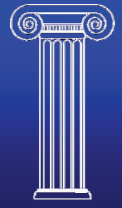




# WLUFA advocate



## Building community through dialogue, discussion and debate

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**Herbert Pimlott, Editor & Associate Professor of Communication Studies**

Welcome to the (belated) first issue of this year's WLUFA advocate. My apologies, but the Communications Committee has been very busy with communications work for Contract Academic Staff negotiations.

At the December 18<sup>th</sup> joint meeting of Senate and Board of Governors the Administration's presentation of the 'Strategic Mandate Agreement' proposal, it was 'standing room only'. No answer about the SMA's targetted enrollment number was provided then, nor was one forthcoming at this week's Senate meeting (January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014). One Senator asked whether the number was just being kept secret from faculty? One figure some of us keep hearing is "45,000" - 15,000 for each of three campuses (assuming Milton is approved as a campus). Don't forget Thursday's Townhall on Laurier's "Financial Future". Of course, it's a coincidence that it (and IPRM's completion) are just before full-time faculty & support staff negotiations begin. On Monday January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014, OCUFA's Mark Rosenfeld and faculty from Guelph and Brock will talk about the IPRM on their campuses. Happy New Year!



### More Pension Losses, More Disclosure or More 'Baloney'?

**Bill Salatka, WLUFA President & Associate Professor of Accounting**

In my review of the financial statements of several Ontario universities, I noticed an accounting standard change that now gives us a lot more information about the status of our pension plan. In the past, the accounting standards allowed administrations across Ontario to hide actuarial gains and losses of university pension plans. Substantial actuarial gains were hidden in the past. Today, all actuarial gains and losses must be disclosed in the Statement of Operations. Massive actuarial losses are now disclosed. Why does this affect you?

My best guess is that administrations all across Ontario will use the massive actuarial losses to claim that: (1) pension plans are "broken" and need to be fixed; and (2) far greater contributions are needed from faculty and staff along with substantially reduced benefits in the future for pension plans to survive. Don't believe this, it is not true. It's baloney.

The Administration has largely created the deficits we now observe through pension contribution holidays and it is now responsible for those deficits. The economic design of the Laurier pension plan requires contributions each year from both eligible employees and the Administration. In addition, the legal structure is set up so that the Administration owns all actu-

### ***"Since this is your responsibility, why are you not fixing the problem?"***

arial gains and losses.

In the 1990s very large actuarial gains were generated by the Laurier pension plan. The Administration eagerly spent all of these gains by not contributing to the pension plan (the "pension contribution holidays") and in the process borrowed against the pension plan creating the pension deficit we now observe. In all fairness, this is a legal right of the Administration which *owns* all the actuarial gains and losses.

In addition, the tax law prohibited contributions to the pension plan when huge actuarial gains overfund the pension plan. The tax law did not specify what happens to the pension contributions not made. The Administration had a number of options here. They decided to spend every last dime of the actuarial gains and suspend the economic design of the Laurier pension plan. This is its right. But, it also entails a responsibility.

The Administration now points to the deficit in the pension plan, a deficit they created, and insists that the pension plan is "broken," in effect, claiming that they are not responsible for the deficit. This is not accurate. It's baloney. **(cont'd on pg 7)**

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If you wish to receive a print copy of future issues, please contact **Larissa Brocklebank** in the WLUFAs Office at wlufa@wlu.ca or x3721.

## IPRM and Our Responsibility as Faculty to Provide a Quality Education



### *Kari Brozowski, Brantford Liaison Officer and Associate Professor Laurier Brantford*

It has been reported to WLUFAs that the ‘Integrated Planning & Resource Management’ (IPRM) committees are including a “programs to cut” category that would affect between 5 and 15 percent of the programs at Wilfrid Laurier University. This equates to between 12 and 35 programs in total.

By all appearances, the University is in a surplus situation, so why would such a plan be required? Furthermore, the Wilfrid Laurier University Act provides the Senate, in section 19(k), the power to create councils and committees intended to exercise its powers over all educational policy, including the closure of programs. In spite of this law, the IPRM process (aka ‘**Program Prioritization**’), does not include the involvement of committees or councils created by Senate, and IPRM committees are not committees or councils of Senate. Furthermore, the Senate cannot delegate its authority over educational policy to an outside body or group. Ultimately, this appears to be an illegal process, and we have a responsibility as faculty to uphold the WLU Act, since the integrity of our departments and programs depend upon it. The strength of our programs are at risk, as the Senate on November 21, 2013, was told by the IPRM committee that templates were being distributed to programs that would assess the quality of programs. Senate, not the IPRM process, is responsible for all educational policy.

