

The Newsletter of Ryerson Faculty Association

Spring 2020 Vol. 35 No. 2

Message From the President

We certainly live in interesting times. Who could have predicted that a global pandemic and a worldwide recession would take hold in a matter of 10 days in March? Ryerson shuts down all in-person classes and all instruction moves online, in a matter of days. Unthinkable in February, unprecedented in March. Recovery will take many months, perhaps years.

So too must the RFA adapt, with our employees working from home, a move to electronic banking and accounting, and a reduction in printing with a move to electronic publications. We are now planning for an online RFA General Meeting on May 5th, to be confirmed soon. Slowly your RFA is adapting. We must.

My last two years, and three previous as Grievance Chair, have been interesting. Challenges such as big budget cuts from the Ontario Government, the assault against free speech on campus, and a 1% cap on compensation increases, have certainly kept your RFA Executives busy; we never have a dull day at the RFA.

These interesting times will continue. We can expect ongoing challenges from both the Government and Ryerson Administration, such as increased recruitment of international students through a private corporation, Navitas. We will learn more about the Government's pension reform and the impact to the Ryerson Pension Plan. Of course,



Ron Babin, President

the RFA will continue to pursue Gender Pay Equity at an institution that prides itself on Equity, Community and Inclusion.

Despite the challenges, Ryerson is still a great place to be a faculty member. We are one of the few universities that continues to grow, and always to change. Although not rich, our University has the good fortune to be located in the heart of one of the most prosperous and vibrant cities in Canada. This is our University. As faculty members, we can

Cont'd on Page 3 ...

Contents

<i>President</i>	1 & 3
<i>Important Dates</i>	2
<i>New Executives</i>	2
<i>Grievance</i>	3-4
<i>Negotiating</i>	4
<i>Health & Safety</i>	5
<i>OCUFA Award</i>	6
<i>Scholarship Winners</i>	7
<i>Retirees</i>	7
<i>RFA Executives Committee Member/s</i>	8
<i>Reps' Council Members</i>	9

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Important Dates

RFA General Meeting May 5, 2020

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RFA Season Opener September 2020 Location: TBA

* * *

RFA General Meeting December 2, 2020 International Room, ILC

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RFA Season/Holiday Party December 2, 2020 Oakham House

Returning Executives

Ian Sakinofsky

Ian Sakinofsky is returning to the RFA Executive as the President. He was previously the Chair, Negotiations.

&

Anthony Francescucci

Anthony Francescucci is returning to the RFA Executive as the Treasurer. He was previously a Member at Large.

Lila Pine - New Executive

Dr. Lila Pine, of Mi'gmaq descent, is a New Media artist and Indigenous thinker. She joined the RFA in 1999 and the RFA Equity Committee in 2017. She has been a member of the RFA Indigenous Caucus since its inception in 2015. She is also a founding member of Ryerson's Anti Racism Committee (ARC). Lila teaches Indigenous Media and New Media courses in the RTA School of Media. She is the Director of Saagajiwe, FCAD's Indigenous Communication and Design network, whose mission is to facilitate the creation and dissemination of Indigenous thought and ways of knowing and doing.

Lila's research seeks to develop a way of "seeing" sound in order to identify distinct qualities in the speaking of different languages. It employs digital art creation as a scholarly research tool and it engages Indigenous research methods to shift perceptions around the relationship of language to worldviews and ecological concerns.

Lila is also collaborating with Buffy Sainte-Marie on a project called *Creative Native: Youth Mentorship in the Arts Initiative*, which brings touring multi-arts festivals to First Nations communities across Canada. The festival showcases local and professional Indigenous entertainers and artists of all kinds, while building a corps of local Indigenous youth who take leadership positions in doable jobs and then mentor their peers at subsequent community events.

Donna Koller - New Executive

Dr. Donna Koller will be joining the RFA executive as Member at Large in May 2020. She has previously served in a variety of capacities including as member on the School Rep Council, and more recently on the negotiating committee in the last round of bargaining.

As professor in the School of Early Childhood Studies, Donna's expertise lies in pediatric psychosocial care having previously worked in three pediatric hospitals in Canada and the US. Donna holds an adjunct scientist position at The Hospital for Sick Children where she has conducted studies that address children's rights in health care settings and the social inclusion of children marginalized because of illness or disability.

RFA List Servs

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

We wish to keep you informed!

Thank you.

From the President....

and must influence how Ryerson evolves into the future. We share governance with the Administration and we must never let that slip away. One last time, let me again encourage you to participate, to be involved at Ryerson. This is your faculty association, your University.

