

SCFA
FPSE LOCAL 10

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On Stream

February 2025

Selkirk College Faculty Association



KSA student Chloe Roberts made a new SCFA banner for parades and special events. It's made from upcycled materials. She created it as part of the micro-internship program offered by CEES.

RIDING THE WAVE

by **Takaia Larsen**, SCFA President

As the weather starts to warm up and the promise of spring gets closer, I hope you are all holding up okay during these tumultuous times. This time of year is incredibly busy and as our students strive towards the finishing line, we are all busy trying to hold it all together and also make it to that goal. This is no small task and when combined with change and uncertainty, it becomes even more difficult. My hope is that you find support in the solidarity of your co-workers and fellow SCFA members. Despite the different areas we all work in, we are connected by understanding the cycle of our work, the effort it takes, and the reasons it is so rewarding. When I go to work every day, I know I will see many people who understand this and I am so grateful. I hope you also feel those connections and that support.

In this issue of On Stream I thought it would be best to provide an update on what has been happening with regard to declining International student enrollments and projected workload reductions. The past few weeks have been focussed on working with HR and Selkirk College leadership to ensure that the canvass period has followed our Collective Agreement language and that members who have responded to the canvass have been supported by an SCFA representative in order to make an informed decision. Each response has now been responded to and members are considering their options. For those who applied for the additional Early Retirement Incentives, they have 30 days to accept. Once those offers have been accepted, workload calculations and

projections will be adjusted again by the respective Deans and then layoff notices will be issued. We anticipate this happening by the end of March. The SCFA has committed to making someone (either an Exec member or a steward) available to attend meetings with our members and be there to take notes throughout the process. Please reach out to the SCFA if you need support – whether that is to attend a meeting with your Dean or Chair with you, to help you plan ahead and consider your options, or just to chat. ■

In solidarity,
Takaia

Faculty Spotlight

Shannon Shah

School of Health & Human Services

I have been a registered nurse for 35 years and a part of the Nursing team here at Selkirk for over 20 years. I have enjoyed the opportunities for building knowledge, making lifelong friends and seeing our graduates become happy active members of our healthcare team both in practice and as colleagues.

I have a beautiful daughter, Sarah, who is away at UBC studying marine science and loving every minute of it. Our conversations are often full of biology learning for me, and it is fun to hear her enthusiasm for her chosen field of work.

With Sarah away, I have a mostly empty nest with two cats, Ollie and Tilly, who are such fun and make me laugh every day. I am also a bit of a collector—those who have made the mistake of asking about Medalta pottery know that I really like the stories surrounding this amazing piece of Canadian history. I truly suggest a visit to the historic clay district if you're ever in Medicine Hat. I also collect original Canadian art.

“It was a trip of a lifetime.”

Finally, I love to travel and spend time in the water. My recent trip was to Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands and the Amazon jungle. It was a trip of a lifetime. The country is so beautiful and snorkeling in the islands with turtles, sea lions and so many cool fish was amazing.

This summer's plan is to turn my paddle board into a standing paddle board and get beyond the kayak experience. I will also try once again to plant and see what grows and what the deer and turkeys really enjoy. I love to read and belong to a few book clubs. I am always keen to hear what others are enjoying.

I am nearing the end of my first term as the Chief Steward. As you know, we are currently facing difficult times with the decrease in funding from international student enrollment and uncer-



tainly about how to best minimize layoffs and keep our members working.

My main role in these discussions is to understand the collective agreement and support our SCFA members. Please reach out to clarify any concerns you may have. Recent questions from members have been about seniority, the layoff process, bumping and the call back process to name a few.

Please know you are welcome to request an SCFA executive member or steward to attend any meetings. Our leadership team at Selkirk supports and encourages our presence and feels it is a positive piece of the process for us to have open communications and to work together.

On a personal side, I am finding this new role a good fit with my experience as an RN, as an educator, and a proud member of Selkirk College. ■



60 YEARS | March 21, 2025

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

News from Across the Sector

compiled by Leesa Dean

Langara Faculty Association protests ahead of expected layoffs

As the college prepares for a wave of expected layoffs, the Langara Faculty Association gathered several times in February to express concern about job insecurity and what they call the lack of leadership on the part of college administration.

LFA president Pauline Greaves emailed faculty and staff on Feb. 3 to invite them to gather throughout the week at noon each day in the foyer of the A Building. The meetings have been ongoing.

“Our goal is to show the real face of Langara. People who work every day to make the college great,” Greaves wrote in the email. She added that staff are frustrated by the lack of engagement and visibility by school leadership.

“Department members have faced warnings,” they said. “Even just saying we don’t want to cut a class has faced reprisals.”

Read the full article [here](#).

Coming Together from Across the Province: A Stand for More Funding In the Post-Secondary Sector

British Columbian post-secondary institutions are awaiting the province’s budget next month as the country’s cap on international students sets in.

