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Driving Brock to Market

President's Message

Hans Skott-Myhre
BUFA President

“The university is necessarily a centre of resistance to all that is shallow, dogmatic, dishonest or pretentious . . . It is the custodian of the free human spirit and of much that gives human life its dignity.”

Bhikhu Parekh, Professor of Political Philosophy at the Center for the Study of Democracy at Westminster University in London, a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, president of the Academy of the Learned Societies for Social Sciences and a member of the House of Lords

About a year and half ago I wrote a column in this newsletter, as a faculty member. In it I expressed concern that the current university administration was restructuring Brock using a neoliberal blueprint. I argued that this blueprint had already failed in the U.S. and would very likely not succeed here. Since that time, I have been elected Vice President and now President of BUFA. In my initial column, I noted that I might be overly cautious and perhaps not generous enough in my interpretation of the administration's positioning. I now believe that the past year and half have confirmed my worst fears. In that column, I listed 18 points that were characteristic of neoliberal incursions into academic life. I have been watching as each of these concerns has unfolded as a reality at Brock and will report on each in future issues. Indeed, Dr. Lightstone's recent report to the Senate on “Brock's Developmental Trajectory” was as full an explication of neoliberal logic as I have seen in a long time.

Driving Brock to Market

(President's Message cont'd)

In his report, Dr. Lightstone paints a picture of Brock emerging as a cutting edge institution pointing the way to the future for Ontario Universities. Missing from his characterization, however, is the cost of this innovative approach to the actual people who work here. In fact, I would argue that this new developmental trajectory, that Dr. Lightstone says we entered four years ago, has demonstrably led to an erosion of the pedagogical and research capacities of Brock. In that time, we have seen a serious assault on the seminar system and an undercutting of faculty governance. Faculty members have found themselves compelled to teach courses on their own time so students can graduate. One faculty under this new system was allowed to run a deficit budget of over a million dollars. Fifteen BUFA faculty positions were lost. Some departments remain without adequate physical plants or lab equipment. We have cut TAships and left unfunded or under-funded graduate programs scrambling for resources. We have departments and faculties competing for resources, having been told repeatedly there are limited moneys available and that only the competitive entrepreneurs will survive. If this is future direction for Ontario Universities then we are indeed in a new academic environment.

In his report, Dr. Lightstone decries the politicization of the process and says he will resist it so we can move forward together. I would ask, what institution is not political and what budgeting process is free from political agendas and the exercise of power? The agenda of the Lightstone administration for this university, I would argue, is explicitly political and will not lead to all of us proceeding together. Indeed, so far it has been an agenda that has already left a number of BUFA members behind in its rush to the future. In order to avoid being called “political” must we simply follow along and rubber-stamp the budgets and strategic plans put before us? Is our only role as faculty to find new and innovative ways to support an already existing long-term plan to restructure this university? Or do we actually have a voice that the administration will take into serious account when it is told no?

As BUFA President I do not hesitate to call “no” a vital and necessary part of a dynamic political institution. Politics is not a dirty word. It is the lifeblood of pluralistic democratic societies. It is in the best sense, a collective effort to struggle together to shape the future of this institution. As BUFA President my mandate is explicitly political and will be shaped by the interests of the only real resource this institution has—its faculty. However, before I turn to those concerns and others raised by Dr. Lightstone’s vision for the future in later columns, let me be a little clearer about what I mean by the term neoliberalism, which I referenced in my original column.

In a column in the New York Times written shortly after I wrote my piece, Stanley Fish attempted to delineate neoliberalism in higher education. He drew on Paul Treanor who defines neoliberalism as, “a system modeled on the philosophy that the existence and operation of a market are valued in themselves, separately from any previous relationship with the production of goods and services . . . and where the operation of a market or market-like structure is seen

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(President's Message cont'd)

as an ethic in itself, capable of acting as a guide for all human action, and substituting for all previously existing ethical beliefs.” (“Neoliberalism: Origins, Theory, Definition.”). He goes on to suggest that neo-liberalism sees the solution to any set of social problems as premised in an expanding sphere of privatization that reduces value to “calculations of wealth and productivity.”

In the United States and elsewhere this has led to a series of movements to privatize social security, health care, k-12 education, transportation, energy, radio, television, war and of course the deregulation of various markets such as real estate, stocks etc. The logic of this kind of system, according to Fish, is that market forces left to their own devices will provide the best sort of society. In such a society, “values like morality, justice, fairness, empathy, nobility and love are either abandoned or redefined in market terms.”

