

# BUFA Forum

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Editor: Maureen Connolly, BUFA Communications Officer

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## News From the 13th Floor: News From the Ground

### *President's Message*

**Hans Skott-Myhre**  
**BUFA President**

Well, we have our answer from the president's office. We had requested that the recently announced surplus be applied to the negative effects of the last two sets of rescissions. As you will remember, this was a commitment that the president made publicly at the first town hall. He said he would provide a chart of the effects and that the first surplus would be used to offset those effects. Instead, he has chosen to take the surplus (allegedly three million dollars according to the provost) and centralize it into a strategic fund controlled by the Vice President Academic. Actually to be fair, he has only proposed this to the Board of Trustees as the first step in the implementation of BRAM. However, this is a bit puzzling as well, because in the last town hall he announced that BRAM was inappropriate for Brock in the current economic climate. Nonetheless, as we explained in a recent e-mail to you the membership, BRAM appears to be well on the way to being implemented.

What does this mean for us as faculty? The first effect is that without the distribution of the surplus, we are being subjected to yet another round of rescissions. This is deeply troubling. We told the president in the last town hall that we had been meeting with faculty across the university and asking them about how things were going. We reported that things were not going well and faculty were feeling demoralized and undervalued. I asked him specifically if this troubled him. He said to all of us at that meeting that it did trouble him, but that he had no money. Clearly however, it doesn't trouble him enough to allocate funds to faculty when he actually does have money. That is very disappointing, particularly as we head into negotiating a new collective agreement. We would hope that the administration would have regard and care for the legitimate needs of the faculty who deliver the courses and do the research.

In that regard, I would direct your attention to three reports in

## News From the 13th Floor: News From the Ground

*(President's Message cont'd)*

this issue of the BUFA Forum. We recently heard from faculty that they had concerns about their ability to effectively utilize technology in their classrooms. We passed these concerns on to the provost who assured us that there was more than enough funding for IT to provide excellent technology support for pedagogical needs. Since we had heard otherwise from both IT staff and faculty, we thought we might investigate that a bit. The results of our informal survey are reported here and certainly pose a question about how far we have advanced towards being a 21<sup>st</sup> century university.

In our meetings with departments across the university we had also heard that a number of departments felt they were understaffed in terms of the tenure track faculty necessary to carry out their pedagogical and research obligations. So, again we thought we would ask a bit more specifically about this issue. We surveyed all department chairs and found a stunning number of needed and unfilled positions across all faculties. The summary report is also available in this issue.

Finally, we had heard that faculty had concerns about the role of copyright and the new copyright stipulations here at Brock. We have, again, asked you, our members about this, and a summary of concerns raised is also here.

These reports indicate to us, at BUFA, a deteriorating infrastructure for pedagogy at Brock. This will be a key issue for us in the upcoming negotiations. We should note, that the administration has not taken the time to do even preliminary sampling of the actual working faculty here regarding the impacts of their fiscal decision-making. As BUFA president, I find this both puzzling and disturbing. To go into bargaining with a faculty union without any idea as to what the past three years have meant in terms of the actual conditions our faculty experience on a daily basis is to bargain with only an ideological or institutionally biased agenda.

Some administrations choose to operate with the interests of the institution and its long term good as their primary focus. Some choose to operate with the interests of the public as their primary focus. Some choose to operate with the needs of the people who work in the institution as their focus. We would argue that an institution cannot sustain quality over the long haul if it operates without the well being of the people within the institution as a primary focus. The people inside this institution should be consulted by the administration and their needs and legitimate concerns taken seriously and not just given rhetorical nods and lip service.

The faculty and the students make up Brock. They are the university. The administration has an obligation to administer the institution so as to meet, not their own needs and agendas, but the needs and agendas of the university. That is the university that we have defined as the faculty and students. We hope that, as negotiations approach, we can count on the administration to take the time to look down from the 13<sup>th</sup> floor and explore what the people who work and study here really need. We at BUFA have done this and we have some ideas.

We will take the mandate given to us by the faculty into the negotiation process. We will not be driven by the agenda of the BUFA president, the BUFA executive or the BUFA bargaining team. We will be driven by what you have told us and will tell us about what you need to do your work to the very best of your abilities.

