

BUFA VOICE

Message from the President

Harassment and Bullying in the Academy

Linda Rose-Krasnor



I think the hardest thing I've had to deal with in BUFA, both as President and in my former role as Grievance Officer, is to witness and work to resolve cases of harassment and bullying in our University. These situations frequently are highly emotionally charged, complex, and can result in psychological damage and stress-related health issues. The problems that we see most often involve BUFA members who experience other BUFA members' behaviour as harassing or bullying, followed by members facing similar behaviours from students.

The University has legal and contractual obligations to provide a workplace that is free from harassment and bullying. A major role for BUFA is to ensure that the University is meeting these obligations, consistent with our Collective Agreement, and supporting our members in the process.

Unfortunately, the University's response to claims of bullying and harassment has too often been slow, inadequate, and ineffective. Indeed, the recent [report of a CAUT Investigatory Committee](#) revealed a number of serious problems with our Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment Policy and its implementation.

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General Membership Meeting Friday, February 5, 2015

Harassment & Bullying in the Academic Workplace

Cathy Lace, Partner
Goldblatt Partners LLP



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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: Larry Savage
Editorial Assistant: Joy Werner*

Message from the President

(continued from cover page)

Admittedly, bullying and harassment issues are often difficult to investigate, assess, and resolve. Individuals often don't agree on what comprises bullying and harassment.

The nature of discourse at the University, involving animated debate and critical analysis in the context of academic freedom, sometimes presents unique definitional challenges. Overlapping jurisdictions among legislation, university policy, and collective agreements confound the process. Other complicating factors include the complex power relationships inherent in university settings, lack of knowledge about how to respond to bullying and harassing behaviours, tensions raised by internal peer investigation committees (such as those required by Brock's Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment Policy), and varying criteria for what comprises acceptable evidence in investigations, as well as high costs and long delays associated with the use of external investigators.



You may recall that BUFA organized a panel discussion on bullying and harassment at a General Membership Meeting last year. Brief presentations were made from various perspectives: social context; academic freedom; legislation; Collective Agreement; and action. There was widespread interest in further presentations on the topic, including requests for more clarity on legal and associated issues related to bullying and harassment. In response, BUFA has invited Cathy Lace, a human rights and labour lawyer from Goldblatt Partners, to speak to us at our Feb. 5 General Membership Meeting. Several members of the Executive have heard her present on related topics in other settings and were impressed with her knowledge and insight in this domain. There will be an opportunity to ask questions following her presentation. We strongly encourage you to attend. You may not have directly experienced or witnessed bullying and harassment at Brock, but it is a serious problem on campus that needs attention from all of us.

Brock for Refugees

Jane Helleiner and Ebru Ustundag

By late summer of 2015 more Canadians were becoming aware of the protracted Syrian refugee crisis - part of a broader global reality of forced displacement (see: <http://www.unhcr.ca>). In October Drs. Ebru Ustundag (Geography) and Mary Beth Raddon (Sociology) called a meeting to discuss possible Brock University-based responses. The meeting attracted student leaders, students, staff, faculty and community members and led to the formation of a "Brock for Refugees" network co-chaired by Dr. Ebru Ustundag and Kristen Smith (Student Life and Community Experience). Those who have participated include Unicef Brock, BUSU, the Student Justice Centre and the Muslim Students Association as well as other Brock and non-Brock members.

To date the network has aimed to support Brock University's existing student refugee program through the World University Service Committee (WUSC), as well as to broaden Brock University-based responses by pursuing: a) private sponsorship, and b) Brock University re-affiliation with the [Scholar-at-Risk network](#). The recent co-hosting initiative

of Scholar-At-Risk affiliates [Carleton University](#) and the [University of Ottawa](#) offered inspiration for the latter goal.

