

Message from the Chair Involvement Matters

The topic of this issue of Collectively Speaking is evident. Involvement matters, and whether we are talking about the Association or the university, there are many ways for us to be involved.

Being an involved USFA member:

From attending general meetings or participating in a questionnaire or survey to being a FAR or running for the Executive Committee, involvement in the Association can take many forms. Here are some examples:

1. Attend Meetings

Being involved in the USFA is as simple as attending a general membership meeting. There are two such meetings each year – spring and fall. Thank you to everyone who attended our Spring General Meeting on April 25.

2. Volunteer for a Committee

Over the years, the USFA Executive Committee has sent out a *Call for Participation* asking members to volunteer to participate in committees. The Executive Committee annually appoints members for two or three year terms to the various committees.

We have three kinds of committees. Those that stem from the Collective Agreement and have representatives from both the employer and the union; those that are USFA standing committees or mandated by the USFA constitution; and those that are ad hoc and are created as they are needed.

[The USFA website has a list of our committees.](#)

The Collective Agreement recognizes service to the USFA as part of the equitable assignment of duties and can be included as contributions to the administrative responsibilities of the University for consideration in collegial processes.

3. Become an Observer

A USFA member can also get involved in the union as a USFA Observer. According to our Collective Agreement, we are entitled to Observers on particular collegial process committees (listed below) in order to ensure the provisions of the Collective Agreement are followed.

- President's Review Committee (2)

- Promotions Appeal Committee
- Tenure Appeals Committee
- Sabbatical Leave Appeal Committee (2)
- University Review Committee (2)

4. Become an advocate

Each of the collegial processes allows for appeals of negative decisions. In the case of negative renewal, tenure or promotion decisions, appellants are allowed to have a colleague act as an advocate on their behalf.

5. Become a FAR

Faculty Association Representatives (FARs) volunteer or are chosen by their department or college to represent and to serve as a liaison between members of the departments or non-departmentalized Colleges and the Executive Committee. Each unit should have a representative. One important role is to ensure that correct procedures are carried out in department committees or in other collegial processes covered in the Collective Agreement. Another is to pass on views and suggestions about what matters should be included in the future negotiations.

6. Be a peer reviewer

While we are unable to offer it this year, in the past, we have organized a review process that matches tenure and promotion candidates with experienced faculty members willing to read case files and provide an “outsider’s perspective”. In order to make this happen we need tenured members willing to be reviewers. We are always short reviewers, even though some members review more than one case file.

7. Volunteer for URC (Article 15.8.4) or the Appeal Panel (Article 16.3.5)

Collegial processes for renewal of probation, tenure, promotion, salary review and sabbatical leave include university level committees. These committees play an important role, particularly for appeals.

This year, URC (University Review Committee) was one member short of its required nine. The Nominations Committee of Council nominates, and Council approves, tenured or continuing USFA URC members. Members usually serve a three-year term, and one third of the committee retires annually. Anyone who has served on URC in the last three years may not be nominated.

There is often a need for a few more Appeal Panel members. The Appeal Panel is comprised of 48 tenured GAA members who have not served on URC in the last three years. The Nominations Committee of Council nominates, and Council approves, Appeal Panel members. Members usually serve a three-year term, and one third of the panel retires annually. The President’s Review Committee and the Sabbatical Leave Appeal Committee are drawn annually from the Appeal Panel. Promotion Appeal Committee members are drawn annually from the

Promotion Appeal Panel, which consists of Appeal Panel members at the rank of Professor or Librarian.

Become involved and aware of University governance

While we need members to be involved in the work of the Association, we also need you to be involved in the governance of our university. As one member from Nursing puts it, being involved means “we have been able to defend against administrative creep. We have been able to better protect the quality of our programming. We have begun to understand our rights and responsibilities as professors. We have been able to improve collegial processes and defend against the top-down administration decisions that were based solely on cost savings or increased administrative power. Our whole College has learned to ask more questions and refuses to participate when the Collective Agreement is not being followed. A healthy level of skepticism of administration's authority has grown. We demand better from leadership and we work hard to protect our members and our programs. It's not utopia, but it sure has empowered our members.”

Over the last few years, across Canada there have been strikes by faculty where collegial governance is at issue. Just last month we had council elections where procedural issues were raised. As we continue to recover from the effects of COVID, it is more important than ever for us to be involved in the life of our university.

In her message for the CAUT Bulletin in March of last year, [*A Wave of Militancy*](#), CAUT President Brenda Austin-Smith noted more faculty associations were on strike or preparing for job action than seen in many years. In response to the question, “Why is the heat so high at the bargaining table right now?” It is not coming from nowhere. It is the result of an increasing lack of respect exhibited by university administrations toward faculty, their contributions to their institutions and their role in collegial governance. As she points out, well before COVID, colleges and universities were under a range of threats including constant funding cuts from governments, increasing workloads and insufficient support. Then, “in the thick of the COVID crisis, central administrations seized on the emergency to grab unilateral power in academic decision making.” Across Canada, collegial governance was being pushed aside by administrations bent on commercialization and top-down control while faculty were relied upon to keep the lights on. Faculty rose to the challenge three years ago. As Dr. Austin-Smith aptly puts it, “I’ve yet to meet a student who turned to a university president for support when they were sick, anxious, and unable to cope.” The way administrations are treating faculty continues to be cause for outrage.

