

UWFA President's Report – 7 April 2025

Peter J. Miller

Thanking Lisa and Marissa for their work on all our behalf.

Thanks to Council members who have chosen not to run for re-election: Jay Maillet, La Royce Batchelor, and Janis Thiessen. I want to give a special thanks to Janis who has served on UWFA council for 12 years and served as a chief negotiator for UWFA-RAS bargaining. Thank you!

I'm going to say a few things about some items we've been working on the last few months, and I'd be happy to take questions. Then, I will talk in more depth about the University budget, financial exigency, and the situation in the USA.

Some items we're working on

University

- Collegiate Bargaining Unit
 - Chief Negotiator: Michael Saj
 - Bargaining Team: Mason Gursko, Lisa McGifford, Carmen Rohne,
- Following up on member issues with SentinelOne browser plugin: waiting to hear back from VPFA and CIO
- Ensure faculty-based criteria for promotion, tenure, and continuing appointment accord with CA
- Indigenous Identity Policy Committee – UWFA rep
- Senate Caucus: met December, January, March.
- Policy renewal/revision process consultations
 - Building Access and reputation again
- Fallout from Cyberattack
- Instructor/Librarian ad-hoc committee
 - I'd like to thanks co-chairs Jay Maillet and Sam Popovich along with members Ryan Clement, Sherry Herbet, Brianne Selman, Glenn Moulaison, Lori Novak, and Carl Heaman-Warne.
- Secondly, UWFA will be offering governance training – likely late May/June. The winter term ended up too busy!

Labour Movement

- Joined Manitoba Child Care Coalition with me as UWFA representative

Budget

2% to operating, double the deferred maintenance. Challenging given inflation in Canada was 2.64%. However, I have been assured that there is the possibility of more money and that the budget and grant letter are not the end of the process. Last I heard there may be a surplus in the 24-25 financial year. Even RAS hiring is at the decanal level now and *should* move forward. We are not in an unsustainable financial crisis.

Exigency is NOT on the horizon. Here's why (see attached slides)

YorkU situation is a possible warning (but see lawsuit – program opening/closing is academic freedom issue; reminded Pres in Senate in January).

USA

Obviously deeply troubling. Illegal detention and deportation of student protestors such as Mahmoud Khalil. Repression of campus autonomy and academic freedom. University acquiescence. Destruction of research. Illegally dismantling research and scholarly organizations and departments; removing funding (e.g., from NEH for projects that no longer “align”), etc.

Border issues: raised with admin. Offering letters now, we will be bringing up more formally with Provost in two weeks.

Not immune to these issues in Canada

Trump interference in Canada

(Ottawa – March 17, 2025) The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is warning that the Trump administration is undermining the integrity and independence of academic research conducted in Canada. Researchers working on projects funded wholly or in part by American federal agencies have been sent a lengthy [questionnaire](#) to determine how their work aligns with the Trump administration's political agenda. In the questionnaire, Canadian researchers are asked to confirm that their research:

- does not include a climate or “environmental justice” component
- does not contain diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) elements
- does not ascribe to “gender ideology”
- increases American influence globally

Nova Scotia bill 10:

“The legislation would link funding decisions to the government’s social and economic priorities and could force universities into unplanned reorganization. The proposed changes would also allow the government to appoint up to half the members of a university’s board of governor”

Alberta Bill 18

“The [Provincial Priorities Act, 2024](#), (formerly Bill 18) supports Alberta’s government in pushing back against overreach by the federal government. The Act requires provincial entities to obtain prior approval from Alberta’s government before entering into, amending, extending or renewing an agreement with the federal government. The legislation is implemented through a supporting regulation, which sets out the approval process, any requirements to be met before a provincial entity may enter into an agreement with the federal government as well as any exceptions to the legislation.”

Pollievre:

- End to the “imposition of woke ideology” in the federal civil service and in the allocation of federal funds for university research
- Incentivize federal funding to universities that have “implemented the Chicago Principles” to “protect free speech on campus.” Failure to protect free expression “would result in losing federal funding.”
- Implement a “competitive review process with enhanced transparency and accountability” to determine Tri-Council grant recipients and “restore merit” by directing hiring practices associated with research funding “away from ideology.”

<https://universityaffairs.ca/news/where-do-the-federal-election-candidates-stand-on-postsecondary-education/>