As any given society moves in the direction of adopting a neo-liberal approach, all of the institutions of that society, even those previously exempted from market discipline, will “nevertheless engage in practices that mime and extend neoliberal principles — privatization, untrammled competition, the retreat from social engineering, the proliferation of markets.” This, academic critics such as Henry Giroux, have argued has become the fate of the university under neo-liberalism. They would argue that this market driven approach leads to “short-term transactions-for-profit replacing long-term planning.” The drive for funding and a market share undermines the role of the university’s function as the academy, or that institution in society whose role it is to promote first and foremost thought and knowledge of all kinds. Instead, we begin to hear definitions of the university that are about accountability to the market, to the consumer, and to the corporate sector (often defined as the community).

Of course, with this come incentives from the public sector to engage with the markets. The first step in such a process is the withdrawal of operating funding from the state. If the universities operating revenues drop significantly, it opens the doors to “innovative approaches” that somehow always seem to become increasingly market rather than pedagogically driven. This is particularly problematic as the demand for higher education increases and the costs to deliver that education also increases. Fish states that,

Faced with this situation universities have responded by (1) raising tuition, in effect passing the burden of costs to the students who now become consumers and debt-holders rather than beneficiaries of enlightenment (2) entering into research partnerships with industry and thus courting the danger of turning the pursuit of truth into the pursuit of profits and (3) hiring a larger and larger number of short-term, part-time adjuncts who as members of a transient and disposable workforce are in no position to challenge the university’s practices or agitate for an academy more committed to the realization of democratic rather than monetary goals. In short, universities have embraced neoliberalism.

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(President's Message cont'd)

So, how does this look in relation to Brock as we enter our negotiation year? I would argue that the portrait painted above is increasingly what Brock is becoming. What have the town hall meetings been but a discourse on the necessity to turn all our efforts towards making money? The pretext for the exercise has been a budget crisis. However, as BUFA has argued, this crisis is more manufactured than actual. This is evident in the way that money is being borrowed from operating costs to fund new buildings and marketing campaigns, huge cost overruns in certain faculties, an ever expanding and costly bureaucracy, and an increasing focus on increasing enrollment and student costs regardless of the pedagogical implications. There are and has always been alternatives to rescission, but the neo-liberal agenda of administration has never allowed or seriously engaged an authentic transparent dialogue through which these could come to light.

Is this the best way for Brock to develop? The negotiating team and I will be asking for time in each of your department meetings to discuss what is important to you in the next collective agreement. There are those who would say that the administration has the sole responsibility of shaping the agenda for the university. I would say they have a role to play, but that we as faculty also should have a say in the terms and conditions of work that prevail at Brock. In what kind of environment do we want to work? Take a look around at what is happening in your department and to your students. Let me know what you think. Of course, some of you are in areas of the university that are favored by the market value approach. If this is the case, ask yourself whether you have any responsibility to the broader university community and look at what is happening to your colleagues and their students.

In future columns I will take a closer look at what is happening at Brock using data BUFA has been gathering over the past couple of years. In doing so, I hope to incite your interest, whether or not you agree with me in regards to what is happening at Brock. Please, remember BUFA is your association and for it to work the way it should we need your participation and sense of ownership. Get involved and let me hear from you.

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B. U. F. A Report On Brock University's Administrative Structure

INTRODUCTION

Brock University's administrative structure has undergone significant changes in the last few years. This report surveys the evolution of the university's administrative structure with a special focus on administrative salaries.

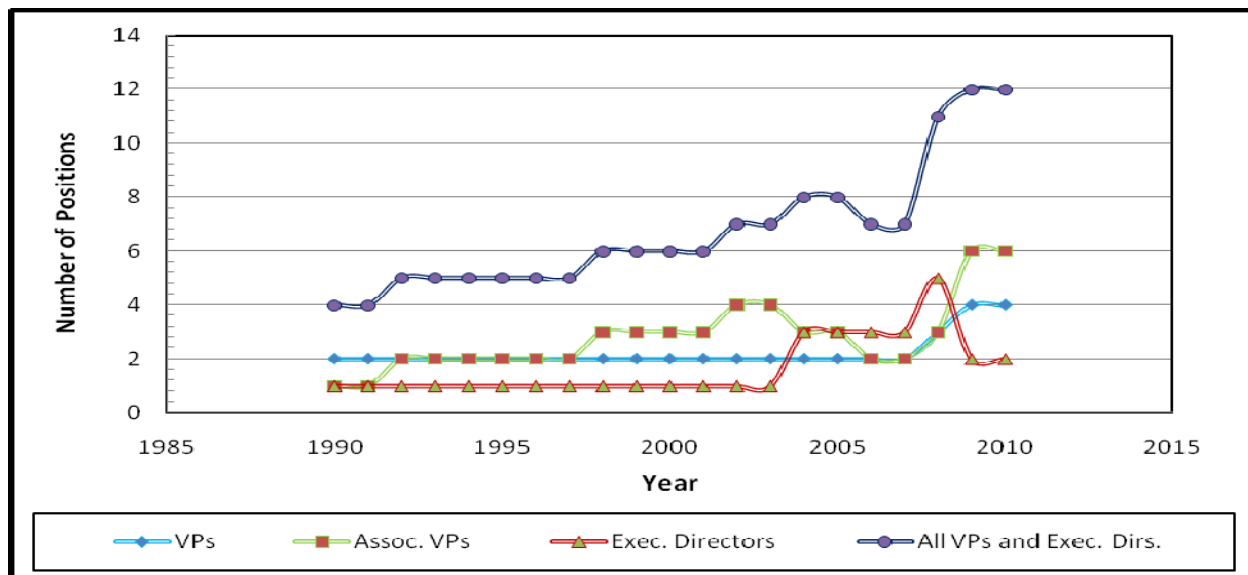
In short, the report reveals that senior administrative positions have increased dramatically in the last few years, while faculty positions and student enrolments have remained quite stagnant. In addition, compensation for university administrators has outpaced salaries for faculty members, particularly in recent years.

