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Your Monthly Newsletter from the SCFA

ON STREAM

SCFA AT PRIDE >>>



The SCFA would like to thank all faculty and their families who joined the Pride Parade in Nelson on Sept. 3rd.

In the wake of recent anti-SOGI protests, showing our support is an essential way to let past, current, and future students as well as queer colleagues know they can count on Selkirk College to support safer, more inclusive learning environments, without fear of discrimination or hatred.

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Welcome to our new academic year and thank you for all your support, especially during bargaining. First, I want to introduce you to our SCFA Executive:

VP Contract Administration: Rebecca Jacobson
VP Negotiations: Jonathan Vanderhoek
VP Member Engagement: Leesa Dean
Treasurer: Craig McDonald
Secretary: Takaia Larsen
Board Observer: Ken Laing
Retirement Issues: Shannon Shah

Second, I want to mention that The Federation of Post-Secondary Educators, comprised of 20 college and universities, has spent many months preparing a plan to make use of and/or protect unionized workers from the latest governmental mandate (StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan). For example, the \$480 million provided by the government to develop micro-credentials will create opportunities, but there are also threats since the work to develop these credentials would be short term rather than regular work.

Third, we will regain some support from invigilation services that we lost with the retirement of Paris Voykin, management reorganization, and the chaos of the pandemic. Please stay tuned for more informatio. Taya Whitehead and I have agreed to a pilot study of making invigilation support for three exam periods, including during final exams. The details are being finalized as others contribute to making invigilation support a smooth process.

Finally, let us celebrate one of the best contract negotiations that we have had in 20 years! Jonathan has provided more details in his bargaining report, and we will also send out some reminders so you can all take advantage of our new wellness fund and other benefits. A special thanks the bargaining team who put in many extra hours and might have missed some vacation time over those negotiations.

In Solidarity,

Victor Villa

HIGHLIGHTS FROM BARGAINING

The SCFA and Selkirk College made productive use of the 2022/23 bargaining cycle. Some of the highlights of the new collective agreement include three annual wage increases, changes to the Health Benefit plan to increase its flexibility and usefulness, improvements in working conditions, and updating and expansion of leaves. We added new language to protect Academic Freedom and to update and clarify the selection process. Finally, we addressed a large structural weakness in our collective agreement that allowed for discounting wages for online instruction.

Members working this fall will see the wage increases first reflected on their September 22, 2023 pay deposits for pay period #19. The wage increases are also retro-active to April 1, 2022, and so members who worked on or after that date will also receive retro pay for the difference between the wages they received and the negotiated increases. This retro pay will be paid out on November 17, 2023. The changes to the Health Benefit plan including the new Health Spending Account and the Employee Wellness Account will come into effect on January 1, 2024.

Although many strides were made in this round, there are still areas in which we lag behind similar post-secondary institutions in B.C. For example, we have some of the highest contact hours required for full-time equivalency with no mitigation for number of distinct instructional preps. Challenges with workload also take on unique forms in the different schools and departments. The SCFA hopes to meet with individual members as well as with groups from the different Schools and Departments in order to better understand how issues may take specific shape in the different programming and student service contexts. This will help us prepare as we turn an eye to the next round of bargaining.

If there are any questions about the new collective agreement, or if members would like to meet to discuss workload or issues related to the collective agreement, they should reach out to a member of the SCFA Executive or the soon to exist Stewards Committee.

Regards,
Jonathan Vanderhoek
VP Negotiations, SCFA

New Employee Spotlight: Jill McKenna and Naser Alardeh



Though new to Selkirk College, **Jill McKenna** has been in the Nelson area since 2019. Always a cup of coffee in hand, she finds as much joy in bringing other artists' music to life as her own.

She is a professional bass player originally from Hamilton, ON, who studied jazz performance on the upright bass at The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music. While living in New York, McKenna had opportunities to study with jazz legends including Reggie Workman, Peter Washington, David Wong, Matthew Wilson and Joel Frahm. She has toured internationally including shows at the Bern Jazz Festival (Switzerland), Les Journées Musicales de Carthage (Tunisia), Tallinn Music Week (Estonia) and Fringe Milan (Italy).

On top of being the Assistant Producer for Tiny Lights Festival and Project Coordinator for the Nelson and District Arts Council, McKenna has been touring extensively throughout Western Canada and appeared on NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts in January with English singer-songwriter, dodie. McKenna released her debut full length album under the artist name Marivon, entitled None of this is Mine in March 2023.

Jill prioritizes showing up for the music first and honouring the process. She believes in the value of mentorship and subject-centred learning with her students.

"I am truly humbled to stand alongside such an incredible faculty here in the Music Program at Selkirk College. This program attracts an amazingly diverse group of emerging artists, and I am so excited to be working and learning from them all."

Naser Alardeh has been in the Canadian post-secondary education sector since 2016. His teaching journey began at the school of business at St. Lawrence College in Kingston, Ontario. His work has included serving as the entrepreneurial thinking programming advisor at the University of Calgary and offering consultancy expertise in innovation to two other institutions in Ontario and Jerusalem. He currently serves as a sessional instructor in business management, economics, and program development advisor at Northern Lights College in Northern BC and now teaches economics and marketing at Selkirk College.

Naser has a multidisciplinary academic background: he completed three master's degrees from the Smith School of Business at Queen's University and the University of Waterloo, in Management, Economics, and Environmental Studies.

What excites him about Selkirk College is not only its welcoming, supportive, and collegial environment but also the vibrant and diverse student community. As a lover of nature, hiking, and the mountains, he couldn't ask for a better location than being surrounded by the beautiful mountains and residing in the picturesque town of Nelson.



