

The Newsletter of Ryerson Faculty Association

Spring 2014 Vol. 28 No. 2

Message From the President

Dear Colleagues,

Once again we have had a very busy semester. I would like to thank Peter Danziger for taking my place for the months of January and February while I was away in South Africa. Peter did a wonderful job in my absence.

We are entering a very uncertain period both internally as well as externally. Internally there are two important searches underway that will have a huge impact on our future as a university. First, of course, is the search for a new President of Ryerson and second, is the search for a new Vice Provost Faculty Affairs. The RFA has very good collegial relations with both President Levy and Vice Provost John Isbister. These changes both in the administration and in the leadership come in a negotiating year and we need your continued support in these uncertain times.

Fortunately, we have very strong and capable RFA members

on both committees and we are confident they will represent our collective interests very well. I urge all of you to get involved with the searches by informing the Chairs and the members of the committees of your views, in writing and at town halls. We also have a very capable negotiating committee comprising three new members (Doreen Fumia, Rachel Burman, and Jane Sprott), a returning member (Diane Pirner), and a past chief negotiator (Ian Sakinofsky), who returns as the Chief Negotiator for this round of bargaining. They will be coming to visit with all of you in your respective departments during the next academic year, as they begin to set the negotiating mandate.

Externally, we are in an uncertain provincial political environment with an election looming (though the timing of the election is still very uncertain). In



Anver Saloojee, President

addition, the province has clearly signaled that the fiscal crisis has not passed and while it will continue to run deficits for the next couple of years, it is expecting a climate of restraint in the broader public sector of which we are a part.

In the Fall 2013 Faculty News Link, we noted that:

- ◆ The province was using differentiation as a means of ensuring cost control, and that there was a need for greater clarity about how these filters and principles will be used to guide policy;

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Important Dates

RFA General Meeting

May 7, 2014

ILC, International Room

* * *

RFA Season Opener

September 2014

"Location TBA"

* * *

RFA General Meeting

December 2, 2014

International Room, ILC

* * *

RFA Season/Holiday Party

December 2, 2014

Oakham House

RFA List Servs

If you are not receiving information sent out on rfa-announce and/or rfanet, please advise the RFA Office at ext. 5186 or by e-mail: rfa@ryerson.ca

We wish to keep you informed!

Thank you.

New Executive Committee Member/s

Rahul Sapra, VP External

Dr. Rahul Sapra (Associate Professor) has been a full-time faculty member in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, since 2005. He teaches courses on Shakespearean Drama and Performance, Renaissance Literatures, World Cinema, and Literary Theories. His work has been published in top journals such as *Modern Philology* and *Renaissance and Reformation*. His book *The Limits of Orientalism: Seventeenth-Century Representations of India* (2011) was praised in the internationally renowned *Times Literary Supplement*. Dr. Sapra is the Subject Editor for the Film section of the peer-reviewed *Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism*. He is presently working on a monograph – *Is Shakespeare a Foreigner in India?* – that deals with the assimilation and impact of Shakespeare in India. He has also conducted workshops on Shakespearean acting and cinema.

Carmen James Schifellite, Treasurer

Dr. Carmen James Schifellite has been a full time member of the Department of Sociology since 2004. He teaches and supervises students in the Immigration and Settlement Studies graduate program and in the Communication and Culture graduate program. Dr. Schifellite's works primarily in science and technology studies, the sociology of knowledge, and media studies. In addition, he has served on the RFA Reps' Council, the Department of Sociology Teaching Standards Committee and on an the RFA Negotiating Committee. He has also held a number of finance and collective bargaining positions in university-based unions before coming to Ryerson.

From the President....

- ◆ It was clear that the priority filters and principles will be used to establish a framework that will guide the process by which institutions negotiate Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) with the Province; but
- ◆ It is not clear how the SMAs will be used as a part of the government's intended strategy to increase differentiation.

Things have moved considerably since then. The government has stated that by March 31st 2014, it would like each university in Ontario to sign a separate Strategic Mandate Agreement. As of today, the government appears to be on track. They have developed a SMA template that is being used by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) to structure the agreement with our university administration.

As it currently stands, the SMAs will be used to make decisions about future program approvals, as well as graduate allocations. To the extent that the SMAs are negotiated separately with each university, it is a divide and conquer strategy and one that requires each university to identify its strengths and what differentiates it from other universities in the sector.

The link between the government's differentiation policy and the SMAs has become clearer. The template reflects the principles, components, and metrics expressed in MTCU's Differentiation Policy Framework, which are an important part of the Ministry's move to "differentiate" the sector. The SMA template is about the MTCU's intention to pursue differentiation in collaboration with individual universities based on what they have identified as their core strengths.

As OCUFA noted, there are several areas of potential concern in the template:

1. The template approach suggests that MTCU will be compiling the final SMA agreement from each institution's SMA proposal, indicating greater MTCU power to "edit" proposals than was originally indicated.
2. It continues to advance a "standardized" process for differentiation. OCUFA has argued that using standardized metrics runs the risk of damaging organic diversity in the interest of a narrow vision of differentiation.
3. The template reiterates the government's desire to revisit the university funding formula. However, the Ministry again stated that this work will be done in consultation with the sector.
4. It is not clear whether new undergraduate spaces will be allocated through the SMAs, as with the graduate expansion.
5. The template also indicates that the government wishes to update the program approval process. This is a new area of interest, and it is not clear what needs to be updated, or what the updates might look like.
6. The template suggests that institutions will continue to be "accountable to the Ministry with respect to effective and efficient use of resources" but does not indicate the design and character of accountability mechanisms. There is some suggestion that the current Multi-Year Accountability Agreements (MYAAs) will be re-purposed as SMA progress reports.

From a RFA perspective, we need to remain vigilant about how the SMA and the differentiation policy impact the new academic plan being developed by the Provost. So, we urge all RFA members and especially members of Senate to become familiar with the differentiation document, the Strategic Mandate Agreement Ryerson is signing and the draft academic plan, which the Provost will bring to Senate in Spring 2014.

