

ECUAD FA Executive Working Committee Report 2025

April 25, 2025

I would like to start out this (my final report) with a huge thank you to Brendan Tang, who served as our Faculty Show coordinator and to all the faculty who participated in the exhibition, readings, and events during this amazing celebration of our community. I would also like to thank the entire team at the Libby Leshgold Gallery, who offered support, guidance, installation expertise, reception support, and great good will for the entire endeavour. This exhibition really was a celebration of our faculty history and our creative community.

The exhibition marked the mid-way point of a year that has been filled with advances and struggles. On the positive side, this year saw the continuation of a series of successful hires across the various Faculties, particularly in Foundation, and we saw many of our non-regular faculty move over to regular faculty positions and welcomed new faculty from as host of other institutions outside of ECU.

Also, the majority of our membership had the opportunity to fully experience the physical, emotional, and mental relief of 4/4 studio faculty workload. This significant shift has allowed faculty to have more of a work-life balance, and to give greater attention in the classroom and outside the institution in the multiple forms of creative practice, research, and professional development. I am sure our families also appreciated having just a bit more of us present as well.

This year brought change again in the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills with a cabinet shuffle visit and the return of Minister Anne Kang as Minister Lisa Beare was moved over to Education and Child Care. Minister Kang came to visit ECU in January and I had an opportunity to meet with her briefly and champion the value of studio-based education. This work continues through our membership in the Federation of Post-Secondary Education (FPSE) – see the FPSE Presidents' Council report further down.

The big Collective Agreement challenges of the year have revolved around the areas we negotiated to try and improve working conditions for our Lecturers and Non-regular faculty. As part of bargaining, we secured an agreement for new hiring processes that promised to be more transparent and fairer for all involved. These changes included the development of a seniority list (reviewable by members) and a shift from Right of First Refusal (ROFR) to Qualified to Teach (QTT). One of the goals of QTT is to allow Lecturers and Non-Regular faculty to be more readily considered not just for courses they have taught in the past, but also courses that they are qualified to teach.

The seniority list was pretty straightforward for HR to produce and members had an extended period to review the list and query their position on the list. QTT has proved to be much more challenging.

Despite bringing the urgency of developing the QTT to every meeting of the Joint Consultation Committee (JCC) with HR and the Provost's office, this project has struggled. There was little guidance from administration in terms of structure, but our regular faculty members rallied to develop QTT lists for their areas. A special shout-out to Alla Gadassik, who developed the initial framework for Media Studies, which was an early model for other faculties to consider. In every JCC meeting we were told that the QTT process would be ready for the 2025-26 hiring cycle. We were cautiously optimistic, but as the months wore on, we pressed to see samples of the QTT frameworks and the system that IT argued needed to be built from scratch. We offered volunteers to beta test the system (thank you to all who put their names forward) and were told that the system would be ready for testing "soon". It was only at our mid-March JCC meeting that the administration finally admitted that the QTT system would not be ready until the 2026-27 hiring cycle. So, for now, ROFR is still in play, however summer courses do count towards ROFR and seniority which was not the case prior to the last bargaining round.

So, moving into 2025-26, one of the focuses of the bargaining team will be on cleaning up the collective agreement language in relation to the gains made in the last round. There is more work to be done on the actual delivery of gains, ever clearer language, and administrative accountability. You can imagine the team faces some resistance at the bargaining table when it comes to accountability and every grievance we might file to push back can be a long process in itself. But the bargaining team is a seriously committed group, as evident from the successes of the last round.

Most of you will have read the email I sent out to the membership on April 11 regarding the impact of the deficit budget voted on by our University Board of Governors. Here again are the specific impacts for 2025-26:

- An increase in 400 level studio class sizes from 17 students to 20 students. This will result in fewer sections of 400 level classes on offer.
- Class sizes at 200/300 level are not being changed for Fall 2025 and Spring 2026.
- HUMN100/101 seminar sizes are increasing from 22 to 25 students (including intensives). Markers will be offered for assignments related to the HUMN lecture. While the final enrolment numbers are still in flux, it is anticipated that the shift could result in six less sections in HUMN 100 and six less in HUMN101. Again, this is still to be determined. Many of our faculty who teach in HUMN are already aware of this as the Interim Dean of Culture + Community has informed impacted faculty and it was also discussed in this week's meeting for Critical Studies.
- ROFR still applies this year, and lecturers maintain at least 50% teaching load as per our collective agreement.
- We have four regular faculty members who will have retired this year and only two of those faculty positions will be filled. Administration is still determining in which program areas these positions might be most needed.
- In the longer term, the administration will be taking a deeper look at the course release system. There will be tighter control on "banking" releases, so that people are taking releases when they are being earned. Supervision of graduate students is also being re-examined.