Over the next few months we at BUFA will be asking you to support us in bargaining with the administration towards obtaining a new collective agreement. We would ask that you let us know what you think and what you want. You have already given us very useful information in your survey responses and in the department meetings we attended. Now we will need your help in taking all of that data and honing it into a mandate we can take into bargaining. What I am asking is that when you are notified of BUFA meeting to set the mandate, please take time out of your busy schedule to attend and let your voice be heard. It will make a difference.

## IT, Copyright, and Tenured Faculty Positions

**BUFA has been researching IT, Copyright, and Tenured Faculty Positions and here is a summary of the data we have received.**

### **Tenured Faculty Positions Needed - 74**

26 Departments Responded

Applied Health Sciences – 7, Business – 13,  
Education – 3, Humanities – 23,  
Mathematics & Science – 6, Social Sciences – 22

- retirement - 13
- appropriate departmental growth - 47
- to convert long standing part time positions - 13
- members having to teach on overload - 1

### **IT Issues**

This summary is a compilation of 27 different complaints about IT.

- poor ethernet/wireless connections in certain areas
- old/outdated equipment
- service hours, for example after hours and during slower periods not available
- support other than at the main campus
- \$700 computer allowance insufficient

### **Copyright Issues**

This summary is a compilation of 44 different concerns about copyright.

- What can and cannot be posted on Sakai?
- Can students' presentations be posted on Sakai for other students to study?
- Do members need permission to show illustrations?
- Can members share books, articles, etc. that the Library does not own with students?
- Who incurs expenses for obtaining copyright?
- Whose responsibility is it to enforce?
- Will students have to buy 15 books to read one chapter from each?
- Who owns the copyright on members' images once they are shown at Brock?

**Shannon Lever,  
BUFA Administrative Assistant**



## **RUMOUR MILL....**

Spring is in the air and the water is pouring. These damp signs of the season are springing up all over the campus: buildings, corridors, windows, basements, drains, fields, roofs, ceilings... is there something to the rumour that the Courtyard will be renamed Pond Outlet? Just askin'.



# The Importance of Preparation in the Process of Collective Bargaining

*Report of the Chief Negotiator*

**Dave Whitehead**  
**BUFA Chief Negotiator**

**Question:** How is it possible to identify the needs and priorities of the more than 550 individual members in the large and diverse BUFA bargaining unit, in order to represent fairly each of those members in the collective bargaining process to renew the current collective agreement that will expire on June 30, 2011?

**Answer:** With a great deal of careful, hard work by many skilled and knowledgeable people in a relatively short period of time up against statutory deadlines before the face-to-face collective bargaining process between the parties even begins!

In my previous report as BUFA Chief Negotiator in the February BUFA Forum, I discussed the 33 department meetings that BUFA reps attended in fall term as part of BUFA's efforts to survey the problems experienced by members in the bargaining unit that need to be addressed in the round of collective bargaining with the administration that will commence in the next few weeks. In this March report, I will talk a little more about the work the BUFA Bargaining Team has done and continues to do to prepare for collective bargaining.

BUFA's Collective Agreement Committee chaired by Felice Martinello has analyzed the results of the BUFA member survey conducted in the Fall and the minutes of department meetings attended by BUFA reps in the fall, and has advised the BUFA Bargaining Team of the results of these analyses. The BUFA Bargaining Team is now in the process of carefully considering the results of these analyses in identifying the areas that need to be addressed in collective bargaining.

The BUFA Bargaining Team has carefully reviewed language of the expiring collective agreement from start to finish and identified clauses and articles that are unclear or otherwise problematic.

In addition, the members of the BUFA Bargaining Team have divided themselves into teams to carefully review sections of the current collective agreement and to gather additional data and conduct further research as necessary, with the assistance of staff in the BUFA office, in each of these areas. For example, we are conducting further research and carefully reviewing the provisions of the current collective agreement regarding: sessionals; librarians, faculty members, LTAs and ILTAs; ratios of numbers of faculty members and librarians to students; department workload plans; the process for restructuring departments and programs; the tenure and promotion criteria and processes; salary and benefits; benefits retired members; the rights and responsibilities for members in the governance and administration of academic programs and departmental work; the roles of undergraduate and graduate program directors; intellectual property, copyright and research integrity; e-learning; and the transparency of the administration's budgeting and strategy setting processes.