THE SIZE AND EVOLUTION OF THE BROCK UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

i. Growth in Vice-Presidents, Executive Directors and Deans at Brock

Over the course of the last five years, Brock has seen a dramatic increase in the number of Vice-Presidents and Deans (see Figures 1 and 2), despite several rounds of budget cuts to academic programs.

Figure 1 – Growth in Vice-President, Executive Director and Dean Positions in the Last Twenty Years.
Data from the Brock University Undergraduate Calendars and the Secretary to the University.

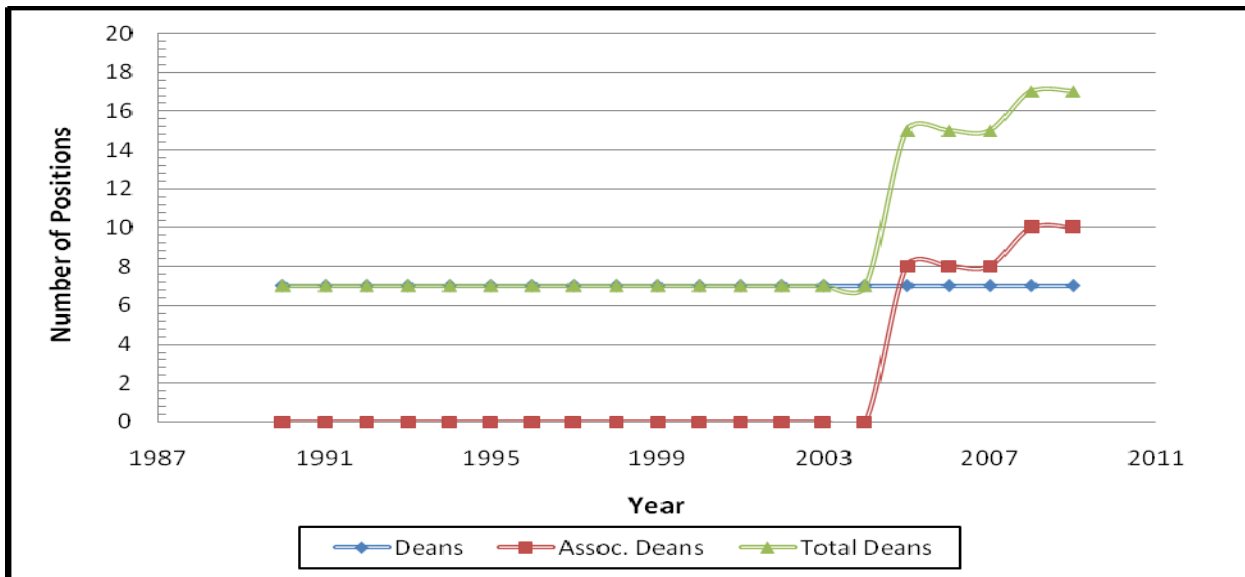


While most BUFA members are familiar with the role played by Deans and Associate Deans, many administrators hold non-academic positions. Many of the Executive Director positions in the university (Facilities Management, Finance & Controller, and Human Resources and Environment, Health and Safety Executive Director) were converted to Associate Vice-President positions as of July 2009, under the

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headings of Facilities Management, Finance, and Human Resources respectively (Office of the Vice-President, Finance and Administration, 2010). The decrease in the number of Executive Directors and the corresponding increase in the number of Associate Vice-Presidents in 2009 can be observed in Figure 1. The total number of Vice-President and Executive Director positions has increased at a substantial rate since 2006, despite the fact that faculty positions have been cut and enrolments remaining virtually stagnant since this time. It took fifteen years for the total number of Vice-President and Executive Director positions to grow from 4 to 8, yet it only took three years for the number to balloon to 12. While the total number of Vice-President and Executive Director positions increased between 1990 to 2006, it did so at a much slower rate and in unison with relative increases in faculty and student enrolments.

