

NEWS FROM UWFA

EDITOR: DANIEL STONE

1997 / 1998 UWFA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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President's Report

After the frenetic activity of the negotiations of last spring, things are quieter. We have in many regards (though not in all as I shall explain) a brilliant contract that is to run until March 31, 2001.

However, growing out of the new contract is a troublesome situation. This is the wording in the new Collective Agreement regarding how newly appointed Members would be moved from the old salary scale to the new one. Put simply, would they receive recognition for their steps-in-rank-for-salary purposes that had been given to them in their Letter of Appointment? UWFA was intent on negotiating wording to ensure that if someone was appointed at Step 3, for example, then they would go to Step 3 of the new one. The wording selected seems to have confounded what, we believe, both sides committed themselves to.

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Remonstrations, statistics and arguments about fairness have not convinced the senior administration and they remain obdurate. The matter is after all about recognizing positions on the salary scale that the administration chose to give to new Members when they appointed them. In the meantime, UWFA has filed a grievance over this matter.

Other matters that have come up are the pension issue of commuting benefits and the Instructor/Term Appointee workload issue. Regarding the former, UWFA's Pension Committee representatives have been on top of this matter and we expect a successful resolution of it.

On Instructor workload, it turns out that the Dean's desire to change the system coincided with the tabling of a report by Jim Clark and a special UWFA Instructor sub-committee. The report examines carefully the status and history of Instructors and makes a number of recommendations. These will be taken up by the UWFA Executive shortly.

In the meantime, UWFA has communicated with the Dean that we believe workload is a contractual matter in which UWFA should be involved. We have also formally proposed that the Board and UWFA strike a Joint Consultative Committee to examine systematically the Instructor and Term Appointment workload issue.

Over the last academic year I met regularly with Dr. Marsha Hanen, the President, and the Acting President George Tomlinson has been accessible and communicative even if on some matters obdurate, as I have explained. It is important for UWFA to be in touch with the various parts of the University. In the Spring I met with Keith Black, Chairperson of the Board. I have continued this connection with Frank Hechter, the new Board Chairperson. We will continue this dialogue.

Finally, let me remind you of the Distinguished Faculty Lecture Series, sponsored by UWFA and the President. The first of these lectures takes place on November 24 and I hope all Members will give it their support.

ALLEN MILLS

EDITORIAL

Welcome back and, to new faculty, welcome!

We can look forward to a relatively quiet 1998-9 since contract negotiations concluded in the last school year. But there will be many challenges and much to do. This first issue of the UWFA Newsletter shows some of ongoing activities.

DANIEL STONE
HISTORY

PENSION COMMITTEE

The Pension Committee has not met in this academic year. However, there are several decisions made by the committee during our last academic year that may be of interest to UWFA members.

First, the period for accepting both of the current early retirement plans was extended to December 31, 1999. Those wishing to take advantage of either plan must notify Human Resources one year prior to their planned retirement date.

Second, there were some minor changes to the benefits that members opting for the latest plan would receive. These benefits were minor and were primarily designed to provide equity to all plan members.

Third, approximately 25 people did not pay into the pension plan when they were on Sabbatical Leave during the late 1960s and into the 1970s. In many cases the decision to opt out was made on the basis of faulty information. Since then several members have asked to buy back their lost year. Until last year the Pension Committee did not permit that. However, after the Pension Committee received a written petition from approximately 15 current UWFA members, the Pension Committee decided to credit all current and retired members who had opted out with one-half year. This is what the University would have contributed if the member had not opted out of the plan while on leave. It was decided not to allow the member to buy back his/her portion. This was seen as too time demanding to calculate the amount of money each person would have to pay.

Finally, the University is considering the legality of allowing members to take lump sum (commuted value) pension payments rather than monthly payments. This matter is still before the Manitoba Pension Commission. If this option is permitted, and several members have received letters from Human Resources indicating they could exercise this option, a large portion of the pension contributions made by the member and the university along with accrued interest could be put into a registered retirement account to be managed by the member. If this is permitted, it will have a neutral effect on the plan. That is, the plan would not be compromised if people were to take lump sum payments.

The Pension Committee has not received a third-quarter report from our plan's managers. As with most funds, we are likely to be down. However, both managers anticipated the market down turn and made adjustments to our holdings. Once the third-quarter information is available we will pass it on to you.

RON NORTON
PSYCHOLOGY

UWFA STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

In May 1998 the UWFA Executive passed a motion initiating the establishment of two annual student scholarship awards of \$500 each. Judy Dyck of the Awards Office meet with UWFA representatives to help formalize award criteria, and move the award through Senate. Appointed to the sub-committee were Bob Young (who had initiated the idea), Phil Cyrenne and Geoff Scott. The Executive approved pre-Senate wording of the scholarships in June, and the final wording as approved by Senate on September 28 is:

Scholarships of \$500.00 each, made possible through the generosity of The University of Winnipeg Faculty Association, will be awarded to two students who have made exceptional, voluntary contributions to campus life at the University of Winnipeg or to the larger, off-campus community. Applications must have completed at least 30 credit hours and may register in any undergraduate degree program.

