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Your Monthly Newsletter from the SCFA

ON STREAM

Trauma Informed Teaching Project: Seeking Participants



Congratulations to SCFA member Matty Hillman who has been given a research fellowship from BCcampus in order to establish a community of practice at the college on the subject of trauma informed teaching.

Matty is currently **recruiting instructor** participants from across disciplines. The “community of practice” group will meet once a month during the winter 2025 semester to learn about and practice trauma-informed teaching strategies as well as increase their awareness of college resources and supports.

Participants will be provided with food and an honorarium.

If you would like to be considered for this project, please reach out to Matty Hillman via email: mhillman@selkirk.ca

CONGRATULATIONS, 2024 SCOPE WINNERS!



From left to right: the 2024 SCOPE Award Winners Lisa Gates, Michelle Pearce, Leanna Kozak and Stephen Harris

We would like to thank everyone who attended this year’s Fall GM and the SCOPE Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, October 15th. The ceremony always offers a mix of laughter and tears and a chance for all of us to reflect on everything teaching has to offer: some hardships, yes, but also the ample opportunities we are provided to inspire and be inspired by students and colleagues, advance our fields of practice, and contribute to positive changes in our region and beyond.

An extra special thanks goes out to James Nichol, the evening’s gracious host, who wore his fanciest attire for the occasion!

WORDS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT: OCTOBER UPDATES



The wait is over! The final count for the BC Provincial Election is now complete and the results are 2 seats for the Greens, 47 for the NDP and 44 for the Conservative Party. In this shockingly close provincial election where some key electoral areas had less than 50 votes between the top two candidates, it seems clear that many British Columbians have a desire for change and that our province is divided on many issues. Within that political climate, I hope that the labour movement can stand united. Now that we know who will form the government and as such, who we will be Bargaining with in our next round, the work of preparing for Bargaining begins. At our local level, you will be receiving our latest Bargaining survey from your VP Negotiations, Jonathan Vanderhoek, at your Selkirk email address in the near future. Please take the time to fill out the survey as your results will help shape the focus of the Bargaining Committee and the SCFA's priorities for this next round. At the provincial level, the work will now begin to plan strategies and focus areas for all FPSE locals in the province. That work began last weekend at the Bargaining Conference we attended in Vancouver on Oct. 18-19 and will continue in earnest now that the election results are in. Stay tuned for updates from our local as the process unfolds and we near the end of our current contract, set to expire at the end of March 2025.

Here at Selkirk, it has also been a very busy few weeks keeping on top of the continually changing landscape around International Student enrollments. Since my update at our Fall GM and the recent Town Hall, the federal government has also made an additional announcement to cut immigration numbers by 20% in 2025, with further reductions planned for 2026 and 2027. These changes will likely have an additional impact of further reducing the numbers of students who might choose to study here in Canada. We have been continuing to meet with the Selkirk College Leadership team and BCGEU and PPWC every two weeks to discuss the College's plans for addressing these challenges and in order to ensure that any changes proposed align with our Collective Agreement and serve the best interests of our SCFA members. We continue to have assurance that all contracts will be honored until the end of this academic year, but I have been hearing from many of you with your questions and concerns over potential workload changes which may be looming in the future. Please continue to reach out to me, Shannon, your local Steward, or anyone else on the SFCA Executive with your concerns. We want to hear from you!

In solidarity,

Takaia

MARLA GONZALEZ PLASENCIA: ON SELF-CARE AND COSTANZA NAPS



When I was hired by the college in 2022 to teach in the ECCE program, I was thrilled to have achieved this life long goal, and when I was given an office space I felt a true sense of accomplishment. For me, having a place to hang my hat reinforced a sense of belonging and welcomed me as a member of the Selkirk College community. For the next year I didn't put anything up on the wall or bring any personal touches as I was still labouring under the weight of imposter syndrome so many of us teachers feel and I didn't want to get my hopes up in case I was let go 😊 After 1.5 years of working full time I knew that I was where I was meant to be and decided it was time the office reflected that.

I am lucky enough to share an office with Lisa Gates. We both have a love for plants, organization and warm settings. We made a plan to purge outdated materials, lower the visual distress of our very full book shelf, bring our plants, and create a sitting space for guests. Since then, we have brought in my grandmother's plant stand; a cast iron spiralling stepped piece of art that holds 7+ plants. We also have a handful of other plants that have taken permanent residence on our desks. The goal was to invite principles of forest bathing into our office. We also rearranged our desks to create room for a chair next to the plants so when folks came to visit us they too could have a micro forest bathing experience. We purchased cloth cubes to store books and random supplies in and matching black metal organizers to arrange course materials into. We purged a filing cabinet, old VHS tapes, and many resources that were no longer relevant to create room and lower visual stimulation. We brought in soft lighting lamps and our colleague Michelle Pierce gifted us a beautiful canvas featuring a picture she took of Canadian hoodos.

The final touch was my yoga mat, basket of blankets and my office slippers. Not only do I value comfort but I also often work 12 hour days, I have an active hobby farm, do most of my own renovations, and have a full time job keeping up with my daughters—the potential for burn out in my world is real and my sleep is frequently affected. Although self care is not always at the top of my list, I have begun allowing myself to take wee naps when I need them. The yoga mat and blankets have been instrumental in allowing me to take “Costanza naps” under my desk on lunch breaks, and this small addition has had a major impact on my overall well being. We are continuing to develop our office space and recognize the changes that have made our working environment a calming space. We are so delighted that everyone who comes to our office shares feeling the same warmth and care that we do.

