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# THE UWFA NEWS

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## Message from the President

*By Hugh Grant, UWFA President*

As much as I'd like to provide a grand vision of UWFA affairs, our work has been preoccupied with addressing a number of short-term problems. Things have been inching along on several fronts.

**On-Line Courses:** the University's intent to expand on-line course offerings raises several issues with respect to the Collective Agreement. During the last round of negotiations, we sought to table language on "Technologically-Assisted Courses" in order to clarify a host of matters from intellectual property and "authorship" to compensation and the right of first refusal. Having refused to discuss the matter during negotiations, it has now agreed to develop an appropriate Letter of Understanding and the Labour-Management Committee is addressing the matter.

In the interim, the University is moving ahead with on-line courses with the intent to develop courses primarily by contracting with individuals (either current UWFA Members or future CAS Members). Nothing in the current Collective Agreement precludes them from doing so, but we have significant concerns with the contract that individuals are required to sign. Our specific concern is the intellectual property ownership rights, so it is imperative that you meet with Lisa McGifford in the event that you are considering an offer to develop on on-line course for which you are being asked to sign a contract.

**Student Evaluation of Teaching:** no one is happy with the current SET instrument and process. The Employer has suggested moving to an on-line process; however, whatever improvements this may provide, it fails to address the host of current problems **and** raises others. We will be canvassing the opinions of Members before entertaining any change from the unfortunate status quo.

**Flexible Benefits:** Human Resources has brought forward a proposal to introduce a Flexible Benefits Plan that would allow each individual to choose from four options (each with a different mix of health/dental coverage and value of the Health Spending Account). One option is the status quo and the other options would allow for a better fit between Members and the benefit package. UWFA has met with the two other affected unions on campus (AESES and IOUE) and our intent is to pursue further talks with the Employer on the matter. In the event that an agreement is reached, information sessions will be held and a ratification vote conducted.

**Counselling Services:** the Students Association has done great work in pressuring the Board of Regents to address to inadequate level of counselling services on campus. In January, our only remaining Counselling Member was appointed to the Department of Education. UWFA agreed to allow the University to contract with Klinik, Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre, and the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, to provide on-campus services on an interim basis. The purpose of the agreement is to allow the Employer until June to sort out a structure for delivering counselling services.

**The Manitoba Organization of Faculty Associations (MOFA)** has been dormant for the past two years. After two meetings with the association presidents are St. Boniface, Brandon and Manitoba, we have agreed to

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revive MOFA so that it will be up and running in time to do the needed lobbying work leading up to the provincial election.

**Collegiate Negotiations:** UWFA has issued Notice to Bargain to the Employer. Preparations are underway. The Bargaining Team is Bonnie Talbot (CN), Kelly Livesley, and Lisa McGifford.

**CAS Negotiations:** I am pleased to announce that Andrew Bendor-Samuel has agreed to serve as the UWFA Chief Negotiator for the upcoming round of bargaining for Contract Academic Staff. The successful outcome to the last round of bargaining were in part due to Andrew's hard work, bargaining skills, verve and determination.

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## Report from the Women and Equity Committee

*By Lisa Sinclair (Psychology) and Michelle Owen (Women and Gender Studies), WEC co-Chairs*

The re-energized Women and Equity Committee (WEC) has been busy this year. Under the terms of reference WEC is a standing committee of UWFA. It is mandated to represent the interests of women and other marginalized groups on campus, make recommendations to the UWFA executive, and coordinate activities and strategies related to equity. Formerly the Status of Women Committee, the name was changed to highlight inequities experienced by a variety of faculty members (e.g., racialized, queer, trans, disabled, Aboriginal), in addition to female faculty. We had a great response to our call in September 2014 for a meeting. Over lunch in the faculty club we presented information from a Canadian Association of University Teachers' meeting on diversity, and discussed ideas to make WEC stronger. One proposal is for the WEC Chair(s) to have representation on the UWFA Council. In October the new President, Dr. Trimbee, was supposed to speak to us but had to reschedule. We had a good meeting anyway, and those present were able to talk about the issues they were interested in. We heard about getting hired, tenure and promotion, and the climate at UW amongst other issues. In November Dianna Scarth, UW's Human Rights and Diversity officer, made a presentation about policies relevant to equity on campus. In December committee members gathered to speak informally, and many interesting issues were raised, including the lack of racialized faculty at UW. In the new year we got off to a good start with Dr. Trimbee coming in on January 14, 2015. We were expecting her to speak to us, and she expected us to talk to her, so we did a bit of both. She seems to know a lot about barriers to equity, especially for women. The President promised that WEC could have access to the report produced by the Task Force on the Status of Women headed by Dr. Green. On February 4 Dr. Fiona Green is scheduled to present the findings of the task force to WEC. Upcoming meeting topics include mentoring and promotion. There is also a social gathering planned for the end of February. Thanks to UWFA for valuing equity, and supporting our efforts to make WEC a vibrant committee again!

