

Executive Working Committee Report 2024

April 29, 2024

This year saw the completion of over 14 months of bargaining with the ratification of our new Collective Agreement (2022-2025). Together we are able to improve conditions that have not been possible in 20 years. Our key gains included:

- Substantial salary gains (thanks in part to the larger unions who secured the mandate)
- Workload reduction for studio faculty to 4/4 (75% of our membership)
- Right to Qualified Work
- Improvements for Lecturers (continuous contract status)

Other changes coming from the collective table include:

- A new trimester model
- Adjunct Opportunity Pathway
- Decolonization & Indigenization audit of our collective agreement and associated university policies
- Movement towards a Knowledge Keeper in Residence
- Increases in some healthcare provisions
- And improved language throughout the collective agreement for clarity and fairness

With such substantial changes in our collective agreement, the roll out has been taking time as HR and other departments endeavour to create and adapt to new systems. The roll out has included the development of a Seniority List as well as the development of a framework for creating the Qualified to Teach (QTT list) system that will help make hiring more of a transparent process. We have a number of committees still to fill including one for the Knowledge Keeper, the CA audit, and working conditions. We hope to fill these committees by the end of May so the work can begin.

It may feel like we just ratified our new agreement, but pre-bargaining committees and the faculty survey will roll out in Fall 2024, as bargaining is coming up again in March, 2025.

We are extremely grateful to our FPSE representatives Tim Armstrong (2022-23) and Weldon Cowan (2023-24) as well as Robin Wylie who was with us from the beginning and saw us through to a successful ratification. Robin is one of the bargaining coordinators (originally from Douglas College) and his breadth of knowledge and experience in the sector has been beyond helpful at the table and we greatly benefitted from his participation.

We had some other highlights this year, beyond the work of bargaining, including a campus visit from our new Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills, Minister Lisa Beare. She

was accompanied by local MLA Joan Phillip (Mount Pleasant) on Friday March 22, 2024. We only had 15 minutes scheduled (they were on campus a total of 45 minutes), and the minister was visiting 4 institutions that day. Recognizing the limitations of this brief official visit format, Cameron's focus was to highlight the amount of work the faculty produce and contribute outside of the academy, and to express to the minister that we needed her to be our champion in government and other ministers. Given her former post as the Minister of Tourism, Arts, and Culture, it was refreshing to not have to begin the conversation explaining the value of art and design in society. It was a very positive conversation, and both the minister and the MLA left with a desire to return to the campus for a longer visit in the future. The Minister's chief of staff also left with a copy of Non-Regular!

We continue working to keep our financial house in order and the move of the FA defence fund to VanCity Credit Union has been a positive action. With that move has come ongoing financial training and info sessions with VanCity for members of the FA executive. Our treasurer, Sunny Nestler continues their amazing job, taking on the challenge of our FA finances and additional training from FPSE.

Ahead of all the committee reports and summaries, we wanted to thank all of the faculty who served on the wide range of committees that are required to support our collegial governance. We are hugely grateful for your time, thoughtful consideration, tireless dedication and support. Your work is essential to our membership and to the University community. We also want to thank all of the faculty and staff who continue to show up – show up to meetings, to workshops, to training sessions, to hallway conversations that lead to new ideas and solutions that make a difference to our working lives. You have shown up in countless Zoom rooms, in person, and via email. You have shown up for each other. Thank you.



Above: FA Garden Party in September; Below: FA Year-end Korean BBQ Potluck

The FA Executive for 2023-2024 included:

President: Cameron Cartiere

Vice Presidents: Lindsay McIntyre and Ben Unterman

Members at Large: Rubén Möller, Valérie D. Walker, Hillary Webb, Sue Shon, Sarah Samash, Alla Gadassik

Co- Stewards: Rita Wong, Nick Conbere

Secretary: Patryk Stasieczek

Treasurer: Sunny Nestler

Thank you to member-at-large Magnolia Pauker who served in 2023.