BCIT president Jeff Zabudsky said on Wednesday that international students are not only important to the local economy, but also for the health of the schools.

The federal government’s change will see approximately

300,000 fewer international student permits over the next three years, leaving a significant gap for many post-secondary institutions that have become accustomed to large numbers of foreign students.

“It was implemented so quickly and bluntly that it’s really caused some havoc in a lot of institutions,” said Zabudsky.

Read the full article [here](#).

York University suspends 18 programs, faculty say ‘goes against the school’s values’

York University is suspending admissions to almost 20 academic programs due to a “multimillion-dollar” deficit and declining student enrollment.

But the move, which affects mostly language and humanity majors such as Indigenous studies, women’s studies, and gender studies, “goes against

the school’s values” according to some faculty, the Toronto Star reports.

Department heads were informed last week other programs affected include sexual-ity studies, East Asian studies, sociology, and global history and justice.

Read the full article [here](#).

‘It’s really caused some havoc’: B.C. schools awaiting provincial budget amid international student drop (from CTV News Vancouver)

British Columbian post-secondary institutions are awaiting the province’s budget next month as the country’s cap on international students sets in.

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Read the full article [here](#).

**ON STREAM submission
deadline is the 3rd
Friday of each month**



College Pension Plan Webinars

Dear SCFA Union Members,

I'm writing to remind you about the College Pension Plan webinars that are available to help you better understand and manage your pension benefits. There are three great webinar options available:

1. **Getting to know your pension:** A friendly introduction to understanding your pension plan.
2. **Making the most of your pension:** Learn how to optimize your benefits for a more secure financial future.
3. **Approaching retirement:** Designed for those nearing retirement, this section offers two options:

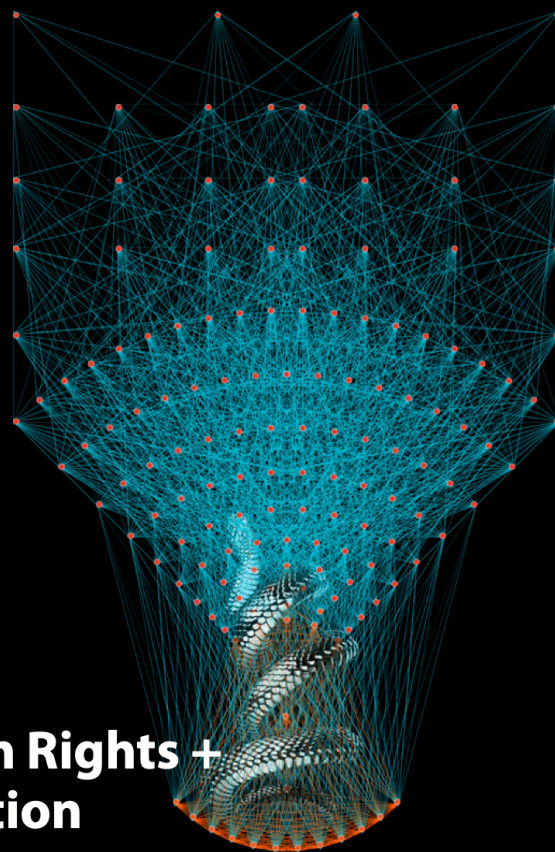
- **A 45-minute** Self-directed learning module, or
- **A 75-minute** instructor-led webinar, next one scheduled for March 10th from 4:00 to 5:15 pm.

To register or learn more about these sessions, please visit:

College Pension Plan Webinars.

I encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to ensure you're fully informed about your pension options. If you have any questions or need assistance, feel free to reach out. Perhaps I will see at the March 10th webinar! ■

Warm regards,
Todd Solarik
Retirement Issues Officer



AI Human Rights + Education

The FPSE Human Rights & International Solidarity Committee is proud to present a virtual event featuring

Aigerim Shilibekova / University Canada West
Frank Fernandez / University of Wisconsin-Madison
Lynn Long / University of Waterloo
Peter Lewis / Ontario Tech University
Punya Mishra / Arizona State University

March 20, 10:30 AM PT

REGISTER HERE:
<http://bit.ly/4gy2Wy1>



Moving Beyond Polarization with Jennie Barron



Recently, **North Island College** partnered with the **Comox Valley Community Justice Centre** to host a sold-out public discussion on polarization. The event, "*Moving Beyond Polarization*," was held at the Stan Hagen Theatre and featured guest speaker **Jennie**

Barron, Chair of the Mir Centre for Peace and instructor in Peace and Justice Studies at Selkirk College. Facilitating the discussion was CPA's very own **Melanie Nagy**. The evening included a dynamic 50-minute conversation between Jennie and Melanie and an engaging question-and-answer session. Attendees posed thoughtful questions, showcasing a genuine interest in finding ways to move beyond polarization in our communities collectively. The event was well received and sparked meaningful dialogue on building understanding and unity. ■



Photo submitted by Leanne Reitan of Kp'itl'els, as seen from the college trail near the confluence.