We are facing issues of our own. The process for the recent election for University Council raised many questions. Are deans by default a college representative? Why do I have to identify myself when voting for a college representative? The USFA Executive Committee is concerned about potential manipulation of the Council election process and will be asking CAUT to investigate what has been happening.

Collegial processes have not been completed in a timely manner, leaving members unsure of their futures. Class sizes are increasing as student numbers rise and the number of USFA faculty decreases. While some hiring of tenure track positions is happening, there is more and more pressure to hire term and without term lecturers. These poorly paid positions are a trend across the continent and jeopardize academic freedom. The State of Texas has recently passed legislation banning tenure for any faculty hired after January 1, 2024. While that may be an extreme case, the move to hire without term faculty erodes the collegial processes we have worked so hard to attain.

As Dr. Austin-Smith aptly puts it, “The anger sweeping the post-secondary landscape this year is a revolt against disrespect, and the result of our realization that no one will stand up for the values of collegial governance, academic freedom, and workplace rights, but us.”

As your faculty association, we continue to stand up for those values.

Geraldine

Call for Participation

The USFA Committee on Committees is seeking volunteers to serve on USFA Committees and Observers on collegial committees.

As with all unions, the USFA depends on its members to assist in the work of the union. The Collective Agreement recognizes service to the USFA as part of the equitable assignment of duties and can be included as contributions to the administrative responsibilities of the University for consideration in collegial processes. If you are interested in serving on any of the USFA committees, as an observer or a Faculty Association Representative please forward your name or contact us for additional information at usfa@usaskfaculty.ca. If you know of USFA members who you feel would be suitable for any of these positions, we would appreciate your suggestions. We look forward to hearing from you.

I. Standing Committees and Joint Committees:

Committee on Charitable Donations - facilitates donations by payroll deductions from USFA members (2 -3 meetings usually in the fall)

Committee on Women's Issues - acts as an initial contact and support group for female USFA members; identifies women's issues which might become the subject of collective bargaining (5 - 6 meetings/year)

External Relations Committee - develops public awareness about educational issues and to establish a liaison with other organizations concerned about education (meetings as required)

Financial Appeal Committee - considers all non-charitable requests for financial assistance referred from the Executive and decides on the amount of financial assistance the USFA should provide. (meetings as required)

Grievance Committee - receives and reviews complaints from members, advises which should be pursued and assumes ownership of the grievance (monthly meetings)

Joint Committee for Management of the Agreement (JCMA) - determines issues specifically placed before it by the Collective Agreement; serves as a forum for the exchange of information, reviewing and where possible resolving matters of mutual concern to the USFA and the employer (two meetings monthly from September to June)

Joint Benefits Committee - monitors and recommends changes to benefit plans (monthly meetings)

Occupational Health and Safety Committee - a single university-wide committee including representatives from each trade union and the employer. (4 or more meetings/year)

Negotiations Caucus - a committee composed of USFA committee members, FARs and other interested USFA members to prepare for future rounds of negotiations and to provide support, information and feedback to the Collective Negotiating Committee (meetings as necessary)

II. Observers

Under the Collective Agreement, observers are required for various collegial committees. Observers have voice but no vote. Their purpose is to ensure the provisions of the Collective Agreement are followed. A special training session will be conducted to familiarize observers with their duties. The number of meetings for most of these committees will be determined by the number of cases coming forward.

President's Review Committee - 2 observers (meetings throughout the academic year, primarily in February and March)

Promotions Appeal Committee- 1 observer (meetings in March-April)

Sabbatical Leave Appeals Committee- 1 observer (meetings in November)

University Review Committee- 2 observers (meetings throughout the academic year)

III Faculty Association Representatives (FARs)

The purpose of a FAR is to serve as a liaison between members of the department (or non-departmentalized college) and the Executive Committee. The role of a FAR is:

- a) to convey information from the membership to the Executive Committee and vice-versa;
- b) to suggest names of members who have expertise and interest in serving on Association

Committees or in acting as observers on University Committees;

- c) to pass on views and suggestions about what matters should be included in the upcoming round of negotiations, and to serve as a member of the negotiating caucus;
- d) to watch for procedural improprieties in departmental committees or in other collegial processes covered in the Collective Agreement.

A list of current FARs and vacancies is on the last page of this issue of Collectively Speaking..

Workers Day of Mourning—April 28

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) created the Workers Day of Mourning that, in 1991, became nationally recognized through the Workers Mourning Day Act. Over 100 countries now recognize April 28 as a day to remember those who lost their lives or suffered injury and illness in the workplace.