This is my last Bulletin post. In early May, when my term ends, Ian Sakinofsky will take office as the next President. I wish him well. After five years as an RFA Executive, I look forward to teaching and research again; this is what we faculty members enjoy most. Our Collective Agreement tells me that sabbaticals are “academic refreshment” that provide “intellectual vibrancy”, so it is time for me to try some of that.

Best wishes to all, I have enjoyed being of service to you, as (soon to be past) President of your Ryerson Faculty Association.

Report from Chair, Grievance - Jesmen Mendoza

The RFA currently has 17 active grievances at various stages of our grievance procedures. Thirteen of those grievances are scheduled or are in arbitration. Additionally, four grievances will be settled by the time this bulletin is published and as always, the Association continues to work diligently in finding resolution to any of the outstanding matters above.

The grievances that are in, or are headed towards arbitration can be grouped into three broad categories: tenure and promotion denials, unjust discipline, and improper hiring practices. One grievance that has been heard at arbitration and where the Association is awaiting a decision is with respect to Articles 10.8.B and 10.15.B which articulate the provisions for voluntary reduced workload for tenured faculty members whose age plus years of Ryerson service equals 80 or more. These provisions allow for a 50% workload reduction with a proportionate reduction in salary to be done in one specified semester, subject to other conditions in the entire article. Such requests by our members who qualify would be effective for twelve-months and renewals would be possible. This article would thus facilitate gradual retirement.

The Administration, however, has been imposing extra conditions and limits, not articulated by this article on gaining access to this provision. Specifically, the Administration has insisted that members must submit a retirement date and agree to undertake to retire by that specified time in order to enjoy the benefits of this article. The Association’s view is that such conditions are not articulated by the article, but more importantly such conditions do not facilitate gradual retirement. Gradual retirement may mean that a member accesses the provision for one year of a reduced workload, extend for a second year, and then realize that they may not be ready to retire and return the following year to a full workload. The Administration’s interpretation would not allow for this scenario to occur, which is why we are in arbitration and now awaiting a decision. The ability of our members to self-determine when they are ready to retire is not only an important issue, but it preserves their dignity in being able to self-determine, without influence, the right time to retire.

Grievance Committee

The RFA Grievance Committee makes careful deliberations on how grievances should proceed. Each member has provided much effort, employed deep listening, and given support without

Report from Chair, Grievance....

hesitation when considering all Collective Agreement concerns. Each member has readily volunteered to act as co-Grievance Officer on select matters. The current members who serve on this committee are Jennifer Poole, Maureen Reed, and Tisha Ornstein, with our President, Ron Babin, serving as an ex-officio member. Along with these members, Andre Foucault, our Executive Director of Labour Relations, and Shiraz Vally, our Labour Relations Officer, also serve on this committee and help in the day-to-day grievance affairs handlings. Their assistance and vast knowledge are key to the effectiveness of our Grievance Committee.

Summary

Finally, not all issues that members bring forward to the Association become a grievance. Again, the Association works diligently to take reasonable steps at resolving a member's issue(s) under dispute. The RFA encourages all members to bring forward any concerns that they might have, no matter the size. We look forward to assisting all our members.

Report from Chair, Negotiating - Brian Ceh

Members of the Negotiation Committee met with academic units during the fall term and conducted an online survey in January, 2020. These steps helped the committee build a proposed mandate for negotiations. The Committee was given its mandate from the membership for negotiation on March 3, 2020. Having said that, I would like to remind our members that the committee, at present, is constrained by Bill 124. This Bill essentially caps our wages and benefits to a maximum of 1% and up to 3 years (the moderation period). Keep in mind, that our next Collective Agreement commences on July 1, 2020.

It is important to note, that we should be cautious of the administration's decision to hire a lawyer to be their chief negotiator. A lawyer cannot fully understand the pressures, concerns, and insights that we possess as RFA members when it comes to our university. I surveyed some negotiation chairs at other universities in the province as to their experiences at having to bargain with a lawyer versus a VP of faculty affairs who came from the ranks of academia. Unfortunately, there were no positive experiences that other bargaining groups could share. From what I surmised, negotiations became more strained when a lawyer was inserted into the bargaining process by administrations. Should this be the case here at Ryerson, it would indicate that the administration is taking a dire neo-liberal approach to negotiations. The message being sent to our members seems ominous. Having said that, we will give the negotiation process our full attentions and we hope that negotiating with a lawyer does not turn out as badly as it has at other universities.