The BUFA Bargaining Team has also met with a selection of previous BUFA chief negotiators and deputy chief negotiators, BUFA past presidents, the BUFA Grievance Officer, and BUFA

# The Importance of Preparation in the Process of Collective Bargaining

## *Report of the Chief Negotiator cont'd*

representatives on the Joint Committee to Administer the Agreement to seek their advice on the issues that need to be addressed in this round of collective bargaining. In addition, the BUFA Bargaining Team has reviewed the reports sent to BUFA by BUFA committee chairs, representatives and observers on issues they have identified that need to be addressed.

BUFA receives on-going reports of collective bargaining activity at other Ontario and Canadian universities from OCUFA and CAUT, BUFA reps have attended conferences and workshops hosted by OCUFA and CAUT, and the BUFA Bargaining Team will be briefed by OCUFA and CAUT reps on trends in collective bargaining provincially and nationally.

In summary, the issues for the BUFA Bargaining Team this round are many and important because there are many members in our bargaining unit, because the work we do is diverse, complex, professional, academic, and important for the quality of higher education in our university, and because our members have brought to our attention a wide variety of issues that are causing problems for them.

The collective agreement sets out the terms and conditions under which every BUFA member works every day. Collective bargaining to renew the collective agreement takes place under the rules and with the protections set out in the Ontario Labour Relations Act. BUFA members have a voice in determining what their terms and conditions of work will be every time the collective agreement is renegotiated. In a future report, I will review the rules and protections set out in statute under which locally and voluntarily negotiated collective agreements like ours can be made by the parties themselves through the process of collective bargaining.

In the next few weeks, the BUFA Executive will consider the results of all this review and research and will determine the mandate for the BUFA Bargaining Team that will be presented to the BUFA membership at a special general meeting for consideration and approval. Given the importance of the agenda for that special general meeting, a meeting that is still to be scheduled, the members of the BUFA Bargaining Team, all listed below, sincerely wish that as many of their colleagues in the BUFA bargaining unit as possible will come out and cast their vote. With that member-approved mandate in hand, your BUFA Bargaining Team will be empowered to represent the BUFA membership at the table in the collective bargaining that will begin soon with the administration.

### BUFA COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TEAM, 2011

David Whitehead, Business/OBHREE, BUFA Chief Negotiator  
Linda Rose-Krasnor, Social Sciences/Psychology, BUFA Deputy Chief Negotiator  
Jeffrey Atkinson, Mathematics & Science/Chemistry, BUFA Negotiator  
Hilary Findlay, Applied Health Sciences/Sport Management, BUFA Negotiator  
Neta Gordon, Humanities/English, BUFA Negotiator  
Coral Mitchell, Education/Graduate & Undergraduate Studies, BUFA Negotiator  
Jonathan Younker, Library/Systems & Technologies, BUFA Negotiator  
Felice Martinello, Economics, Chair of Collective Agreement Committee, Ex Officio  
Hans Skott-Myhre, Child and Youth Studies, BUFA President, Ex Officio



## LIMERICK

A curmudgeon in training named Dick  
Thought negotiation might do the trick  
All that bobbing and weaving  
Revolving doors leaving  
Confusion with carrot and stick

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### **The Other President's Social**

Wednesday, April 20th, 2011  
2-4 p.m.  
Pond Inlet

Please join us to meet with colleagues  
and pay tribute to the accomplishments of  
the more than 100 BUFA members  
who serve on Committees  
on behalf of the BUFA membership.

Hot and cold hors d'oeuvres will be served  
along with liquid refreshments.