The Joint Consultation Committee (JCC) continued to meet monthly. Its purpose is “to promote the cooperative resolution of workplace issues” (according to our Collective Agreement 5.03). The committee includes the FA President, the FA Vice-Presidents, a Steward, our FA coordinator, the Provost, the VP of HR, the Director of HR, and HR staff. The FA team continued to pursue issues from 2022-23 such as impacts of ambiguous university policies on faculty, scheduling and hiring, and fair representation on committees. The FA President also has a standing meeting with the ECU President every month to discuss university issues beyond the JCC.

Our stewards have still noted an ongoing increase in requests for accommodation by faculty and also complex and lengthy grievances, many of which resulting from University policies that are not clearly written and procedures that have escalated situations into multi-level grievance processes. This is relentless work and the approval, by the membership, of a second steward last year has gone a long way to lift the burden off the shoulders of our long-standing steward, Rita Wong. We are continually deeply grateful for the breadth of institutional knowledge that Rita brings to the role. Together, with Nick Conbere, our stewards are champions for the membership. Remember, you have support and if you find yourself in a position where you are asked to meet with HR or other areas of administration, you have the right to have steward support with you.



The FA Executive Working Committee, during our Faculty Retreat this February
(not picture, Lindsay McIntyre and Sarah Samash)

Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE) Committees and Reports

The FPSE AGM will be May 13-16 in Surrey — 5 faculty members will go from our local to serve as our delegates (Rubén Möller, Lindsay McIntyre, and Cameron Cartiere). Alex Phillips will also be in attendance as the chair of the Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee and Ben Unterman as chair of the Non-regular Faculty Committee

FPSE is a federation of 21 member locals, including our Faculty Association. FPSE runs a number of committees that gather members from across its locals, allowing us to better understand sector-wide issues and collective strategies. These FPSE committees generally meet once a semester (over two days), and we offer a \$200 honorarium to Regular and Non-Regular members for participating.

Presidents' Council (PC) ECUFA Representative: Cameron Cartiere

The Presidents' Council includes representatives from FPSE and presidents from the 21 union locals. The Council meets every month for an extended meeting that takes place over two days (averaging 9 hours). The monthly agenda is quite extensive and includes policy review, standing committee recommendations, bargaining considerations and preparations, and issues that impact the working conditions of our collective institutions. There are additional meetings to prepare for the AGM. The Council also meets for four days in June for an extensive planning session to discuss the priorities for the year to come.

Bargaining Coordination Committee (BCC) ECUFA Representative: Ben Unterman

The Bargaining Coordination Committee meets monthly and includes representatives from FPSE and bargaining representatives from the 21 union locals. The committee is directly involved in the organization of coordinated bargaining issues and actions. The committee is responsible for recommendations for bargaining.

Bargaining Council ECUFA Representatives: Ben Unterman and Rita Wong

The Bargaining Council brings together the PC and the BCC to ensure clear communication during the bargaining process and to agree strategies for collective bargaining through FPSE. This council continues to be active in 2024.

Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee ECUFA Representative and committee chair: Alex Phillips

This year the Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee (HRISC) hosted an online panel in March on the subject of "Making a Place for Dialogue in Times of Conflict." I've emailed the membership the link to the recording.

The Committee also adjudicated and approved funding from the International Solidarity Fund.

Every year the ISF distributes funds totaling 1% annually of member's dues, which are allocated to projects doing human rights, labour, and education work forwarded by locals. This year

the Fund received twenty-two applications and funded sixteen projects. The total amount requested was \$406,431, while the amount distributed was \$71,541. Among other projects the ISF will provide assistance to projects ranging from support for migrant workers in the Okanagan (RAMA), anti-violence work for women in Guatemala (Leaving Footprints Guatemala Women's Group), scholarships for Palestinian students (CPPF), and education for children in India (Isha Education) and women in Afghanistan (Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan).

HRISC also drafted a statement on Gaza which is now on FPSE's website.

In addition to sending a number of motions to President's Council we made novel use of the remainder of our discretionary budget by distributing the funds to eight non-profit organizations doing labour and human rights work in Canada and abroad.