The negotiation committee is in the process of refining its mandate and we ideally would like to start bargaining with the administration in April, 2020. Should changes to our schedule occur due to COVID-19, we will inform our membership.

Negotiating Committee Members: *Brian Ceh (Chair, Negotiating), Joanne DiNova, Cecile Farnum, Andrew Hunter and Diane Pirner.*

Report from the Health and Safety Officer - Habiba Bougherara

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some updates on occupational health and safety.

Coronas virus (Covid-19)

As you are aware, the Toronto Public Health (TPH) continues to monitor the status of cases of COVID-19 in Toronto. Coronavirus live updates with statistics and graphs can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>
<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/>

In response to this pandemic, Ryerson has shifted to an essential services model on campus, following Premier Doug Ford declaration of a state of emergency for Ontario. To learn more about these essential services, please use the following link:

<https://www.ryerson.ca/covid-19/updates/2020/03/ryerson-university-shifting-to-essential-services-on-campus/>

Additional information about Ryerson's response to COVID-19 can be found at [ryerson.ca/coronavirus](https://www.ryerson.ca/coronavirus).

With this shift to essential services, faculty members' SRC activities will be impacted. Updates about SRC-related matters can be found at <https://www.ryerson.ca/research/covid-19/>

As a certified member of JHSC, I advise our members to be safe and practice "social distancing" to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Accessibility issue due to frequent elevators outage

Some elevators in EPH and KHN, KHE, and KHS are frequently out of service. This inconvenient situation is causing a big challenge to our faculty members and students, particularly to those who require accessibility. This issue was brought to the attention of the RFA executive and JHSC. I was informed during the last JHSC meeting (Wednesday March 11th) that a plan for replacing these elevators is underway.

Centre for Student Development and Counselling (CSDC) water leak

EHS was contacted by the RFA H&S officer to investigate ongoing leaks in some offices in the student counselling centre. An indoor air quality assessment (IAQ) and mold sampling were conducted by a third party company (Environmental Limited). Results of the IAQ assessment were within the recommended guidelines. Also, results of air sampling did not indicate the presence of significant indoor amplification or degraded air quality with respect to mold in the areas tested. Temporary and long-term actions were undertaken to solve the leak problems, this included removing the wet tiles in the offices, putting in place water diversion protectors, and installing waterproofing membrane.

Fit for work policy

Ryerson's HR has established a policy called "Fit for work", which means it is an employee's duty to arrive at work able to perform her/his assigned tasks safely, effectively, and without using or consuming impairing substances before or during their working hours. The RFA executive does not support the current policy, and requested changes to its language and further clarification about the policy guidelines, including the scope, roles and responsibilities.



FCS Grievance Team from left to right: Emma Phillips, Peter Danziger, Ian Sakinofsky, Andre Foucault, Sophie Quigley, Dave Mason, Cathy Lace, Rahul Sapra and Jesmen Mendoza.

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) is pleased to announce that Ryerson University Professor Sophie Quigley is a recipient of the inaugural OCUFA Award for Outstanding Contribution to Grievance/Arbitration. The award, sponsored by OCUFA's Grievance Committee, recognizes individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the defence of collective agreements through the grievance/arbitration process.

"In the inaugural year for this award, we honour Sophie Quigley for distinguished service as a long-serving Grievance Officer and three term Chair of the Ryerson Faculty Association (RFA) Grievance Committee," said Rahul Sapra, OCUFA President. "Sophie has repeatedly demonstrated the thought leadership, courage, and fortitude that are critical to defending the rights of faculty members."

As a Grievance Officer for the Ryerson Faculty Association, Quigley has handled over seventy individual and policy grievances. Among the cases she shepherded through arbitration are two notable successes: One resulted in an arbitration award that clarified the role of comparator files in tenure evaluation. The second concluded with a precedent-setting award that determined that surveys used to evaluate faculty member teaching performance do not measure teaching effectiveness. It also found the surveys are characterized by inherent and systemic bias, and are discriminatory in their effects. Thanks to Quigley's work, the results of these groundbreaking arbitration awards have reverberated well beyond Ryerson and received international recognition.

"OCUFA is deeply honoured to recognize those exceptional individuals who have demonstrated such a firm commitment to defending the rights of faculty members and other academic professionals," said Sapra. "Sophie's many accomplishments for RFA members and the broader impact of her achievements in arbitration, along with her steadfast commitment to equity and fairness, make her a worthy and distinguished recipient of the inaugural OCUFA Award for Outstanding Contribution to Grievance/Arbitration."

