



On Stream

Newsletter of the Selkirk College Faculty Association

December 2014

Your SCFA Executive:

Lui Marinelli, Elizabeth

Lund, Duff Sutherland,

Tracy Punchard, Doug

Henderson, FPSE Staff Rep

Leah Squance, Victor Villa.

Absent: Mike Konkin,

David Feldman, Danielle

Cossarini



Message from the President

Duff Sutherland
President, SCFA

Every semester consists of a lot of hard work. Thanks for getting this far in the newsletter at this busy time of the year! We want to continue to keep you informed about the activities of your association. Let us know how we do.

Thanks to all who completed the bargaining survey. We now have a significant number of surveys (91) and a large amount of data on your working

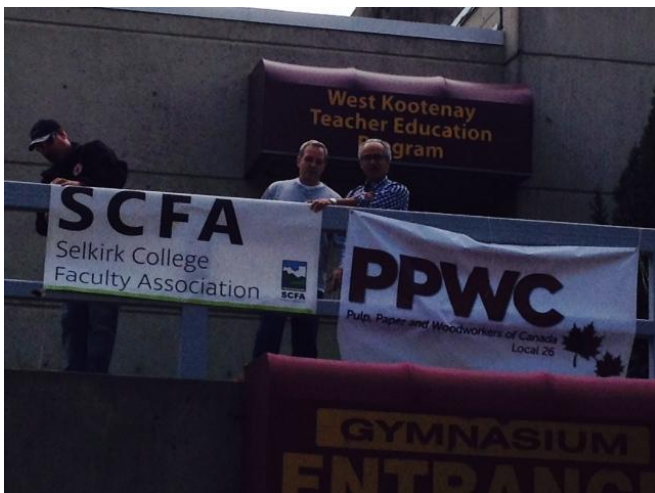
conditions and on your hopes for this round of bargaining. Our bargaining committee will now develop our proposals with the help of our FPSE staff rep, Leah Squance. We expect to begin bargaining in January with the process completed by March 1.

I know more about the FPSE media campaign that will begin in January to protect accessible, comprehensive post-secondary education in British Columbia. The campaign will coincide with provincial bargaining and the implementation of the Clark government's "blueprint" report. FPSE's public policy research company (it is not an ad agency) has

completed the focus groups with students, faculty, and community members. The group of artists and writers the company has hired from across Canada will now develop the narrative (the "stories") for the campaign. I met a couple of the writers at Presidents council meeting. They are very smart, young people. I am looking forward to the campaign.

The executive talks a lot about bargaining, contracts, workloads, evaluation, and working conditions. We also discuss ways to make the SCFA an organization that more members will get involved with. Along with the general meeting this fall, we had a great SCOPE awards ceremony, participated in the PPWC rally against cuts, held a vigil for the 43 missing (likely murdered) student teachers in Mexico, and sponsored the 60th anniversary showing of the banned film *Salt of the Earth* at the Castle Theatre in Castlegar. Members of the executive have also supported the striking teachers and city workers in Castlegar. We have had a good experience.

Along with your willingness to serve on SCFA committees, we welcome your ideas for other SCFA events that support the values of our association at the college and in the community.



At the PPWC rally against cuts we heard about the importance of the community colleges in British Columbia. They provide opportunities for students to lead better, fuller lives; they re-distribute wealth

outside the lower mainland; they make of our regions better places to live and to work; and they reflect a longstanding desire for equality among people and across regions in British Columbia. These have all been core values of the labour movement. As SCFA members I hope that we can continue this conversation as we move into bargaining and face a government with a narrow view of post-secondary education in the province.

Regularization: Where We Are and Where We Are Going

Lui Marinelli
VP Contract Administration

Regularization isn't tenure but it is the most secure contract you will find at Selkirk College. Short-term and annualized contracts all have end dates, after which more work, less work, or no work is available: hard to plan your life around that kind of uncertainty.

For a number of years we have been guided by an interpretation of the regularization language that the SCFA is now challenging. Under that interpretation the longest path to regularization starts with short term contracts. If a member is able to secure four consecutive terms of short-term contracts, then in the fifth, they are offered an annualized contract. If the work continues for another four consecutive terms, then the work should be considered "regularized" in the fifth term.

For those doing replacement work while someone is on leave for example, annualization is the end of the road. You can't be regularized if you have replacement work even if that replacement work has been going on, say, for nine years.