These criteria reflects the self-governance and volunteerism ideals that characterize UWFA activities. Recipients of the first two awards are Ms. Sarah Graham and Ms. Nicole Rosevere.

For the first three years these scholarships will be funded by annual donations from UWFA. After that time the award will be reviewed by UWFA in order to decide if the scholarship should be continued, and if so, how funding should be arranged.

GEOFF SCOTT
GEOGRAPHY

CHAIRSII

Departmental staffing time is here again! Last spring UWFA experienced several problems relating to those sections of Article 23 of the Collective Agreement that relate to term appointments (23.22 - 23.26). UWFA was placed in the awkward position of having to sign Letters of Agreement for several departments/divisions because their staffing plans would otherwise have conflicted with these clauses. These clauses are in the CA to protect our membership from the abuses of the past. Chairs are reminded that appointments with term have very specific criteria, and that the extension of an appointment with term beyond three (3) years is in violation of the CA, unless there are exceptional circumstances as specified in the CA.

UWFA COMMITTEES - VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS WELCOME!!

Memberships of all UWFA standing committees, and non-UWFA committees to which we send representatives, were published in the June, 1998 issue of News From UWFA (vol. 5, #1). Please check this list so you know who your representatives are. Several committees are still in need of members -- examples are, the Status of Women Committee (Chair needed), and the Finance Committee (due to Grace O'Farrell's move to administration). If you have an interesting in serving on any of our committees please drop the Nominating Committee a note (contact Geoff Scott at voice mail 9297 or e-mail, Geoff.Scott@UWinnipeg.Ca). The Nominating Committee will keep this information on file for the establishment of new committee memberships next April/May on in filling vacancies resulting from mid-year resignations.

NEWS FROM MOFA

Although The University of Winnipeg, via its four-year collective agreement, is in a period of relative labour peace until 2001, the situations at the Universities of Manitoba and Brandon are anything but peaceful. At both campuses, bargaining for new collective agreements is heading toward potential strike action, mainly over wages, and the introduction of mandatory retirement.

As UWFA members may remember, the government introduced University Acts for both Brandon and Winnipeg that contained enabling provisions for a mandatory retirement age to be negotiated, thus allowing this to be done on all three campuses (the University of Manitoba Act had already been changed to introduce this provision last November). It is clear that the administrations at Brandon and Manitoba were anxious to have these provisions, since they have appeared on the negotiating table in the current round of negotiations.

At Brandon, the Faculty Association (BUFA) recently convened a membership meeting attended by 120 of the 160 eligible members. At the meeting, there was a vote to take a strike vote that was over 95% in favour. Negotiations are continuing there, and no strike date has been set. At membership meetings held at the University of Manitoba, there were overwhelming votes taken to reject the latest administration salary offer (which had increases in it, but also days without pay), and to reject the introduction of mandatory retirement at age 69. Currently UMFA and the administration are in conciliation.

On other provincial matters, the Council on Post-Secondary Education (COPSE) has recently developed a tuition fee policy which links tuition fees to programme costs. Even though it is not clear how programme costs are to be determined, the policy, as it stands, will almost certainly lead to higher tuition fees in some programmes - this comes at a very bad time for students who are already facing substantial debt loads. It is worth noting that COPSE has developed this policy in the absence of consultation with either faculty or students!

ED BYARD
PRESIDENT, MOFA

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY LECTURE SERIES

One area of complete agreement between UWFA and the Administration concerns the plethora of talent among the Faculty: recipients of the University's major awards for teaching and research, faculty members whose expertise and knowledge are in demand by government and industry; colleagues whose opinions are sought by the media; others who are recognized as authorities in their field at the national and even international level.

The jointly-sponsored *Distinguished Faculty Lecture Series* aims to showcase that talent with two annual lectures, one in the Fall, the other in the Winter term. The series was launched in 1996-97 with presentations by *Susan Hornshaw* and *Alaa Abd-El-Aziz*. Last year's speakers were *Bruce Daniels* and *Pauline Greenhill*. This year, on November 24th, Ron Norton will speak on *Behind the Couch: Clinical Observations on Anxiety*. Ron was the winner of the Rogers Award for Research in 1995 and is a practicing psychologist. The Winter Term spotlights *Doug Skoog*, arguably Manitoba's best-known criminologist.

The series is open to the public as well as to the University community. Lectures are held in Eckhardt-Grammate Hall, followed by a reception at the Faculty and Staff Club. Tickets to the reception are FREE but (to allow for catering) must be requested in advance from the Dean's Office, Vice-President (Academic's) Office or the Faculty and Staff Club.

Where else can you hear distinguished colleagues speak on their field of expertise and enjoy and informal drink "on the house"? See you there!

CAROL HARVEY
FRENCH

AESES NEGOTIATIONS

The AESES unit at The University of Winnipeg is in conciliation for its contract negotiations. The contract expired in April 1998 but it continues in effect for one year under normal circumstances.

SAFETY CONCERNS

The Administration is carrying out a periodic safety review. If you are concerned about safety in your area of the campus, please get in touch with Steve Coppinger, Associate Vice-President (Finance and Administration).