Furthermore, the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Associations (OCUFA) is against the IPRM (‘Program Prioritization for Ontario Universities’), and has stated in a November 27, 2013, newsletter that: “Program Prioritization usurps Senate authority for academic decision-making, and can be used as a justification for cutbacks and program closures. OCUFA is working

***Should we expect the same kind of ‘fallout’ from the IPRM, as that experienced by UNC? The divisiveness of pitting faculty against each other over resources and program closures - including termination of tenured faculty and costly lawsuits -- endured long after the Administration had left.***

closely with faculty across Ontario to resist and block program prioritization” (see [OCUFA website](#) & excerpts in this issue). Consequently, the IPRM will promote long term effects for the University, resulting in rifts and divisions between individual faculty members, as well as programs and departments that could endure long after the present University Administration has departed, and may never be repaired.

Indeed, American universities, such as the University of Northern Colorado (UNC), have continued to experience a fractured atmosphere long after ‘Program Prioritization’ processes were introduced. The effects of this toxic work atmosphere will be especially damaging for Contract Academic Staff (CAS) -- faculty who are most vulnerable to the expected cuts from the IPRM. This process threatens to worsen working conditions for the remaining CAS, who may face fewer employment opportunities, increased class sizes, and fewer resources for teaching their classes, further undermining any job security and intensifying the precariousness of their working lives. Despite the promise of some programs being “enhanced” or “maintained,” all full-time faculty face a risk of diminishing salaries, benefits and working conditions. As a faculty we are primarily responsible for delivering a quality education to our students. We have a (bare) majority representation in Senate, and are the dominant force on all other committees related to Senate, including programs and departments, curriculum committees, and Divisional Councils. Given that the WLU Act gives the Senate power over all educational policy, faculty have a duty to create and maintain excellence in the education students receive. At the very least, we must sustain the current standards of education, which can only be accomplished by critically evaluating our participation in the IPRM process, and ensuring that we continue to promote a collegial environment for all WLU faculty.

December 11 2013

***At the General Membership meeting on December 11th, members passed a motion requesting that the Ad-hoc Committee on the IPRM draft a 'Statement of Concern' to be read to the Board of Governors the next morning. This is the text as drafted.***

### **'STATEMENT OF CONCERN'**

We would like to alert the Wilfrid Laurier University Board of Governors to the serious concerns of the faculty regarding the IPRM, also known as 'Program Prioritization'. Faculty are disturbed by the IPRM process at present, and as presented on November 21, 2013, to the WLU Senate, since it appears to be a violation of the WLU Act and governance processes. This includes a lack of transparency on the

***Craig Heron found Dickeson's methodology to be extremely flawed, and focused on cutting academic programs, but not expensive administrative costs.***

IPRM committees, which have not conformed with the WLU Act, or Senate By-laws. It should be noted that committees that do not keep minutes or follow rules of quorum, in effect, do not exist and are open to potential problems in the future as they attempt to pass recommendations through the Senate.

The IPRM model of 'Program Prioritization' was founded by Robert C. Dickeson, who is the consultant hired by the Administration to start the initiative here.\* Dickeson first created his version of Program Prioritization when he was President of the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) from the early 1980s to the early 1990s.

This plan caused havoc at the University, where the plan was viewed as methodologically flawed, and inherently divisive among the faculty. As such, there were investigations by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which concluded that the Program Prioritization was not in compliance with the UNC's governance system, and resulted in the unnecessary closure of academic programs and the termination of 39 permanent faculty positions.

It should be mentioned that none of the administrative units were closed. Most of these faculty launched lawsuits, which cost the UNC a great deal of money (Elliot & Steuben, 1984). To this day, the University of Northern Colorado faculty and staff feel the fractious effects of the Dickeson plan.

Since the early 1990s, Dickeson has been selling his plan to U.S. universities, and most recently to Canadian universities. In the US, in case after case where a university employed the Dickeson plan, universities were left in shambles, and resulted in AAUP investigations and faculty lawsuits (Elliot & Steuben, 1984). These lawsuits have cost universities using the Dickeson plan enormously. It is interesting to

note that in many cases these 'Program Prioritization' plans were initiated by Dickeson.

