

BUFA VOICE

Message from the President

Linda Rose-Krasnor



Academic Freedom... It's not so simple

In recognition of Brock's 50th Anniversary, BUFA held a celebration of our four core principles: Educational Quality, Shared Academic Decision-Making, Academic Freedom, and Strengthening Community. There was a brief presentation by a faculty member for each principle, and then we had an opportunity for discussion and questions from the audience.

Although there were interesting exchanges between the presenters and audience members on all of the principles, Ana Isla's presentation on Academic Freedom led to the most discussion. The comments reflected differing views of academic freedom, with contrasting interpretations of its rights, limits, and responsibilities. Although all of us would likely agree that academic freedom is an important and fundamental right of faculty and librarians, there are circumstances in which its expression may conflict with other valued principles or organizational constraints.

Continued on next page...

Thursday, October 30, 2014
Pond Inlet

Guest Speaker: James L. Turk

Ryerson Distinguished Visiting Professor and former Executive Director, Canadian Association of University Teachers

"Civility, Precarity and the Demise of Academic Freedom"

10am - 11am

Membership Meeting to follow

11am - 12pm



www.BUFA.ca

News and Views

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Keep up-to-date on what's happening with your faculty association through social media.

Twitter: @BUFABrock

Facebook: search "Brock University Faculty Association"

Editor: Nancy Taber

Editorial Assistant: Joy Werner

Message from the President *(continued from cover page)*

Finding yourself in a situation in which your academic freedom is threatened can be surprising, very uncomfortable, and difficult to resolve.

Here are examples of the complexity of the construct.

Dr. Robert Buckingham at the University of Saskatchewan was fired from his position as Dean and escorted from campus when he publically criticized the University's program review. In this context, we note that in its 2011 Statement on Academic Freedom, the Association of University and Colleges of Canada (an organization of university presidents) claimed that individuals' academic freedom must be subordinated to the mission of the university. Thus, faculty or librarians criticizing the university and its policies would not have academic freedom protection against discipline or termination. Further, the academic freedom right to engage in service to the University and community was not included in the Association's statement.

A faculty member wanted to teach a required course using an asynchronous online approach. However, his Department, with Senate approval, decided the course must be taught using a traditional lecture/seminar format. The faculty member believed he had an academic freedom right to teach the course as he saw fit; the Department and Senate claimed they were exercising their authority to determine the method of program delivery.

The University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University had approved a governance structure for the Balsillie School of International Affairs, in which major donor Jim Balsillie and his private think tank would have veto power over academic decisions, such as choosing the School's Director and determining its research direction. Following threatened censure by CAUT, the two Universities signed a new agreement that guaranteed the School's academic freedom and integrity.

A faculty member criticized a religiously based volunteer program that was being promoted for students at Brock University. The program was criticized for, among other things, promoting negative views of homosexuality. The University's Office of Human Rights and Equity accepted a complaint of religious discrimination against the faculty member for her criticism. When the same discrimination complaint was brought to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, the University denied the faculty member legal assistance.

The University of Toronto failed to support Dr. Nancy Olivieri, Professor of Medicine, when she was sued by Apotex, a drug manufacturer. She had reported harmful side effects related to one of their experimental drugs – a finding that Apotex demanded be suppressed.

In response to the interest expressed by our members in discussing issues of academic freedom, the BUFA Executive invited Dr. James Turk, Distinguished Professor in Ryerson's School of Journalism, to give a talk on the topic. Jim recently retired as the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), a position he held for 16 years. He has spoken and written extensively on issues important to post-secondary education in Canada and his most recent edited book is entitled *Academic Freedom in Conflict: The Struggle over Free Speech Rights in the University* (2014). Jim is a highly knowledgeable and engaging speaker, and we encourage you to come to hear him and participate in the discussion following his talk.

At our September 19th reception, several attendees expressed regret that we rarely took the time to talk about large issues such as academic freedom, given that most of us are kept so busy with the everyday demands of our work.