What will happen to these agreements if either the NDP or the Conservative Party becomes the governing party after the next provincial election, remains to be seen.

From the President....

On another front, the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) recently released a highly flawed report, *Teaching Loads and Research Outputs of Ontario University Faculty: Implications for Productivity and Differentiation* (hereinafter, referred to as the report). The study is “designed to measure the teaching loads of faculty members in the Ontario university system and the relationship of this variable to others, such as research output and salary.” The rationale is very telling, it “... was to inform the discussion about opportunities for greater differentiation and productivity in the Ontario university system.”

The study is based on a sample of tenure and tenure-track economics, philosophy and chemistry faculty members at 10 Ontario universities. The disciplines and institutions seem to be chosen, not at random, but rather to support a predetermined position.

The study focused on a sample of teaching workloads, research volume and impact, and remuneration for assistant, associate and full professors in the economics, chemistry and philosophy departments at the following universities, Brock, Carleton, Lakehead, McMaster, Ottawa, Queen's, Toronto, Western, Wilfrid Laurier and Windsor. The institutions were selected to reflect the diversity of universities in the province – from primarily undergraduate universities to research-universities. Ryerson was placed between the two poles and the report found that at Ryerson the median salary for full time faculty was \$121,469 and academic salaries, as a percentage of operating expenses, was 22% - second lowest after UOIT.

The authors found that “the average course load during the 2012 academic year was 2.8 courses. The average teaching load varied across disciplines – 3.0 for economics, 2.4 for chemistry and 2.9 for philosophy.” The report estimates “... that about 27% of faculty members in economics and 7% of faculty members in chemistry have neither published in peer-reviewed journals nor received a Tri-Council grant in a three-year period. These research non-active faculty members teach, on average, 0.9 courses more in economics and 0.5 courses more in chemistry than their research-active colleagues.” The report concluded that if these colleagues taught more, the teaching capacity of full-time professors in Ontario's universities could increase by 10%, equivalent to adding 1,500 additional faculty members across the province.

The report reiterates the myth that faculty are expected to do 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% service. This ratio is certainly not found in our Collective Agreement. Nonetheless, the authors of the report say Ontario universities could become more productive and more efficient if faculty members who are not productive on the research front are allocated more teaching such that their workload becomes 80% teaching and 20% service. It is universally accepted that even if faculty do no research there must be time for academic rejuvenation and engagement.

The authors do acknowledge data limitations - noting that workload information resides at the level of the university and there is little public information that “... documents teaching and research outputs of faculty -- particularly teaching ... The best information with which to conduct an examination of faculty workload and impact resides with the universities themselves.” Despite this, they readily pronounce that faculty in Ontario universities can and should be made more productive. In fact, the 2014 report reiterates the two policy recommendations from the 2012 report “The first is at the government level (with the engagement of institutions) and is to consider a redesign of the postsecondary system and how it is funded. The second is at the institutional level and is to consider how workloads are distributed across the complement of faculty members.”

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Jonker, Linda and Martin Hicks (2014), *Teaching Loads and Research Outputs of Ontario University Faculty Members: Implications for Productivity and Differentiation*, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), March 11, 2014, <http://heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/FINAL%20Teaching%20Loads%20and%20Research%20Outputs%20ENG.pdf>

From the President....

The HEQCO report is tautological. It begins with the view that faculty members are unproductive, it selects a very small sample of departments and a very small number of faculty members, it has selective, ill defined measures, to assess faculty members' workloads, and then uses the results to prove their initial view that faculty members are unproductive. Aside from the fact that the authors of the study do not truly comprehend what is actually involved in a faculty members' complete workload, it is seriously flawed, is highly irresponsible, and is an insult to all of us in the university system in Ontario. It appears that the authors have selectively and carefully chosen a sample of 3 departments in 10 universities to ensure their findings confirm a predetermined outcome. The study:

- ◆ Only examines 10 of Ontario's 20 degree granting institutions;
- ◆ Looks at only 3 disciplines from the hundreds of academic programs and departments in our universities.
- ◆ Samples less than 4 per cent of the full-time faculty in Ontario;
- ◆ Seeks to look at teaching loads and research activity of assistant, associate and full professors without clearly defining or understanding the workload involved in preparing and teaching a course, and without defining what is "research activity."
- ◆ Fails to distinguish between research and research activity while focusing only on the latter.
- ◆ Defines a course as a semester-long, for-credit course, at the undergraduate or graduate levels, but completely fails to look at student numbers in courses.
- ◆ Fails to measure important components of workload involved in a course – a course involves preparation and development of the curricular materials, preparations of lectures and reading materials, course delivery in terms of stand up hours, grading, tutorials, office hours, responding to student emails, course coordination across multiple sections and the number of students in a particular course. The study, while not completely oblivious to these elements of workload, does not give them any weight at all. If all this workload data is actually missing, then what exactly are the authors measuring? It certainly is not faculty workload. And the question does arise, what does productivity for HEQCO mean in the context of ever increasing class sizes in courses?
- ◆ Does not address course releases faculty members may have for performing other roles and responsibilities in the university, e.g., as Chair of a department.
- ◆ Addresses "research activity", and is very limited with respect to what it measures. In fact, with respect to research productivity the authors say, "For research productivity, we measure both research volume and research impact. Our analysis focuses on more recent, as opposed to lifetime, research productivity. As such, we look at the number of articles published and their associated citations from 2007 to 2012. For economics and philosophy, we include only articles published in peer-reviewed journals. We do not include other research activity such as books, book chapters, conference presentations, case studies, reviews and contributions to workshops." There is no consideration of lifetime research, no understanding of where in the career trajectory a faculty member might be, and only peer reviewed articles are included.
- ◆ Acknowledges that with respect to Philosophy they encountered challenges: "Capturing research volume for philosophy is more challenging as faculty members in philosophy generally publish proportionally less of their research in peer-reviewed journals. It is quite common for philosophers to publish books and book chapters." Here is precisely where the study falters badly – if the authors are only using peer reviewed journals as a measure of research productivity and our colleagues in Philosophy publish more books and chapters in books, then they are automatically less productive because the measures used exclude the very research outputs – books and chapters in books – which are common in the discipline. So, our Philosophy colleagues are less productive simply because the authors determine them to be less productive.

