

CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Executive Committee, our staff and various USFA committees continue to be busy with a large number of issues under discussion with the employer. These discussions occur through various means, including formalized structures such as the Collective Negotiating Committee (CNC), the Joint Committee for the Management of the Agreement (JCMA) and committees that deal with grievance, benefits or pensions. On occasion, special committees may also be set up to deal with a very specific issue: Article 10.8 and 27.4 are currently being discussed in this manner. Finally, the Executive Committee may communicate directly with the employer on some matters.

The work of the Association, when viewed as whole, is complex.

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Executive Committee Elections

A call for nominations to the USFA Executive Committee has gone out. **Nomination forms must be received by the Association Secretary in the Faculty Association Office, Room 20, Education Building, by 4:00 p.m. Friday, March 24, 2006.**

"Coping with the Dreams"

**Wed., Apr. 26 3:30 to 6:00 p.m.
Faculty Club**

The vision statements and foundational documents read well and are inspiring separately. Put together they cause confusion as to what is expected of each member of the campus community. What is the role of an individual member in fulfilling the dreams of someone else? Join the USFA External Relations Committee for a discussion of these questions. There will be five-minute presentations by a few speakers and ample time for discussion. Reception to follow.

For more information and to register, contact: Chary Rangacharyulu (chary.r@usask.ca) or Ed Tymchatyn (tymchat@snoopy.usask.ca)

USFA Scholarship Fund

Applications are now available online.
<http://www.students.usask.ca/moneymatters/awards/apply/>

General Academic Assembly

**Mon., Apr. 10, 2006
10:00 a.m. Neatby-Timlin Theatre
(Room 241 Arts)**

The General Academic Assembly (GAA) meets annually. The GAA is comprised of a majority of USFA members. It is important that you plan on attending.

University Council Meetings

**2:30 p.m., Neatby-Timlin Theatre
(Room 241 Arts)**

Thurs., Mar. 16, 2006
Thurs., Apr. 20, 2006
Thurs., May 18, 2006
Thurs., June 15, 2006 (STM Room 140)

Workers Day of Mourning April 28

Liberating Knowledge for US All Academic Freedom Week March 27 - 31, 2006

Monday, March 27, 241 Arts, 3:00 to 4:30 p.m.

A Violation of Academic Freedom: The Implications of Bill 43 for Graduate Students in Alberta
Christine Johns, University of Alberta

Monday, March 27, 241 Arts, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The Waters: A Case for Whistleblower Protection in Canada
Chris Radziminski, Vancouver, a recent graduate student in the sciences,
and
Angela Regnier, National Deputy Chairperson, Canadian Federation of Students

Tuesday, March 28, 241 Arts, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Exploring Canadian Public Interests
Maude Barlow, National Chairperson, Council of Canadians

Wednesday March 29, 241 Arts, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Academic Freedom in Canadian Colleges and Universities: The Current Picture
Jim Turk, Executive Director, Canadian Association of University Teachers

Thursday March 30, STM Auditorium, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Navigating the Institution: Graduate Student Perspectives
Lori Blondeau and Tasha Hubbard, U of S

Friday March 31, Arts 241, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

At Home with Academic Freedom?
Gavin Gardiner, USSU; Jonathan Anuiik, GSA; Len Findlay, English Department

Everyone is welcome. All sessions are free and open to the public.

**Sponsored by The University of Saskatchewan Students' Union,
The Graduate Students' Association and
The University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association.**

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From time to time, we are faced with questions about what is the proper business of the Association. The purpose of my remarks is to provide some clarity about the Association's jurisdiction. All governance bodies at the University need to be cognizant of their jurisdictional boundaries, especially in light of the Integrated Planning exercises being perpetuated by the administration

A Certification Order from the provincial Labour Relations Board (LRB) establishes the Association as the **sole** agency responsible for negotiating the terms and conditions of work for academic employees at the University. The LRB Order also identifies the Board of Governors as the employer for the purposes of collective bargaining. Thus, the Association negotiates **only** with the Board of Governors (i.e. the employer) or its designate (i.e. the administration). The Collective Agreement is a legally-binding contract between the Association and the Board of Governors and sets out the employment terms and procedures for academic employees. This contract cannot be modified unilaterally by either side; changes must be negotiated between the two principals identified in the LRB Order.