### **BUFA Annual General Meeting**

Friday, May 27, 2011  
12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.  
Sankey Chamber - MCC



## Commentary : On the right to say “we”

Post-colonial theorist Kum Kum Bhavnani (2004) provides a set of effective practices for how to wipe out a culture: invisibility, denial, tokenism and erasure. She offers this list not as a recipe but rather as fair warning.... If these practices are being enacted, then people and their culture are already at risk. The list might not seem all that imposing; indeed, its taken for granted familiarity is chilling. Each item mentioned could be overlooked or even dismissed as the tip of a large iceberg or the top of a slippery slope, the danger being the denial of the presence of the iceberg or the slope. Thus, denial becomes easy to practice because one gets so much practice with it. Tokenism and erasure are equally pernicious; easy to do in those blithe, casual and habit forming ways, easy to disguise in discourses of quality, priority setting and democracy. But it is to invisibility that I wish to turn for the remainder of this commentary, and the ways in which choices about who speaks, writes and re-presents for whom make it possible for whole groups of people to remain unrepresented, misrepresented, involuntarily silenced, policed, and disenfranchised, or, as Bhavani claims, invisible.

Taking up similar issues in a methodological context, Herbert Spiegelberg (1980) wrote poignantly on the right to say *we* and encouraged scholars working within human science orientations to pay particular and scrupulous attention to the way they lay claim to the experiences of others, to the ways in which “we” might be assumed as habit, without the benefit of even a cursory consultation, and to the caution that is a necessary balance to assumptions, regardless of how well intentioned these assumptions might be.

In recent weeks and days, there have been numerous written and spoken communications organizing preferences and positions that “we” hold, or stand for, or support. Who is “we”? Who gets to swing that lasso that cinches “us” into a happy, homogenous, like-minded collective? Who decides who does not get to write, speak and express? Who is made invisible by “we”?

I do not suggest that policing of discourse is any better than misusing “we”. I do suggest that vigilance and thoughtful attention are habits of engagement that are needed more than ever. I am reminded of the phrase I heard one of my students utter after a particularly prickly seminar where several people disparaged the use of the terms “that is so gay” and “that is so retarded” and (perhaps best of all) “we don’t mean anything by it”. I spent some time unpacking the inherent discrimination in those phrases, and was in process of asking seminar participants to think about the words being used habitually and, perhaps, carelessly, when a student sighed and declared: You mean to say, I have to think about *everything* that I say ?!!

Well... yes.

I think that also includes “we”.

**Maureen Connolly, Communications Officer**  
**extension: 3381**  
**e-mail: [mconnoll@brocku.ca](mailto:mconnoll@brocku.ca)**

# BUFA Executive Elections

Thursday, March 10 marked the close of nominations for positions on the 2011-2012 BUFA Executive Committee. At that time the following positions were acclaimed:

**President**..... Hans Skott-Myhre, Child & Youth Studies  
**Vice President**..... Kathy Belicki, Psychology  
**Treasurer**..... Jonah Butovsky, Sociology/Labour Studies  
**Grievance Officer**..... Linda Rose-Krasnor, Psychology  
**Secretary**..... Nancy Taber, Grad & Undergrad Education  
**OCUFA Director**..... Michelle Webber, Sociology  
**Health & Safety Officer**..... Jonathan Neufeld, Grad & Undergrad Education  
**Communications Officer**..... Joe Norris, Dramatic Arts  
**Librarian Representative**..... Laurie Morrison, Liaison Services  
**Non-tenured Faculty Representative**...Debra Harwood, Grad & Undergrad Education

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**An ELECTION will be held on Thursday, March 31, 2011 for the two (2) positions of Member-at-Large.**

**Candidates for the Position of Member-at-Large (2 positions) :**

Dragos Simandan, Associate Professor, Geography

Jeannette Sloniowski, Associate Professor, Communication, Popular Culture and Film

Francine Vachon, Assistant Professor, Finance, Operations and Information Systems

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**Vote in St. Catharines or Hamilton**

There will be voting booths at both the St. Catharines and Hamilton campuses. In St. Catharines the locations for voting are at the BUFA table in the hallway of A Block near the Sankey Chamber and at the BUFA table in the hallway close to the bottom of the stairs by the Walker Complex Food Court. Polls in St. Catharines will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

In Hamilton voting will be from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Members will need to show identification and have their eligibility to vote confirmed by those supervising the ballot boxes who will also issue the member a ballot.**

*If you are not running in this election, and are interested in assisting at one of the polls, we need your help. Please contact Leslie Dick at [ldick@brocku.ca](mailto:ldick@brocku.ca) or extension 3268.*