Figure 2 – Growth in Dean and Associate Dean Positions in the Last Twenty Years.
Data from the Brock University Undergraduate Calendars and the Secretary to the University.



As Figure 2 illustrates, the number of Associate Deans at Brock University has also increased in recent years. Even in the face of severe budget cuts, this number keeps growing - a new Associate Dean position was created in the Faculty of Social Sciences for July 1, 2010 (this new position is not yet reflected in the tables). The growth in non-teaching staff has outpaced growth in faculty positions for several years. Based on the *Brock Facts* data provided by the Brock University Office of Institutional Analysis (2006-2010), Figure 3 demonstrates that the number of faculty members has been in decline (we have lost 24 faculty positions since 2006) while we have seen consistent growth in the level of non-teaching staff.

Non-teaching staff positions have increased by nearly 100 positions since President Lightstone assumed office in 2006 (see Figure 3). The need for such positions is partially explained by the increase in Senior Administrative positions, which require additional non-teaching positions to provide support for these roles. However, much of the increase is also explained by the rapid expansion of University Advancement, a non-teaching department which has seen its budget increase dramatically while academic departments were asked for successive rounds of budget cuts (see Figure 4). To date, the dramatic budget

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increase for University Advancement, partially in support of the University's capital campaign, appears to have failed in attracting additional students to Brock, as demonstrated by the stagnant growth in student enrolments in Figure 3.

ii. Growth in Non-Teaching Staff and the Office of Advancement

Figure 3 – Growth in Non-Teaching Staff, Total Faculty, and Total Students since 2006.
 Data from Brock's Office for Institutional Analysis.

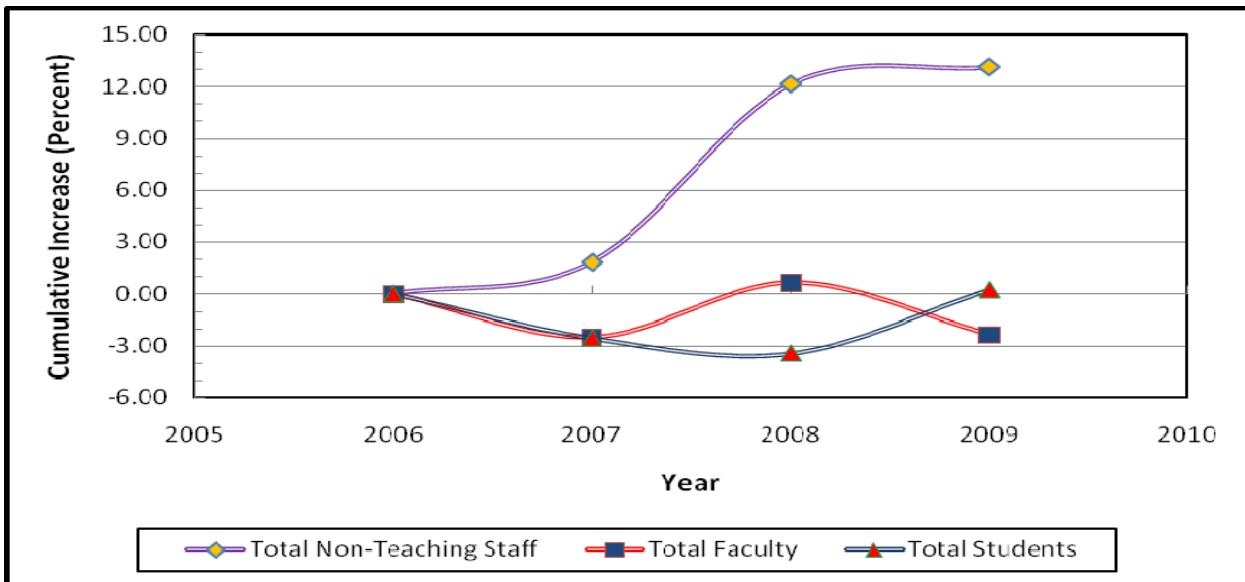
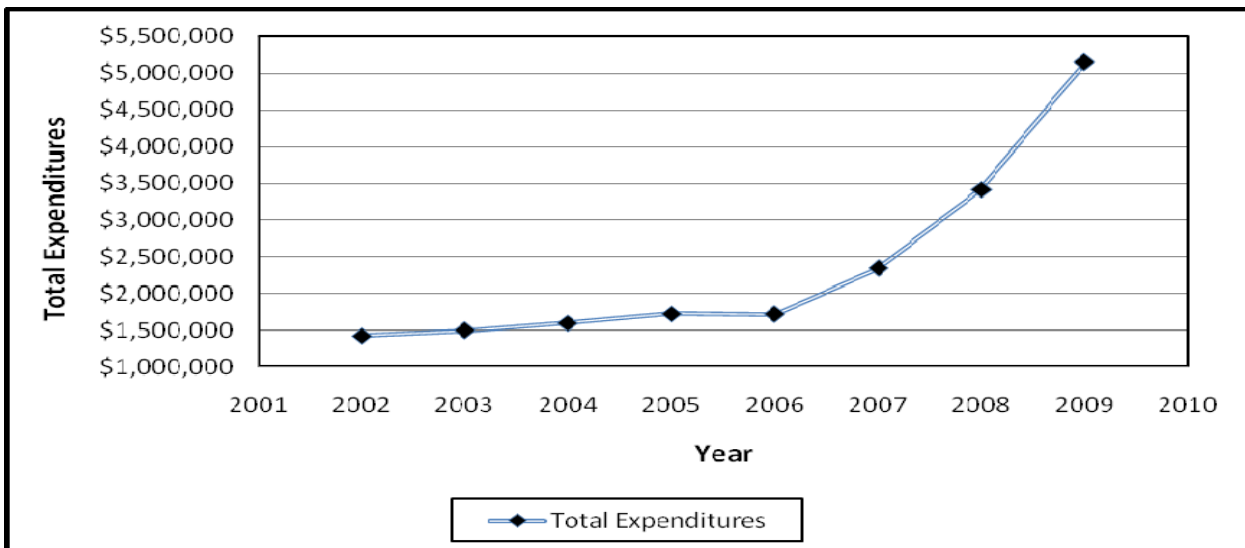