Heads Up From Your Treasurer: Increased Membership Dues Proposal

At last year's Fall GM, we were able to increase release time for the president and VP Contract Administration positions in order to better align with provincial averages and to reflect a need for increased release based on actual workload. We are committed to ensuring that you receive the support and representation you deserve as members of the SCFA, and in order to do so, we are proposing a small increase in membership fees after a long period at the same rate.

The proposed increase would raise the membership dues from the current rate of **1.6% to 2.05%**. The individual financial effect this will have on you varies depending on where you are located on the salary scale, but to give you a general idea, this increase would be around \$20 per pay period at Step 1 of the salary scale. This adjustment is primarily driven by two critical factors:

1. **Funding for Increased Release:** As previously mentioned, the increases to 50% release for the President and VP Contract positions require additional funding in the budget. The previous release time of 25% was not enough for people in those positions to effectively carry out all the work that needed to be done and was significantly below the provincial average of release time given by other FPSE member institutions. We also increased the Assisted Leave funding to 100% as the previous rate of 75% left regularized employees paying partially for their own benefits and living on a reduced salary while carrying out important work.
2. **Aligning with the Province-Wide Average:** At 1.6%, our current membership dues are significantly below the province-wide average of 2.07% paid on average by other FPSE members. This disparity puts us at a disadvantage when compared to other associations in terms of resources and capabilities. By increasing our dues to 2.05%, which is still below the provincial average, we will be in a better position to advocate for your needs and interests both locally and provincially.

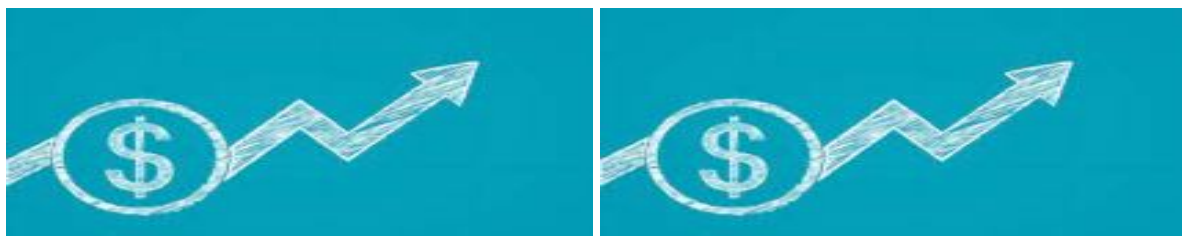
We will be presenting a motion at the upcoming GM, on October 11th. You will also receive an email with the official motion and more specific financials prior to the meeting.

In closing, we thank you for your continued trust and support. The strength of the Selkirk College Faculty Association lies in its members, and together, we can ensure that our union remains a powerful advocate for your interests.

Please stay tuned for further communication regarding this motion, and feel free to reach out to us with any questions or feedback in the meantime.

In solidarity,

Craig McDonald, CPA, CMA
Treasurer,
Selkirk College Faculty Association



2023 SCOPE WINNERS

The SCFA is proud to celebrate this year's SCOPE winners Jamie Bliss, Elizabeth Ferguson, Kerri Webb and Victor Villa with a ceremony following the Fall GM, on Wednesday, October 11th in the Faculty Lounge. Come enjoy the food, raise a glass to your colleagues, and share kind words about how they have impacted you!

JAMIE BLISS

After being nominated multiple times for this award, Jamie's time has come. A pillar in three different schools at the college (Environment and Geomatics, Business and UAS), Jamie is an exemplary instructor who has earned the coveted title by one student nominator as "the instructor whose classes you NEVER want to skip". Chair Gordon Rein pointed out in his support letter how "students consistently pointed to Jamie's courses as models for what they need to thrive in this new learning environment." Aside from teaching, Jamie has been a Learning Fellow with Teaching and Learning and has done important work on the college's Privacy Committee.

ELIZABETH FERGUSON

Letters of support for Elizabeth were numerous and effusive. One learner referred to her teaching accomplishments as "majestic" and others agreed that Elizabeth completely embodies learner-focus, community engagement, innovation, the fostering of healthy and safe work and learning environments, dynamism, and deep devotion to her students. UAS Chair Duff Sutherland noted all the contributions Elizabeth has made in developing new Indigenous courses like INDG 101, supporting faculty as they Indigenize their course content, and all the very important other roles that contribute to moving UAS and other schools forward in a good way as they incorporate Indigenous approaches and content.

KERRI WEBB

Letters of support stated that "Kerri is one of the most hard-working, dependable, high functioning colleagues I have ever worked with. On top of that, she is a kind and thoughtful person who will go out of her way to make others' work lives go better." Students spoke at great length to her supportive nature. Highlights included ways in which she has made information user-friendly for students through sophisticated curriculum mapping and charts for students of all due dates and requirements for various medical school applications. She has also created an exceptional excel chart that outlines all the course requirements for every major at many of the BC universities and how the Selkirk college courses transfer to these universities.

VICTOR VILLA

As union members, we can attest firsthand to Victor's excellence in his role as President of the SCFA and former VP of Negotiations. He has served our students as an excellent instructor of psychology, and as a founder of the research program connected to the Rural Pre-Medicine program. He has also offered significant service to the college as member of the Mir Centre for Peace Advisory Council. Victor has brought passion, empathy, and intellectual seriousness to his work and to his interactions with others. He has offered numerous other contributions during his fifteen years as a member of the Selkirk College community.

STAY TUNED FOR MORE SCFA NEWS IN YOUR OCTOBER NEWSLETTER!