It is curious that Dickeson is selling his plan to Canadian universities, when the US has roughly 6,400 higher education institutions to a mere 200 here in Canada. Indeed, the US holds approximately three times more Universities and Colleges per capita than in Canada, which amounts to 1 in 49,000 in the US vs. 1 in 165,000 in Canada. With such a large market available in the US to Dickeson, why is he selling it up here when there is a great many more opportunities in the US than in Canada?

It should be noted, that in the US where there is greater competition for fewer students, and therefore there are more post-secondary institutions likely to experience declining enrollments, the Dickeson plan is better suited than for Canadian higher education.

Indeed, Dickeson's book has been analyzed by Craig Heron at York University, who found his methodology to be extremely flawed, and focused on cutting academic programs, but not expensive administrative costs.

As a faculty we are alarmed at the apparent violation of governance processes at Wilfrid Laurier University, consistent with the Dickeson plan, and would like to bring this to your attention as a member of the Board of Governors.

We trust that you will consider this information, which is just the tip of the iceberg of what this Program Prioritization could (will?) bring about at Laurier. It has already been divisive and created a level of morale, amongst many faculty, that is at its lowest in years.

Please consider all the evidence, seriously and carefully, as we do not want this University to repeat what has occurred at many Universities in the US. Thank you for taking the time to listen to a statement of concern from faculty members and for considering our views on this matter.

\*CORRECTION: Sentence should have read: '... C. Dickeson, whose work forms the basis of the process promoted by the consultant hired by the Administration'. The consultancy hired is Campus Strategies.

### **References**

Elliot, J.E., & Steuben, N.L., (May-Jun., 1984). Academic Freedom and Tenure: University of Northern Colorado, *Academe*, 70(2).

Heron, C., (2013) *Robert Dickeson: Right for Ontario? OCUFA*.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Editor's Note:** *The 'Statement of Concern' expresses faculty concerns about possible or potential violations to the BoG. I would like to note that there are differing opinions on the 'legality' of the IPRM in terms of violations of the Act and/or the CA, which stems, in part, from differing interpretations (at present) over the boundaries in the bicameral form of governance at Laurier and other universities. Please also see box on OCUFA's advice on page 7.*

### ***WLUFA advocate Editorial Policy***

The views expressed in WLUFAs advocate are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of WLUFAs, the Communications Committee, and /or the editor, except where such views are clearly indicated. The editor reserves the right to edit and reformat submissions to meet the format and requirements of the newsletter. It is the policy of WLUFAs advocate to encourage discussion and debate that is respectful. We do not (re)print or publish *ad hominem* attacks on fellow members, nor any submissions that might be deemed libellous or discriminatory. Submissions to the newsletter must include name and contact information, and name(s) may be withheld upon request.





## 'The Year of the Adjunct'?

CAS campaign taps into wider

discontent over the situation of the 'new working poor' in USA

Herbert Pimlott, *WLUF Communications Director & Associate Professor of Communication Studies*

The situation of an 83-year-old, adjunct professor, Margaret Mary Vojtko, who died penniless and homeless after 25 years continuous service at Duquesne University in September 2013, ignited a firestorm of public debate about the situation of contract faculty (aka 'adjuncts') in the USA. Adjuncts are a major component of the 'New Faculty Majority' of some 1,000,000 precariously employed professors or approximately three-quarters of all faculty across US campuses (almost the exact reverse of the situation in 1975). Even CNN covered the story and referred to adjuncts as the 'new working poor'.

I would like to provide you with an account of our communications campaign in support of Contract Academic Staff (CAS), which made use of a number of different media and ideas.

First of all, we knew we had to raise the profile of CAS faculty because our research shows that their share of classes, labs, tutorials and seminars increased from 38% in 2008 to 52% in 2012, but few are aware of their situation even though they are clearly integral to the quality of the education of Laurier students.

Contract faculty started the academic year by handing out water bottles on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, the second day for new students moving into residence, and were overwhelmed by the welcome from students and their families.