On October 30th, let's take a moment from those everyday demands to consider, with Jim Turk, the challenges and complexities involved in the exercise of this essential right, its responsibilities, and threats to its existence.

Core Principles all lead to Quality Education

BUFA Celebration

Reported by Corey Larocque, BUFA Communications Consultant



Providing a high-quality university education is where all four of BUFA's core principles intersect, says Brock Education professor Dr. Coral Mitchell.

"It's at the point of educational quality that all the other elements – academic freedom, self-governance, and strengthening community come into play," Dr. Mitchell said during a BUFA panel discussion about these principles on September 19.

Professors Dr. Jeffrey Atkinson (Chemistry), Dr. Ana Isla (Women's & Gender Studies), Dr. Coral Mitchell (Graduate and Undergraduate, Education), and Dr. Charles Burton (Political Science) took part in the panel discussion.

Where there's a strong tradition of academic freedom, professors and librarians can challenge students to think about issues in ways they hadn't previously, Dr. Mitchell said during her presentation.

"When academic freedom and collegial governance are intact, faculty members can then push out and push past the boundaries of knowledge. They can question the dominant narrative and they can also invite students to also question the perceived wisdom of cultural and academic wisdom that they have been given," said Mitchell, who teaches students in the Faculty of Education about what goes into making a good school.

"Self-governance gives us the opportunity to hold people to account for any kind of decision that would undermine the critical enterprise," Mitchell said.

Getting a solid university education means students are able to do more than a job they're trained for; they're able to contribute to the betterment of their community, generally, said Kinesiology professor Dr. Maureen Connolly.

"University is not exclusively about job training. University is citizenship training. It's meant to make you an educated, critical, informed analytical person," said Connolly.



Jack Lightstone, Brock University President and Jeffrey Atkinson, BUFA Panel Member



Core Principles all lead to Quality Education *(continued from page 3)*

Connolly is one of nine BUFA members featured in a series of profiles about how their work promotes the Faculty Association's Core Principles.

Publishing the profiles on BUFA's Outlook website and hosting the September 19 reception and launch party was BUFA's way of marking Brock's 50th anniversary. The Association highlighted the work our members do to make Brock a strong centre of higher learning. Events were held across campus from September 18 to 21 to celebrate the University's founding in 1964.

The reception to launch the Core Principles profiles came just three weeks after BUFA and Brock University's Administration approved a new three-year Collective Agreement.



Hans Skott-Myhre and Don Cyr provided entertainment with their musical talents at the BUFA reception

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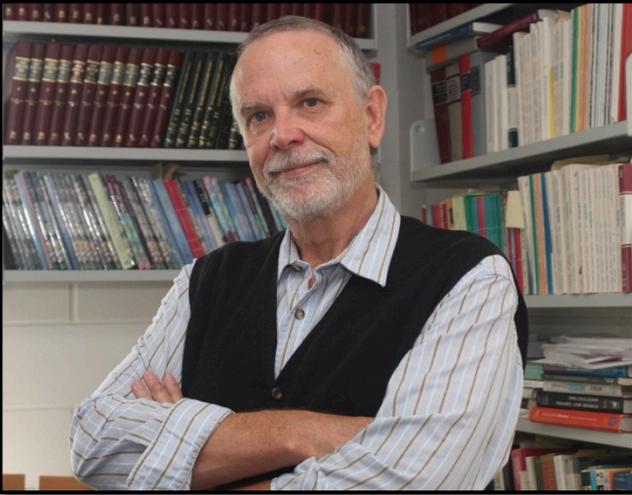
Connolly said she hopes the discussion on academic freedom would stimulate regular discussions among BUFA members about professional issues they have in common. "This ought to be stuff we're having to talk about in an ongoing way," Connolly said during the panel discussion. The diverse crowd of BUFA members included professors from business, science, education, social sciences and librarians, as well as university administrators and staff. "This is the first time I've ever begun this discussion with such a mixed group," Connolly said.



www.BUFA.ca

Message from the Grievance Officer

David Whitehead



A union's grievance process might seem complicated, but in simplest terms it's about ensuring a union and an employer honour the promises they made to each other, says BUFA Grievance Officer Dr. David Whitehead.