Workplace Health, Safety & Environment Committee ECUFA Representative: Justin Novak

The FPSE WHSEC discussed the following issues that were raised:

- Mental health challenges continued to feature prominently as a shared area of interest among representatives of the Local FAs at this year's WHSEC meetings.
- The following motion was passed, and will be brought to FPSE President's Council:
 - Preamble: This motion is in recognition of the violence perpetrated against an instructor and learners at the University of Waterloo, Ontario in 2023.

To reduce risk of exposure to violence, WHSEC recommends institutions protect members from potential violence by moving certain online information (for example, office hours and location, classroom locations) to password protected areas of websites. This will ensure that information is only accessed by registered members of the institution.

- WHSEC determined to spend WHSEC's annual budget on materials and guest fees on occupational health and safety awareness, offering a workshop either at the AGM (ideally hybrid or online workshop) or independently of that meeting, open to all FPSE membership (BCFed has Mental Health First Aid training, and workshops on Psychologically Healthy & Safe Workplaces through the CSA (National Standard), briefly covering the 14 psychosocial risk factors.
- The question was raised whether Bargaining Coordination Committee might recommend that Local FAs might advocate for their inclusion as "Joint agents of record" with insurers in order to gain access to aggregate data on benefit use related to health & safety
- Are there ways to actively support locals facing indoor air quality issues?

Women & Gender Equity

ECUFA Representative: prOphecy sun

The following are highlights from the Fall/Spring WGEC Committee meetings

- Updating the WGEC's terms of reference.
- Discussed how other representatives are addressing gender equity within their institutions and organizations.
- Donated some of the discretionary fund to the women in the INDECOS (delivers the Women Empowerment Program which is also the Women Entrepreneur Program).
- Shared updates and relevant developments from each local, with a focus on special events, educational initiatives, and the need for action in light of the recent rise in anti-2SLGBTQIA+ rhetoric.
- Committee requested financial assistance from FPSE to support committee members to attend the Summer Institute for Union Women in Portland Oregon. Update: Our resolution was pulled due to the focus on the US Election and advocating for related issues.
- Committee discussed possible workshop opportunities and guest speakers for future meetings at member locals and at the 2024 FPSE AGM.
- Committee discussed the current schedule for FPSE meeting times and dates, the effects of Friday and Saturday meetings for equity-deserving groups, and possibilities around scheduling meetings on other days.
- Committee contributed in drafting an equity statement for publication on the FPSE website.
- Discussion on purchasing items like flags, magnets, umbrellas that can be used (and reused) at locals for events like International Womens Day.

Disability Management & Rehabilitation Committee

Vacant

Decolonization, Reconciliation & Indigenization Standing Committee

ECUFA Representative unable to attend this year.

Climate Action Standing Committee

ECUFA Representative: Jean Chisholm

Initiatives this year:

- Completed a Work Plan for the period November 2023 to November 2024 in line with the CASC's Terms of Reference and FPSE Strategic Priorities
- Published the Climate Change Teaching brochure on the FPSE website
- Canvassed our Local Reports for CASC's submission to the Bargaining Committee, submitted March 2024
- Deepened partnerships with Youth Climate Corps, West Coast Climate Action Network, BC Climate Emergency roundtable
- Thanks to the DCFA Climate Committee for organizing an event on October 26th 2023 with Creative BC on "Climate Change and the Film Industry" to showcase the work being done in the entertainment industry towards climate action
- Hosted a talk with Brandi Morin, Indigenous journalist and filmmaker, on the experiences of Indigenous women land defenders in Canada and the US on March 27th, 2024
- Welcomed guests from the Pension Advisory Committee [Alison Woods, Paul Ramsey and Chris Burnley] to our formal meeting in November 2023
- Supported attendance at the [AASHE Sustainability Professionals Exchange](#) online Conference January 2024
- Chair participated in BCCEC's campaign to meet with MLAs in their riding to share the Clean BC Report Card (met with Renee Merrifield)
- Local 09 co-hosted a screening and panel discussion of "Outgrow The System", March 28th with community partners
- Continued to distribute and analyze the results of our Climate Survey to inform future programming and activities
- Continued to check in with Locals on climate activities on their campuses, through written reports and on Slack, to enable & support learning exchanges
- Continued to liaise with climate action groups in communities locally and province-wide

Next Year:

- Will continue our Work Plan with plans to: Gather and share a library for the use of instructors on climate-change pedagogy across disciplines and locals, develop and host a Climate Teaching Community of Practice, develop a Tool Kit for Climate Action on campus, and host more Speakers
- We have purchased 2 screening licenses for the film 'Outgrow the System' to assist locals with hosting their own screening events during the coming year

Contract Administration Review Committee
ECUFA Representative: Nick Conbere

For each of the 2-day meetings, both in October and February, I was teaching on the first date and only attended on the 2nd day.