You will read ahead all the FPSE committee reports and summaries and we want to thank all the faculty who served on the broad range of committees, within the university and outside of our institution, that are needed for us to support collegial governance at Emily Carr University. We are immensely grateful for your efforts, time, dedication, and thoughtful consideration.

As I am writing this report, I would be remiss if I didn't mention all the uncertainty being created by the current President of the United States. I could write reams of what feels like freeform craziness south of the border, but instead, I would like to turn my attention to the strength, compassion, dedication, and much-needed goodwill and humour that I have seen every day from our members inside and outside of this campus. I am continually humbled by your ability to keep showing up – in meetings, workshops, seminars, gallery openings, and countless other events. I have seen you in endless Zoom and Team rooms (as we grimaced as ever-changing platforms) and in-person committees and planning meetings. You keep showing up, not just for the school, but for each other. As I step down as your FA President for early retirement, I would just like to say that it has truly been an honour to serve with you and on behalf of you. Our membership is a community of incredible people.

I will always be in solidarity with this amazing Faculty. – Cameron



Above: The Faculty Show, Libby Leshgold Gallery, January 10-February 9, 2025

The FA Executive for 2024-2025 included:

President: Cameron Cartiere

Vice Presidents: Lindsay McIntyre and Alex Hass

Members at Large: Rubén Möller, Valérie D. Walker, Hillary Webb, Sue Shon, Sarah Samash, Magnolia Pauker, Pat Vera

Co-Stewards: Rita Wong, Nick Conbere

Secretary: Gabe Wong

Treasurer: Sunny Nestler

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 such as the 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 continued to note an ongoing increase in requests for accommodation by faculty and also complex and lengthy grievances, many of which are resulting from University policies that are not clearly written and procedures that have escalated situations into multi-level grievance processes. We are deeply grateful to our stewards, Rita Wong and 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.

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

The FPSE AGM will be May 12-15 in Richmond — 3 faculty members will go from our local to serve as our delegates (Rita Wong, Alex Hass, and Ben Unterman). Alex Philips will also be in attendance as the chair of the FPSE Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee. Ben Unterman will be doing double duty as chair of the Non-regular Faculty Committee. A new chair for the FPSE Non-regular Faculty Committee will be taking up the role in the Fall term.

FPSE is a federation of 19 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 19 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.

This year, much of our work at PC has been focused on the cuts that have been ravaging our sector and FPSE has been very vocal with the Provincial Government through a range of press releases and interviews. Many of the local FA presidents have been in the press lately speaking out against chronic underfunding of Post-Secondary Education and the administrative bloat that plagues our sector, particularly in the face of faculty layoffs, program cuts, and increased international student tuition.

Bargaining Coordination Committee (BCC) ECUFA Representative: Ben Unterman

Bargaining Council

ECUFA Representatives: Alex Hass

- FPSE is continuing to developing a bargaining support framework to create greater access, transparency and support between the institutions.
- The committee met in person for two days in the fall and two days in the spring, supported with monthly online meetings
- No one is bargaining yet.
- Most expect to start bargaining in the fall, with some being asked to push bargaining into 2026.
- We are facing far fewer layoffs at ECU than most of our fellow institutions
- The fall meeting was scheduled the weekend of the provincial election so could not establish a clear sense of who they's be bargaining with.
- The spring meeting was more clearly focused on exploring a benefits trust and building technical supports for the bargaining process.
- currently the committee is exploring AI concerns in post secondary and the bargaining team is now gathering all AI language from the schools to discuss and model new language

Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee

ECUFA Representative and Committee Chair: Alex Phillips

The Human Rights and International Solidarity Committee met in October and February. At our Spring meeting we hosted former VIU student Sara Kishawi as a guest speaker. Ms. Kishawi, a Palestinian-Canadian who was one of the organizers of a Gaza support encampment on the grounds of VIU, recounted how she and another Palestinian student were marked for surveillance and intimidation by campus security personnel. VIU eventually took the students to court to remove the encampment, costing the university (whose deficit is now nearly \$9 million) approximately \$800,000 in legal fees. Kishawi has been suspended from VIU and denied her transcripts. She has appealed the decision.

For this year's Speaker's Tour the Committee chose to convene an online panel examining "AI, Human Rights, and Education." The recording of the five-person panel is available online at <https://fpse.ca/committees/HRISC> under "Resources of Interest." The panel discussion proved so compelling the committee invited all five researchers to write a reflection on their findings to be compiled as a publication. We anticipate publishing this book through ana academic

publisher. The recording of the panel discussion will eventually be made into an audio file and a written transcript.