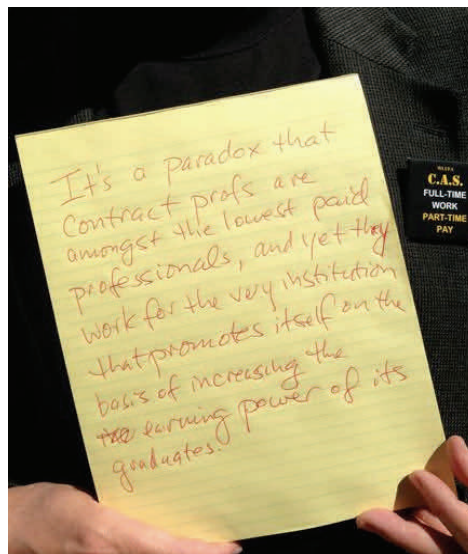
Leaflets were also handed out to people at the Labour Day picnic in Waterloo Park, where no one had any idea that

some of the most educated Canadians earn so little right here in the heart of the 'knowledge economy'.

As classes began and negotiations carried on, the Strategy Committee felt that it was also important to reach out to members of the Board of Governors (BoG) directly, as well as to our local MPPs, the (Liberal) Minister for MCTU as well as their Tory and NDP counterparts, since they are rarely exposed to views outside of those of administrators.

And, no doubt, this is why OCUFA is also promoting lobbying efforts which WLUF participated in at Queen's Park in October.

Full-time faculty staffed tables in sup-



port of CAS over two days during the 'Fair Employment Week' (FEW), the national campaign to raise awareness of the working conditions of contract faculty.

There was also the 'card campaign' (see one of the most popular cards on page 5, 'Should this be Laurier's priority?'), which encapsulated key points to circulate to students and other members of the Laurier community.

While print communication remains an important means of communication, it is limited in its reach, so we started posting them to our Tumblr blog, 'weteachlaurier', to provide more background and a fuller explanation of the research and thought behind the

statements and information presented on each card.

Our title is an attempt to bring to everyone's attention the crucial role that CAS faculty play at Laurier since they are responsible for about half of all students' educational experience.

The title was also inspired by OCUFA's 'We Teach Ontario' campaign, designed to raise public awareness about the connections between university-level teaching and research, and it drew upon the strategy of 'story-telling' of the different situations of contract faculty. This strategy had been used very successfully in 2011 by the 'We are the 99%' Tumblr blog in bypassing mainstream media and reaching the US public (something about which I research and teach).

We also posted pictures of students and faculty with signs, such as you can see on this page (this one was one of the most popular and widely circulated images).

Many of the posts on our blog were picked up and re-blogged/posted via other contract faculty and student activist sites (one was re-posted 122 times!) and since the situation of US adjuncts was making headline news on mainstream networks, US faculty groups took it up and promoted our site throughout the US.

The 'Margin Notes' blog, which is part of the national University Affairs website, picked up on the statistics that our research had uncovered and, despite some incorrect or misleading statements put out by others, we were able to get the issue some degree of national coverage.

They say 'imitation is the sincerest form of flattery': a 'weteachcarleton' site was launched in November and it is an excellent example of the effective use of personal stories which the public can relate (too many aspects of universities are too complicated to explain simply).

Finally, I want to say that this campaign involved a lot of contributions from lots of people, from students to faculty and staff, many of whom had little time to spare, but pitched in when they could. All your efforts were appreciated.

Thank you.

# Where Does the Money Go?

## Some Facts and Figures about the State of Laurier that you might like to know

When we bring together the Administration's personnel and enrollment reports and Bill Salatka's analysis of Laurier's financial statements, the numbers reveal an interesting picture of priorities.

Over the last 4 years (2008-2012), there was a 23% increase in student enrollment, more than 3 times the 7% increase in Full-Time Faculty (FTF) (including LTAs), and almost half of the 44% increase in management. Support staff increased by 12%, almost one-fourth of the management's massive increase. Other groups had an increase of zero.

At the same time, WLUFAs hired a researcher to analyze the number of courses, labs, tutorials and seminars taught by CAS as opposed to FT Faculty and identified an increase from 38% of all students taught by CAS in 2008 to 52% in 2012. Allowing for the tutorials, labs and courses that could not be identified as either FTF or CAS, that number 52% could increase or decrease by about 2%.

In addition, during negotiations, the Administration claimed that the FTF Collective Agreement meant it was limited to 35% of courses but eventually admitted that this equalled 45% of students. However, it has conveniently ignored all the courses **exempted** from the '35%' (e.g. online courses; all courses taught in Sprummer except for SBE). How much higher would the percentage be?

