

KUCFA

Newsletter

January 3, 2023

Fall 2022:

Extraordinary Times

Faculty have had an association since the early days of King's College but the necessity for us to have become a union may never be more evident than it was during the fall 2022 term. It began with negotiating and ratifying a contract within the context of what we now know to be unconstitutional legislation which means the Collective Bargaining Committee [Rick Csiernik, Laura Lewis, Chris Roney, Derek Silva, Joseph Turnbull] whose work was in theory complete in October will be back at the negotiation table in the new year led by Chris Roney as chief negotiator.

The second major event was the October KUCFA membership meeting that witnessed two critical incidents. With a 97.5% acceptance rate we voted to join the CAUT Defence fund in 2023, an action that will provide us leverage during future contract negotiations that has previously not existed. Further, due to the work of past treasurer Adian McFarlane and current treasurer Jason Dean there will be NO INCREASE in union dues as your existing contribution will cover the monthly fees. Jason and Adian were also able to find funds in the existing budget to cover the cost of the initiation fee.

The other major outcome of the October members' meeting did not have direct financial implications but was even more significant in terms of what it means to be a faculty member at King's and the crucial role of the university to demonstrate democratic principles. With the departure of VAPD Gillian Balfour her position was transformed into a VPAR: Vice President Academics and Research without consultation or input not only from faculty but any group within the King's community. Concerns from the faculty members of the VPAR hiring committee [Laura Beres, Antonio Calcagno, Wendy Ellis, Josephine Gemson, and Chaya Halberstam] provided the forum to allow us to engage in a constructive debate on the 26th. A motion arose from the discussion that led the KUCFA Executive, on behalf of the membership, to launch a level two grievance against the President, the first time in the history of the College that this had occurred. As a direct result, the VAPR hiring was terminated and a new process under the leadership of the Academic Dean will commence in 2023.

Fortunately, not all KUCFA activities were adversarial and confrontational and some of the

behind the scenes work that was put in is presented for your information in the committee reports that constitute the remainder of the newsletter. As well, there is a new tab on the KUCFA website [<https://www.kucfa.ca/>] “retirees/professor emeritus” where not only retirees but all

members of faculty can readily access a summary of our benefits. In December, KUCFA financially supported a family through the auspices of the Children’s Aid Society of London and Middlesex’s Christmas drive. KUCFA also began the academic year by hosting new faculty members [Kofi Antwi-Boasiako, Lesley Bikos, Courtney Dakin, Jafar El-Armali, Jess Notwell, David Webster, Joshua Wyman, Jingjing Xu, and Alexandra Zidenberg] and their mentors [Stephanie Bangarth, Claudia Clausisu, Jordan Fairbairn, Kristin Lozanski, Andrew Mantulak, Ana Ning, Chris Roney, Akin Taiwo, Mahdi Toruage] to the first annual Mentor-Mentee Welcome to King’s and get the actual inside scoop about the place luncheon. [and yes this is certainly not the first commercial you will receive regarding recruitment of mentors for 2023-2024].

Looking forward, during the winter term we will have at least general member’s meetings both of which will be presented in hybrid format. The first on Wednesday January 18 will be highlighted by the nomination for the incoming chair of the next Collective Bargaining Committee chair, Lynne Jackson while the second in March or April will focus on a pressing pension issue; whether to maintain and attempt to enhance our existing pension plan or whether to opt into the University Pension Plan [<https://myupp.ca/>].

In closing I would like to thank everyone who participated in the union’s activities this term. First and foremost, by coming to meetings in person and virtually and voting on issues that allow us to address concerns in the workplace. The essence of the university is democratic, collegial governance and your participation in these activities sets the foundation for the principles we aspire to working at a post-secondary institution. Secondly, I would like to thank everyone whose service included participating on committees on behalf of KUCFA [and to that end the list of KUCFA volunteers can be found at the end of the newsletter]. Finally, I want to publicly express my gratitude to the members of the Executive for their wise counsel during the first four months of my tenure as chair and also for not yet commencing impeachment actions against me.

In Solidarity

Rick

Please contact us at info@kucfa.ca if you have any questions about KUCFA. Check out our [website](#) too! Find us on OWL at KUCFA Information Site.

Committee Reports

Tidbits from the Equity Officer by Akin Taiwo

I attended the OCUFA Status of Women & Equity Committee (SWEC) meeting on October 14-15, 2022, in Toronto and had the opportunity to meet folks from other universities who are doing equity work. They admitted that faculty associations were created for bargaining and grievance work and equity work is relatively new to most unions. Though exhausting, they encouraged us to keep challenging the system to remove all barriers to inclusion and build relationships with one another to sustain equity work. I discovered that some equity officers don't have a vote on their executive councils, and I'm gratified that that's not the case at King's!

The issue of accommodation came up in our discussions as students no longer require accommodation notes for many things while faculty members do. Indeed, it was highlighted that accommodation request denials had led to grievances in many universities. Though employers have a duty to accommodate, insurance companies also have a role in the process. We were reminded that we are not employed by insurance companies and the university must take responsibility to protect the privacy and confidentiality of our medical records as well as respect our human rights. Failing that, a human rights complaint could be filed against the university and insurance company.

As the Equity Officer of KUCFA, I need two more members with me to form the Equity Committee. Please reach out to me to get on board. I will utilize the 'first come, first served' methodology. The committee is tasked with investigating concerns brought forth from all equity-deserving groups and the membership as well as recommend strategies to ensure that King's operates on the principles of equity and equality.