Figure 4 – Total Expenditures for the Office of Advancement from 2002 to 2009

Data from Brock University Financial and Administrative Services and Board of Trustees web pages.
 Office of Advancement includes: VP Advancement, Development and Donor Relations, Alumni Relations, Telegrad, Marketing and University Communications



B. U. F. A Report On Brock University's Administrative Structure *(cont'd)*

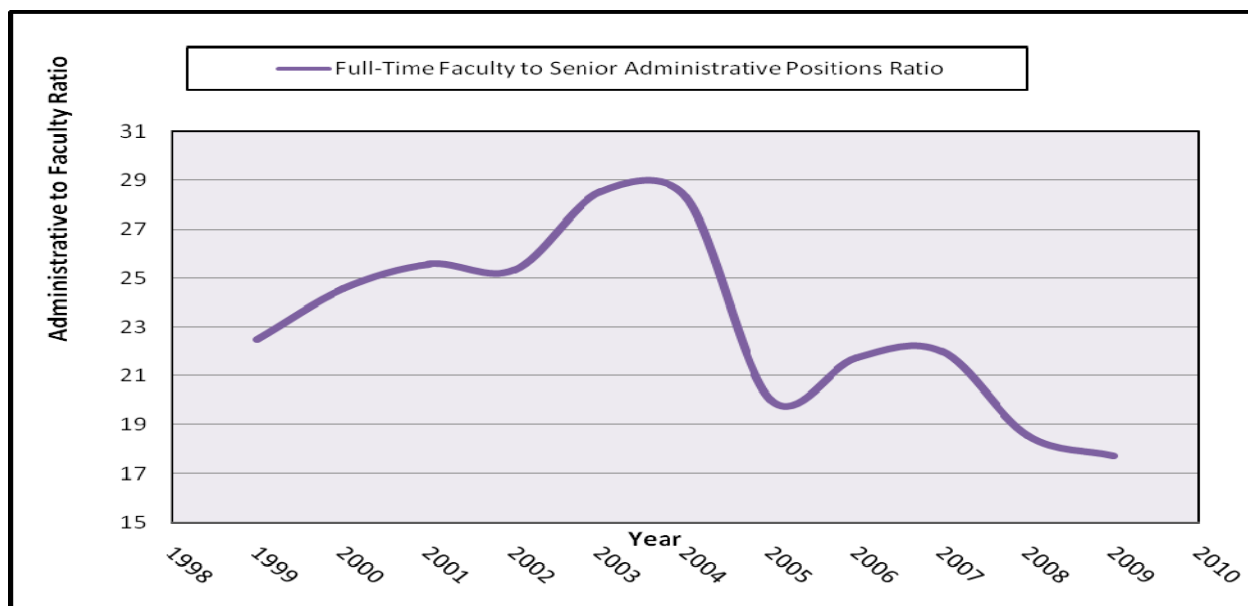
Despite this state of affairs, the Office of Advancement has seen its total expenditures increase from \$1,713,184 in 2006-07 to a projected 2010-11 amount of \$5,144,097 (Financial Planning, Audit and Human Resources Committee, May 18, 2010 presented to the Board of Trustees on June 24, 2010). This represents a 300% increase in funding, since 2006-07.

