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# THE UWFA NEWS

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## Message from the President

By Richard Jochelson, UWFA President

I hope the term finds each of you well. It has been an extremely hectic Fall season for UWFA. We have been busy bringing closure to issues that have been lagging on for some time. As you know, the last Collective Agreement initiated a new process for tenure and promotion for which we all voted. Implementing the negotiated rules has proven challenging. Through a series of meetings and signed memorandums, UWFA has worked hard to ensure that the new process is fair and has the appropriate peer input. The Employer has engaged in consultations with you through meetings with Chairs, DPC Chairs and other groups. The Employer has unveiled both the new process and the Faculty-based criteria, and information on both can be found here: <http://uwinnipeg.ca/arts/faculty-and-staff-forms/fac-chairs-info.html>. UWFA will remain vigilant as the new approach is operationalized but we ask that you let us know of any concerns or questions that arise as you or your peers undergo the new Faculty-based approach.

We are also nearing the end of a two-year long process of negotiating the terms of online course development for the University. Our original concerns related to the intellectual property concerns that inure when Universities purport to own courses. Moreover, some of our Faculties had developed robust plans for online delivery models. With the change of University leadership, the negotiations have been limited to courses that are taught for a development stipend, and usually in the continuing education context. With advice from legal counsel, we are confident that Members will not experience any infringement of their intellectual property rights in the courses they teach as part of workload. If you agree to develop a course at the request of the Employer, please avail yourself of the right to consult with UWFA prior to signing any agreements. While we are reasonably content with the University's approach to development of these courses, the variation of types of online delivery is vast and consulting with UWFA may help clarify any concerns you have.

All University unions have also signed off on the new flexible benefits program that will allow Members to select various suites of services and which will allow coordination of benefits with partners' plans in mind. The plan is a modest step forward for Members, but again, UWFA will reassess this approach as it is operationalized. The plan requires that all unions on campus sign on and stay on, so retreat from the plan has consequences for members outside of our Association. At minimum, Members should attain a slightly improved version of our current benefits package. With some planning, Members may be able to realize substantial gains by coordinating benefits with their partners. We have been informed that the program will be rolled out in the New Year.

The University has presented its strategic directions document at Senate and at the Board of Regents. In tandem with this process, we understand that Vice President (Academic) Besner, and Associate Vice President (Research and Innovation) Distasio will be leading a steering committee to inform the academic and research directions of the University. Some of you may be asked to join this committee as it embarks on its work. At this point, we have no sense of where the process will lead, but we ask all Members to contribute to the

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The UWFA News is also available  
online at [http://uwfa.ca/pages/  
resources/newsletter](http://uwfa.ca/pages/resources/newsletter)

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process and to submit your concerns and questions to UWFA as the academic and research plan for the University is articulated.

I write this to you upon our return from the Western Regional CAUT meetings, and the administrative directions of universities in western Canada seem remarkably consistent. Administrative calls for program prioritization, hard-coded deliverable metrics, austerity and top down management strategies seem to be the order of the day. University of Winnipeg has compared quite favourably with other western universities in this context, but the current (and apparently usual) budget hardships at UW require that we anticipate these strategies (which are developed, quite often, at Universities Canada). We also face uncertainty in the provincial political landscape. Universities are now overseen through the Education and Advanced Learning Minister's office and a new administrative structure rather than COPSE (Council on Post-Secondary Education) and the fate of post-secondary policy in Manitoba may well rest on the results of the next election. We can report that the current government has been willing to engage Associations to help inform their regulatory approach after the dissolution of COPSE.

UWFA has also been involved in organizing activities with the coordination of MOFA (Manitoba Organization of Faculty Associations). Together with the UWSA (students) and the UW Alumni Association, we hosted a very well attended all-candidates debate of the Winnipeg Centre candidates. The event had strong attendance and was one of the few successfully organized all-candidates debates in post-secondary institutions in Manitoba. We are also in the process of working with UWSA, MOFA and others to develop alternate University budgets at each of Manitoba's post secondary institutions. MOFA has been reenergized and is more active than it has been in years.

On October 14, UWFA hosted Catherine Burr, a research associate at Western University and an anti-harassment workplace expert. She discussed the ways in which Members can respond to harassment and how impugned conduct can run afoul of respectful workplace and sexual misconduct policies. She also spoke about due process and the basics of what a good Employer investigation would look like - including the role of confidentiality and transparency. Her talk was well attended, and is particularly germane here at UW where an increasing amount of Members contact UWFA about workplace civility, bullying and harassment.

As you know, we completed Collegiate bargaining this year. We are about to embark on CAS bargaining, and will soon begin the process of gathering information from you to help inform a mandate for RAS bargaining in the spring of the New Year (see Bargaining Update in this newsletter). We will be reaching out to you, in person, and through surveys, to help us determine what the priorities for UWFA should be in the upcoming round of RAS negotiations. We will be organizing meetings in our Faculties and Units to get your input and we ask for your active participation in this process.

In many ways, the upcoming year will be a test case for the University of Winnipeg under its new leadership. How will our academic and research plans be developed? How will this administration deal with RAS collective bargaining under President Trimbee given our Membership's many frustrations since 2004? At UWFA, we have always believed that this University depends on your ability to communicate, relate and learn with your students. Your ideas, your collegial governance, your teaching, and your research are the primary resources that University of Winnipeg can offer students and the community at large. Now is the time to get involved in Senate Committee work, and to make your voices heard in the collegial governance processes at UW. As always, UWFA remains committed to protect your ability to direct this institution. We hope that you have an engaged Fall session and that you let us know how we can help you in reaching your collective goals.

