

MAFA NEWSLETTER

Mount Allison Faculty Association

Room G2, Centennial Hall Tel: 364-2289

E-mail: mafa@mta.ca

Web Site: www.mafa.ca

April 2016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Before I got involved in collective bargaining and eventually became president of MAFA, I had many questions. How does MAFA operate? Why is our collective agreement written the way it is written? What do CAUT and FNBFA do? How can faculty members use these organizations to work to ensure Mount Allison is the institution we want it to be?

To some extent, it is my job to help answer questions like these that you have. So please ask. I will warn you, however, that part of the answer I may give echoes the answer Euclid is reported to have given to Ptolemy: there is no royal road to geometry. In the direct application to MAFA, the interpretation of this advice is: come to meetings, ask questions, and volunteer to serve. All members jointly do the work of MAFA through membership meetings, the executive, its committees, and the bargaining team. You may not be ready to volunteer today – that's fine – but if you want to know more and want to help guide the organization, please approach someone on the executive to learn more and let us know you are interested.

Thank you to all who participated in the planning for collective bargaining over the past year. The collective bargaining committee conducted half a dozen consultation meetings and many informal conversations. The collective bargaining team is now working hard to synthesize these contributions into bargaining proposals. Your views and priorities drive the work of our association and make our collective work possible.

The “highlights” of the year include the WGST debacle, the exposure of two contrasting views of Senate and university governance in general, and the discovery that faculty and librarians were not properly represented on Board of Regents committees. Through their responses to these developments, faculty and librarians demonstrated their commitment to collegial governance processes and took action to improve the university.

In late March the Liberal provincial government introduced an omnibus bill to implement their strategic initiatives announced in the budget. For our association, and unions in general, the major concern was a provision to amend the *Industrial Labour Relations Act* to tip the balance of power in negotiations towards the employer and the province and away from employees. Concerted lobbying by many individuals and groups, including MAFA and the FNBFA, led to the government announcing their intention to withdraw the provisions on April 8th.

I'm grateful to the members of the Executive for their work on behalf of the association. The combined effort of the membership, MAFA committees, and the Executive allow us to achieve our goals.

If you have questions or concerns please contact me or any member of the Executive.

Andrew Irwin
Mathematics & Computer Science

MAFA'S STATEMENT ON INDIGENIZATION AT MOUNT ALLISON

At the recent indigenous conference on campus, President Robert Campbell announced that the next academic year, 2016-2017, will be the Year of Indigenization at Mount Allison. This news was greeted with excited applause from the audience, who had gathered for the two-day conference to discuss *Working Towards Cultural Proficiency*.

Mount Allison University currently offers a handful of indigenous-focused courses on campus. The administration has stated on a number of occasions that it plans to develop a more cohesive and deliberate indigenous studies program. The hope is that it will do so in a good way, and involve indigenous students at Mount Allison as well as indigenous Elders and nearby First Nations to ensure the program reflects needs and interests of both indigenous and non-indigenous students and has an authentic indigenous spirit. Mount Allison also has several faculty who have worked extensively with indigenous communities and who could be resources and lend their support.

The introduction of a concerted indigenous program at Mount Allison has numerous benefits. For indigenous students, such a program would create a positive space for them to be who they are, would allow them to see themselves in the fabric of the university and the curriculum, and acknowledge and respect the history of the relationship between Canada and indigenous people. For non-indigenous students, such a program would help educate about the indigenous-Canadian relations and how this relationship continues to impact Canadian society today. Such a program would also debunk myths and commonly held misconceptions, reduce racialization and othering, and pay respect to the people on whose territory this campus sits.

The evolution of the program complement at Mount Allison University to include indigenous studies is a positive and exciting step forward. At the same time, MAFA and the Employer have established collective agreements. They lay out the definition of the bargaining units and the issues of appointments, job security, salaries and benefits and

so forth, which must be respected, as in any other circumstance.

MAFA is looking forward to the next step in Mount Allison's transformation to a more positive space for indigenous students and the Mount Allison University community as a whole.

The MAFA Executive

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REPORT

Since the last Collective Bargaining report, the committee has held several topic-based meetings with MAFA members. These have included Leave Replacements, Salary, Pensions and Benefits, Part-time Issues, and Child Care and Dependent Care. We will also be seeking advice from the membership in a meeting on Wednesday, April 13th on Evaluation and Tenure and Promotion.

The committee's work continues in advance of negotiations as we shape the feedback that we have received this year into proposals for the new collective agreement. We hope that these will represent noticeable improvements to your working conditions in our future contract.

Thank you to the stalwart committee members (Rob Cupido, Suzie Currie, Steve Law, and Elizabeth Millar) and to all who have attended meetings and passed on your thoughts via our lengthy survey.

Chris Down
Fine Arts

GRIEVANCE REPORT

Since the end of 2015, there has been movement on four grievances:

Grievance #2015-10, regarding the violation of Sabbatical procedures by the Employer, has not been resolved and is moving towards arbitration. I feel that this is an important grievance, and is the inevitable result of the Employer's attitude towards Sabbaticals.

