

The FABric: Microfibre Edition

Upcoming Events

FA4FB

Support UPEI's Food Bank
Drop off of dry goods
Friday, June 12
1:00-4:00
Bus shelter in front of the student
centre

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, June 23, 2:00
Virtual Meeting TBA

FA Membership Survey

See notice in the "Upcoming Events"
section, p. 2.

Faculty Recognition Night

Postponed until...
PEI Brewing Company

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Celebrating our Colleagues

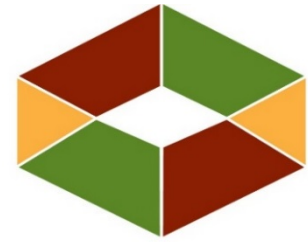
Were things otherwise, we would have gathered months ago for our annual Faculty Recognition Night. This is an occasion where we mark the end of an academic year and the transition to a new one, and we toast the promise of summer and perhaps more time for research, writing, and creative work. But most of all, we gather to celebrate the exceptional achievements of colleagues and to acknowledge the retirements of friends and academic community members. That we have been unable to hold this event this spring will not scuttle this celebration entirely, only delay it. So stay tuned for an announcement in the days ahead.

In the meantime, with tremendous pleasure and heartfelt congratulations, the FA Awards and Scholarships Committee (and its sub-committees), and the FA Executive Committee announce the 2020 recipients of the distinguished merit awards. Please reach out to your colleagues to extend your personal congratulations.

The UPEIFA Merit Award for Outstanding Service:

Vicki Johnston, *Department of Psychology
and University 1000, Faculty of Arts*

James Randall, *Island Studies, Faculty of
Arts*



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Hessian Merit Award for Excellence in Teaching:

Susan Graham, *Faculty of Business*

Richard Raiswell, *Department of History
and Classics, Faculty of Arts*

Merit Award for Scholarly Achievement:

Aitazaz Farooque, *Faculty of Sustainable
Design Engineering*

Trung Dung Ngo, *Faculty of Sustainable
Design Engineering*

John VanLeeuwen, *Department of Health
Management, Atlantic Veterinary College*

Members will note that there is no recipient of a Hessian Award for Sessional Instructors this year. None were nominated, and we must commit to nominating deserving colleagues in this category next year. Additionally, no nominations for the Scholarly Achievement Award were made in the category of Arts, Business, Education, and Library Science. Again, we must turn our attention to this next year. Given the lack of a nomination in that category, the Executive Committee agreed to provide an extra award in another category. This was in response to the request of the sub-committee, which

Celebrating our Colleagues ~ cont ~

argued in favor of the exceptional strength of those nominated.

And of course, we share news of the retirement of a number of colleagues. Each has made significant contributions to their departments and faculties, to the education of their students, to their fields of intellectual endeavor, and to the community that is UPEI. While we look forward to wishing each one well in person, until then we extend very best wishes for joyful retirements to:

Godfrey Baldacchino - May 1, 2020 - *Island Studies, Faculty of Arts*

Vickie Johnston - May 31, 2020 - *Department of Psychology and University 1000, Faculty of Arts*

Alexander (Sandy) McAuley - July 1, 2020 - *Faculty of Education*

Mary Ann McNiven - 31 December 2019 - *Department of Health Management, AVC*

Anne Muckle - July 1, 2020 - *Department of Pathology and Microbiology, AVC*

Arthur Ortenburger - May 1, 2020 - *Department of Health Management, AVC*

Upcoming Events.....



On June 3rd, the FA Executive distributed a memo to members indicating that client visits to the UPEI food bank have increased 924% since April. While the food bank usually closes for the summer, this summer it will remain open. Donations are desperately needed. Please drop off your donations on Friday, June 12, between 1:00 and 4:00, or arrange drop offs for an alternate time by contacting lhale@upe.ca and slloyd@upe.ca. Thank you, and our students thank you.