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- ◆ Identifies the following research measures only: “We present three measures of research activity from 2007 to 2012: (1) the aggregate Tri-Council funding received by faculty members within our sample, (2) the median number of publications as a measure for research volume, and (3) the median number of total citations to capture research impact.” Ignored is community based research; research findings presented to communities, a more nuanced understanding of research culture and numbers of publications in different and diverse schools and faculties etc.
- ◆ Is highly exclusionary with respect to research measures used to measure “research activity.” These measures do a great disservice to our colleagues who do extremely valuable research with historically marginalized and excluded communities and who do research that is much more community based. Such research takes, as its starting point, peer review by community, and often the research and research reports do not find their way into peer reviewed journals. This kind of research is vital to society and to the mandate of universities, but is excluded by the authors. Simply put, the authors of the study fail the equity test because if they had applied an equity lens to their selective measures, they would have understood how fundamentally exclusionary their measures are.
- ◆ Completely ignores service as a vital component of the workload of faculty members.

HEQCO is an agency of the Government of Ontario, established to contribute to the improvement of Ontario's postsecondary education system. It is mandated to conduct research, evaluate the postsecondary education system and provide policy recommendations to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities on improving system quality, access and accountability. In this report, HEQCO appears to be fulfilling its research mandate very poorly. Further, based on this faulty and very biased research, it makes policy recommendations that are irresponsible and are simply not based on sound facts.

The issue is not the productivity of faculty as measured by the number of courses we teach – simply put, a course tells one nothing about the actual number of students in the course, nor does it tell one anything about how the actual number of students in the course has been increasing. The HEQCO report therefore ignores class sizes, supervision of undergraduate and graduate students and the intangible, immeasurable dimensions of our work, preparation time, marking, supervision, curriculum development, the quality of teaching in the classroom, and service both inside and outside the university, including service to our discipline and to the community at large.

The real issue, left unaddressed in the report, is the chronic underfunding of the university system in Ontario which results in all of us having to do much more with significantly less resources. Consider the following:

- ◆ Ontario's universities have the lowest level of per-student funding in Canada.
- ◆ Since the year 2000, the number of students at Ontario universities has increased by over 64 per cent.
- ◆ Over the same period of time, the number of full-time professors has only increased by 30 per cent. That means there are more and more students for every teacher in a classroom or laboratory.
- ◆ Ontario's student-to-faculty ratio is the worst in Canada at 28:1. In 2000, this ratio was only 22:1.
- ◆ For students, this means fewer opportunities to engage one-on-one with faculty, fewer chances to get involved with research, and less access to mentorship. It also means larger classes.
- ◆ The gap in provincial funding between Ontario and the rest of Canada has widened in the past decade. By 2010-11, says OCUFA, the gap had stretched to 37 per cent.
- ◆ An estimated \$1.4 to \$1.6 billion increase in university funding from the provincial government, would be required for Ontario universities to attain a level of support comparable to the average in the rest of Canada.

The HEQCO concludes, “Extrapolating from our sample, we estimate that this would result in an increase of approximately 10% in the aggregate teaching capacity of the assistant, associate and full professor cohort. This estimate takes into account the data presented in this paper that faculty members not active in

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research are already teaching approximately 33% more than their research-active colleagues and uses the assumption that 15% of Ontario faculty members are currently not active in research. Given the size of the full-time faculty cohort in the Ontario university system, and given the teaching loads presented in this paper, this is akin to adding a teaching contribution of 1,500 faculty members in the Ontario system."

Interestingly, the report did not look at Collective Agreements such as ours, which permits faculty members to voluntarily increase their workload by a single one-semester course if the faculty members feel they want to temporarily decrease their research output. In addition, the RFA and the administration have developed a strong protocol which has to be followed before a Dean can impose an extra course on a member whom the Dean feels is not productive on the research front.

Clearly, this is not about productivity. Fundamentally, it is about the restructuring of the university system, the differentiation agenda, and the funding formula. The report is an egregious attack on hard-working faculty and its recommendations are an attempt to deflect attention away from chronic government underfunding. Interestingly, the RFA received reports that Chairs and Directors at Ryerson were receiving copies of the HEQCO report directly from their Deans.

At around the same time that the HEQCO report was being released, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance (OUSA) released its report- *Beyond the Traditional Classroom: Teaching and Learning in Contemporary Higher Education*, the first report of the *2014 What Students Want Report Series*. In November 2013, OUSA launched its biennial Ontario Post-Secondary Student Survey and received approximately 9,000 responses to a series of 140 postsecondary related questions. At the launch of the report Amir Eftekarpour, OUSA President and Vice-President External of the University Students' Council at Western University (USC) said: "Increasingly, students are looking for greater access to high-impact learning opportunities, including co-ops, undergraduate research projects, and paid internships ... Students recognize that the hard skills acquired through high-impact learning compliment their academic instruction in the traditional classroom, while also easing their transitions into the labour market."

The *Beyond the Traditional Classroom: Teaching and Learning in Contemporary Higher Education* report identifies university initiatives that students would like to see university resources directed towards – at the top of their list, is increased training for professors and teaching assistants. According to Eftekarpour, "The findings of this report support OUSA long-standing recommendation that the Province and institutions direct funding towards the creation of greater numbers of teaching-focused faculty in Ontario ... Increased support for high quality teaching and instruction will not only support student success, but also better ensure that faculty are able to embrace and adapt to emerging pedagogical trends and classroom technologies."

So, two recent reports paint us as unproductive luddites, who do little research, are unable to adapt to emerging pedagogical trends, and are in serious need of skills upgrading. It is time for all of us, including our provincial and national bodies, to fight back against these myths and these unfounded stereotypes, all of which are based on faulty research, unworthy of an undergraduate student at any university in our province - but all of which lead to policy recommendations, which could impact our workloads in the future.