Grievance #2015-11, concerned the Employer's failure to consult with the Senate on appointments, per Article 16.05 of the CA. This was settled, with the employer undertaking to provide the called-for equity report to Senate. The employer has still not consulted with Senate on appointments for 2015-16, but the academic year is not yet over.

Grievance #2016-01, concerned a proposed Employer "review" of the Graduate Studies programme, which we believed likely to be inconsistent with Article 7 of the CA. Subsequent to explanations from the Employer and the conclusion that the possible violations have not yet occurred, the grievance has been allowed to lapse on a "without prejudice" basis, to be re-filed depending on future Employer action.

Finally, an individual grievance, #2016-02, regarding procedural problems encountered in a promotion to Full Professor, has been filed. We are currently awaiting the Employer response.

It is always important that any grievances or potential grievances be brought to our attention, to ensure that the collective agreement works well and that what can't be fixed through grievances can be considered for collective bargaining.

Louis Béliveau
Commerce (Honorary)

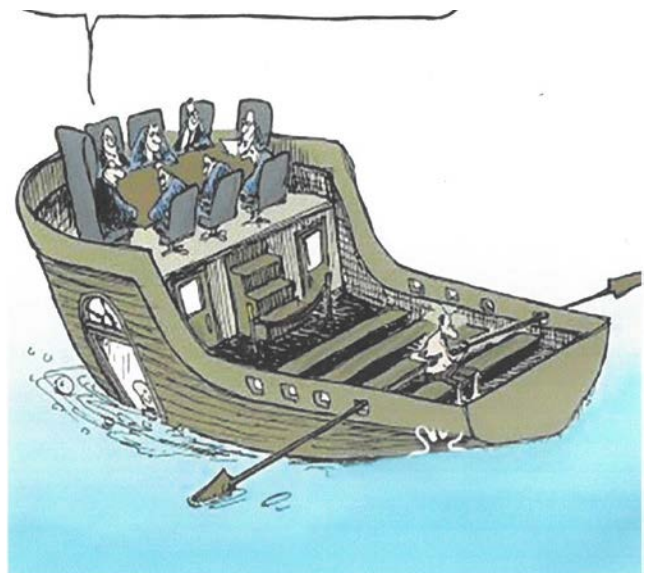
**REPORT ON THE CAUT CHIEF
NEGOTIATORS' FORUM**

The CAUT Forum for Chief Negotiators was held in Ottawa, March 18 and 19. The list of participants was longer than any I could recall from past years with 66 representatives from 54 organizations, from AUFA to YUFA.

Following the opening address, the initial session presented some lessons learned from recent settlements from the large (Toronto) to the small (Mt. St. Vincent). In general, it appears that too many university administrators have been generating negative publicity from ignoring

fundamental issues of support for research and for high-quality education raised by faculty associations before and during bargaining. Concern was expressed about the longer-term damage that some Employers had done to reputations and conditions in the PSE sector as a result. In the following session, we heard an inspiring story of the difficult but ultimately rewarding co-ordination of bargaining at many post-secondary institutions negotiating in the same province (an organization in Quebec with 35,000 members). In subsequent sessions, we learned more about interest arbitration and the importance of a clear demonstration of solidarity and commitment to principles of fairness and collegiality to convince arbitrators of the strength of support from the membership for the proposals of the faculty association.

"I DON'T GET IT AFTER ALL THE BUDGET CUTS TO STREAMLINE THE WORK FORCE, WHY AREN'T WE MOVING FASTER?"



Representatives from faculty associations from Edmonton (University of Alberta) and Lethbridge discussed the new reality of bargaining in their province. In Alberta, the provincial NDP government has proposed legislative amendments to enable freedoms and union rights to become more

like those that have been enjoyed in the rest of Canada, even as the exercise of those freedoms is being increasingly curtailed in the rest of the country, particularly in New Brunswick. Other sessions covered equity provisions, inflation forecasts, and, of course, there were excellent discussions of bargaining tactics from the experienced staff at CAUT.

Stephen Law
Past President

COMING EVENTS

All MAFA members are encouraged to attend these coming events:

MAFA Annual General Meeting and Election,
Friday, April 15, 12 noon, Avard Dixon G12

MAFA Retiring Members' Party, Friday, April 15,
4:30 pm, University Club

MAFA 2015-2016 EXECUTIVE

Andrew Irwin, President (Mathematics and Computer Science)

Fiona Black, Vice-President (Religious Studies)

Stephen Law, Past President (Economics)

Louis Béliveau, Grievance Officer (Commerce [Hon. Member])

Chris Down, Collective Bargaining Officer (Fine Arts)

Catherine Lovekin, Membership (Physics)

Lori Ann Roness, Part-time Officer (Sociology/ MASSIE)

Robert Rosebrugh, Treasurer (Mathematics and Computer Science)