The UPEI-FA AGM, originally scheduled for April 6th, did not meet quorum, as we anticipated. An AGM has now been set for June 23rd, 2:00-3:30, via a zoom platform. Quorum is required, and the Association membership will be requested to support an operating budget for the 2020-21 fiscal year. A formal agenda and details concerning access to the meeting will be distributed in advance of the meeting.

In the days ahead, Members will receive a survey being conducted by the FA Executive. The purpose is to receive and more clearly understand your concerns about the summer and fall semesters. Please participate in that survey as it will help us to shape our advocacy work and respond to issues.

Did you know....

FA Members who are part of the supplemental health benefits plan (ie., Blue Cross) have access to a Health Spending Account (HSA). Some Members use that account (\$500 per year) to cover expenditures in excess of what the supplemental plan covers. For example, if a new pair of glasses cost \$100 more than what the supplemental plan covers, you can direct the overage to be taken from your HSA or apply for reimbursement from your HSA. Others use it to cover a range of health services the supplemental plan doesn't cover.

For those who haven't exhausted the funds in your HSAs, there is another way the balance in your funds can be used. They can be applied against your bi-weekly contributions to the supplemental health plan, and you can be reimbursed for those contributions (to the limit of the balance in your HSA). How does this work? Email employeeservices@upe.ca. Ask for a letter indicating your contributions to the Blue Cross supplemental health benefits plan so that you may seek reimbursement from your HSA.

You will receive a letter in response. Submit that as a claim to Blue Cross indicating you are seeking reimbursement from your HSA. You will need to do this by end of June. Remember, the roll-over in your HSA is limited to two years. If you don't utilize the balance in your HSA on a two-year cycle, it is absorbed by the University.

Update: FA Advocacy in Response to Covid-19 Measures

In the context of the emergency response to COVID-19 in March, the FA sought a number of alterations to the terms of the Collective Agreement in support of our Members. Many of those issues have been addressed in earlier letters or memos. They included, but were not limited to, SOTS, reviews, tenure timelines, etc. In the days since, the FA has continued to try to advocate in the interests of the membership. What follows is a partial description of some of the issues we have been engaged in. We will note tremendous difficulty getting traction on issues that will have (even minor) financial consequences for Administration.

Collegial Governance

Under the terms of the provincial University Act, decisions over academic matters are vested in the University Senate, populated by elected faculty members and others. It is intended to be a democratic body, animated by the active participation and careful debate of colleagues immersed in defining and delivering the academic program and policies of UPEI. See section 24, https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/u-04-university_act.pdf. The FA has actively and consistently advocated that all academic decisions, including but not limited to those about teaching online, f2f, or hybrid, the setting of a timetable or course caps, are the purview of Senate.

Provincial legislation tells us so. To date, the Administration has echoed this understanding, and for that they deserve due credit.

There has been a hiccup that required FA intervention. At its last meeting, Senate approved a process by which Deans would consult with Chairs (where they exist) and Chairs with faculty members to develop a teaching plan for the fall semester. The process was intended to be consultative and collegial and centered on the departmental level process. In one faculty, that process was bypassed and an announcement issued that the Faculty would deliver its program online.

Following FA intervention, the Senate-approved process was more closely applied in that Faculty. It is necessary, particularly in times of “crisis,” that the surety of collegial governance practices be preserved, perhaps even strengthened.

Working from Home

The FA has advocated for a variety of supports for those working from home. Among those items, many of them financial, we have advocated for assurance that Members will be provided T2200s. These permit claims for some home-based work expenses on one’s tax filing. The FA is aware that current T2200 eligibility may not line up perfectly with COVID circumstances, but most anticipate revisions to eligibility criteria will be forthcoming from the CRA. **For now, the Administration has advised that FA Members should keep track of expenses incurred while working from home until further guidance is received from CRA. Keep all receipts and bills concerning costs incurred in relation to carrying out your work from a home environment.**



Teaching Online

Some FA Members living rurally or otherwise without good internet access face particular challenges teaching online.

The FA has received a commitment that Members who are unable or limited in their ability to teach online from their homes will be permitted access to their offices to develop course materials and teach from there. Should public health directives become more restrictive again in the fall, a system will be put in place that permits access to offices, but where a schedule for building access may be applied.