Finally, I would like to welcome Jennifer Slay on board as the Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Decolonization at King's. I'm looking forward to collaborating with her to make King's "a place to be and a place to become" for everyone on our campus.

Thank you.

Communications and Liaison Report by Nicolas Virtue

It's been my pleasure as Communications and Liaison Co-Director to facilitate the online ratification vote in September and our hybrid general membership meeting in October. Thanks to all of you for your participation and patience with these new processes. We intend to keep the option of virtual attendance available for future meetings.

My main focus these past months has involved issues concerning contract faculty, not just at King's but across Ontario and Canada. I have been sitting on OCUFA's Contract Faculty Committee, which has proven a valuable source of information, ideas, and advocacy. I attended the committee's semi-annual meeting in late October, where I had the chance to meet colleagues from other Ontario universities to compare conditions and concerns. It's clear that the definition and labels given to contract faculty vary from institution to institution, as do the ways in which contract faculty are represented, but the main issues of precarity and equity are top of mind everywhere. At King's, I've been meeting regularly with the President of CUPE 5265 to increase the cooperative work between our full-time and part-time faculty associations. Taking part in CAUT's social media day of action during October's Fair Employment Week was a start. We're looking forward to co-hosting some more substantial events in 2023.

OCUFA Report by Ben Muller

The OCUFA calendar was rather packed this semester. Continued pandemic related challenges on campuses across the province, many ongoing and upcoming collective bargaining processes in the shadow of Bill-124, and the ongoing underfunding of post-secondary education in the Province of Ontario, led to a full slate of issues and activities for OCUFA.

OCUFA continues to be an essential support for faculty associations across the province and serves as a critical advocate for post-secondary education. OCUFA continues to provide our members with essential training and support for navigating university finance, collective bargaining, part-time faculty relations, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and grievances. Our KUCFA executive members are active participants in these workshops in order to effectively serve our membership.

As our OCUFA Board member, I represented KUCFA at the OCUFA Board of Directors Meeting on 29-30 October. The tragic circumstances at Laurentian University continued to weigh heavy on the agenda, along with ongoing challenges to Bill-124. Since the Board meeting, OCUFA's advocacy work has contributed to encouraging outcomes, as Bill-124 was ruled to be unconstitutional, and the Auditor General's report on Laurentian provides a scathing account of gross mismanagement on the part of the Laurentian administration and the provincial government. OCUFA is hoping to capitalize on this momentum to push for greater transparency in university governance, redoubling efforts for bolstering transparency and collegial governance, and strengthen government funding for our sector. At the Board meeting, a variety of other issues were discussed related to coordinated strategies to protect and support post-secondary education in our province, and the collective bargaining rights of faculty in the province.

Related to amplifying the voice of post-secondary education to the Provincial Government, I participated in OCUFA's Advocacy Day at Queen's Park on 15 November 2022. The Advocacy Day included a breakfast reception with MPPs, and small meetings with five MPPs, including our local London MPPs, Peggy Sattler, Terence Kernaghan, and Teresa Armstrong. OCUFA's Strategic Priorities that we discussed with MPPs included proposed amendments to Bill 26 (Strengthening Post-Secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022), enhanced accessibility to funding and tuition, and the pressing need for faculty renewal, as the reliance on part-time faculty continues to grow in our institutions.

I encourage members to visit the OCUFA website for more details about the important role of OCUFA for advocacy and faculty association support, and if you have any questions about OCUFA or KUCFA's relationship with OCUFA, please do not hesitate to contact me: bmuller@uwo.ca

Save the date!

Our next KUCFA General Meeting will be held on Wednesday January 18, 2023 at 2:30pm. See you there! An agenda and Zoom link will be sent via OWL.

KUCFA VOLUNTEERS

Executive:

Chair: Rick Csiernik

Vice-Chair: Chris Roney

Past Chair: Stephanie Bangarth

Secretary/Treasurer: Jason Dean

CBC Chair: Chris Roney

Equity Officer: Akin Taiwo

Grievance Committee Chair: Jacquie Newman

OCUFA Director: Ben Muller

Communications and Liaison Director(s): Derek Silva and Nic Virtue

Member-at-Large: Adian McFarlane

Office Manager: Sandy Swartz

Grievance Committee

Jacquetta Newman (Chair)

Carrie Arnold

Coby Dowdell

Chaya Halberstam

Kristin Lozanski

Andrew Mantulak

Chris Roney (Past Chair)

Grievance Mediation Panel

Adam Bohnet

Rick Csiernik

Laura Lewis

Ian Rae

Chris Roney

Thomas Tiekou

Shawna Weingartner

Pension Committee

Stephanie Bangarth

Adam Bohnet

Jonathan Geen

Trevor Hunter

Peter Ibbott

Christine Lavrence

Amanjot Singh

Akin Taiwo

KUCFA Equity Committee

Cathy Chovaz
Chaya Halbersam
Harassment and Discrimination Advisor
Claude Olivier
Joint Health and Safety Representatives
Jinette Comeau[co-chair]
Rick Csiernik

Social Committee

Josephine Gemson
Erika Katzman
Collective Bargaining Committee
Rick Csiernik
Laura Lewis
Chris Roney
Derek Silva
Joseph Turnbull

Faculty Mentors

Stephanie Bangarth
Claudia Clausisu
Jordan Fairbairn
Kristin Lozanski
Andrew Mantulak
Ana Ning
Chris Roney
Akin Taiwo
Mahdi Toruage
Auditor
John Siambanopoulos
Nominating Committee
Peter Ibbott (Chair)