In both meetings, the primary discussion I engaged with was reviewing complaints, grievances and arbitrations going on at various FPSE schools. We discussed challenges and ways to address concerns. The individual issues were private, so they were discussed without identifying information. Here were concerns from other institutions to seemed like they could relate to issues at ECU:

- How “letters of expectation” can arise from informal dispute resolution but then be used as discipline.
- Concerns around faculty accommodations. Questions about who verifies that accommodations are medically needed.
- How work is distributed among deans and faculty-based positions that do administration (like Asst and Assoc Deans at ECU, or area heads at other institutions)

Other items covered in the meetings:

- We generated ideas for possible workshops at the upcoming FPSE AGM.
- Discussed strategies of how stewards can delegate work.
- We discussed the CARC Connects website that lists shared information. We specifically discussed sharing reviews on mediators and arbitrators

Education Policy Committee
ECUFA Representative: Patryk Tom

In the fall of 2023, select Academic Governance Committee members, including myself, established a subcommittee to draft a report on Micro Credentials for the VP2 to present to the president's council in the new year.

Members of the AGC attended the CUFA 2024 Conference on Academic Governance ahead of our FPSE AGC in-person gathering. Insights from the conference highlighted strategies for collaboration between senate and board members to maintain institutional autonomy and a cultural shift within institutions related to their management practices and the impact this has on working and learning conditions. A report on the conference was collaboratively drafted to identify concerns and was later shared with the VP2.

During the FPSE AGC gathering, we reviewed our committee's work plan and recognized the need for language updates while addressing sectoral challenges such as shifts toward a trimestral university model. We also identified pressing issues for the upcoming bargaining round, including the professional development needs for all categories of faculty in order to promote inclusive decision-making practices at an institutional/sectoral level. We also identified which FPSE committees we would like to directly engage with during our next in-person gathering round recommended for Fall 2024.

An Academic Governance workshop-presentation by Graeme Bowbrick of Douglas College (former Attorney General and former BC's Minister of Advanced Education) was shared with members of the committee. I brought this to the attention of ECUFA's executive and they have budgeted him for the September 2024 installment of Academic Affairs meeting.

Pension Advisory Committee **ECUFA Representative: Julie York**

Pension Fund Updates:

- The Trustee reported that the pension fund has exceeded its performance objectives, currently holding assets valued at \$7 billion. However, benchmarks fell short, mainly due to declines in private equity and real estate holdings. Despite this, the carbon footprint of the portfolio has seen a consistent decrease. Additionally, the cost of living for the pension increased by 4.4%.
- Assets under management: \$7.31 billion.
- Performance returns: One year - 6.9% (against benchmark of 11.99%), Five year - 7.9% (against benchmark of 7.70%), Ten year - 7.82% (against benchmark of 7.21%).

Trustee Position:

- A search for a new trustee is in progress to replace Alison Wood. Shortlisted candidates were interviewed, and the committee has made recommendations. Details to be announced.

Pension Enrollment Rules:

- Consultations on enrollment rules for the pension are ongoing. Discussions include implementing a mandatory "Day One enrollment rule" and reducing the mandatory enrollment threshold for new pension participants to promote inclusivity and accessibility.
- Niall Christie from Langara advocated for non-regular faculty, highlighting concerns about benefits, and emphasizing the need for advocacy and support.

College Pension Plan Retirees (CPPR):

- President George A. Davison presented on the role of retiree representatives on PAC.

The committee reviewed the terms of reference to explore the feasibility of changing the language to include a retiree from a local or for someone from CPPR to sit as a non-voting member of PAC. A vote indicated strong support.