"Brock for Refugees" was given permission to use the BUFA email list to invite BUFA members to a meeting about private sponsorship options. Following this initial meeting 18 BUFA and other Brock employees put together a team sponsorship application to the Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge. During the process the group learned that Founder and Executive Lead of Ryerson University Lifeline Syria



As a group of employees of Brock University in St. Catharines we are excited to be part of the Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge (RULSC)! The humanitarian crisis that is affecting Syrian and other refugees worldwide demands a collective response at many scales. As individuals connected through a university community, we were inspired by the RULSC initiative which highlighted our own capacity for refugee sponsorship. By joining together we are able to offer much more than we could individually and we are grateful for both the inspiration and logistical support offered by RULSC.

MAKE A
DONATION

**Brock Sponsors Refugees
Sponsor Lead**

Brock for Refugees

(continued from page 2)

Challenge, Dr. Wendy Cukier, would be our next University President. The group is now awaiting a “match” for a family.

The donation site for the “Brock Sponsors Refugees” sponsorship team states: “As a group of Brock employees of Brock University in St. Catharines we are excited to be part of the Ryerson University Lifeline Syria Challenge (RULSC)! The humanitarian crisis that is affecting Syrian and other refugees worldwide demands a collective response at many levels. As individuals connected through a university community, we were inspired by the RULSC initiative which highlighted our own capacity for refugee sponsorship. By joining together we are able to offer much more than we could individually and we are grateful for both the inspiration and logistical support offered by RULSC”.

Those interested in donating funds to this sponsorship team can visit: <http://www.ryerson.ca/lifelinesyria/ryerson.html> (click on "sponsor team leads" and scroll down to find "Brock Sponsors Refugees"). Non-financial forms of support for this sponsorship can be directed to [Dr. Ebru Ustundag](#). It is hoped that this initiative may inspire other Brock-based private sponsorship teams to form.

“Brock for Refugees” was also aided by BUFA in the matter of re-affiliation with the Scholar-At-Risk network. A motion at Senate and a letter to President Lightstone have led to re-affiliation being considered by the Brock University administration. It is hoped that Brock University will be able to pursue the possibility of hosting or co-hosting a scholar-at-risk in the future.

“Brock Supports Refugees” invites those interested in joining to contact: [Dr. Ebru Ustundag](#).

CAUT Forum for Aboriginal Academics

Shé:kon BUFA, Sewakwekon: (Greetings to all of you BUFA)

Sakoieta Widrick



I first and foremost want to offer great thanks to BUFA for the pleasure of being able to travel to the 2015 CAUT Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on the weekend of November 5-6, 2015. Niawenhkó:wa (Great Thanks). This conference was entitled, “Surviving and Thriving in an Age of Austerity.” The purpose of this conference was for CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) delegates to get together to begin a process of assisting each University in terms of assessing their teaching systems. Programs and courses to include recommendations and concepts that have been put forth by the UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples) and the report findings of the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) would need to be assessed to determine compliance.

This would be in regards to Indigenous Education policies, staff employment, funding, awarding of credentials based on accepting Traditional Cultural Knowledge as equal to Masters, and PHD and how the University directs itself and its Unions. Discussions centered on how to accomplish this in an unaggressive yet totally appropriate manner.

Much of the first day, Friday, dealt with the way Universities operate financially and their usual method of the way courses and programs are developed and funded. Most funds would be given to programs and courses that teach about continued capitalistic methods of training students to be part of this business system and any programs or courses that were an important part of this system.

Delegates listened to Trent Professor David Newhouse speak about the manner in which universities need to reassess how they value and credential people who carry vast amounts of Traditional cultural knowledge. Newhouse also expressed how research is seen as ceremony and how credit should be given for time spent in ceremony since ceremony is to be considered oral research of a civilization that has existed on this planet for thousands of years. This assessment of cultural tools also needed to include languages, ceremonies, cultural oral knowledge about environment, socialization, art, music, dance, story and histories of different Indigenous nations. Many thanks for your time and consideration in this matter.

Ni skennen sewanontónion. (May we all be at peace)

Communications Director Report

Driving up proportion of contract faculty will undermine Brock's key priorities

Larry Savage



While much has been written by OCUFA, CAUT, and other advocacy groups about the negative impact of contract faculty jobs on the people who actually occupy those positions (precarious work, low pay, etc.), there has been less of a focus on what a proliferation of contract faculty positions means to the university as an institution.