Since March, the FA has advocated for the expansion of e-learning supports for those teaching online. We have approached this in three ways: that a series of workshops – graduated in skills from basic to more advanced – be offered for Moodle and Collaborate, the platforms the Administration has indicated it will support; that the staff complement in E-Learning be increased in order to assure there is the capacity to educate and support Members as they begin to prepare fall courses; and that a number of “digital shepherds” be hired who can answer quick “how to” questions from faculty and students, thereby freeing up some time for the E-Learning specialists/Instructional Designers. To date, the Administration has advised the minimal staff is coping with demand and the administrator overseeing E-Learning has not indicated the need for more resources. **There has, however, been a contract appointment to the unit tasked to develop a collection of resources under the Resilient Teaching site.** That will be helpful, undoubtedly, but the FA recognizes and continues to advocate for an increased investment in personnel in the E-Learning unit. Demands on that unit will only increase over the summer as fall term approaches. Teaching Members want to teach well, but the ability of many of us to do so depends

upon the Administration supporting us, and by consequence, our students.

There has been an initial Collaborate workshop. The FA requested that that session be recorded and made available to Members who were unable to attend. **This request was accommodated, and the workshop is available here:**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/119ZjWTrmekVnUKtDR20gTCPTsXIH10ai/view> You will need to be signed in through your upei account to access.

Access to Moodle course sites is now linked to the university’s Colleague system. As part of that integration (linking course registration to Moodle, for eg.), course sites appear on Moodle automatically eight weeks before the start of the course. The FA has advocated that earlier access be provided so Members have more time to experiment with the various features of Moodle, its integration with Collaborate, and to design or build their courses. The default will remain the eight weeks. **However, the FA has been advised that Members who want earlier access to their Moodle course sites should request this of the University Librarian, Donald Moses, at dmoses@upe.ca. He can provide early access. Additionally, Members may request the set-up of a “sandbox” course in Moodle, which will allow one to try out various features of Moodle.**

One of the recurring difficulties Sessional Instructors face – in times of COVID or not – is even later access to their courses on Moodle (sometimes mere days before courses begin). **The FA advocacy around this issue has produced this outcome: Chairs should email Ryan Giddens in the Registrar’s office (rgiddens@upe.ca) and cc.**

the VPAR (kgottschall@upei.ca) with the names of Sessional Instructors to attach to courses in the timetable (ie., replacing TBAs). This can be done immediately, and should result in the course being available at the eight-week window.

While we have no positive information to provide on this issue, it is important that Members know that we have been consistently advocating for additional stipends for Sessional Instructors who transitioned courses to online in March, and we continue to advocate for additional stipends to acknowledge the increased workload associated with the creation of online courses in spring/summer/fall sessions. We thank all Members who have reached out asking for this advocacy, who are, in the majority, full-time faculty members who are concerned about the interests of Sessional colleagues.

Those teaching online this spring were informed SOTS had been set up for students to complete online. The issues are twofold. First, the SOTS are invisible to instructors, so it wasn't clear whether the standard SOTS questions were presented to students or, in departments where there are supplemental questions, both the standard and supplemental questions were presented. **The FA has been advised the answer is the latter.** Secondly, given the rapid pivot to online teaching in March, with very little time to then prepare for online teaching in May, the fairness of using spring and summer SOTS for purposes of review, tenure, or promotion is questionable. The FA is advocating that the use of spring and summer SOTS in review, tenure, and promotion files should be at the option of the Member. We are engaged in a conversation on this matter.

It would appear that advertising of Sessional positions for fall term is delayed. **The FA has received confirmation that Sessional Instructors who hold right of recall for courses that have been timetabled should understand that those courses are proceeding, subject to normal mechanisms.** The FA is nevertheless very concerned that fewer than twenty fall and winter courses have been advertised. We are awaiting further clarification from Administration on this issue.