Those doing work that is supported from soft money (money that is not base funded, did not come from Victoria as a part of the school budget) are in a similar boat--annualized but never regularized. The SCFA has had many discussions at labour manage-

ment meetings aiming to improve the rates of regularization, but to no avail. We are now arguing that the original intent of the language is being misapplied.

Here is what we believe was the original intent of the language. When a person is offered short-term work and completes four consecutive terms, then there are two possible branches in the fifth term: On the first branch, if the work is NOT considered replacement and is based funded, then the additional work is to given as regular. In the college sector, two years of short term before a regular appointment is fairly standard. On the other branch, if the work is replacement or is supported with soft money, then the additional work is given as annualized before going to regularization. Presumably the annualization route is used to allow the potentially temporary work to dry up or start to take root.

We have notified the employer of our position. Because we strongly believe that the current language in our collective agreement supports this interpretation, the issue does not belong at the bargaining table. The employer has been unwilling to discuss our position so we have grieved. This summer was our first grievance dealing with a member who worked four consecutive terms and was given another short-term contract in the 5th. Any way you cut it that was wrong. We argued that the member should have been given a regular contract for that work in the fifth semester, not an annualized contract. In the end, we won the grievance and the work went from short-term directly to regular.

The next step is to find more people in the same boat and grieve. We have a number of people in the replacement and soft money boat that will be the basis for future grievances. Either the employer accepts our interpretation of the collective agreement or they deny the grievances and we take them to arbitration, where a third party will decide the issue for us.

Let's Get An Academic Freedom Clause Into Our Collective Agreement

Duff Sutherland
SCFA President

You saw in the bargaining survey that 80% of faculty members in the province have clauses in their collective agreements that protect academic freedom. I feel strongly that we should have one too. Academic freedom gives us as faculty members the right to teach and undertake research without restrictions from inside or outside the institution. It also gives us the right to use our professional judgment in what we teach, how we teach it, and how we evaluate student learning.

Academic freedom allows us to determine our own professional standards for the evaluation of teaching and research, and for appointments to the College through committees and governing bodies such as Education Council.

Academic freedom means that we play a major role in the governing of the college in its day-to-day operations and in its long-term planning. To fully exercise this right, we must be involved in the decision-making process regarding all aspects of the delivery of academic programming. We must also have access to substantial amounts of information about the running of the College.

Academic freedom means that we can speak out and express opinions at the College and in the community on important public issues without fearing that we will lose our jobs. The Canadian Association of University Teachers policy statement on academic freedom states that this freedom of expression extends to opinions "about the institution, its administration, and the system in which one works..."



Duff Sutherland and Takaia Larsen recently spoke at the showing of the banned film *Salt of the Earth* in Castlegar.

Our present autonomy to do our jobs, run our schools, and plan our programs reflects our administration’s belief in academic freedom. I appreciate that. However, I believe that our academic freedom should be further protected by a clause in our collective agreement. Such a clause would provide certainty in our relations with the administration as we engage in the development, activities, and operations of our college. It would make for a better college.

For the CAUT policy statement on academic freedom see:
<http://archive.caut.ca/pages.asp?page=247&lang=1>

Was Your Evaluation Done Properly?

**Tracy Punchard
 VP Liaison**

If you have been around here a while, I’m willing to bet you have not had a comprehensive evaluation since your first or third year of employment. Many SCFA members are happy to not be evaluated on an ongoing basis. Fair enough, and from the SCFA’s point of view, a non-evaluation is the equivalent of

a satisfactory evaluation should an issue arise. This doesn’t mean that a non-evaluation is proof that you are doing a good job, only that the college cannot discipline you for poor performance if no proper evaluation has been conducted.

Article 7 and the SCFA Evaluation Handbook identify the processes and forms that can be used to formally evaluate an SCFA member. There are approved forms for the evaluation of every SCFA position whether you are an instructor, chair, non-instructional faculty, or a tutor. For the record, a “360 survey” is not one of the approved forms. If your supervisor used a non-approved form for your evaluation, then you have not been evaluated.

You can find the SCFA evaluation handbook on our website scfa.ca, and you should become familiar with Article 7 of our collective agreement. If you have any questions about whether or not your supervisor is following the approved process for evaluations, contact the SCFA.

SCFA members often inquire about how they can receive informal feedback on their performance. This too is outlined in the SCFA Evaluation Handbook. What is important to know in this case is that the decision to gather informal feedback is entirely your choice; it cannot be requested by a supervisor. Any information collected must go only to you. After you have received the feedback, you can decide whether or not you want the information to go on your file.