As an early childhood education instructor I teach students to slow down and live with the process of learning. As a part of this process we consider the image of the educator and the ways in which educators are honoured in their role. The image of the educator is a lens that aims to both professionalize and humanize educators and ground them as an essential component of learning communities deserving of both respect and care. I believe that our environments reflect the value we hold for the people who inhabit those spaces. For Lisa and I, our office now reflects the reverence we have for our roles, our field, and our students and is a safe space to be creative, bold, and cared for.

NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEES: BARGAINING

BARGAINING UPDATE

PREPARED BY JONATHAN VANDERHOEK

The 2022-25 Collective Agreement between the SCFA and Selkirk College has entered its final six months. With this in view, preparations for bargaining have begun to ramp up in intensity both locally and provincially.

Locally, we have drafted a new version of a bargaining survey for members to complete. It is scheduled to launch this week. You will find it in your Selkirk emails. The survey is a helpful tool by which members can identify priorities, concerns, and preferences that give shape and direction to the approach and package of proposals that the SCFA team will bring to the bargaining table.

One new type of question on this year's survey asks about members thoughts on engaging in job action. In particular for which issue or priority would you engage in job action and to what extent, recognizing that job action can take different forms with increasing levels of impact or disruption on the work place. We are not preparing for bargaining with the hopes that it leads to job action; job action only occurs when negotiations break down and reach an intractable impasse. However, it is important to enter the process knowing where we are at as an association and preparing for various circumstances.

As noted at the Fall General Meeting, workload is a priority issue for most locals in the province. We made some progress locally last round by getting rid of LOU7 which previously allowed for the discounting of online instruction. Despite this, we still have one of the heaviest instructional workloads in the province. We are 1 of 3 institutions in the province in which an instructor could be required to teach 5 courses a semester/10 courses a year in order count as fulltime. Moreover, we're actually worse than those institutions though because of how we calculate contact hours, some instructors who don't have seminars, labs, or clinicals could theoretically teach 10 courses and not be at 100%. For example, if you taught 10 courses with 3 contact hours each, you could be at 480 contact hours, which is only 93.75% of the 512 hours for fulltime. And unlike with our peers in a place like the College of the Rockies Faculty Association, we also don't have any limits on the number of distinct preps one can have in a semester; e.g., CORFA has language whereby if you are assigned 4 distinct preps in a semester than you are considered full time. As you can see, this is an area of real weakness in our collective agreement.

We also have workload issues that are specific to different program and service areas. The more we can understand the shape of the problems, the better positioned we are to table relevant collective agreement language that addresses the problem. If your program or service area would like to meet, or you want to meet with me one on one, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Jonathan Vanderhoek
VP Bargaining

FROM YOUR VP, CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

Layoffs and Asserting Seniority Rights

Thank you to everyone who checked in regarding the seniority list; it has been great connecting and making sure everyone understands their place on the seniority list and how having this information is important. I would also encourage anyone who has questions regarding their appointment type to reach out.

In this report, we will explore Layoff Sequencing. Below is a brief overview, so it is also a good idea to review Article 5 of the local Collective Agreement for all the details:

<https://selkirk.ca/sites/default/files/documents/Selkirk-SCFA%20April%201%2C%202022%20to%20March%2031%2C%202025.pdf>

Layoff Sequence

In the event that the college determines a layoff is required, the layoff will occur based on expertise, seniority, and appointment type. For example, if the college determines that it must layoff two of its three philosophy instructors, then the first thing it will do is assess whether all of the instructors meet the expertise requirements for the position. Expertise is understood as the qualifications and experience required for a position. If one fails to meet the expertise requirements identified with the position, then they will be laid off first. If all have the expertise, then the employer will look at the appointment type. Employees on short-term appointments are laid off before employees on probationary appointments. Faculty on probationary appointments are laid off before employees on continuous (i.e., regularized) appointments. If all faculty have the same appointment type, then the order of layoff will proceed based on who has the lowest seniority.

There are many steps to this process and your knowledge of your program, your students and other program opportunities are so valuable. Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

Shannon Shah
VP Contract Administration

THE FINAL WORD: CARTOONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



"Mary, I've got meetings all day so I'm going to be unable to have my scheduled happiness moment at 3:01. You have it for me, OK?"

Are you feeling as frazzled as this cartoon figure at this point in the semester? Here are a few suggestions for maintaining your well-being:

- Go to a free fitness or yoga class at the Selkirk College gym. It's right outside your office door!
- Use your benefits for regular massages. You have to pay for the first five (hint: find someone who does 30 minute appointments for those), but then the rest are covered for the year.
- Be inspired by Marla Gonzalez Placensia and bring comfort items to your office (slippers, yoga mat, heated blanket).

REMINDERS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

- As we head into the final months of the year, be sure to use your **Health Care Spending and Lifestyle accounts**. You can use your \$250 lifestyle account for all kinds of things like new hiking boots, fitness classes, ski passes... if you're not sure if your planned expense will be covered, feel free to email benefits@selkirk.ca to discuss.
- As we head into the bargaining period, we will be creating a **Job Action Committee**. Job action does not necessarily mean striking, although it is certainly an option if the situation demands it. However, job action can also include a variety of incremental measures, such as the withdrawal of participation in certain duties. The Job Action Committee's task is to ensure that we are logistically ready and prepared to engage in job action should it be required. If this is something that interests you, please reach out to the SCFA Executive.
- On Stream is always on the lookout for **submissions** relevant to our work, professional development, interests and well-being. We also feature a member in each issue. Send your ideas and/or member news at the beginning of each month to idean@selkirk.ca, or let us know if we can feature you!

LOOK FOR MORE SCFA NEWS AT THE END OF NOVEMBER!