Any way you look at it, students at Laurier spend about 50% of their class, lab and tutorial time with CAS faculty. (One person suggested it might also indicate an increase in class sizes. Individual departments and programs should be able to answer this.)

Why is this important? Let's look at some other figures.

Total costs for **ALL salaries** at Laurier, from the occasional part-time worker to the president, have actually **decreased** as a total proportion of expenditures at Laurier from 51% in 2008 to 47% in 2012 (and that's including, I assume, the **44% increase in management** - at nearly double the increase in student enrollment of 23% - and six times the rate of increase in FTF hiring). These numbers fly in the face of 'public perception' that the biggest cost is faculty salaries.

Student tuition increased by 19.2% from 2008 to 2012. If the proportion of students taught by CAS increases and they cost only 3.4% of revenue in 2012, this tuition increase is surely not for those courses?

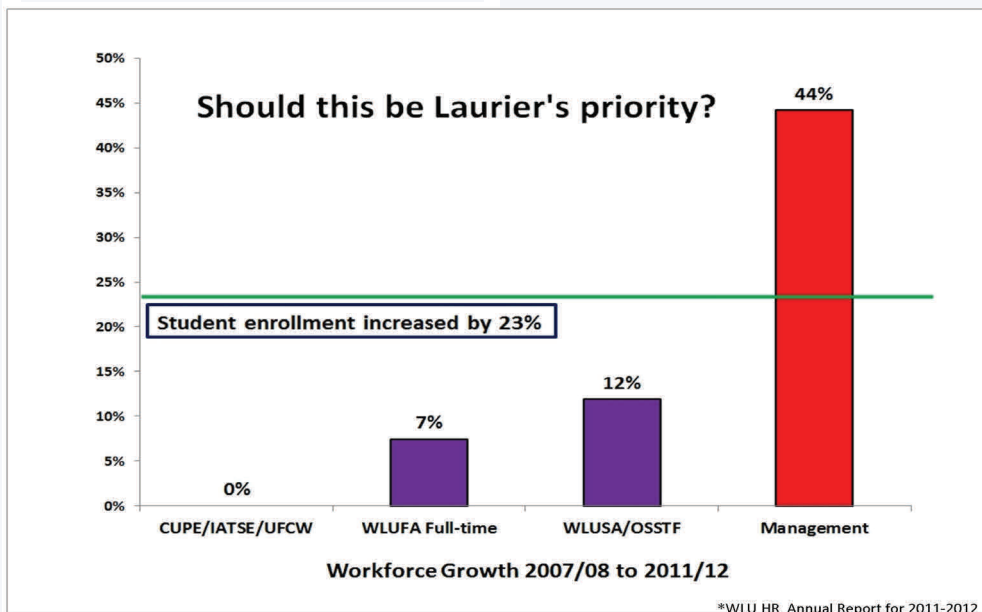
The cost for all CAS faculty is approxi-

mately \$9 million per year (averaged over the last three years, 2010-2012). For comparison, WLUFAs was told that the Administration had to pay \$11 million to renovate the 12 student apartment buildings purchased (for \$68 million) in March 2012, which is significantly more than the total income for one year for all CAS.

Are students (and the public) paying more for larger class sizes, limited course choices and restricted program offerings?

Arguably, those programs that rely heavily on CAS faculty are probably the least expensive of any unit at Laurier.

If the Strategic Mandate Agreement and/or the IPRM have anything to do with cutting academic programs (and faculty positions too?) and increasing class sizes, one has to begin to wonder whether the Administration's present trajectory is in the 'best interests' of Laurier?



### Sources

Employee Group data from WLU *Human Resources Annual Report 2011/2012* (revised Mar 14, 2013)

Student enrollment data from Council of Ontario Universities *Common University Data Ontario (CUDO)*

### Employee Group Definitions

#### Management

**Management:** Employees who have managerial responsibility including Senior Administration, Managers, Associate Directors, Directors, AVPs, Deans and Librarians.

#### WLUFAs Full-time

**Full-time Faculty include:** Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor.

**Full-time Librarians:** A professional librarian appointment to the rank of Librarian I, Librarian II, Librarian III or Librarian IV & who works 24+ hours per week during their period of employment.