"A collective agreement provides the promises that the university has made to BUFA and its members," says Dr. David Whitehead, BUFA's Grievance Officer. The grievance process ensures promises are kept, Whitehead says. When BUFA and Brock's Administration negotiate a Collective Agreement, as they did in August, the agreement spells out how they're going to work together. The University promises a set of employment conditions and the Faculty Association promises not to strike during the term of the collective agreement. "The promises are really worthless if there isn't a way to enforce the promises in the event, for any reason, the promises are not kept," says Whitehead, an associate professor in industrial relations in Brock's Goodman School of Business. He's in his third year as grievance officer. Before taking that role, Whitehead was BUFA's Chief Negotiator for the 2011-2014 Collective Agreement.

If a professor or librarian feels a term of the Collective Agreement has been violated, he or she should call, email or visit the BUFA office. *"Tell us what the problem is. We're the ones who are best equipped to know exactly the best route to deal with it,"* Whitehead says.

In an average year, BUFA might field 100 queries from members asking whether something in their workplace is a breach of the "promises" in the Collective Agreement. Ten might become informal complaints and get resolved. Another 10 might proceed to the formal grievance procedure. In 2013, only four grievances went to arbitration.

The types of issues members bring to BUFA run the gamut, Whitehead says. Issues that members have questioned include reimbursement of expenditures on computer or office equipment, irregularities in tenure and promotion, procedural violations in proposals for courses and the elimination of support staff positions.

Because few BUFA members are ever involved in grievances, many are unaware of the process. It starts when one of the 570 professors and librarians BUFA represents thinks he or she might have been denied a benefit included in the Collective Agreement. When the member brings it to BUFA, the office will try to resolve the issue. If a member makes a complaint that cannot be resolved informally, then it becomes a grievable issue and BUFA can file a written formal grievance. If there's no resolution, it goes to an arbitration that's final and binding. Both BUFA and the University have agreed to a panel of independent third-party arbitrators to hear those cases.

Whitehead says members find some relief in seeing their concern go through the process because it gives them their proverbial day in court. "You finally get evidence that has been obtained through due process," he says. "This brings an awful lot of relief to members. The process is very helpful. It's a just process. It provides a final outcome." When an issue goes to arbitration, it can be a long process - maybe more than a year, Whitehead says.

"Yes, the process can be lengthy. Yes, it's quasi-judicial. But compared to the alternatives, this process is a remarkable process. It's faster than the courts. It's cheaper than the courts. And it provides a fairer outcome to people who don't have unlimited financial resources to fight those battles."

For more information about BUFA's Grievance Procedure, visit www.BUFA.ca and look under the Resources tab or contact: Grievance Officer J. David Whitehead | david.whitehead@brocku.ca | extension 3268

Message from the Health & Safety Officer

Lisa Barrow



BUFA Health & Safety Officer encourages members to be on alert when dealing with students or members of the public who might be upset.

Two assaults against professors on Canadian campuses in September should be a "wake-up call" for everyone who works in an academic setting about potential dangers says BUFA Health and Safety Officer Dr. Lisa Barrow. The [stabbing of a University of Toronto professor](#) in his office, allegedly by a student, and the [assault of a Red River College professor](#) in Winnipeg, again allegedly by a former student, made headlines shortly after school started. "What could happen at Brock? What do faculty need to be aware of in order to keep themselves safe?" says Barrow, an assistant professor in Brock's Goodman School of Business.

Professors and librarians need to deal with students and other members of the public. Sometimes, it's under difficult circumstances like after giving a student a bad mark. "Any time you deal with individuals, you have to have a sense of heightened alertness because you really don't know what is happening with the person in front of you," she says. In the classroom, Barrow encourages professors to be aware of their surroundings, know where the exits are, make sure aisles are free of tripping hazards or other obstacles and to keep an eye on their students for erratic behaviour. When talking to students after class, make sure there aren't any sharp objects nearby. Don't turn off a cell phone; keep it on vibrate to avoid wasting valuable seconds powering it up. The Brock University app for smart phones includes security features to call for help.