RFA Scholarship Winners

We would like to congratulate all of the 2019 - 2020 RFA Scholarship Winners:

RFA Full-Time Scholarship Winners:

- ◆ Samantha Howden
- ◆ Levi Marshall

RFA Part-Time Scholarship Winners:

- ◆ Rabiah Choksi
- ◆ Radcha Mestoewa

RFA Indigenous Scholarship Winners:

- ◆ Emma Bilodeau
- ◆ Levi Marshall

Retirees

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

- ◆ Susan Cody

The RFA Executive for 2020/2021 is composed of the following members:

President	Ian Sakinofsky
Vice President ,Internal	Peter Danziger
Vice President, External	Dave Mason
Treasurer	Anthony Francescucci
Secretary	David Naranjit
Chair, Grievance	Jesmen Mendoza
Chair, Negotiating	Brian Ceh
Chair, Professional Affairs	Rachel Berman
Chair, Equity Issues	Lila Pine
Health & Safety Officer	Habiba Bougherara
Members At Large (2)	Corinne Hart Donna Koller

RFA General Meeting

May 5, 2020 12 (noon) - 2:00 p.m.

Via Zoom Video Conferences

An announcement will be sent out shortly

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

We would like to thank all contributors to this issue. Editors: David Naranjit

Produced by: Stacy Stanley and Agnes Paje

RFA 2019 -2020 Representatives' Council Members

Accounting	<i>Vacant</i>	ITM	Jim Tam
Aerospace Engineering	Seyed Hashemi	ITM	Abbas Keramati
Aerospace Engineering	Goetz Bramesfeld	Interior Design	Lorella Di Cintio
Architectural Science	Carlo Parente	Journalism	Marsha Barber
Architectural Science	Umberto Berardi	Law & Business	Chris MacDonald
Chemical Engineering	Chil-Hung Cheng	Languages, Literatures & Cultures	Dana Osborne
Chemistry & Biology	Lynda McCarthy	Library	Ann Ludbrook
Chemistry & Biology	<i>Vacant</i>	Library	Val Lem
Child & Youth Care	<i>Vacant</i>	Marketing	Hamed Mehrabi
Civil Engineering	Darko Joksimovic	Mathematics	Niushan Gao
Civil Engineering	<i>Vacant</i>	Mathematics	Wei Xu
Computer Science	Neil Bruce	Mechanical & Industrial Engineering	Kouros Zareinia
Computer Science	Alex Ferworn	Mechanical & Industrial Engineering	Mucahit Cevik
Counselling	Jean Tsai	Mechanical & Industrial Engineering	Sajad Saeedi
Creative Industries	Miranda Campbell	Midwifery	Nicole Bennett
Criminology	Anna Flaminio	Nursing	<i>Vacant</i>
Disability Studies	<i>Vacant</i>	Nursing	<i>Vacant</i>
ECS	Mehrunnisa Ali	Nursing	<i>Vacant</i>
Economics	Debapriya Sen	Nutrition	Yvonne Yuan
Economics	<i>Vacant</i>	Occupational & Public Health	<i>Vacant</i>
Electrical Engineering	Vadim Geurkov	Philosophy	Rohan Sud
Electrical Engineering	Lev Kirischian	Physics	Catherine Beauchemin
Electrical Engineering	<i>Vacant</i>	Politics & Public Administration	<i>Vacant</i>
English	Sarah Bull	Professional Communication	<i>Vacant</i>
English	Colleen Derkatch	Psychology	Tisha Ornstein
Entrepreneurship & Strategy	Ann Dulhanty	Psychology	Maureen Reed
Fashion	Anika Kolowski	Real Estate	David Scofield
Finance	Laleh Samarbaksh	Retail	Katie Lebel
Geography	Tor Oiamo	RTA	Marusya Bociurkiw
Geography	Evan Cleave	RTA	Charles Zamaria
Global Management Studies	Hossein Zolfagharina	Social Work	Susan Preston
Graphic Communications	Richard Adams	Social Work	Jeffery McNeil Seymour
History	Joey Power	Sociology	Jacqui Gingras
Hospitality & Tourism Mgmt.	Zhen Lu	School of Performance	Michael Bergmann
Human Resources & Organizational Behaviour	Annika Hillbrandt	Urban & Regional Planning	Chris De Sousa
Human Resources & Organizational Behaviour	Madhi Roghanizad		
Image Arts	Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof		
Image Arts	Dimitrios Latsis		