**WLUSA/OSSTF:** WLU Staff Association/Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation are "office, clerical and technical employees."

**CUPE:** Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 926 include tradespersons, custodians & grounds persons.

**IATSE:** International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Local 357.

**UFCW:** United Food & Commercial Workers, Local 175: food service associates, group leaders, chefs, cooks, porters & dishwashers.

*(Cont'd from pg 8)* Faculty, both full- and part-time, are the agents through which the university fulfills its academic mission to provide quality education to its students and to advance knowledge through scholarship and research.

While university presidents may pay lip service to this academic mission, they, like corporate managers, have led the way in the marginalization of faculty and the casualization of academic labour. (According to Laurier's Human Resources reports between 2008 and 2012 there has been a 44% increase in management to a 7% increase in full-time faculty for a 23% increase in student enrollment; the same period saw an increase of 49% in the number of CAS taught classes.) We engage our best and brightest students in the life of the academy, then after graduation offer them part-time employment as inadequately paid piece-work professionals without job security. While full and part-time faculty have tried to protect conventions of academic freedom, collegial governance and the conditions of academic work, there are now signs of a virus spreading from south of the border. The misnamed 'right to work' ideology, antagonistic to unions and promising an end to the Rand Formula, threatens our associations at the local, provincial and national level. BUFA was no different from the rest of us in facing these issues in a hostile political climate. What added fuel to the fire was an administration determined to go beyond bargaining for a set of regressive changes to the contract. It engaged in a strategy designed to free the academy from the encumbrance of a faculty union. In his report, Dolecki complains of the university's use of an anti-union labour lawyer as their chief negotiator. Now most labour lawyers who serve employers are to some degree antagonistic to unions.

If they are willing to operate within the conventions of collective bargaining and the employer is really desirous of an agreement, their experience and skill can lead to greater efficiency at the bargaining table. At Brandon, the labour lawyer and chief negotiator was

clearly given a mandate that went beyond the usual goals of collective bargaining by making the union itself a target. The administration apparently sought this end regardless of its harmful, long-term consequences for Brandon as an academic community. As Dolecki observes, the breakdown of trust between the parties made progress at the table even through conciliation and mediation near impossible.

Dolecki's report provides a detailed narrative of the strike. This narrative is instructive for its focus on the political work of the executive, and on communications with the membership. At well-attended general meetings, members collectively resisted administration efforts to break the strike, and resolved to sustain their position in spite of external political pressures. BUFA also engaged in effective communi-

***“We engage our best and brightest students in the life of the academy, then ... offer them part-time employment as inadequately paid piece-work professionals without job security.”***

cations with interested outside parties. Even though the administration encouraged students to cross picket lines, organized student bodies were critical of the administration and supported the faculty. On the other hand, some parents, the local chamber of commerce, and MLAs from Brandon supported the administration.

Even more troubling was the role of the NDP provincial government. Although supposedly friendly to labour, the provincial government had limited the collective bargaining rights of its own civil service unions by a wage freeze. The administration claimed this freeze applied to all of the public sector including university employees. BUFA using its own political intelligence received advice that the freeze did not apply. The mixed messages from various government officials largely worked in favour of the administration, and hindered any progress through

conciliation and mediation.

Here there are differences between Manitoba and Ontario. In Ontario, the parties cannot lock-out or strike until a provincial conciliator issues a no-board report. By Dolecki's chronology, the strike commenced on October 12 just as conciliation was to get underway, and the strike continued through mediation. As the strike went into its second month, the minister of labour made a more decisive intervention favouring the employer. She encouraged the parties to go to arbitration. The employer had already called for arbitration, but BUFA's experience in conciliation and mediation made it distrustful of third party interventions. BUFA placed its trust in the pressures of the strike itself to push the parties toward a settlement. By this time, the parties were only \$224,000 apart. In the end, two

blunders by the employer's chief negotiator forced the administration to move to a settlement. First, he attempted to use a provision of the Manitoba Labour Relations Act to compel the union to go to arbitration but failed to observe the timeframe required. The minister of labour intervened once again ordering a vote on the employer's last offer. At a BUFA membership meeting, members resolved to reject this last offer. When this news leaked to the administration, its chief negotiator attempted to change the last offer without giving due notice to the union. The Labour Relations Board correctly refused to change the employer's last offer, and prepared to conduct the vote.