In the classroom or in the office, it never hurts to tell a colleague if you're meeting a student who might be volatile. Asking someone to walk past your office or establishing a

signal that you need help are ways to enlist a colleague's help. In their offices, professors should keep the floor free from cables, bags, and tripping hazards, keep their desktops free of pens, staplers, tape dispensers or other objects that could be used as a weapon, Barrow says. "The goal is to try to eliminate as many potential weapons as possible. We still need to work and do what needs to be done. Just be mindful of what you have in your environment. "Reducing clutter makes it safer. If there's a scuffle, a pile of books or essays could fall onto the floor, making it harder to flee the area."



Barrow, who had 25 years of experience in the manufacturing sector, compares the "alertness" BUFA members should exercise at work to the kind of fire planning they do at home. *"It's probably not going to happen, but if you've never given it any thought, you're at a disadvantage."* Barrow encourages members to always observe the person they're dealing with. Non-verbal cues like a flushed face, red ears or louder voice could indicate the person is becoming agitated. If a student shows those signs, back away, start wrapping up the conversation, or edge toward the door.

Other resources are available. A member of BUFA's health and safety committee will inspect an office and offer suggestions. Department chairs and faculty deans have responsibilities when a professor raises a security concern. Campus Security (extension 3200) can help a professor or librarian who feels threatened develop a personal safety plan.

For suggestions about staying safe while interacting with the public, see BUFA's bulletin, "Safety Tips for Faculty Members" on the BUFA website under the Resources tab or contact Health & Safety Officer Dr. Lisa Barrow | lbarrow@brocku.ca | extension 5401

Department Organization Charts



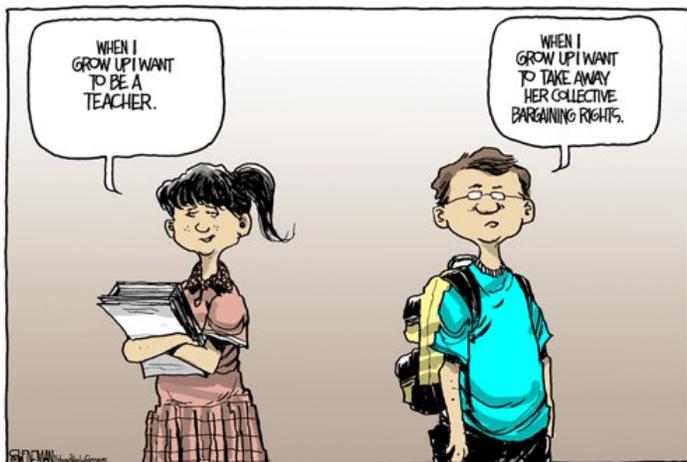
Coral Mitchell

Over the summer, the BUFA Executive learned that Department Chairs had been instructed to post an organizational chart of the Department on their website. Some members of the BUFA Executive had been invited to provide input into the development of the charts, but others had no first-hand knowledge of that expectation, and some still don't. *The construction and posting of an organizational chart is problematic for several reasons.*

First, organizational charts are inherently hierarchical in that they show structural relationships among the various operating units in an organization. Even a version that shows lateral rather than vertical linkages depicts a hierarchy of inter-unit relationships and reporting obligations. For the most part, a graphic representation of these relationships and obligations does not support or advance the work of the Department in any substantive way. It does, however, support the work of administrators. In the current climate, with managerial control intensifying across the university, faculty members will need to be vigilant lest the organizational chart they develop enables deans and other senior administrators to frame and monitor the relationships and obligations according to their own definitions of how the Faculty and the University should be governed.