Colleagues, this is a direct attack on us and on what we do and it is coming from a number of quarters, most notably from an institution mandated by the provincial government to conduct research, evaluate the post secondary education system and provide policy recommendations to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities on improving system quality, access and accountability.

In the year ahead, there will be much, including negotiations, on which the RFA must concentrate its efforts, and I appeal to you to continue to show your support for the Executive and the Negotiating Committee.

I would like to thank all members of the 2013-14 Executive and all members of our various Committees for their exceptional dedication to improving the working conditions for all of us. The work of our organisation and the service we provide to our members cannot be done without the incredible work of our Office Manager (Agnes) and her assistant (Stacy), and our executive Director, Labour Relations (André). I am certain all of

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you who have had contact with Agnes, Stacy and André will agree that they are exceptional. All three make my work a pleasure.

On behalf of our entire membership, I would like to congratulate all our colleagues who received teaching, research and service awards as well as those who have received their tenure and promotion. We are very proud of all of you.

Leaving the Executive, after four years are, Professor Franklyn Prescod, our VP External, and Professor Bozena Todorow, our Treasurer. On your behalf, I thank both of them for their dedication to the RFA, and for the copious amounts of time and effort they spent on behalf of our members. I wish both well in their new endeavours. Both will be missed, greatly.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the enormous amount of trust you have placed in me as your President. It has been an honour for me to be your President for over four years. It was wonderful working closely with colleagues over the past year. I learnt a great deal from everyone with whom I came into contact.

I leave confident that we have a strong and robust incoming Executive and one that will serve you well. I wish Peter Danziger, our incoming President, and the entire 2014-15 RFA Executive every success for the upcoming year.

If, in the time I have remaining as your President, there are any issues or concerns that you wish to raise with me, or if you want me to come and meet colleagues in your department or faculty, please contact me and I will gladly make myself available.

Report from the VP Internal - Kileen Tucker Scott

We may not think about our Association and its work until we need it to act on our behalf. The truth is that our Association acts on behalf of its membership - us - everyday, and often 24/7, to represent, protect, maintain and advance our collective and individual interests in our employment at the University. In order to do this, each of our members plays an integral part in helping the Association attain its goals.

Reps' Council

Our faculty, librarian and counselor members of Reps' Council are instrumental in maintaining an open dialogue between the RFA Executive Committee and you - the members of our Association. Reps' Council meetings also provide an important forum for the discussion of matters of mutual interest to our membership at large. I would like to thank the members of Reps' Council for their continued diligence in bringing forward issues of interest and concern, and for promoting the flow of information between the elected members of the RFA Executive and Ryerson's many varied schools and departments. We have encouraged representatives to use a part of their regular school/departmental meetings as opportunities for communication with our membership, and have provided them with 'Fact Sheets' that highlight key issues of interest for potential discussion at these meeting and/or for circulation to their colleagues.

One of the many issues vigorously discussed this year relates to the perceptions of, and value placed on, the service component of the RFA responsibilities outlined in our collective agreement. Based on input from our representatives, the Executive drafted the following statement related to service:

The Collective Agreement, Article 10, outlines the expectations of faculty in regard to teaching, SRC and Service. The RFA recognizes the importance of all three facets of these expectations, including the importance of faculty members taking an active service role within the University, their Faculties, and their Schools/Departments. While it is understood that probationary members have a lower service expectation than tenured members, the RFA acknowledges that service is essential to the successful functioning of the academy and is the cornerstone of collegial governance.

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Therefore, the RFA encourages its members to engage in service activities and believes that service activities deserve recognition.

As a result of Reps' Council discussion, a statement concerning the use of on-line and paper-based Faculty Course Surveys by faculty members was also drafted and sent to our membership earlier this winter. Feedback from representatives has also informed the agenda and work of the Executive on our members' behalf. Significant issues (such as issues related to members' safety, distribution of resources, workload, policy, etc.) that demand the attention of the University Administration and potential strategies to address these issues, continue to be identified at Reps' Council meetings.

Schools/departments that do not have a representative on Reps' Council (and there are still some across the University) are missing out on an opportunity to have their voices heard and to have access to current information regarding the work that the RFA does on our collective behalf. It is my hope that we will be able to have representatives from all schools/departments on board for next year and I encourage our members to consider taking on this important (yet, not overly time-consuming) role.

Council of Chairs and Directors (CDC)

Article 26 of our collective agreement outlines the key foci and responsibilities of our Chairs and Directors. Clearly, their role is the provision of academic and administrative leadership within their schools and departments, a role that draws heavily upon the underlying principle of collegial governance. The role is a challenging one, especially since Chairs and Directors are called upon to be accountable for budget allocations over which they have little or no control, and are often informed, erroneously, that they are expected to act as 'bosses' within their academic unit.

The CDC provides our Chairs and Directors with the chance to come together, discuss their challenges and opportunities, and share potential approaches to fulfilling their responsibilities. Sometimes, the CDC is simply a place where mutual benefits and trials, associated with the role, can be explored and feelings vented! I encourage more of our Chairs and Directors to become involved in the CDC which meets just twice a semester, over lunch, during the fall and winter terms.

In my roles as Chair of Reps' Council and the CDC this past year, I've acquired a better understanding of how powerful our collective voice can be. Also, I have come to appreciate better, the contribution of my colleagues across the University, to the vision and mission of our Association and the enhancement of our workplace.

Representation

It is recognized that there may be a variety of reasons why a member of the RFA would need to have a meeting with a University Administrator during which normal workplace dialogue would occur. However, situations may arise when a member of the RFA is called to meet with her/his Dean, the VP Faculty Affairs, HR or another member of the University Administration, or an external investigator. In accordance with our collective agreement, RFA members are entitled to have an RFA representative (an advocate) in attendance at any such meeting. The role of the advocate in such meetings is to ensure that the members' rights under the collective agreement are upheld.

Investigations where the University is gathering information (for example, related to a civility, harassment/discrimination, or other type of complaint in which a member is the complainant, respondent or a witness) and matters related to discipline are examples of meetings where a member may wish to have RFA representation. At any other type of meeting with a person(s) from the University Administration, an RFA

Report from the VP Internal...

member may decide that the meeting has developed in such a way that he/she requires to consult with a RFA Executive member or with the RFA's Executive Director. In this case, the RFA member may adjourn the meeting until s/he has had the opportunity to speak with someone from the RFA Executive or an RFA advocate.