HRISC will be sponsoring a three-day online screening from April 19th to the 21st, of “A Path Forward,” a film about Palestinians and Jews working towards “peace, justice, empathy, and sanity.” This spring two HRISC members will also be distributing FPSE’s Solidarity Fund, a fund representing 1% of FPSE’s dues, to non-profit organizations nationally and internationally who do human rights and labour-related work to improve the lives and working conditions of our siblings here and abroad. Some past recipients include CoDevelopment Canada which works with Latin American communities in Central America, Women for Women in Afghanistan, Rights Action, and RAMA, which aids migrant workers in the Okanagan. The entire list of past recipients is available at <https://fpse.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/ISF2024.pdf>.

Non-Regular Faculty Committee
ECUFA Representative: Ben Unterman

Workplace Health, Safety & Environment Committee
ECUFA Representative: Kristy Waller

The FPSE WHSEC discussed various safety initiatives across locals:

- Implementation and training for naloxone – now a provincial requirement for colleges and universities
- Communication of safety results between admin and unions
- Mental Health claims – parameters and mental health first aid training (<https://stressassess.ca/>, <https://www.csagroup.org/article/can-csa-z1003-13-bnq-9700-803-2013-r2022-psychological-health-and-safety-in-the-workplace/>)
- How health and safety can be addressed in the collective agreement

The February minutes are not yet available - at the October 2024 meeting three motions were passed:

- Be it resolved that the committee recommends that FPSE provide WHSEC with educational opportunities and resources for determining the WorkSafe parameters for an effective mental health claim prior to the next WHSEC meeting or create them where they do not exist. Be it further resolved that WHSEC will make up to \$2500 of the WHSEC budget available to defray the costs of that training should it be necessary.
- Be it resolved that WHSEC support and coordinate with DMRC regarding mental health first aid training, including the use of WHSEC budget of up to \$1000.
- Be it resolved that WHSEC recommends to the Bargaining Coordination Committee that it prioritize the following bargaining item for the next round of bargaining: that each local review the required/mandatory workplace safety training in relation to workload, compensation, and scope.

Women & Gender Equity
ECUFA Representative: prOphecy sun

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

- Reviewed FPSE Equity Statement.
- Discussed potential workshops for the 2025 FPSE AGM (May 12-15, 2025).
- Discussed understandings of FPSE, benefits of membership, and services provided.
- Discussed the structure of FPSE and the role of standing committees.
- Reviewed the committee's terms of reference and considered relevant projects they wished to accomplish this year.
- Members reported on recent initiatives, challenges, and developments at their locals.
- Discussed educational opportunities for locals.
- Discussed FPSE equity survey
- Discussed the importance of dates and initiatives such as:
 - October 4: National Day of Action for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Gender-Diverse People
 - November 20: Transgender Day of Remembrance
 - November 25: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
 - December 6: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women
 - March 8: International Women's Day
 - March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility
 - May 17: International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia
 - May 5: Red Dress Day
 - Moose Hide Campaign
- Discussed how to build relationships across communities and silos, ways to find support within and outside of locals.

Disability Management & Rehabilitation Committee

ECUFA Representative: Vacant

Decolonization, Reconciliation & Indigenization Standing Committee

ECUFA Representative: Nicole Almeida

- Reviewed and approved the work of the shared governance subcommittee, as an alternate way of holding the FPSE AGM, and a facilitation guide
- Approved an anti-racism workshop developed by the committee

Climate Action Standing Committee

ECUFA Representative: Jean Chisholm

- Reviewed CASC Survey results from 2023. Drafted new CASC Survey to share with respective faculties
- Circulated existing Green/Sustainability Language from other FPSE Collective Agreements
- Donation to Youth Climate Corps BC
- Discussion of online vs. in person meetings

Contract Administration Review Committee

ECUFA Representative: Nick Conbere

September 26+27, 2024: Discussion of Issues across Locals

Scheduling and class size

- One school's faculty is taking volunteer extra students to make classes bigger
- Pressure in many to move to larger classes

LayoA/recall/severance

- Cancellation of programs – ESL at one school, Outdoor Rec at Cap,
- Severe: VIU layoAs (30 layoAs, expecting 40-60 more). LayoAs come from program cancellations and institutional restructuring. Budget issues.
- Langara – anticipating job losses and layoAs due to lack of int'l students

Disciplinary issues w/ investigations based on harassment charges that seem unneeded

Want to go to 3-day mtg, to allow room for additional workshops. I said that's too much. They'll likely start that in the spring.

Summary of CARC Meeting– January 16+17, 2025

Legal info session on medical concerns and accommodations

A diagnosis is never needed. Just restrictions and limitations.