Second, hierarchical graphics could easily fail to capture the relationship between Department Chairs and faculty members established in Article 16 of the Collective Agreement. This Article gives the decision-making authority to the Departmental Committee, not to the Department Chair. To represent this provision accurately, the organizational chart should show the Department Chair and the chairs of all departmental sub-committees reporting to the Departmental Committee. Faculty members who do not assume chair duties still have governing responsibilities as members of the Departmental Committee. However, some organizational charts position the Department Chair as the key structure, with faculty members sitting in a line with the Chair but with no clear areas of responsibility, and with the chairs of the sub-committees reporting to the Department Chair. In such cases, the relationships established in the Collective Agreement have not been accurately portrayed.

Finally, with the loss of administrative support in a number of Departmental offices, faculty members and Department Chairs have had to assume some of the administrative tasks that had previously been handled by Administrative Assistants and Coordinators. *If the provisions of the Collective Agreement are to be upheld, the creation of an organizational chart for a Department will be a collaborative process.* This will inevitably take up considerable time, effort, and energy that should be directed elsewhere. Faculty members and Department Chairs should not waste precious time on an activity that does not support the academic work of the Department.



Delivery of Instructional Technology

BUFA members have the right to have suitable instructional technology available in, or delivered to, their classrooms. Article 32.05(b): when suitable instructional technology is not permanently installed in rooms normally used for teaching, that equipment “shall be made available and delivered if the request is (1) reasonable; and (2) made at least five (5) working days in advance of the required delivery.”

Please let BUFA know if you are instructed that it is your responsibility to pick up and deliver instructional technology to your classrooms and we will work with you to have the problem corrected.

Welcome to our Newest BUFA Members

Xue Bai
Economics

Simon Black
Labour Studies

Jessica Clark
History

Rachel Corbett
Sport Management

Ronald Cummings
English Language and Literature

Sandra Della Porta
Graduate & Undergraduate Studies,
Education

Mary Beth Fortune
Graduate & Undergraduate Studies,
Education

Todd Green
MIBS

Jason Hawreliak
Digital Humanities

Sadia Jahanzeb
O.B.H.R.E.E

Yasmin Kandil
Dramatic Arts

Yun Ke
Accounting

Steven Khan
Teacher Education

Michelle Lau
Accounting

Jin Lei
FOIS

Adam MacNeil
Health Sciences

Caitlin Mahy
Psychology

Robert McGray
Graduate & Undergraduate Studies,
Education

Yasanthi Perera
O.B.H.R.E.E

Elizabeth Shulman
Psychology

Robert Steinbauer
O.B.H.R.E.E

Kendra Thompson
Applied Disability

Laura Wiebe
Communications, Pop Culture, and Film

Kimberley Zonneveld
Applied Disability



OCUFA Queer Caucus Listserv
The listserv is intended to communicate and develop strategies for providing a supportive community for lesbian, gay, trans-identified, bi, queer, and/or two-spirited academic staff who belong to OCUFA Member Associations. See more at: <http://ocufa.on.ca/members-area/queer-caucus>

Calendar of Events at Brock and in the Community (Visit us online for more information)



BUFA
BROCK UNIVERSITY FACULTY ASSOCIATION

Upcoming General Membership Meetings
October 30 and December 8, 2014
10am-12pm ~ Pond Inlet



www.BUFA.ca



MUNICIPAL VOTE
Monday, October 27, 2014

2014-2017 Collective Agreement
Electronic draft version now available!

www.BUFA.ca
(Under the resources tab)

*Official signing is being scheduled



Thorold Santa Claus Parade
Friday, November 29, 2014

Show your union pride...
BUFA Gear
Place your order NOW!




taste THE Season
A Holiday Inspired Wine and Food Tasting Event at 26 Wineries.
WEEKENDS IN NOVEMBER
November 7-30, 2014
11am - 5pm
Wineries of Niagara

The OCUFA
STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE
Award of Distinction

The OCUFA Status of Women Committee Award of Distinction honours those who've improved the lives of women academic staff at Ontario universities.
The deadline for nominations is December 5, 2014.
www.ocufca.on.ca





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