Recently, the administration seems to be confused with respect to the proper venue for negotiating the terms and conditions of employment for academics at the University. In particular, the administration has recently used the rubric of Integrated Planning to mistakenly place some matters before the Planning Committee of University Council. These matters deal directly with employment of academics and will

likely appear very shortly on the main Council agenda. We have advised the administration that it is improperly bypassing the Association by doing this and faces legal action if it persists in this regard.

University Council is an invaluable and powerful body, legally entrusted through the provincial U of S Act with the general academic affairs of the University. However, Council **does not have** any legal authority to exert jurisdiction over the Association or matters determined by the Collective Agreement.

We hereby call upon members of Council to be very careful when some plan from the administration improperly sets out employment conditions for academics, and to refrain from dealing with matters that are not properly within its jurisdiction. For example, whether individuals are to be transferred to another academic unit or whether an academic unit is to be staffed by employees other than academics is not something for Council to determine. These issues clearly fall within the jurisdiction of the Association, and are dealt with by the Collective Agreement and the LRB Certification Order.

Jurisdictional boundaries simply must be respected. The administration may be of the view that the Association is an impediment to their grand schemes and planning exercises, but the bottom line is that we cannot be bypassed when it comes down to employment conditions for academics. If members of University Council are at all unclear about where Council jurisdiction starts and ends, by all means contact the Executive Committee of the Association for advice.

Tracy Marchant

CAUT Travel Advisory

Since 9-11, changes have been made to policies with respect to travel to or through the United States. In response to requests for advice in relation to these policies CAUT issued a travel advisory about travellers' rights at an American border in June of 2005.

In January of 2006 CAUT released a second travel advisory. This advisory details U.S. policies and requirements for those seeking en-

trance to attend a conference in the United States. In a variety of situations, a visa is now required even though the person is a Canadian citizen. Rules for permanent residents of Canada (landed immigrants) are even stricter.

Both of these advisories are available on the CAUT website:

(<http://www.caut.ca/en/publications/traveladvisory/default.asp>)

GENERAL ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY
10:00 a.m. on April 10, 2006
Neatby-Timlin Theatre
(Room 241 Arts)

The General Academic Assembly (GAA) is a component of University governance and is legally established by *The University of Saskatchewan Act*. Its membership is composed of all faculty, certain University administrators and several student representatives, with the President of the University serving as chair. The *Act* provides University Council with exclusive jurisdiction over the academic affairs of the U of S, but the GAA is also provided with several specific roles and powers. For example, the President is required by the *Act* to call a meeting of the GAA at least once per year and to provide an account of University activities to the GAA membership. The meeting on April 10, 2006 represents the fulfillment of this legislated requirement.

Members of the USFA are also members of the GAA, comprising a vast majority within the GAA. The USFA Executive Committee strongly encourages you to attend the GAA meeting on April 10. This is an opportunity to join your colleagues from across campus and engage in an open and public dialogue with the highest level of University administration. Some timely issues that would be appropriate to address with the President during the GAA meeting include the academic direction of the University and the state of University finances .

President MacKinnon Apologizes for
Breach of Collective Agreement

In a letter dated January 18, 2006, U of S President Peter MacKinnon apologized to the USFA for university administration's failure to uphold their responsibilities under Article 10.3.1 of the Collective Agreement.

This article states that, "The parties agree that on receipt of a formal request or proposal from the Provincial Government concerning an amendment to *The University of Saskatchewan Act*, they will immediately inform the other party of the substance of the request or proposal and provide a copy when available."

In the fall of last year, the USFA became aware that the Provincial Government was proposing changes to The U of S Act. When inquires were made of the Board of Governors as to why the USFA had not been informed of the proposed changes, President MacKinnon was asked to respond.

Our understanding is that in the last session of the Legislative Assembly these changes were passed into law and are limited to a reduction in the number of government appointed members to the U of S Board of Governors. This revision means that the Board of Governors will now have 11 members instead of 12.

NEW MEMBER LUNCHES

In January of 2006 the USFA Executive Committee extended an invitation to lunch to members in the first few years of their appointment at the U of S. Executive Committee member Teresa Paslawski, who is in the second year of her appointment, has been hosting these lunches along with USFA staff members, Maureen Fryett and Johanne Brassard.

The purpose of these lunches is to put a face on the Association, to talk about the roles of the USFA and the importance of the Collective Agreement. As well, it is an opportunity to hear from new members and address their specific questions and concerns. For many new faculty, their appointment here is the first of their career and it is their first experience in a unionized environment. Many do not understand that the USFA is an important resource available to them over the course of their career here.