The introduction of the Vice-President, Advancement position in 2007 was created in order to “help the University become a recognized leader in its sector, attract more top-calibre students, [and] faculty and researchers” (Office of the Vice-President, Advancement, 2010). However, applications to Brock from students coming directly out of secondary school dipped by 3.3% in 2010 and applicants ranking Brock as their first choice decreased by 5.7% (OUAC, 2010). Fewer than 50% of students are entering Brock with averages of 80% or higher (OUAC, 2010).

iii. Student-Faculty and Senior Administrator-Faculty Ratios at Brock

The ratio of senior administrators¹ to full-time faculty at Brock has seen a significant decrease in recent years. Indeed, Figure 5 suggests that the senior administrator to faculty member ratio is at its lowest point, reflecting an increase in senior administrative positions and a decrease in faculty positions. The decline in senior administrator-faculty ratios combined with increasing student-faculty ratios is almost certain to impact the university negatively by increasing workload for faculty members (thus taking time away from research) and decreasing choices for students (in the form of fewer course options).

Figure 5 – Senior Administrator to Faculty Ratio since 1999.
Data from the Brock University Office of Institutional Analysis.



¹ Note that for the purposes of this report ‘senior administrators’ include: the President, all Vice-Presidents, all Deans, and Executive Directors

B. U. F. A Report

On Brock University's Administrative Structure

(cont'd)

COMPENSATION OF BROCK UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS

Between the 1996 and 2006, senior administrators in Ontario universities saw their compensation increase by over 40% (Essaji & Horton, 2009). At Brock, salaries of senior administrators have also seen tremendous growth which, in recent years, has significantly outpaced increases in faculty salaries (see Figure 6).

Figure 6 – Differences Between the Top Ten Senior Administrators and Top Ten Faculty Members Average Salaries from Year to Year in Percent from 1999 to 2009. Data from the University Salary Disclosure lists under the *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act*.

