Vic. And when the local RCMP helped us with traffic safety and asked us to report dangerous drivers.

Our brothers and sisters also showed us how to keep up our spirits on the line, chanting, singing, talking to one another. It was in fact a time of deep community for many of us, having extended conversations with people we usually just nod to, if that, while passing in the hall.

My only bad experience during picketing, oddly, was from the handful of colleagues who, for whatever reason, were driven hysterical at the thought of exercising their Charter-protected right to withdraw their labour from their employer.

I would still rather get an agreement without going on strike, but I am no longer worried about it. While not exactly experienced, I know enough about it to know that if we do end up on strike we will be supported by students, by community members, and even - quietly - by members of the administration. We will talk, laugh, and sing while we walk the line. And at the end of it, we will have accomplished far more than we ever could if we were too afraid to strike.



**rain & wind -
no bargaining
with nature.**

(UNBC FA strike – day 8, Art Fredeen)

**a second chorus
of 'the union makes us strong'
into clear night sky**

*(Kevin Hutchings leading us in
'solidarity forever')*



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Cold feet
Cold arse
Warm heart ... bonds made.

(Davina Banner-Lukaris)



My favourite strike memories are of the visits paid to our picket lines by members of fellow unions, whether it was the firefighters dropping by to warm our hearts with fresh donuts and hot coffee, the Steel Workers walking the line with us geeks to show us how it's done, or the wonderful Flying Pickets who visited us from faculty unions across Canada. I was especially happy when our students walked the line with us side-by-side to support and encourage us. These experiences taught me the true meaning of solidarity.

Then of course there were the songs we sang on our pickets lines, at the rally downtown, and at Strike Headquarters on weekend evenings, including the song I wrote to mark the occasion (with apologies to my partner Lisa):

*My baby's walkin' on the picket line
She looks so good I'm lookin' for a pickup line
But I won't need to use it 'cause she's already mine
And I'm holding her hand while she's holding her sign
This kind of solidarity suits me just fine
While my baby does her time
Walkin' on the picket line.*

(Kevin Hutchings)



Nothing like a good old strike of solidarity. I am reminded of the sweet conversations passing by with strike sheets covering my body, cars driving by honking their horns, people walking by and stopping for a wee chat, but most of all, it was about relationality. Did we truly know each other as a collective? That was the perfect opportunity for faculty to share their academic experience, to share some common themes. Let's reunite to build on what we envision for the future.

In Solidarity

(Tina Fraser)



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CAUT condemns Heritage report on copyright

(Ottawa – May 17, 2019) The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is alarmed by recommendations released this week by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage regarding copyright law in Canada.

The report, though produced by a committee mandated to take into consideration the broad range of stakeholder interests — including creators, the public, educators and students — focuses entirely on the interests of big publishers and their lobby groups.

“The report puts the financial interests of publishers over the rights of students and teachers,” says CAUT executive director David Robinson.

The report makes a number of contentious and alarming recommendations, including rolling back fair dealing rights, extending copyright term, and increasing damages for infringement (even for accidental and minor, non-commercial violation of copyright), while also creating several new rights and payments for publishers.

“Restricting user rights is no way to genuinely support independent Canadian creators, and would have a significant negative impact on scholarly communications and the exchange of knowledge,” Robinson says.

He notes the report demonstrates little understanding of the legal development of fair dealing — the existence and parameters of which have been confirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada — and ignores the reality at Canadian schools, universities, and colleges across Canada.

“Students and schools are paying unsustainable and unfair amounts of money to publishers. Fair dealing is a necessary carve-out that allows appropriate sharing for educational purposes, yet this too is under attack,” Robinson says. “The claim that fair dealing has anything to do with publishers’ declining profits or the struggle that some creators face in making a decent living is demonstrably false. The recommendations should be rejected in favour of a more balanced and fair approach to copyright law.”