## Corporation Events

By Allison Surtees (Classics), UWFA Communications Officer

The role of corporations in North American society is a contentious one. In particular, corporate influence on the political and educational systems is a growing concern. American corporate personhood legislation, most recently in the form of the Citizens United ruling of 2008, has opened the door for increased corporate influence on politics, and has led to unprecedented spending by corporate players in American elections from the federal to municipal levels. While Canada has different laws regarding election spending, corporate players still exert a huge amount of pressure on the Canadian political system. Private donors to universities are increasingly holding sway over the direction of higher education, from influencing what programs are supported to who might be hired. The imposition of the corporate model on university administration is also having a deleterious effect on our system of higher education. The Salaita affair at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the firing of Robert Buckingham at the University of Saskatchewan are but two recent examples.

These issues are the focus of two upcoming events on campus. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, the UWFA and the UWSA present a free screening of the award-winning documentary “The Corporation”. Based on the book by Joel Bakan, *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*, the film addresses the issue of corporate personhood by exploring the personality of the corporation. Originally released in 2004, the film won twenty-two international awards and honours. Just over ten years later, this film is as timely as ever. Following the screening, there will be a Q&A and reception with one of the film’s producers, Bart Simpson. Mr. Simpson has worked as a producer and director in the independent film industry for over fifteen years. He specializes in social/political and humanist filmmaking and has won numerous awards for his films. We are very pleased that he has agreed to come participate in this event and make himself available to the university community. This event is free and open to faculty, students, and the general public.

On February 13<sup>th</sup>, the UWSA is holding an event focusing on the corporatization of the university titled “Fighting Cutbacks: Student Power and the Democratic University”, featuring Dr. Alan Sears. Dr. Sears teaches Sociology at Ryerson University and is a long-time social justice activist. He is the co-author of *The Democratic Imagination: Envisioning Popular Power in the 21st Century* and the author of *Retooling the Mind Factory: Education in a Lean State* and other books. His talk will address ways in which students, staff and faculty can resist attempts to corporatize our post-secondary institutions. This event is free and open to all.

### Event Details

“The Corporation” Screening/Q&A with producer Bart Simpson

Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup>

2:00 pm Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall

4:30 pm reception at the University Club

“Fighting Cutbacks: Student Power and the Democratic University” with Dr. Alan Sears

Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>

12:30-1:30 at the HIVE

## Safety Issues on Campus

By Marilou McPhedran (Global College), UWFA Vice President

Recently, a woman member of our UW community was walking through the Balmoral bus loop when a man started taking photos/video of her. UW officials were immediately advised and it has been confirmed that this incident was recorded on the UW security system. The security recording also showed that the man had been photographing several other passing women. The UW administration still has its response to this incident under consideration. Nevertheless, UWFA executive members are concerned that this was not an isolated incident, that it is relevant to concerns about overall safety - and a shared sense of safety - on and near our campus. This kind of activity is a form of harassment and contributes to an environment in which women feel sexualized and unsafe. Therefore, we wish to keep you informed of the incident and are asking that anyone who has information about this or similar actions on or near our campus, contact Marty Grainger, UW Director of Campus Security and Emergency Preparedness, at 204-786-9192 or [m.grainger@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:m.grainger@uwinnipeg.ca) to provide additional information.

## UWFA Bowling Night

It's back, so keep Friday, Feb. 27 open. The UWFA's Bowling Night is scheduled for 7:00 - 10:00, Friday, Feb. 27 at Coronation Lanes, 255 Taché Avenue. Come and join your fellow faculty members for a free night of 5 pin bowling. Awards or prizes for:

- i) High Team Score
- ii) High Individual Score
- iii) Congeniality Award, for best outfit
- iv) Harry Crowe prize for the person most in need of a union, otherwise known as the lowest score

Individuals and teams are welcome. Food will be provided.

If you can't make the bowling, please join us for drinks afterwards, time and location to be announced later. A free drink ticket will be provided.

More details to come as the date approaches.

**Please RSVP at [uwfa@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:uwfa@uwinnipeg.ca) by Monday, 23 February at 4.30.**

### About the UWFA News

The UWFA News is compiled and published by the UWFA Communications Committee. The committee is chaired by Allison Surtees (Classics). For more information on the UWFA News, please contact Allison at [a.surtees@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:a.surtees@uwinnipeg.ca).

*The UWFA News accepts submissions from University of Winnipeg Faculty Association Members on issues of interest. Unless otherwise stated, the opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily of the Association or its Executive Council.*