

BUFA VOICE

Message from the President



Michelle Webber

The Presidents of the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (Sam Hammond), Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation (Harvey Bischof), and the Ontario Elementary Catholic Teachers’ Association (Liz Stuart) joined us at the OCUFA Board Meeting on February 8. They each spoke about the status of, and experiences with, their bargaining and job actions.

All three presidents provided an analysis of their bargaining experience with the Ford government. It is a government that is undertaking the deliberate dismantling of public education in Ontario. They agree that the government’s draining of resources from Ontario classrooms is an attempt to drive parents to remove students from the public education system in favour of enrollment at private schools, thus reducing the overall costs for the government associated with the education portfolio.

The only public narrative being offered by the government is that these labour actions are about compensation. All three presidents countered that they are bargaining to preserve quality public education in the province: students need to have access to their required teaching supports, do not need larger classes, nor mandatory e-learning courses.



Harvey Bischof ended his remarks with the following, “How does this all end? I don’t know. But what I tell my members is it will not end with us signing a lousy deal.”

All three presidents appealed for support. We can support them by walking with them on their picket lines, writing letters of support for education workers and sending them to local MPPs, meeting with local MPPs. If you are a parent, consider sending individual messages of support to your children’s teachers. OSSTF requested supportive research for their position on mandatory e-learning as well as research that counters the Education Minister’s statement that large class sizes build resilience among children. Any references to research can be sent directly to OSSTF: see the Contact Us section of their website (osstf.on.ca).

Like other education sector employees, we are being forced to “negotiate” under Bill 124. We therefore have common interest in resisting education cuts and interference in collective bargaining.

News and Views

In this issue:

Message from the President
Michelle Webber

~
When to Get in Touch
Jonah Butovsky

~
Preparations for Bargaining are Underway
Larry Savage

~
Executive Committee

~
Campaigns and Events



Editor: Tim Murphy
Editorial Assistant: Joy Werner

www.BUFA.ca

BUFA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday March 4, 2020 10 a.m. in the Pond Inlet

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS: FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

with legal counsel
Derrick McIntosh, Partner

and Danielle Leon Foun Lin, Associate



When to Get in Touch



Jonah Butovsky, Health and Safety Officer

As BUFA's Health and Safety Officer, part of my portfolio is to assist members with securing necessary health-related workplace accommodations and negotiating return-to-work protocols for those who have been on medical leave. In doing so, part of my role is to evaluate the Employer's responses to requests for accommodation as well as their proposals for return-to-work protocols. For example, if a member was returning from medical leave and was slated to then be on sabbatical, the Employer might suggest that someone delay their sabbatical until they have demonstrated they were able to work at full capacity. Such a request is inappropriate and having BUFA present for any return-to-work meeting allows us to intervene on the member's behalf to have an inappropriate request withdrawn. Having BUFA involved in these meetings safeguards members' rights and benefits under the Collective Agreement.

I am also available to consult on general medical leave related questions – such as:

- While on long-term disability leave, am I entitled to keep my office?
- Can I continue to supervise my graduate students while on medical leave?
- Do I have to “make up” any teaching that I missed while on leave?

Please feel free to reach out with your questions and/or concerns. I can be reached at jbutovsky@brocku.ca.



Preparations for Bargaining are Underway



Larry Savage, Chief Negotiator

I am happy to report that preparations for the 2020 round of collective bargaining are well underway. Below, I have compiled a collective bargaining FAQ to answer the most common questions members pose concerning negotiations.

1. When do negotiations begin?

BUFA will send a notice to bargain to the Administration on April 2, ninety days before the expiry of the current collective agreement at the end of June 2020. From there, the Parties will arrange “bargaining dates” to meet, exchange proposals, and negotiate.

2. What are the big issues?

BUFA members have endorsed a bargaining mandate with nine key priorities, including the expansion of research capacity through targeted course releases, defence of collegial governance, and the need for retirement replacements that are tenure-stream. Members received a detailed version of the mandate via email in January 2020. A condensed point-form version of the mandate is reproduced below.



- Preserve educational quality and improve the student experience
- Build up supports for research, scholarship, creative activity, and unscheduled teaching
- Provide greater choice, flexibility, and protections in scheduling for members
- Work to address collective agreement issues as they relate to efforts to Indigenize and decolonize the University
- Provide greater flexibility in retirement options
- Defend measures to ensure transparency, consultation, and collegial decision-making in the selection of senior academic administrators
- Improve terms and conditions of work for professional librarians
- Explore ways to increase job security and extend rights and benefit entitlements to LTAs and ILTAs
- Maintain fair and reasonable compensation levels that preserve our relative position in total compensation compared to other Ontario universities

3. Who is serving on the BUFA Negotiating Team?

The BUFA Team is experienced, diverse, and is working extremely well together. Once again, Larry Savage is serving as Chief Negotiator. Cathy van Ingen, is serving as Deputy Chief Negotiator, having served as a member of the Team in the past two rounds of bargaining. Martin Kusy is also serving on the Team for the third time. Felice Martinello is new to the Negotiating Team this year, but brings a wealth of experience as past Chair of the Collective Bargaining Committee. Betty Ombuki-Berman is serving on her second BUFA Negotiating Team, along with Professional Librarian representative Heather Whipple. Spy Dénomme-Welch is new to the BUFA Negotiating Team, and BUFA President, Michelle Webber, sits ex-officio on the Team. She previously served as Deputy Chief Negotiator in the 2017 round of bargaining.