Media contact: Lisa Keller, Communications Officer, Canadian Association of University Teachers; 613-726-5186 (o); 613-222-3530 (cell)

Please join the Faculty Association in welcoming our newest members:



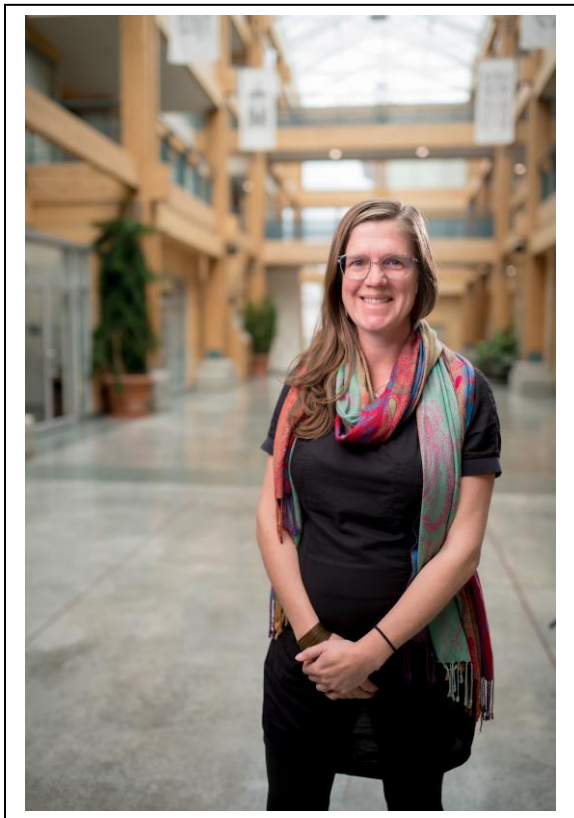
Meghana Adoor, Senior Lab Instructor
Health Sciences



Heather Bryan, Assistant Professor
Ecosystem Science & Management



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Sinead Earley, Assistant Professor
Ecosystems Science & Management



Sarah Hanson, Senior Lab Instructor
Nursing



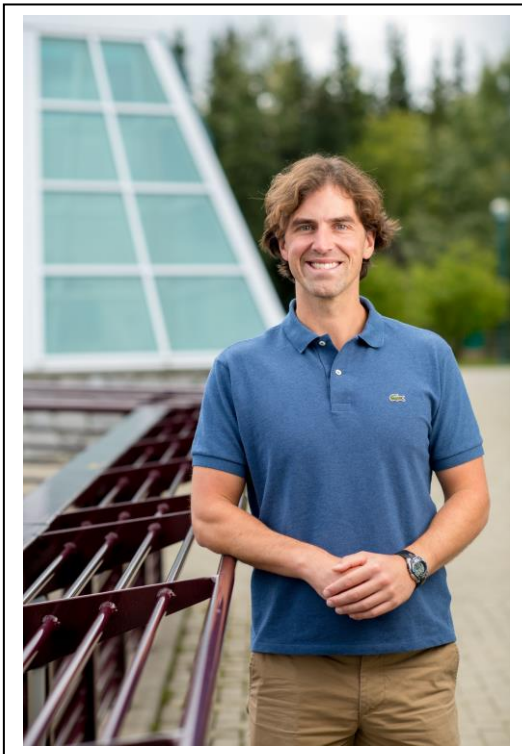
Samuel Hanson, Instructor
Chemistry



Kendra Furber, Assistant Professor
Northern Medical Program



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Tristan Pearce, Associate Professor
International Studies

Mohammad El Smaily
Associate Professor, Mathematics

Sarah Giesbrecht
Librarian

Saqib Hakak
Assistant Professor, Computer Science

Lauren Irving
Senior Lab Instructor, Nursing

Darren Karunanithi
Assistant Professor, Business

Kathy Wrath
Senior Lab Instructor, Nursing (Quesnel)

To find out more about our new members and their research interests, visit our website at: www.unbcfa.ca



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Faculty Association Office



The Faculty Association Offices are located in
Rooms 3084-3089 Charles J. McCaffray Hall

Office hours: Monday–Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm

Donna Sindaco, Executive Director
donna.sindaco@unbc.ca, 250-960-5816

Christa Florell, Professional Services Officer
christa.florell@unbc.ca, 250-960-5313

visit our newly updated website: www.unbcfa.ca



Don't forget the deadline to vote is:

Thursday, October 3rd at 4:30 pm

For more information, please contact
Donna Sindaco (donna.sindaco@unbc.ca)

Upcoming events

PG Cougar's Hockey Night and World Teacher's Day

5 October 2019
7:00 pm CN Centre

We have a limited number of tickets
to give away to our members and extra tickets
can be purchased at the box office
at the CN Centre

For more information, please contact:
Christa Florell christa.florell@unbc.ca

Annual General Meeting

25 October 2019
Noon – 1:30 pm
6-205 Conference Centre

***Teleconferencing is available on request
Please contact christa.florell@unbc.ca for dial-in
instructions on or before March 21st
Light lunch will be served***

25th Anniversary Celebration of the UNBC Faculty Association

18 November 2019
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

***Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more
Information.***



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