Every once in a while dissatisfaction is expressed with the current evaluation forms. There is a mechanism to deal with that and it is identified in our collective agreement. The joint labour-management committee on evaluation has the power to review and make changes to evaluation processes. The SCFA is committed to this process. In the meantime, if a process such as evaluation is not adhered to, not only is the fairness of the evaluation system at stake, but so too is the fundamental premise of our collective agreement—that it was bargained by both parties in good faith.



Mary Ann Morris and Victor Villa speak up for justice in the case of 43 missing student teachers in Mexico.

On Stream asks Victor Villa about his roots in the labour movement

I grew up in a family of story tellers. I grew up admiring the story teller's ability to speak truths that required courage, humility, insight and wisdom if their purpose was to transform the listener. A Mexican education starts with familial and cultural stories but the core of the stories that shaped me were about my parents' life experiences. Others' stories were often interweaved; my father was especially fond of Benjamin Franklin and Lázaro Cárdenas.

Ronald Takaki was one of my heroes because he told stories that transformed the USA at a time when I was struggling to understanding who I was-- A Mexican, an American and just as importantly a laborer. I never worked gathering onions or watermelons in Bakersfield, like my brothers did in the early seventies. Their labor protected me from doing the same back-breaking, heat-stroke producing work and allowed me to go to school. I never forget their sacrifice. I honor them when I work for the

principles of unionism that transformed the world especially in the last century. Cesar Chavez is as much a hero to me as is Ronald Takaki-- everyone does what work they are best able to do in the circumstances that they find themselves.

Here is an excerpt from Takaki's (1993) book, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*

Through their narratives about their lives and circumstances, the people of America's diverse groups are able to see themselves and each other in our common past. They celebrate what Ishmael Reed has described as a society "unique" in the world because "the world is here" -- a place "where the cultures of the world crisscross." . . . At the same time, these people offer hope, affirming the struggle for equality as a central theme in our country's history. At its conception, our nation was dedicated to the proposition of equality. What has given concreteness to this powerful national principle has been our coming together in the creation of a new society. "Stuck here" together, workers of different backgrounds have attempted to get along with each other.

Our college community is similarly made of a diversity of people. I call on all SCFA members to consider how they can serve the SCFA. Support for the union is essential to make gains in an environment where government has lost the motivation to adequately fund education. Just like the Californian, Japanese and Mexican laborers, we too must work together and find the strength to put equity and equality ahead of individual gains because we too are "stuck here together" in labor.

On Stream asks Danielle Cossarini, College Board Observer, about her motivation to join the SCFA Executive

Who am I?
 Danielle Cossarini
 Systems Librarian at Selkirk College since March 2011

If I think hard about it, the reason that I joined the Selkirk College Faculty Association’s (SCFA) Executive was because of my Dad. During his teaching career he was highly involved in the British Columbia Teacher’s Federation and he instilled in me the value a union has for maintaining a fair and equal workplace and creating change.

But, my involvement in the SCFA Executive stems from more than strong union roots, it comes from being a young person (with education and skills) who bounced from one minimum wage job to another, never making ends meet; it comes from feeling

belittled and disrespected in those jobs; it is a result of the perceived apathy my generation has for workers’ rights; it comes from an understanding of the flaws of unions and a wish to reverse those flaws and stereotypes; and it comes from a firm belief that though the union movement is flagging, there is strength in a union and that unions stand for social justice and fairness.

It is important to me to try to make a difference and being a part of the SCFA Executive offers me that chance. Have you thought of joining the SCFA Exec, but are worried that you don’t understand collective agreements, or bargaining language? Don’t be. I didn’t have a clue either. What really matters is your enthusiasm, your passion, and your voice for change.

Happy Holidays!

Your SCFA Executive	Your SCFA Standing Committee Representatives
<p>President: Duff Sutherland VP Contract Administration: Lui Marinelli VP Liaison: Tracy Punchard VP Negotiations: Victor Villa Secretary: Elizabeth Lund Treasurer: Mike Konkin College Board Observer: Danielle Cossarini Retirement Issues Officer: David Feldman</p>	<p>Bargaining: Victor Villa Contract: Lui Marinelli Disability: Sally Glock/Mark Spielman Education Policy: Victor Villa Human Rights: Mary Ann Morris Non-Regular: Jonathan Buttle Pension: David Feldman Professional Development: Rebecca Jacobson Status of Women: Robin Higgins Health & Safety: Robert MacRae</p>