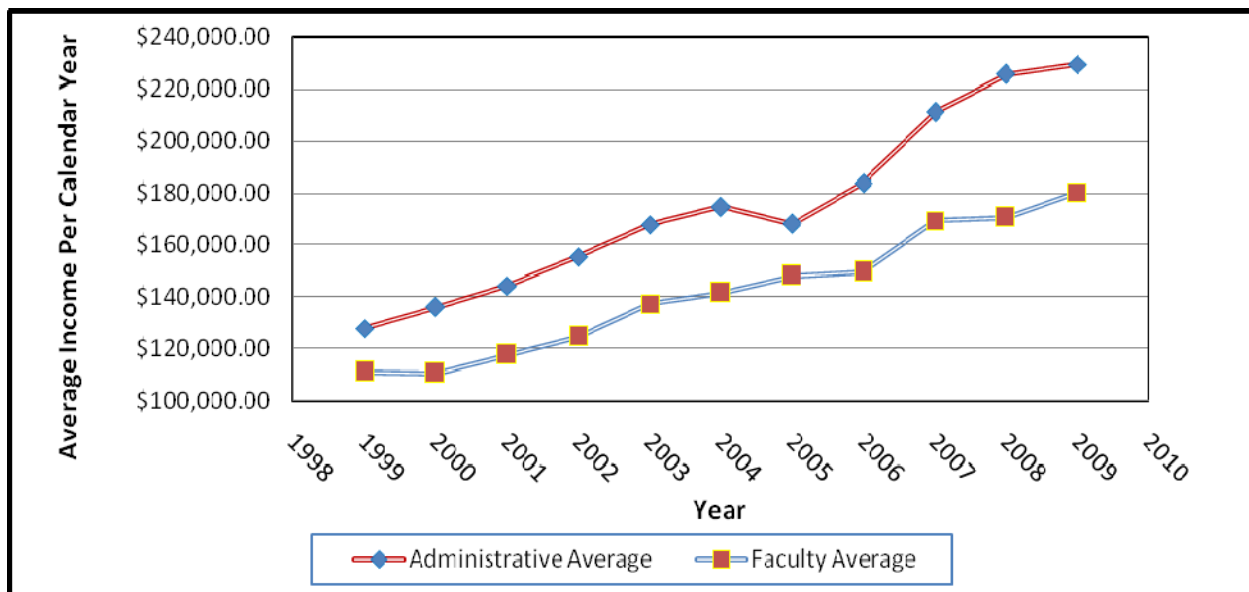


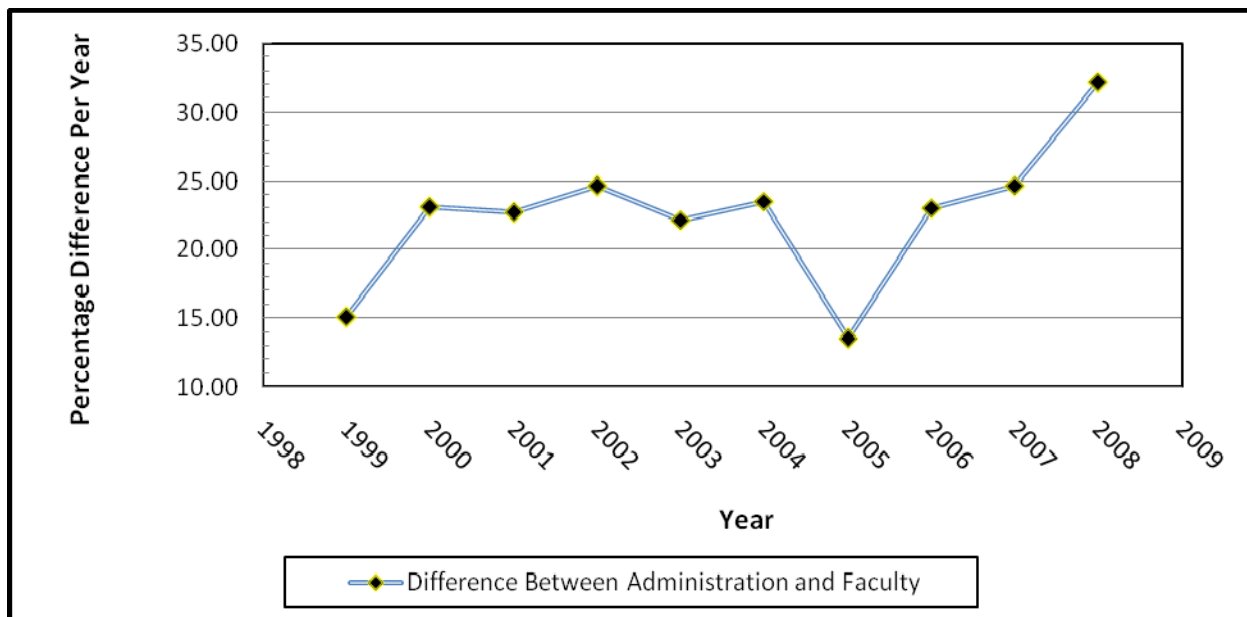
Figure 6 demonstrates the average annual salary increase of the top 10 administrators (in terms of salary) and compares it to the average annual increases of the top 10 BUFA members (in terms of salary) using data from the *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act*. The slight dip in administrative salaries in 2005 comes as a result of the transition period between Presidents. Since Dr. Jack Lightstone was appointed in July 2006, the gap between the top ten administrators and top ten faculty members, in terms of compensation, has grown significantly.

While relatively similar increases in both sets of salaries were the norm in the early 2000s, a new trend has emerged since 2006 – one that has seen senior administration compensation grow at a much quicker rate than that of BUFA members.

As Figure 7 indicates, the top 10 Brock administrators consistently earned just over 20% more than the highest paid faculty (top 10 BUFA members) for most years since 1999. However, the gap grew to in excess of 30% in 2008.

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Figure 7 – Differences Between the Average of the Top Ten Highest Paid Senior Administrators and Top Ten Highest Paid Faculty Members from Year to Year in Percent from 1999 to 2008.
 Data from the University Salary Disclosure lists under the *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act*



If a university's reputation depends more on the quality of the faculty than it does on the quality of its senior administration, Brock is potentially headed down a dangerous path. University resources should be allocated where they can be most effective – by creating new full-time faculty positions, supporting research initiatives, reducing the student-faculty ratio at Brock, and providing financial support for students.

A high-quality university education depends on instruction by high-quality permanent faculty members. Brock's growing administrative structure and the dramatic growth of non-academic departments (like the Office of the Vice-President, Advancement) hamper the university's ability to hire new full-time faculty.

Larry Savage and Eric Starrs
 with Felice Martinello, Michelle Webber and Jonah Butovsky

BUFA General Membership Meetings

Friday, September 10, 2010	12:00 to 2:00 p.m.	PL600F
Friday, December 3, 2010	12:00 to 2:00 p.m.	Sankey Chamber
Friday, February 4, 2011	12:00 to 2:00 p.m.	Sankey Chamber
AGM May 2011	TBA	

**Refreshments are served at all General Meetings
In the interest of sustainability feel free to bring your own beverage cup.
We look forward to seeing you there.**

GOOFY POETICS



Proverb: The person who chases two chickens catches neither.
(Confucius)



RUMOUR MILL

Is it true that in a year of profound budget cutting at the pedagogic level that at least one faculty dean managed a 2 million dollar over- spending??