Invitations to attend a meeting such as that described above are sent to the RFA member and to me (as VP Internal responsible for advocate assignments). Included in the invitation should be the statement telling you that you are entitled to have an RFA representative (advocate) attend the meeting with you. If you notice that I have not been copied on the invitation, please do not hesitate to contact me. It is my responsibility to ensure that an advocate is assigned to you, should you wish RFA representation at the meeting. If you decide to waive your rights regarding having an RFA advocate accompany you, you will be asked at the beginning of the meeting to sign a waiver. Should there be subsequent meetings and should you change your mind and wish to have an RFA advocate in attendance, please give me a call and I can arrange that for you.

Supporting our RFA colleagues through advocacy is a rewarding experience. The Executive is currently developing a training program for our members who are interested in becoming RFA advocates. We'll keep you posted as the program unfolds and encourage you to consider becoming involved in the work of the Association as an RFA advocate.

As I enter my second year in my role as VP Internal, I'd like to thank our Association members for their ongoing involvement and support, and our Executive for their ongoing mentorship.

Report from the Chair, Grievance - Jason Lisi

Case Load Overview

As we wind down the Winter Term, I am very pleased to report that we have only one new grievance since the beginning of the 2014 year. Unfortunately, there are still many ongoing grievances from 2013 and earlier that keep my colleagues, on the Grievance Committee, and me busy.

Currently, there are 17 active grievances on file, and out of these 12 are in various stages of arbitration. This year, we have seen two long-standing tenure denial cases complete arbitration, and we are awaiting the decision from the arbitrator in both cases. These are two very important cases for us, so I am very eager to get these decisions.

Perhaps one area of grievance work that is not as obvious as grievances themselves relates to what we call cases. Cases are issues that have been identified, but have not yet progressed to a formal grievance. Article 9.1.A of the Collective Agreement states that "Prior to filing a grievance, the parties will undertake reasonable steps to try to resolve the issue(s) under dispute." In actuality, this is a very important part of the grievance process, but it is also the least known part of the process. There are actually many issues that get resolved at this stage that never progress to the grievance process. When issues can be resolved without a formal grievance, there are many advantages to the member(s) who are affected. The biggest advantage is with regards to time, as a dispute that has to go through binding arbitration can take a long time to resolve.

In the past year, the RFA has successfully represented our members in 12 cases, and there are over 30 cases that are currently active. If, at any point, we reach an impasse in any of these 30 cases, it will become a grievance.

Report from the Chair, Grievance...

GrievanceWare

This year the RFA has signed-up, with a Canadian company called LabourWare, for a caseload management system that specializes in grievances. This platform has a long history of success in non-academic union environments, and has branched into Faculty Associations. The feedback we have received from other faculty associations that have used this platform is quite positive.

Over the years, the RFA membership has grown, and with that comes increased grievance and grievance-related workloads, especially as we start relying more on multiple grievance officers to handle different cases. GrievanceWare will enable us to manage our formal and informal grievances in a way that will increase communication and efficiency. It will also allow us to generate detailed customized reports to analyze trends and track grievances as they relate to Collective Agreement Articles. Our configuration will be tested over the course of the next two months, and then finalized once any kinks are worked out. The goal is to fully migrate to the new system by Fall 2014.

Considerations for Pre-Tenure Faculty

Pre-tenure faculty members are subjected to many different assessments that will be used ultimately, to assess eligibility for tenure. These include peer assessments of teaching, student evaluations (FCS), year-end assessments, and an intermediate tenure review.

Sometimes, members will seek my advice at the tenure stage because the DEC has made negative comments based on observations made through one of these assessment tools. Often, I hear that the comments made in the assessments were out of context, or not entirely true. When I ask the members if they responded to these assessments, often the answer is no. Their answers may have been no, because they did not know they could respond or because they felt intimidated.

I cannot stress enough how important it is to respond to any assessment that is not an accurate reflection of your performance. If done collegially and respectfully, there should be no reason for anyone to take offence. In my experience, an absence of such a response can be detrimental at the tenure review stage. Please, please respond when needed. If you are unsure of how to respond, please contact me. I would be happy to review the process with you. In the end, having clarification on certain assessment parameters could mean the difference between a smooth tenure application and a not so smooth one. When in doubt, please ask!

About Meetings with Administration

Frequently, I get calls from members wanting clarification on when they should, or should not bring an RFA representative to a meeting. There is no definitive formula for this, but here are a couple things to consider.

1. **Chairs/Directors are not managers of RFA, and cannot invoke discipline.** If your Chair/Director asks you to a meeting where it is just you and him/her, generally, this is seen as a collegial meeting. Chairs are members of the RFA, and the RFA does not intervene on meetings between members. Having said that, Chairs, under no circumstances, should be inviting an HR representative to such a meeting. If this is suggested, please contact me and let me know.
2. **A meeting with the Dean is not always a bad thing.** Deans can meet with faculty members for a variety of reasons. Many of these reasons do not require the presence of the RFA.
3. **If HR is part of the meeting, bring the RFA.** A good general rule is that if you are invited to a meeting that will have an HR representative there, it is a good idea to bring an RFA representative with you. If you show up to a meeting and are surprised to see HR there, you are within your rights to refuse to meet until you have RFA representation.
4. **If you are asked to participate in an investigation with an outside firm, bring an RFA representative.** Sometime the University will hire an external firm to investigate concerns, allegations or complaints. You may be called to an interview as a respondent, complainant or a witness. In any of these situations, it is a good idea to have a representative with you.

Report from the Chair, Grievance...

If you find yourself in a situation where you need RFA representation, or are unsure as to whether or not you need representation, please contact the RFA VP Internal, Kileen Tucker Scott (ktscott@ryerson.ca).