Fearing it might lose, the administration called BUFA back to the bargaining table. The parties soon reached a settlement based largely on BUFA's last position including



the preservation of collegial processes on appointments, tenure and promotion. With the rescheduling of classes, faculty and students completed the fall term.

For Joe Dolecki, BUFA shared in common with faculty associations across Canada the “reality of the ongoing transformation of the Academy into a ‘Knowledge Factory’.” The lesson of the BUFA strike, according to Dolecki, is that the defence of the academy through collective bargaining requires an understanding that “rights are not granted, but taken through determined, conscious, and unified collective action”. Consequently, it is “only through such action that they are preserved, strengthened and ...restored.”

At Laurier, the CAS bargaining unit is at the negotiating table,\* and the full-time unit will be there shortly. Full-time faculty need to understand that the CAS struggle is their struggle. Whatever concessions, if any, may be negotiated at the CAS table will haunt the full-time negotiations. Full and part-time faculty are the guardians of the academy. Just like BUFA, WLUFA and its members will be engaged in saving the academy within our corporate university.

NOTE: \*Doug completed this article in early September.

**Doug Lorimer** first served on a WLUFA bargaining team in 1974 in his second year at Laurier. Following the certification of WLUFA, led by Joyce Lorimer, Doug served as chief negotiator for the first full-time collective agreement in 1989-90, and for each subsequent renewal of the contract until he retired in 2010. He also served as chief negotiator for the first CAS agreement in 2001, and renewals in 2004 and 2007.

Being one of the longest serving negotiators in the province, Doug served first as chair of the OCUFA Collective Bargaining Committee, and then as chair of the CAUT Collective Bargaining Committee. Upon retirement, and in recognition of their contributions, CAUT awarded Joyce and Doug, the Donald Savage Award. OCUFA also named its new award for collective bargaining, the 'Lorimer Award'.

**(cont'd from pg 1)** During the last round of negotiating the Collective Agreement for Full-time Faculty and Professional Librarians, WLUFA provided the Administration with a report from our actuary that clearly showed the pension contribution holidays explaining virtually all of the deficit in the Laurier pension plan as of 2010.

The Administration largely ignored this report during negotiations and insisted that other external factors were the cause of the deficit in the pension plan, thereby “absolving” the Administration of responsibility for the deficit. The risk in our pension plan going forward is the risk that the Administration will not accept its rightful responsibilities for under the law of ownership of the deficit and are unwilling to properly fund the pension plan.

The next time the Administration proclaims that the pension plan is in ‘trouble’; think ‘baloney’ and ask them:

**“Since this is your responsibility, why are you not fixing the problem?”**

## FAQs About ‘Program Prioritization’

*Program prioritization has the potential to severely harm universities where it is implemented. The major concerns are:*

- (1) It undermines the authority of academic senates, and gives academic decision-making power to central administrators.
- (2) It is based on a flawed and complicated methodology:
  - (a) The working groups are asked to rank programs according to hundreds of data points, which creates the possibility of serious errors and promotes subjective judgments.
  - (b) Rankers are asked to evaluate programs they may know nothing about.
  - (c) The comparisons are absurd. The logic of program prioritization leads to comparisons between bookstores and Physics programs, English departments with postage & mail services. This is apples & oranges at its very worst.
- (3) Program prioritization often leads to cutbacks and program eliminations, which in turn may lead to layoffs and loss of permanent faculty positions.
- (4) In extreme cases, program prioritization can be used to completely change the mission & purpose of an institution.

SOURCE: OCUFA 2013. *Frequently Asked Questions: Ontario's Differentiation Agenda and Program Prioritization.* (<http://ocufa.on.ca/>)

## OCUFA: How can Faculty respond?

### **The Senate:**

Academic decision-making usually rests with the Senate, and program prioritization is an abrogation of this authority. Senates can therefore be mobilized to block program prioritization. If this is unsuccessful, legal options exist. Usurping the authority of the Senate will typically represent a violation of the university's legal charter, creating the potential for a court challenge.

### **Collective Agreements:**

Many collective agreements contain language protecting faculty members from termination, provided there is no clear case for financial exigency. The agreement can therefore be used to protect individuals from the effects of program cuts or closures.

In many cases, program prioritization is used as a pretense to reorganize the university, change its mission, and alter its governance structure. Each of these will require a change to existing collective agreements, and can therefore be resisted using the grievance process. Violation of the collective agreement – or attempts to unilaterally change it – can be met with strong legal and job action.