Bargaining Update

by Jonathan Vanderhoek

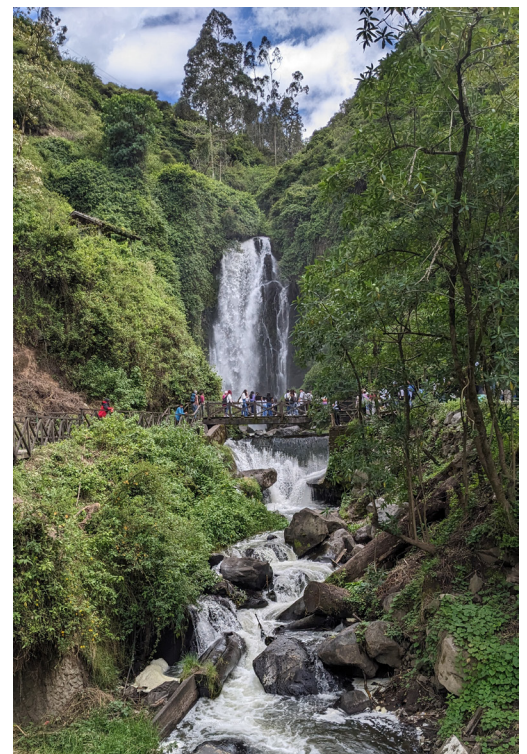
The Bargaining Coordination Committee met for its Winter Meeting as part of a FPSE standing committee summit on February 7-8. Topics of discussion included:

- *possible future models for provincial level negotiating and whether the ministry might try to mandate one of these models,*
- *better coordinating bargaining dates with PSEA reps to shorten the length of the bargaining process,*
- *the potential of creating a Joint Health Benefits Trust between a consortium of employers and FPSE unions that would be responsible for overseeing and managing our benefit plans and the contracting with an insurance company (i.e., closer to how our pension is run),*
- *concerns about AI in the workplace and potential bargaining language to address those concerns, and*

- *each local's state of preparation for the upcoming round of negotiations.*

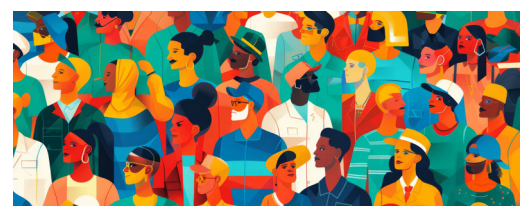
Three locals—Kwantlen Faculty Association, Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association, and Thompson Rivers University-OL Faculty Association—have already sent their employers a notice to bargain. Other locals indicated a hope to send notice near the expiration of the collective agreement at the end of March. The general sentiment was that bargainers hoped to do the heavy lifting for this round in the Fall 2025 semester.

I have also spent some time building a spreadsheet that compares coverage levels and health benefit plan details across the FPSE sector. If you would like to see how we compare, you can find the document here: **FPSE Health Benefits Comparison 2022-25**



The 18 metre Peguche Waterfall located near the town of Otavolo, Ecuador.

Photo by Shannon Shah



Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee Report

by Pablo Pastor

The FPSE Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee (HRISC) representatives met at the **Winter 2025 Standing Committee Summit** in the Lower Mainland in early February. HRISC has organized a Spring 2025 Speaker Panel Virtual Event on the topic of artificial intelligence, human rights, and education. This event will take place from **10:30 AM to 12:30 PM on Thursday, March 20th**. I have booked GRA/13 at the Castlegar Campus for those who wish to view the event together as a watch party.

On another note, the call for proposals for the International

Solidarity Fund (ISF) is now open. The deadline for proposals is March 10th. The ISF promotes international solidarity projects and actions that support disadvantaged people organizing to realize their basic human rights, projects informed by the values of equality, respect, human dignity and social justice and supports projects that advance human rights, educators' initiatives, workers' rights, labour organizations and community development. For more information, view this link: [International Solidarity](#) ■

In solidarity,

Pablo Pastor
HRISC Rep



The Blue-footed Booby, here on the Galapagos Islands, is known for its blue feet.

Photo by Shannon Shah

SCFA Executive

Takaia Larsen
President

Shannon Shah
VP Contract Administration

Jonathan Vanderhoek
VP Negotiations

Leesa Dean
VP Member Engagement

Kim Verigin
Treasurer

Pablo Pastor
Secretary

Ken Laing
Board Observer

Todd Solarik
Retirement Issues

On Stream

is the official newsletter of the SCFA, keeping members informed and connected. Whether you're new or a longtime member, this is your space to stay engaged.

Published monthly, we welcome submissions from all members—share your stories, photos, ideas, and achievements.

Submission ideas to:

Leesa Dean, editor
LDean@selkirk.ca