Grievance Committee

I would like to take this opportunity to wholeheartedly thank the Grievance Committee for all their hard work over this past year. Truly, grievance is a team effort, and I am blessed to have an engaged and dynamic committee. I would like to thank Professor Yunxiang Gao, especially, who is wrapping up her two-year term. I am also delighted to welcome Professor Ron Babin who will be joining the committee for a two-year term starting in May. Ron will be joining Diane Granfield, Jesmen Mendoza and Kimberly Wahl on the committee.

In addition to our elected members of the Grievance Committee, there are several individuals who contribute their time and efforts to support the grievance process. Agnes and Stacy in the RFA office are wonderful supports for the work that we do. And, of course, there is André whose untiring efforts and work on behalf of our members are known and appreciated very much by many, many people.

Conclusion

As the teaching term winds down, the tenure process is ramping up. I would like to remind those being assessed for tenure that they can contact André or me at anytime for guidance and support. In a similar vein, I would like to remind members of DEC's and FTC's that they can also contact the RFA on process-related matters when deliberating tenure cases. We are happy to assist.

For everyone else, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have.

Report from the Chair, Negotiating - Peter Danziger

This will be my last report as Chair of the RFA Negotiating Committee. In May, I will be taking over as President of the RFA and I am looking forward to this new challenge. I am happy to be able to leave bargaining in the capable hands of Ian Sakinofsky, who will be taking over as Chair of the RFA Negotiating Committee. Ian was the chief negotiator for the 2005 and 2008 rounds of bargaining and was on the negotiating team for many years before that. The members of the negotiating team have been elected recently, and I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Rachel Berman, Doreen Fumia, Diane Pirner and Jane Sprott for agreeing to serve on this very important committee. I wish them all well as they embark on this important task.

One of the contract provisions from the last round of negotiations was the introduction of a "special fund" to be used for post retiree benefits on a go-forward basis. We have arranged for coverage to be administered by Green Shield and are pleased to announce that as of January 1, 2014 retirees will be provided with \$500 in a Health Care Spending Account (HCSA). This account will be available to all those who are over 65 and who retired after July 1, 2011, with at least 10 years of service. Those who are over 65 and are still working, or retired but under 65, are still covered by the Ryerson plan. Those who retire after July 1, 2011 but are not yet 65 will be eligible once they turn 65. This is a tax free health benefit and as such is governed by the Canada Revenue Agency Guidelines for eligibility of expenses. It is important to note that this is a fixed amount and the availability of future funds will depend on the number of retirees and the amounts negotiated in future contracts. According to the provision in the collective agreement, we receive money from the administration for this purpose and, in order to account for this, we are adding a new and separate "special fund" to the RFA budget, in addition to our existing operating and defense funds.

Report from the Chair, Negotiating...

Our contract expires June, 2015 and while that is still a long way off, we will be starting the buildup to the next round of bargaining. As mentioned above, the bargaining committee has been selected and the next step is to start to develop the mandate for the next round of bargaining. As part of this process, representatives of the committee will be visiting each department next Fall. Please watch out for the request when it arrives, it is important to have your input. There will also be a survey of the membership, which is another important tool for providing input to the process. We will be having our mandate meeting early in 2015, with bargaining commencing shortly thereafter. Your input and support during this process are crucial.

While our side in the upcoming negotiations has been decided, there are changes coming in the administration that will undoubtedly have an impact on bargaining. In particular, there is the selection of the new Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs, who typically acts as the Chief Negotiator for the other side.

As we start this process, the wider political landscape remains important to us. We continue to work with our provincial and national organizations (OCUFA and CAUT) to understand and mitigate challenges which affect our sector.

Report from the Health & Safety Officer - Chun-Yip Hon

I wanted to take this opportunity to share information on some campus-wide occupational health and safety issues.

Laboratory safety:

With the number of faculty members at Ryerson University steadily increasing, there is going to be a corresponding increase in research activities, in particular, lab-related work. This poses problems as many of the buildings on campus were not designed originally for laboratory activities. This has resulted in the retro-fitting of certain rooms to support research activities. However, retro-fitting without consultation with the necessary departments and agencies (both internal and external) may result in non-compliance with various codes, e.g., building, fire, or electrical, which could lead to unsafe circumstances that affect not only your own research group, but other occupants of the building, as well.

Ryerson University's Integrated Risk Management (IRM) has a website that is dedicated to laboratory safety. If you have a lab, I encourage you and your staff to review the information that is found in the following link: <http://www.ryerson.ca/irm/labsafety/index.html>

Reporting work-related incidents:

Please note that if you experience a work-related incident that either resulted in an injury (accident) or could have resulted in injury (near-miss or hazard), you should follow the procedures that are in place and report the incident. This is important because, if you want to submit a workers' compensation claim, it may be denied because of lack of appropriate documentation at the time of the incident. See the following link for reporting instructions: http://www.ryerson.ca/irm/report_hazard_accident/index.html

Health and safety training. Please be advised that, beginning July 1st, 2014, the Ontario Ministry of Labour is requiring that all workers and supervisors complete a basic occupational health and safety awareness training program. The exact details of the training program have to be worked out as yet. However, I thought that it would be important to let members be aware of this mandatory requirement and that they will be seeing more communication about this initiative in the future. Details from the Ministry of Labour can be found here: https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/sawo/pubs/fs_trainingreg.php

Report from the Equity, Jennifer Clarke

Over the past year, the Equity Issues Committee (EIC) has been active on many fronts, from collaborating with the Ryerson Students' Union (RSU), the CAW Sam Gindin Chair in Social Justice and Democracy, the Anti-racism Coalition (ARC) and other campus unions and groups to organizing and sponsoring events that raise awareness and address equity issues. The EIC works very closely with students and colleagues across the university because these partnerships help to promote equity and social justice at Ryerson.

More recently, the EIC has been engaging in meaningful dialogue with the Assistant Vice President/Vice Provost, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Dr. Denise O'Neil Green, about Ryerson's equity agenda, and these conversations are expected to continue in the weeks and months ahead. Of main concern to the EIC, are issues of tenure and promotion for women, particularly female faculty of colour and faculty with disabilities. We are also concerned with the hostile environment that female faculty of colour experience from students in the classroom.