To date, we have held 4 lunches, with approxi-

mately 30 new members in attendance. The lunches begin with introductions, followed by a few comments by Teresa about her perspective as a relatively new faculty member and her perceptions of the benefits of increasing awareness and participation in the USFA. Participants are then invited to pose questions, make comments and talk about their experience as new faculty on campus. Discussion has been varied and lively, ranging from general concerns around tenure and promotion, and the collegial processes, to specific issues of merit pay, workload, and spousal considerations.

The USFA also hosts an annual New Member Forum that includes some informal presentations and is an opportunity for new members to learn about and discuss matters such as negotiated benefits, the collective agreement in collegial processes and the work of the USFA.

National Unions for UK Academics Have Strike Mandate – Strike called for March 7 followed by ongoing action

In mid-February members of both the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the National Association for Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE) voted overwhelmingly in favour of job action in their ongoing salary dispute. An AUT press release from February 20 reads, "Universities across the UK will be brought to a complete halt on Tuesday 7 March by a day of strike action, with an assessment boycott beginning the following day."

The unions have been seeking a settlement with respect to salary issues since last fall and the employers have yet to make any kind of offer. In a March 1 letter to the AUT the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association advised it would not meet with the unions until late March and that there was an intention to make an offer at that time.

Academic salary levels in the UK have been in decline for decades (40% in relative terms over the last 20 years) and the unions are seeking to have them restored to those of comparable professionals. Employers have reneged on public promises to use new funding coming into the higher education sector for salary improvement.

British Members of Parliament are adding their support to the unions' campaign. More than "120 have signed up to a Westminster resolution declaring their support for pay increases."

The AUT is the trade union and professional association for well over 48,000 UK higher education professionals. NATFHE, with 67,000 members, is the largest trade union and professional association for lecturers, trainers, researchers and managers working in further and higher education throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

AUT and NATFHE members have voted to merge the two national unions into one. The new union, the University and College Union (UCU), will represent further and higher education lecturers, managers, researchers and many academic-related staff such as librarians, administrators and computing professionals across the UK. The two unions will amalgamate on June 1, 2006.

For more information visit the websites for
AUT (<http://www.aut.org.uk/>) and
NATFHE (<http://www.natfhe.org.uk/>).

Prepared with information from the websites for AUT and NATFHE.

YOUR EXECUTIVE

Officers:

Chair: Tracy Marchant, Biology
marchant@duke.usask.ca
Phone: 4420

Vice-Chair: Jim Cheesman, Psychology.
cheesman@duke.usask.ca
Phone: 6674

Sec. Treas.: Michael MacGregor, Psychology
michael.macgregor@usask.ca
Phone: 8460

Executive Members:

Chris Axworthy, Law
christopher.axworthy@usask.ca
Phone: 5894

Patricia Blakley, Pediatrics
patricia.blakley@saskatoonhealthregion.ca
Phone: 655-1096

Bob Gander, Electrical Eng.
bob.gander@usask.ca
Phone: 5286

Glenis Joyce, Extension Division
glenis.joyce@usask.ca
Phone: 5553

Jay Kalra, Pathology
jay.kalra@saskatoonhealthregion.ca
Phone: 655-2152

Jeff Park, Curriculum Studies
Jeff.park@usask.ca
Phone: 7569

Teresa Paslawski, Ed. Psych & Spec. Ed.
Teresa.Paslawski@usask.ca
Phone: 5262

Tim Quigley, Law
Tim.Quigley@usask.ca
Phone: 5884

Grievance Officers:

Richard Julien, Curr. Studies
Richard.Julien@usask.ca
Phone: 7568

Martin Phillipson, Law
Martin.Phillipson@usask.ca
Phone: 5892

Office Staff:

Ardyss Johnston,
Administrative Secretary
USFA@skyway.usask.ca
Phone: 5609

Johanne Brassard,
Administrative Assistant
Johanne.Brassard@usask.ca
Phone: 5610

Maureen Fryett,
Professional Officer
Maureen.Fryett@usask.ca
Phone: 5611

Room 20, Education Building, 28 Campus Drive
Saskatoon SK S7N 0X1
Phone: (306) 966-5609 Fax: (306) 966-8807
Email: usfa@skyway.usask.ca
www.usask.ca/usfa

Office hours: 8:30 to Noon and 1:00 to 4:30
Monday to Friday