4. Who is serving on the Administration’s Negotiating Team?

At this point, we do not know who will be on the Administration’s team and likely will not find out until March 2020. In two of the last three rounds of bargaining, the Administration hired a Toronto employment law firm to head up negotiations. At least one Dean has traditionally sat on the Administration’s Team, but there was no decanal representative in the last round.

5. When will the new collective agreement come into force?

In the last round of bargaining, the Parties renegotiated the contract before its expiry on June 30. However, that timing is atypical. Normally, the current contract expires before the new contract is settled. The timing really depends on how well negotiations go and how committed the Parties are to reaching a fair settlement within a specific timeframe. If negotiations drag on, either party may seek external mediation, or conciliation (a necessary step before a legal labour dispute may occur), to help the parties reach a deal. In short, it is too early to tell when negotiations will be complete.

6. Are you optimistic that BUFA can negotiate a fair deal?

The provincial government's cuts to post-secondary education and interference in the collective bargaining process have certainly muddied the waters in our sector. Senior administration will almost surely attempt to capitalize on the context of austerity to demand that faculty and professional librarians do more with less. However, members should not be fatalistic about the outcome of bargaining. At the end of the day, achieving our priorities, aims, and objectives depends almost entirely on the willingness of BUFA members to defend their rights and insist on a fair deal that preserves the quality of education and enhances the student experience at Brock. These are not pie-in-the-sky goals, but rather imperative to protecting the academic mission of the University.

7. How can I help?

You can support your Negotiating Team in several ways. First, you can assist by joining BUFA's Contract Action Team (CAT) which is tasked with helping to educate and mobilize members and foster multidirectional communication between members and the Negotiating Team throughout the bargaining process. Ideally, each unit should have at least one representative on the CAT. You can learn more about the CAT and its important work by contacting bufa@brocku.ca.



Second, you can help by reading and positively responding to calls to action from BUFA in support of our bargaining mandate. We encourage members to talk with their colleagues about the importance of supporting the Association's drive to expand research capacity, preserve educational quality, defend collegial governance, and enhance the student experience. A union is only as strong as its members. We need to be organized, educated, and mobilized in order to secure a fair contract and build a better Brock.

SUPPORT BUFA



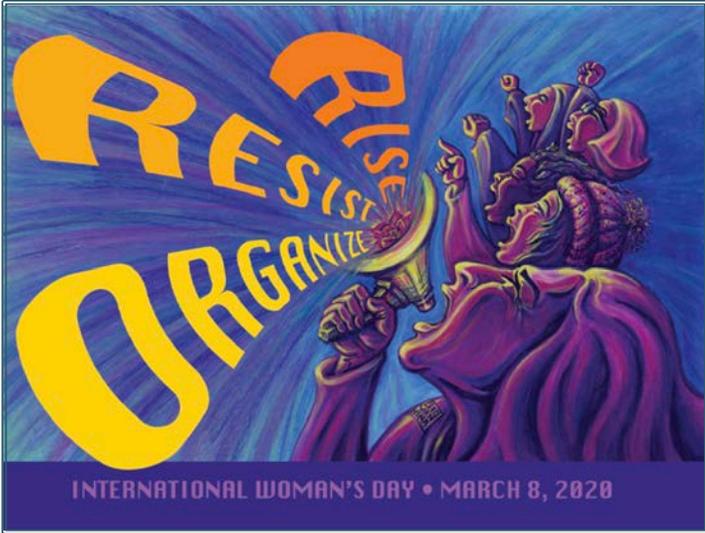
Build a better Brock

BUFA 2019-2020 Executive Committee & Staff Contact List

President	Michelle Webber Sociology	Extension 4411 mwebber@brocku.ca
Vice President	Tim Ribaric Library Systems & Technologies	Extension 5358 tribaric@brocku.ca
Treasurer	Jennifer Li Accounting	Extension 4238 jennifer.li@brocku.ca
Grievance Officer	Alison Braley-Rattai Labour Studies	Extension 6651 abraleyrattai@brocku.ca
Health and Safety Officer	Jonah Butovsky Sociology	Extension 4371 jbutovsky@brocku.ca
Communications Director	Tim Murphy Psychology	Extension 4639 tmurphy@brocku.ca
Equity Officer	Gale Coskan-Johnson English Language & Literature	Extension 5001 gcoskanjohnson@brocku.ca
Professional Librarian Representative	Jonathan Younker Liaison Services	Extension 4899 jyounker@brocku.ca
Non-Tenured Faculty Representative	Glenn Skrubbeltrang Accounting	Extension 4437 gskrubbeltrang@brocku.ca
Member-at-large	Gordon Hodson Psychology	Extension 5127 ghodson@brocku.ca
Member-at-large	Danielle Sirianni-Molnar Child and Youth Studies	Extension 6127 dsirianimolnar@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	Lise Fisher BUFA Office, C409	Extension 6678 lfisher4@brocku.ca

Campaigns and Events at Brock and in the Community

(Visit us online for more information)



   **in**
www.BUFA.ca

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



SAVE THE DATE
BUFA Annual Membership Meeting
Tuesday, May 12, 2020
10am – Pond Inlet



APRIL 28
NATIONAL
DAY of
MOURNING 

EACH YEAR, APPROXIMATELY 1,000 CANADIAN WORKERS ARE KILLED ON THE JOB
Hundreds of thousands are injured
Countless thousands become permanently disabled or die from work-related diseases
Remembering workers injured or killed on the job
Committing to keeping each other safe

Contact Robert McGray, CAT Chair, if you are interested in joining the Contract Action Team
rmcgray@brocku.ca


CONTRACT ACTION TEAM