IME

- employer can only request IME if employee is a danger to themselves or others
- the employer does not have the right to the full report from the physician
- employer usually does not have the right to choose the doctor

Accommodations

- ask the employer to justify all accommodation reasoning - can be knowledge needed later
- accommodation form—

Workers Compensation Act

- if a work-related injury or illness, employer can be required to supply alternate work or accommodation

Communication

- ROGA database is being set up by Pierre and others. It will be a resource of all cases approved for arbitration, so members can search through these for info. Personal detail withheld within the info.
- Discord server will be established for CARC members to share info

Proposal around Legal Advice

- Proposal passed to give stewards access to legal advice before a situation gets to RoGA. Would constitute 5% of each local's union fees, then allocated to individual locals for legal usage. Will move to President's Council.

Discussion of discipline issues

- Recommended: in grievances and other conversations, reference case laws of William Scott and KVP . These are easily found online and offer quick talking points.
- Pressing for settlement is a good strategy

Training related to layoffs

Layoffs expected across BC (fewer Int'l students, tight provincial budgets)

1. Common themes on CAs: seniority, notice periods, recall rights to bring back faculty after layoff, severance pay, emphasis on exploring alternatives, protections for tenured employees, fair treatment protections
2. some other locals have stronger CA language than ECU. Stronger language at KPU helped save some faculty from layoff.
3. section 54 of labor relations code, about layoffs: requires advance notice to faculty, required good faith decisions, alternatives explored, etc.
 - Read section 54 and CA in harmony
 - Article 54 can be used to mitigate or avoid layoffs

Once layoff going to happen

- Union role is to support members during this process, and during recall period
- Important to map out the steps of a layoff—review your understanding with the employer

Academic Governance Committee

ECUFA Representative: Vacant

Pension Advisory Committee

ECUFA Representative: Julie York

Awareness of the College Pension Plan

At the meeting in March, a strong focus was placed on increasing awareness of the College Pension Plan (CPP) among all faculty. A recent report indicated that approximately 30% of faculty at ECU have not enrolled in the pension plan—a surprising number given the strength and value of the benefits it offers.

To help faculty better understand the pension, below is some basic information about the CPP. Additionally, a webinar will be hosted in May/June by FPSE to help inform all locals, with more details on the dates to follow.

About the College Pension Plan

All faculty—are eligible to join the College Pension Plan (CPP) and can sign up as early as their first day of employment. While members can join at any time, it is highly encouraged to enroll as early as possible for long-term retirement benefits.

Pension contributions are set at 10% of your earnings, and the university matches this contribution, effectively doubling the amount invested toward your retirement.

For those faculty that have not join or have missed contribution can buy back service. Buybacks can be especially helpful for faculty. However, it is important to note that buying back service can be costly, which is why early enrollment in the pension plan is strongly recommended.

Buybacks include:

- Authorized leaves of absence (e.g., parental, medical, educational).
- Periods of reduced pay.
- Past service with an employer when you were eligible to contribute but did not.
- Periods of non-contributory service (when contributions should have been made but were not).

When you retire, your pension is calculated based on your highest five years of salary. This means that if you start as a sessional and later move into a full-time faculty role this will help your pension immensely. Early participation in the plan is especially important for maximizing your future retirement income.

The Pension Advisory Committee (PAC) encourages all faculty to speak with Human Resources or contact the College Pension Plan directly for personal guidance and support.

In addition, PAC will host a webinar in the coming months for all faculty to provide more detailed information about the plan. More details on this event will be shared soon.

Pension Plan Updates and Changes:

1. Import/Combine Pensions for Improved Portability:

Members can now import service from other pension plans on an actuarial basis, allowing for consolidation of service and contributions into the College Pension Plan for a more streamlined retirement benefit.

2. Pension Day-One Enrollment (Voluntary):

Although "Day One" mandatory enrollment was considered, Plan Partners have decided not to pursue this option at this time. Enrollment remains voluntary, so it is crucial that Human Resources clearly communicate this to all new faculty to ensure they are aware of the opportunity and benefits of joining the plan early.

3. Removal of Full-Time Cap on Service Accrual:

The plan has formally updated its rules to eliminate the full-time cap on service accrual. While the 12-month cap on service per year remains in place, all salary earned — including earnings above full-time salary — will now be recognized for pension purposes. This means faculty who work beyond full-time hours will be able to contribute and accrue pension benefits on the full amount of their earnings. Effective on January 1, 2026.

Plan Performance

The latest investment return performance numbers follow the pattern of the last two years. The latest investment return report is dated December 31, 2024.

Return	Benchmark	Portfolio Return
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1 Year	16.38%	12.87%
5 Year	8.21%	7.96%
10 Year	7.84%	8.09%

Returns were affected by underperformance in real estate and private equity. This has been the pattern for the last two years. However, actual returns continue to exceed the actuarial return assumption of 6.0%. This means the plan continues to be healthy and in a surplus position.

Trustee Retirement / Open Position: Paul Ramsey and Weldon Cowan trustee terms will end on August 31, so there will be a search for new Trustees in the near future for anyone interested in applying.