# UWFA Bargaining Update

By Allison Surtees, Andrew Bendor-Samuel, and Janis Thiessen

This summer, UWFA successfully concluded bargaining on behalf of the Collegiate members. This coming year will see bargaining for both CAS and RAS members. In preparation, UWFA is preparing bargaining teams for both these units.

## CAS Bargaining Team

*Andrew Bendor-Samuel, Chief Negotiator:*

Andrew is the Director of Math & Science Tutoring at the University of Winnipeg and teaches for the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. Currently serving his second term as a Member-at-Large on UWFA's council, Andrew acted as the Chief Negotiator for the last CAS Collective Agreement which expired this past August.

*Gordon Beveridge, Bargaining Team Member:*

Gord is a CAS member currently teaching in Rhetoric, Writing and Communications, and has previously taught in the Department of English and the Faculty of Education. While Gord has been in associations even as a teenager, this is his first time on a bargaining team.

*Lisa McGifford, Bargaining Team Member:*

Lisa is the truly terrifying Executive Director of UWFA. If it needs to happen ask Lisa. She has been a member of every bargaining team since she started her position here. Lisa is also responsible for drafting most of the team's contract language.

*Marissa Dudych, Note-taker/Scribe:*

Marissa is UWFA's Administrative Assistant. She is the happy face that meets you when you enter the UWFA offices. The claws are kept behind the desk. Marissa will once again take on the duties of note-taker.

## RAS Bargaining Team

*Janis Thiessen, Chief Negotiator:*

Janis is Associate Professor of History and is currently serving a term of Member-at-Large on UWFA Council. She has participated in CAUT townhalls on collective bargaining and we are happy to have her taking up the position of Chief Negotiator for the upcoming round of bargaining.

*Manish Pandey, Bargaining Team Member:*

Manish is Associate Professor of Economics. He played an instrumental role in running the numbers in the last round of bargaining and will be reprising his role as the official bargaining team "Numbers Man".

Lisa McGifford and Marissa Dudych will also be serving on the RAS Bargaining Team in the same capacity as in CAS bargaining. In anticipation of bargaining, research is being conducted in anticipation of bargaining, and team members are participating in training, including CAUT collective bargaining town halls.

Please join  
**Jamie Brownlee & Kevin Walby**  
for the launch of

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**Friday, November 6, 2015 | 7:30 pm**

**McNally Robinson, Grant Park**

**1120 Grant Ave. | Winnipeg, MB**

**[www.arpbooks.org](http://www.arpbooks.org)**

**ARP**



# Centre for the Liberal Arts and Secular Society (CLASS)

*By Jane Barter, Tracy Whalen, Carlos Colorado, and Peter Ives*

Recently, The University of Winnipeg Senate voted to establish a new research centre, the Centre for the Liberal Arts and Secular Society (CLASS). With this official status as a University centre, scholars involved in CLASS intend to develop further several key initiatives on campus that look to the role of the Liberal Arts within a secular society, including that special public that is the university. Thus the Centre hopes to study the concerns of Members as Liberal Arts are increasingly under threat from various pressures – pressures that might be relieved or exacerbated by various forms of secularism.

While traditional views on secularism and secularization have focused on the decline of religious adherence and a differentiation between spheres – most typically, the public (areligious) versus the private – interdisciplinary scholarship in the last decade has emerged that suggests that the secular is not simply a neutral, areligious space. This scholarship draws from a wide range of fields, including religious studies, political philosophy, history, literature and rhetoric. One dominant stream has argued that secularization brings with it a change in conditions of belief that impinge on religionists and non-religionists alike, wherein all “belief” becomes contingent. A second dominant stream in secularism studies illuminates how secular society, far from being a neutral socio-political space, is partial to some perspectives – both religious and non-religious – while marginalizing others. A third stream argues that we moderns now exist in a “post-secular” society. What has emerged from contemporary secularism studies, then, is a deeply complex and highly contested picture of secular society.

Drawing on current interdisciplinary strengths throughout the University, CLASS envisions itself as a hub for international and interdisciplinary research concerning secularism and secularization from humanistic perspectives. Many of the themes CLASS engages deal with contemporary issues of social justice in a secular world.

One central objective of CLASS is to interrogate the nature of the sharp “secularist” lines that divide idealized “private” spaces from “public” ones. Moreover, CLASS seeks to mobilize its knowledge in ways that engage both sides of this dyad, to blur the borders between town and gown, to envision the secular university as neither strictly private nor strictly public. Public institutes, colloquia and lectures that engage a broad set of constituencies are a core aspect of CLASS’ knowledge mobilization.

Work on establishing the Centre began in August of 2013. Since then, many Members have been involved in a variety of exciting initiatives. These have included the highly successful Spring Institute (2014) on the theme, “Is Canada Secular?” with Chantal Hébert as keynote speaker and the establishment of the Axworthy Distinguished Lecture Series on Social Justice and the Public Good, which brought such renowned speakers as Cornel West and Jane Goodall to speak at the University. These lectures have taken place in conjunction with two institutes which have engaged the scholarship of many Members across the University.

For more information about CLASS, please visit our new web-site (<http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/class/>). If you are interested in supporting our work or becoming a member of the Centre, please contact Carlos Colorado [c.colorado@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:c.colorado@uwinnipeg.ca).

## 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).

*We are always looking for contributions from our membership. If you have an initiative, event, or other activity of interest to UWFA and its membership, contact the UWFA office at [uwfa@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:uwfa@uwinnipeg.ca). Unless otherwise stated, the opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily of the Association or its Executive Council.*