While many senior administrators offer up contract faculty as a solution to a number of financial problems in the university system, in my view, driving up the proportion of faculty who teach on contract will have a number of unintended consequences for universities in general, and Brock in particular.

Given the demographic trends on the horizon that are sure to negatively impact enrolments in the years to come, increasing the proportion of contract faculty at Brock will almost certainly make it more difficult for Brock to meet its strategic goal of becoming a well-respected, student-focused comprehensive university.

While many individual contract faculty at Brock have contributed a great deal to their students and the institution as a whole, as an employee group, there is little question that contract faculty are not nearly as well-equipped as their full-time counterparts to help the university meet its strategic priorities in terms of teaching, research, and governance.

For example, with few exceptions, contract faculty are in a weaker position to attract top notch students to Brock, supervise graduate students, secure external research grants, engage in research with students, write letters of reference, or participate meaningfully in university governance.

All of this leads to greater workloads for full-time faculty who are asked to supervise additional students, work more

proactively in terms of recruitment, write a greater number of reference letters, and join an extra committee or two, on top of what they have already committed to.

In short, contract faculty get precarious jobs narrowly focused on teaching and nothing else, and full-time faculty are expected to fill the void in terms of greater research and service outputs, on top of their existing teaching, research, and service commitments.

Any university facing difficulty needs all hands on deck, but given the precariousness of their employment situations, contract faculty are forced to engage in activities outside the university mission (like looking for a job for next year, or working outside the university to keep other job prospects open). The university would benefit by having a faculty member's full energy working towards shared strategic goals. Maximizing our potential human resources (by maintaining/increasing the proportion of permanent faculty members) is a far better way of moving the university forward than ratcheting up the proportion of contract faculty at Brock.

Of course, there are certainly instances where hiring contract faculty makes sense (to replace a full-time faculty member on leave or to address a temporary spike in student enrolments), and we should always be looking for ways to improve the working conditions and job security for contract faculty, but it is unacceptable for senior administrators to treat contract faculty as a permanent fix for cash-strapped universities.

Not only does this trend run contrary to Brock's Strategic goal of becoming a "preferred place to work and study," but more importantly, it also deepens Brock's very serious reputational challenges. Those very real challenges will never be overcome by replacing full time tenure track positions with contract faculty. In fact, as a university operating in an increasingly competitive post-secondary environment, increasing the proportion of contract faculty at Brock will almost certainly undermine the university's stated strategic goals in both the short and long terms.



The upcoming BUFA by-election for Equity Officer will take place via electronic vote on Thursday, February 25 and Friday, February 26.

Please ensure that your new account on the BUFA website is updated in order to take part in this election. If you have any issues logging in contact the BUFA office at extension 3268.

OCUFA

Federal Liberals Introduce Union Waiver Requirements Under Bill 377

The Federal Government has waived the requirement for unions in Canada to track minute financial data introduced by the Conservatives in Bill 377. The waiver was announced on December 21, 2015, just 10 days before the new requirements came in effect.

Bill 377 required unions to disclose all transactions over \$5,000, and to reveal the details of officers or senior staff who make more than \$100,000. The requirements were criticized as imposing a huge administrative burden on unions, and were seen as a political attack on organized labour in Canada.

In introducing the waiver, the Federal Government noted that there are already federal and provincial rules in place requiring unions to be financially transparent with their members.



Introducing Your 2017 BUFA Negotiating Team

Larry Savage, Chief Negotiator
(Social Sciences)

Michelle Webber, Deputy Chief Negotiator
(Social Sciences)

Martin Kusy, Member
(Goodman School of Business)

Beatrice Ombuki-Berman, Member
(Mathematics and Science)

Carmela Patrias, Member
(Humanities)

Nancy Taber, Member
(Education)

Cathy van Ingen, Member
(Applied Health Sciences)

Heather Whipple, Member
(Library)

Shannon Lever
Administrative Support



December 30, 2015

Ms. Linda Rose-Krasnor
BUFA President
c/o Brock University Faculty Association
1812 Sir Isaac Brock Way, MC D402
St. Catharines, ON L2S 3A1

Dear Ms. Rose-Krasnor:

On behalf of the clients at Women's Place of South Niagara Inc. and the Board of Directors, thank you for your generous donation of computers and your kind support to Women's Place of South Niagara Inc.