Saskatchewan had [39 workplace fatalities](#) in 2022, 21 were occupational diseases including firefighter cancer and asbestosis. Our province has one of the highest time loss rates due to injury in Canada, according to [Worksafe Saskatchewan](#). An average of 2,400 workers each year are injured in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is the province with the highest 5-year average [injury fatality rate](#).

Because the day is “important as a means of mourning for the dead while fighting for the living,” Liz Quinlan from the Department of Sociology participated in the Saskatoon & District Labour Council’s ceremony on April 28th by laying a wreath on behalf of the USFA.

Be a part of observing this day every year by attending the Saskatoon & District Labour Council’s annual wreath laying ceremony Civic Square at 222 – 3rd Avenue North.

USFA Conference Fund

Did you know the USFA has a Conference Fund?

In the Spring of 2016, the USFA Executive Committee replaced the USFA Policy for Association Spending on Conferences with the [USFA Conference/Workshop/Meeting Attendance Policy](#).

USFA members are invited to submit an application to the Executive Committee for reim-

bursament of attendance at a conference/workshop/meeting related to the USFA including, but not limited to, labour relations, academic freedom, employment equity, and workplace health and safety.

The purpose of the new policy is to ensure that annual budget allocations are made to support training and development that assists Executive Committee members, FARs, members of USFA committees, and USFA representatives to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, and to support the USFA's active participation regionally and nationally in organizations important to its work.

Criteria for approval of requests includes:

- Relevance to the mandate and activities of the USFA
- The anticipated cost to the USFA of the request for reimbursement given the budget allocation for these activities and the actual and anticipated expenditures on these activities
- Equity among members requesting USFA reimbursement
- Capacity-building and succession planning
- The applicant's participation in USFA activities

Successful applicants are required to submit a written report within 30 days of their return.

For more information about the Conference Fund or to submit an application, contact the USFA at usfa@usaskfaculty.ca. Please reference "Conference Fund Application" in the subject line.

USFA Conference Fund

COLLEGE/DEPT	FAR	COLLEGE/DEPT.	FAR
Agric. & Bioresources		Engineering	
Animal & Poultry Science	VACANT	Chemical & Biological	Bishnu Acharya
Agric. & Resource Econ.	James Nolan	Civil, Geol. & Enviro.	VACANT
Food and Bioproduct Sc.	VACANT	Electrical & Computer	Aaryan Mehr
Plant Sciences	Sabine Banniza	Mechanical	Jerzy Szpunar
Soil Science	Derek Peak	School of Prof. Devel.	Burton Urquart
Arts & Science		SENS	Karl-Erich Lindenschmidt
Arch. & Anth.	Jim Waldram		Paul Jones
Art & Art History	Jennifer Crane		
Biology	Doug Chivers	Kinesiology	VACANT
Chemistry	Michel Gravel		
Computer Science	Chris Dutchyn	Law	VACANT
Drama	VACANT		
Economics	Jingang Zhao	Library	Jane Lamothe
English	Ludmilla Voitkovska		
Geography & Planning	Robert Patrick	Medicine	
Geological Sciences	Brian Pratt	Anat. Physiology Pharm.	Joseph Ndisang
History	Mark Meyers		Greg Sawicki
Indigenous Studies	VACANT	Biochem. Micro. & Immun.	Eriquer Lukong
Lang., Lit. & Cultural St.	Julio Torres-Recinos	Comm. Health & Epi.	VACANT
Mathematics & Statistics	Jiun-Chau Wang	Family Medicine	Greg Malin
Music	Glen Gillis	Medical Imaging	VACANT
Philosophy	Sarah Hoffman	Medicine	John Gjevre
Physics & Eng. Physics	Lenaic Couedel	Pathology & Lab. Med.	Jay Kalra
Political Studies	Maggie Fitzgerald	School of Rehab. Sc.	Soo Kim
Psychology	Janeen Loehr	Psychiatry	Darrell Mousseau
Linguistics & Religious St.	Jesse Stewart	Surgery	Francisco Cayabyab
Sociology	Liz Quinlan		
Dentistry	Ahmed Hussain	Nursing	VACANT
Education		Pharmacy & Nutrition	Gordon Zello
Curriculum Studies	Paula MacDowell		Jason Perepelkin
Education Administration	Michael Cottrell	Public Health	Alexander Crizzle
Educational Foundations	VACANT		
Ed. Psych. & Special Ed.	Laureen McIntyre	Public Policy	Haizhen Mou
Edwards School of Business			
Accounting	VACANT	Veterinary Medicine	
Finance & Mgmt. Science	Fan Yang	Veterinary Biomed. Sc.	Maud Ferrari
HROB	Scott Walsworth	Small Animal Clinical Sc.	Dennilyn Parker
Management & Marketing	David Di Zhang	Large Animal Clinical Sc.	Julia Montgomery
		Veterinary Micro.	Emily Jenkins
		Veterinary Pathology	Bruce Wobeser