The EIC has also met with the University Administration to revitalize the MOU#1 of the Collective Agreement, the Standing Committee on Employment Equity. This committee has not met in some time but with Dr. Denise O'Neil Green's portfolio of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion now in place, we felt it was a good time to re-engage with the administration and begin dialogue around some key equity issues. We have begun discussions around the Self-Identification Survey, gender equity and the classroom environment for female faculty of colour.

The EIC supported a roundtable discussion addressing racism and discrimination at Ryerson, a workshop on Honor-shame related violence in collaboration with the Barbara Schlifer Clinic, and engaged in discussions with the Anti-racism Coalition (ARC) to resolve issues of blackface in an event sponsored by Ryerson University. We also worked very closely with the RSU, Sam Gindin Chair and other Unions to address concerns about the presence of the Canadian Association for Equality (CAFE) on campus at Ryerson. Members of this group have engaged in intimidating and threatening behaviours towards persons who challenge their ideologies. The group is associated with the radical American group, A Voice for Men (AVfM), and the EIC believes that this group makes Ryerson an unsafe space for many people.

EIC also supported a joint event (February 8-13, 2014) between Ryerson and York University titled: "*Searching for New Imaginings: Facing Challenges for Activism and Justice in the University.*" Sarah Schulman is a Distinguished Professor of English at The City University of New York (College of Staten Island). Schulman is also a novelist, playwright, screenwriter, non-fiction writer, AIDS historian, and journalist. Her recent works include *Beyond Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination* (University of California Press, 2012), *Ties That Bind: Familial Homophobia and Its Consequences* (The New Press, 2009), and *Israel/Palestine and the Queer International* (Duke University Press, 2012). The event opened at Ryerson University with a panel discussion titled: "*Challenging (our) Contradictions: A conversation with Sarah Schulman.*" The event put Schulman in conversation with student activists from Ryerson and York. Schulman and the discussants had an opportunity to connect their activism both within and beyond the neoliberalizing university in an effort to imagine new strategies for action.

The EIC also encouraged and sponsored RFA members to attend the CAUT Equity and Diversity Forum, February 7- 9, 2014. The topic of the forum: "*Perpetual Crisis: Diversity with Equity in the Academy*" was of particular interest to the EIC. On February 7th, the keynote speaker, Camille Nelson, Suffolk University Law School, spoke about human rights, equity, and the university. On February 8th, the keynote speaker, Philomena Essed, Critical Race, Gender and Leadership Studies, Antioch University, spoke about everyday oppression in the university. There was also a plenary session titled: "*Visible absences in the neo-liberal university,*" which focused on what CAUT, faculty associations, and individuals can do in response to these absences. The forum concluded on Sunday, February 9th with the development of an action plan.

The EIC has also been in discussion with OCUFA about bringing the *Women's Listening Tour* to Ryerson. The Tours have been ongoing since 2010, and so far they have visited seven faculty associations. The Tour is intended to hear the voices of women and other academics and to provide a safe place to discuss equity issues in the academy.

The EIC is committed to ongoing collaborations with various stakeholders to address equity issues on behalf of the membership. As we continue to work on your behalf, please share with us your concerns, ideas, suggestions and topics that are of interest to you.

Report from the Chair, Services - Wayne Forsythe

The Services Committee planned and held a number of events during the Fall 2013 and Winter 2014 semesters. The "final" Drop-In event in 2013, was held on November 14 with approximately 70 members in attendance. We have since changed the name of these events (due to member feedback) and they will now be "named" events. The format will still be informal events where members can enjoy light snacks and refreshments.

The Season/Holiday Party was held on December 2, 2013 at Oakham House. We welcomed approximately 340 people including RFA members, retirees and guests. Of note, is the fact that 70 people who sent in a RSVP by the deadline did not attend. This needlessly costs the RFA a substantial amount of money. In the future, please retract your RSVP if you cannot attend as we still have to pay even if you do not show up! We continue to adjust the themed food station offerings for the event and table seating is available in the upper portion of the venue. On behalf of the committee, I would again like to thank the staff at Oakham House and our student registration/setup team for helping to ensure the success of this event. Mark your calendars as the **2014 Season/Holiday Party will be held on Tuesday December 2.**

The RFA February Frolic was held at the ILC on February 12, 2014 from 5-8 pm with approximately 65 members in attendance. On March 20, the RFA March Mayhem Pub Night took place in the Thomas Lounge at Oakham House. The theme was the Good, the Bad and the We hired a photographer who took "polaroids" of people in various costumes which proved to be a very well-received idea.

We will hold one more event this semester at the ILC on May 7 (the day of the RFA GM). Details will be forthcoming. The Fall Season Opener will be held at the ILC or the MAC in early September. Details will be sent out in the summer.

I would like to thank Anne-Marie Singh (Criminology) for her service on the committee, and I welcome Emily Agard (Chemistry and Biology) to the committee.

Committee Members: *Wayne Forsythe (Geography), Gerda Cammaer (Image Arts), Peter Kedron (Geography), Martin Greig (History), Stephen Swales (Geography), Emily Agard (Chemistry and Biology).*

Retirees

We are bidding farewell to the following RFA members and also extend our best wishes:

- * Malek Atay - *Languages, Literatures & Cultures*
- * Colleen Clark - *TRSM*
- * Patricia Corson - *Early Childhood Studies*
- * Lynn Cunningham - *Journalism*
- * Garrick Filewod - *Image Arts*
- * Marilyn Hadad - *Psychology*
- * Marilyn B. Lee - *Occupational & Public Health*

New Faculty Members

The RFA extends a warm welcome to our new colleagues:

- * Michael Arts - *Chemistry & Biology*
- * Boris Hennig - *Philosophy*
- * Susan Hopkirk - *English*
- * Andriy Miranskyy - *Computer Science*
- * Catherine Stinson - *Philosophy*
- * M.J. Suhonos - *Library*

Recipient of the 2013 OCUFA Lorimer Award

RFA's Ian Sakinofsky has been awarded the prestigious Lorimer Award by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA). This honour acknowledges individuals who have worked to protect and promote the interests of Ontario's academic staff through collective bargaining. Ian received his award at a ceremony on February 7, 2014 in Toronto where he was described as a tireless champion of faculty rights and effective collective bargaining. In presenting Ian with this award, OCUFA President Kate Lawson said: "Whether working with the Ryerson Faculty Association or through OCUFA's Collective Bargaining Committee, his deep knowledge, unparalleled experience, and thoroughgoing dedication to social justice is nothing short of remarkable."