Conference & Research Support, and Sabbaticals

Some FA Members had conference travel scheduled for this spring or summer, but those conferences have been converted to online formats, delayed, or cancelled. The FA has advocated that Members who had already received UPEI travel grants should be allowed to apply those grants toward online conferences (registration, for eg.); and, if the conference is postponed until a later date, should be permitted to carry-over the approved travel grant until the conference is held; and, if the conference has been cancelled entirely, should be permitted to carry-over the funds for use at a similar conference without having to re-apply for a grant. **The FA has been advised that Members who received a travel grant may apply it to costs associated with an online conference, primarily to cover registration. Additionally, Members who have not yet applied for a travel grant, may apply for one for forthcoming online conferences.** We are still advocating that a carry-over for delayed in-person conferences or a conference-of-a-similar-kind should be permitted.

Public health circumstances and directives may make it difficult for some FA Members to complete research projects within the

timelines associated with their internal research grants. This includes those who will now spend their summers designing online courses, or who will have increased care responsibilities, or those whose access to archives, libraries, or labs outside PEI is impossible. The FA has advocated that all internal grants should have timelines extended one year. **The FA has been advised that Members may apply for extensions to their grant deadlines per the usual process, and that the consideration of such applications will indeed take into account the exceptional circumstances COVID-19 has presented to researchers.** External funding agencies, including the Tri-Council, have developed their own policies.

Some members slated to begin sabbaticals in July may now find it impossible or unlikely that they will be able to carry out their defined sabbatical projects. **The Administration has advised that it understands the nature and approach of sabbatical projects may shift owing to current circumstances and, additionally, that applications to defer sabbaticals will be received and considered.**

Health and Safety

Members may have noted that under various sub-sections of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 ease-back web pages, it indicates FA Members (and others) will need to provide written confirmation of this, or some variation of this: "Supervisors must have individuals in their area confirm that they have read and understand all aspects of UPEI's Operational Ease-Back Plan. This can be done either by email or in writing. ." The FA asked, by "all aspects," does that simply mean they have read the Phase 1 and 2 web pages, or is there something more?

More particularly, we were concerned that Members might be presented with a liability waiver they would be asked to sign. **The Association has received confirmation that this simply means Members should provide written confirmation to their Supervisor, by letter or email, that they have read and understood the material on the Phase ease-back pages.** If you have any concerns about this, please contact the FA.

Members may have noted that the Phase 1 and 2 ease-back plans make reference to a “Supervisor.” This is the person to whom you would send your note (above paragraph) and to whom you could report any health and safety concerns. This person would have action and follow-up responsibilities. The FA was concerned that the term “Supervisor” is ill-defined in those documents and often obscure in usual academic working relationships. More precisely, we were concerned *Chairs* might be tasked to assure health and safety standards are met and concerns responded to, duties that most Chairs have neither the training to carry out nor the resources to address. Simply put, this is not a Chair’s job. **The Association has received confirmation: for the purposes of health and safety matters, Supervisors are one’s Dean/UL. Members might also choose to contact the Department of Health, Safety and Environment at hse@upei.ca should they have a health and safety concern, and can file an incident report for items ranging from an empty hand sanitizing station to concerns about potential exposure to COVID-19, and anything in-between or beyond. Incident report forms are available at: https://files.upei.ca/vpaf/health-and-safety/incident_report_form.pdf and can be sent to**

incident@upei.ca or left in a **dropbox on the 3rd floor of Kelley.** Additionally, you can phone the **Manager of HSE, Liz Rostant, at 902-566-0516.**

As campus re-opens, and moving forward as Members may begin to engage with colleagues and students in labs or in clinical settings, the FA was concerned about the provision of PPE and whether or not the Administration will provide that. **The Association has been advised that PPE in the forms of masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer is available by contacting Health, Safety and Environment at hse@upei.ca. We have been advised it will be made available immediately, upon request.**



Have a question for Dear FAbby?

Send it to:
upeifa@upeifa.org

OR

anonymously by campus mail to the: FA Office, DSC 415.



UPEIFA

UNIVERSITY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

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