Women's Place provides safe shelter for survivors of violence, offers counselling for the mothers and their children, family court support, transitional support and child youth programs. In 2014, Women's Place received 1,824 crisis calls, provided safe shelter for 281 women and children and assisted hundreds of additional women in our outreach programs and services.

Women's Place of South Niagara Inc. has provided quality service to the Southern Niagara communities for over 30 years and thanks to donors like you, we continue to offer free, confidential and vital services to victims of violence. Once again, I thank you for your donation and your kindness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "Ruthann Brown".

Ruthann Brown
Executive Director

A handwritten note in blue ink that reads: "Thank you for the donation of the 3 computers".

MISSION STATEMENT

Women's Place of South Niagara Inc.'s mission is to end abuse and violence by empowering women and children through the provision of safe shelter, counselling, education and community partnerships.

Calendar of Events at Brock and in the Community

(Visit us online for more information)



Upcoming General Membership Meeting
February 5, 2016 - Pond Inlet
***10am to 12pm**



For three weekends in January, the Niagara Region is transformed into a wintry wonderland, celebrating one of Canada's most cherished products - Ontario Icewine. From Gala evening toasts to chestnut roasts, ornate ice bars, ice skating and winery tours, the 21st Annual Niagara Icewine Festival offers plenty for every taste.



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OCUFA Governance Survey

OCUFA has developed a [survey on governance](#) issues, designed to collect baseline information about member association priorities, concerns, and actions that have been taken in recent years relating to Senate and Board governance. Based on the results of the survey, OCUFA will articulate a clear vision of what good collegial governance ought to look like and identify existing problems and shortcomings in Board & Senate governance that need to be addressed.



The survey will be live until February 2, 2016



2015-2016 Executive Committee & Staff Contact List

President	Linda Rose-Krasnor Psychology	Extension 3870 linda.rose-krasnor@brocku.ca
Vice President	Michelle Webber Sociology	Extension 4411 mwebber@brocku.ca
Past President	Dawn Good Psychology	Extension 3869 dawn.good@brocku.ca
Treasurer	Jennifer Li Accounting	Extension 4238 jennifer.li@brocku.ca
Grievance Officer	Nancy Taber Graduate & Undergraduate Education	Extension 4218 ntaber@brocku.ca
Health and Safety Officer	Lisa Barrow Organizational Behavior, Human Resources, Entrepreneurship, and Ethics	Extension 5401 lbarrow@brocku.ca
Secretary	Coral Mitchell Graduate and Undergraduate Education	Extension 4413 coral.mitchell@brocku.ca
OCUFA Director	Kathy Belicki Psychology	Extension 3873 kathy.belicki@brocku.ca
Communications Director	Larry Savage Labour Studies	Extension 5007 lsavage@brocku.ca
Non-Tenured Faculty Representative	Santo D'Agostino Physics	Extension 5785 sdagostino@brocku.ca
Professional Librarian Representative	Heather Whipple Library Liaison Services	Extension 4880 hwhipple@brocku.ca
Equity Officer	Kathy Belicki (interim) Psychology	Extension 3873 kathy.belicki@brocku.ca
Member-at-large	Bozidar Mitrovic Physics	Extension 3415 mitrovic@brocku.ca
Executive Assistant	Shannon Lever BUFA Office, D402	Extension 4643 slever@brocku.ca
Administrative Coordinator	Joy Werner BUFA Office, D402	Extension 3268 jwerner@brocku.ca
Administrative Assistant	Laurie Jansen BUFA Office, C409	Extension 5378 ljansen@brocku.ca