The Lorimer Award was established in honour of Doug and Joyce Lorimer, who were instrumental in advancing faculty association collective bargaining in Ontario. Winners of the award all share the Lorimers' commitment to advancing Ontario's university system through strong faculty associations and fair collective agreements.

Ian is pictured above with the individuals after whom the award is named - Joyce and Doug Lorimer.

Recipient of the 2012-2013 OCUFA Teaching Award



The Faculty of Arts is proud of Dr. Lorraine Janzen Kooistra, winner of the 2012-2013 OCUFA Teaching Award. Dr. Janzen Kooistra has been a leading figure in curriculum and course development within the Department of English, spearheading the creation of Ryerson's BA in English, as well as serving as the driving force behind the creation of SSH 205 "Academic Writing and Research," now a core requirement in the Arts Common Platform.

As co-director of the [Centre for Digital Humanities](#) and the [Yellow Nineties Online](#), and co-investigator for [The Children's Literature Archive](#), Dr. Janzen Kooistra has taken the study of 19th century literature into the 21st, bringing together an array of academics, librarians, and students, to create a unique online presence for ground-breaking scholarship at Ryerson.

Most importantly, Dr. Janzen Kooistra's individualized approach to instruction and her dedication to supporting her students' burgeoning academic careers have inspired both loyalty and devotion. She has built into her courses innovative assignments that allow students to integrate their foundational work as literary scholars with project-based options for creative work, community engagement, and professionally focused endeavours. Her efforts have inspired individual students to successful studies, scholarships, and careers, and likewise, led her colleagues to pursue innovative teaching. It is in recognition of this work, above all, that Dr. Janzen Kooistra has been awarded this prestigious honour.

The RFA Congratulates the following Ryerson University Award Recipients

Sarwar Sahota Ryerson Distinguished Scholar Award:

Candice Monson - *Psychology*

Bala Venkatesh - *Electrical & Computer Engineering*

Collective Research Award:

Habiba Bougherara - *Mechanical & Industrial Engineering*

Early Research Career Excellence Award:

Seth Dworkin - *Mechanical & Industrial Engineering*

Knowledge Mobilization & Engagement Award:

Colleen Carney - *Psychology*

Janet Lum - *Politics & Public Administration*

Social Innovation & Action Research Award:

Marco Fiola - *Languages, Literatures & Cultures*

President's Blue and Gold Award of Excellence:

Ophelia Cheung - *Library*

Kelly Kimberley - *Library*

Fangmin Wang - *Library*

Sally Wilson - *Library*

Deans' SRC Awards:

Alagan Anpalagan - *Electrical & Computer Engineering*

Farhad Ein-Mozaffari - *Chemical Engineering*

Trevor Hart - *Psychology*

Shavin Malhotra - *Global Management Studies*

Andrew O'Malley - *English*

Derick Rousseau - *Chemistry & Biology*

Mandana Vahabi - *Nursing*

Pnina Alon-Shenker - *Law & Business*

Ebrahim Bagheri - *Electrical & Computer Engineering*

Jeffrey Boase - *Professional Communication*

Librarian Awards:

Daniel Jakubek - *Library Learning Services*

Kevin Manuel - *Library Learning Services*

Deans' Teaching Awards:

Emily Agard - *Chemistry & Biology*

Lori Beckstead - *RTA School of Media*

Nick Bellissimo - *Nutrition*

Stephanie Cassin - *Psychology*

Kimberley Gillbride - *Chemistry & Biology*

Michael Inglis - *Accounting & Finance*

Yuanshun Li - *Accounting & Finance*

Zaiyi Liao - *Architectural Science*

Natalia Lumby - *Graphic Communication Management*

Jenny Sampirisi - *The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education - English*

Beau Standish - *Electrical & Computer Engineering*

Stephanie Walsh Matthews - *Languages, Literatures & Cultures*

Halis Yildiz - *Economics*

Deans' Service Awards:

Alagan Anpalagan - *Electrical & Computer Engineering*

Tara Burke - *Psychology*

David Checkland - *Philosophy*

Michelle Dionne - *Psychology*

Alan Kaplan - *Accounting & Finance*

Bruno Lessard - *Image Arts*

Kelly Mackay - *Hospitality & Tourism*

Ali Miri - *Computer Science*

James Nadler - *RTA*

Bala Venkatesh - *Electrical & Computer Engineering*

2013 YSGS Outstanding Contribution to Graduate Education Award Recipients:

Ron Babin - *Ted Rogers School of Management*

Debora Foster - *Chemistry & Biology*

David Harris - *Image Arts*

Karen Spalding - *Nursing*

Monique Tschofen - *English*

Bin Wu - *Electrical & Computer Engineering*

Counsellor Award:

Jastej Gill - *Centre for Counselling & Student Development*

The RFA Executive for 2014/15 is composed of the following members:

President	Peter Danziger
Vice President ,Internal	Kileen Tucker Scott
Vice President, External	Rahul Sapra
Treasurer	Carmen Schifellite
Secretary	David Naranjit
Chair, Grievance	Jason Lisi
Chair, Negotiating	Ian Sakinofsky
Chair, Professional Affairs	Linying Dong
Chair, Equity Issues	Tariq Amin-Khan
Health & Safety Officer	Chun-Yip Hon
Members At Large (2)	Sophie Quigley
	Amina Jamal

RFA General Meeting

Wednesday, May 7, 2014, 12 (noon) - 2:00 p.m.
ILC, International Room

Disclaimer

Statements made and the views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not represent the position of the RFA unless so specified.

THANK YOU

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