Grievance Corner

Performance Review

This year, there has been an usually high number of complaints related to annual performance reviews. While Article 35 of the Collective Agreement sets out clear guidelines for Deans to follow in assessing the performance of faculty members, some Deans have ignored the criteria in the Collective Agreement altogether, while other Deans have simply misrepresented information in members' annual reports. It is important for members to challenge negative annual performance reviews which do not accurately reflect members' academic records because Deans sometimes rely on these annual performance reviews cumulatively as part of their recommendation letters to the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion. Deans could also, over time, use the negative letters to initiate disciplinary proceedings. BUFA has managed to help members have performance review letters destroyed, re-written, or amended as required. Challenging the content of your annual performance review is a simple and informal process which starts with contacting your BUFA Grievance Officer.

Spousal Hire

BUFA has filed a complaint with the University Administration regarding a spousal appointment which clearly violates the hiring provisions in the Collective Agreement. The spouse of a senior administrator was granted a tenured appointment without undergoing a formal interview process or a job competition. This matter was brought to BUFA's attention via a member of the Program Committee of the affected centre. BUFA members should note that the spousal hire provision in the Collective Agreement does not apply to senior administrators or their spouses because neither are members of the bargaining unit. However even if the spousal hire provision did apply, it was not respected in any way, shape or form in relation to the hire. President Lightstone has communicated to BUFA that he intends to follow through on the appointment despite the clear violations of the Collective Agreement. BUFA is pursuing this matter through the formal grievance process.

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BUFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and STAFF CONTACT LIST

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Executive Assistant	Leslie Dick BUFA Office, D402	Extension 3268 bufa@brocku.ca

*BUFA Office fax number (905) 688-8256

COMMUNICATIONS COMMENTARY

It is my pleasure to function in the capacity of Communications Officer for this academic year. I hope to provide some new features in the newsletter that will encourage participation from the campus community. One of these will be a section entitled the “X Files”, and it will be my attempt at exploring phenomena of a paranormal or otherwise mysterious nature. A second section will be “The Rumour Mill” whose overt purpose it is to place rumours that are circulating in a visible newsletter space such that anyone wishing to confirm or deny or clarify will have the opportunity to do so. Contributions to the Rumour Mill are welcome. A third section will be a modest space dedicated to Goofy Poetics, where contributors are invited to submit fables, haiku, proverbs, limericks or other relatively short forms as comments on our academic life world and all its joys, sorrows and absurdities. Future issues of the newsletter will also include contributions from the BUFA Observer on the Board of Trustees and from our BUFA colleagues in the library.

I will also endeavor to offer brief comments on concepts that delight and plague our academic and institutional culture at Brock University.

My first commentary will speak to the concepts of representation and representativeness. I cannot be alone in noticing that this year’s executive of BUFA is somewhat over-represented by social sciences faculty members. Is such an executive representative of the campus as a whole? Can it represent the concerns of the seven distinct faculties? Is it necessary for a person to be from within a constituency in order to represent that constituency’s members or interests? How can the BUFA executive represent when it appears that it is not representative? And if this is the case, is its lack of representativeness a concern? And if it is a concern, for whom? How might other faculties been more involved? How might faculty involvement be better solicited, supported and nurtured?

I pose these questions not only to make visible the need to involve all faculties in bringing voice to

collective and idiosyncratic concerns, but also to make the case that even when people are elected or acclaimed, and are motivated and interested in representing the best interests of the faculty, there is still the need for ALL faculties to bring forward the issues that are close to their hearts. There is no substitute for direct communication and I urge you to approach your executive and have your voice heard and your concerns represented.

THE X FILES

In the words of *X Files* protagonist, Fox Mulder, I want to believe.

I want to believe that consultation is consultation. I want to believe that urgency is... well, urgent.

Recent strategic planning contextualizing makes claims of provincial government policy development in the direction of increased specialization or “differentiation” in higher education in Ontario. The push for this imperative has ostensibly been attributed to HEQCO (the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario) and /or MTCU (the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities). Following communication with MTCU and HEQCO by OCUFA (via Henry Mandelbaum) on our behalf, three points have become clearer:

1. HEQCO is an arm’s length research organization involved in research into higher education that has the potential to inform or recommend policy

2. MTCU has its own policy development division

3. MTCU does not have a policy on specialization

If being distinctive and differentiated are goals worth organizing around for strategic plan or an institutional vision, then perhaps claiming or owning them as one’s own might make them feel more authentic on the ground. Authenticity is a goal I could get behind. And I want to believe.

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