SOURCE: OCUFA 2013. *Frequently Asked Questions: Ontario's Differentiation Agenda and Program Prioritization.* (<http://ocufa.on.ca/>)

# Saving the Academy within the Corporate University:

## The Brandon University Strike of 2011



**Doug Lorimer, Professor Emeritus of History, and WLUFAs Chief Negotiator, 1989-2009**

### ***Putting it all on the Line: inside the Brandon Strike of 2011, CAUT.***

URL: [http://www.bufo.org/announcements/](http://www.bufo.org/announcements/documents/2013/putting_it_all_on_the_line.pdf)

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During its successful 45-day strike during the fall term of 2011, the Brandon University Faculty Association (BUFA) faced a nightmare conjured up by the new style of managers of the corporate university. Our present cohort of university administrators take their inspiration, not from the traditions of the academy, but from exemplars external to the university – the corporate elite. This elite by their financial strategies and management practices have given us, not economic growth, but a stagnant recession in which the only movement is the reallocation of wealth, resources and opportunities from the many to the few. At Brandon, at Laurier, and at universities across Canada, the same regressive features of corporate management are evident.

Consequently, the Brandon strike has a national significance both for the issues at stake, and for the skill and solidarity by which members of BUFA met and resisted the challenge of administrators committed to pushing their corporate agenda. Recognizing the significance of the Brandon strike, CAUT has made available on the net a comprehensive report by Joe Dolecki, Associate Professor of Economics, who served both as chief negotiator and BUFA president. Dolecki, the BUFA executive and the bargaining team faced an aggressive administration determined not simply to negotiate a regressive set of non-monetary and monetary proposals, but to break the strength and solidarity of the BUFA membership. This challenge was difficult enough, but the faculty union also faced intervention by a third party, the Manitoba government.

Dolecki's report sets out the agenda of the leaders of the corporate university. These all too familiar initiatives include expanding the growth in the number of senior administrators, who often have neither academic credentials nor experience, and yet have a rank superior to academic deans (and salaries that greatly exceed what contract faculty earn for teaching several courses). Is it any wonder that within the senior administrative cohort academic resources get squeezed out in competition with other priorities? The prerogatives and role of the principal academic body, Senate, even if enshrined in the university act, are diminished in favour of new bodies created under administrators' control. Of course, Senates have two strikes against them – (1) they are public bodies with the capacity to provide for transparency and accountability within the academy, and (2)

a majority of Senators are faculty. In place of these collegial bodies, our corporate managers prefer to rely on outside consultants often unacquainted with or even hostile to the academy's historic forms of governance (e.g. IPRM consultants). These transformations are part of a larger initiative to marginalize faculty within the academy. Although this process has taken on new dimensions in the last few years, it is not new.

When WLUFAs certified in 1988 (25 years ago this past September), I like to think we started a second wave of unionization among Ontario universities. Eventually, even unlikely prospects such as Queen's and Western certified, until faculty in all but three universities in Ontario had collective agreements under the Labour Relations Act. At the time that WLUFAs certified, real incomes were declining in the face of rampant inflation.

Without a legally binding contract, we were unable to protect academic freedom, collegial processes or even to pursue individual or collective grievances. The political capacity of faculty associations to build strong unions and to negotiate comprehensive agreements, came first from the solidarity of the membership, and secondly from a telling reality within the academy, as true today as it was 25 years ago. (*cont'd on p.6*)

### **OCUFA: FAQs About the 'Differentiation Agenda'**

*What are the problems with the Differentiation Agenda?*

- (a) Differentiation could pose a threat to institutional autonomy and academic freedom.
- (b) Ontario's universities are already differentiated.
- (c) Differentiation can harm access and choice.
- (d) Politicizing funding and impairing long-term planning.
- (e) Imposing homogeneity under the banner of differentiation.

*By confining differentiation to eight standardized "components", the government is essentially forcing institutions to be different in exactly the same ways. This sort of paradox is inherent to top-down, standardized differentiation exercises, and we are concerned that this policy will stamp out true differentiation in the name of standardized metrics and a limited government vision for diversity.*

SOURCE: OCUFA 2013. *Frequently Asked Questions: Ontario's Differentiation Agenda and Program Prioritization.* (<http://ocufa.on.ca/>)