

FAUW Forum

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DAVID WANG, EDITOR

President's Message



David DeVidi, Philosophy

This is my final chance to write a President's Message for the *FAUW Forum*, as George Freeman will be taking over as of July 1. My official entry into the lame-duck period of my Presidency has two implications for this column. First, I have to try to keep it shorter than some of my others, as George will also be writing an introductory article. Secondly, I can indulge my urge to talk about the big picture, and FAUW members needn't worry that my softness for such musing will harm my effectiveness as President. (I will turn to a review of a few practical matters at the end of the column.)

A non-unionized setting like UW provides opportunities to a faculty association at the same time it severely restricts the association's toolkit. This has important implications for faculty at UW, both as they consider who to put into the role of "sole representative" on issues to do with the terms and conditions of their employment, and in the commitment they need to make to university governance.

FAUW does many things, so I hope all the others who work hard for FAUW will forgive my focus on just one. A key venue for FAUW is the Faculty Relations Committee (FRC), where five members of the FAUW Board meet every second week with five key administrators. In a unionized environment, a faculty association has an opportunity at contract negotiation time to put anything on the table. It might, for instance, gain improvements to the merit pay system, or the tenure process, in exchange for something the administration wants elsewhere. At UW, items other than salary are discussed at FRC instead. Such topics can be raised by either side at any time. On the other hand, either side can walk away from any particular topic, saying "on this matter, we'll have to simply agree to disagree."

What does success at FRC require? It seems to me that it takes people who recognize the difference between arguing and fighting. What FAUW needs is people who can formulate and articulate a rational case in the interests of faculty on whatever matter arises. But the game of rational persuasion only works if both sides are likewise able to recognize compelling rational arguments that come from the other side. Things are not quite symmetrical, of course. FAUW needs people who are very effective at spotting the holes in the arguments on the other side, since the Administration has many more resources (staff in Needles Hall and the Faculties, advice from the Council of Ontario Universities, lawyers on retainer, etc.) than the Association does. A good memory for facts and a bad memory for hard

feelings if tempers heat up briefly are also real assets. Negotiating tactics like asking for something you don't especially want in order to "give it up" later on are likely to be counter-productive. Nevertheless, while the game is different, I think it is quite possible for those who think we'd be better off with a union to be effective at FRC—but only if they recognize what FAUW's tools are, and have decided to do what they can with them rather than trying to trade them in for others.

As a sort of corollary, I think that the FAUW membership must accept that FAUW may have to increase the compensation for people who serve in key roles, and perhaps eventually hire more staff. FAUW fees are among the very lowest in the country. A

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good FAUW President needs to be smart, articulate, not completely socially inept, and has to devote long hours to the job. Putting oneself in a position of confronting the Administration is not obviously a good career move. Giving up the time that might have gone into, for instance, the scholarly endeavours that draw the accolades that really matter in academia is definitely not something an effective calculator of rational self-interest would do. My recommendation for the FAUW Board, on my way out the door, is that we need to better compensate the President's role (and some other key roles, for that matter); becoming President would still not be a rational move (sorry George), but, for instance, some extra teaching relief might allow a President at least a bit more time for keeping a research agenda moving forward.

Of course, it doesn't matter how reasonable FAUW is if its partner in discussions is not similarly disposed. When a unionization drive succeeds at a university, the most effective, if inadvertent, organizers are almost always to be found in the administration, not in the association. When called upon to say what I think has been Amit Chakma's key asset as Provost, I say this: unlike many who find themselves in positions of power, especially those who think of themselves as "visionaries", Amit is *not informationally insensitive*. He, too, recognizes the difference between arguing and fighting.

This brings me to another lesson I would urge on faculty. *Collegial governance takes work*, and something that is working well can fall apart in short order. Two years of talking to faculty association presidents from across the country has made clear that the *tools* for collegial governance—policies, practices and institutions—are better at UW than at many universities. It is up to faculty to make use of them, and to defend them. Some very encouraging moves in this direction

have been made in recent times:

- Senate discussions have been increasingly substantive; almost all positions on the Vice President & Academic Provost (VPAP) search committee were contested, and faculty have felt comfortable enough with those elected to provide frank and useful advice;
- there was a vigorous but constructive response to a problematic on-line learning report, resulting in an amended and much improved report;
- people spoke up, in the face of arguments that we need to be fast-tracking professional Master's programs, in defence of the view that new graduate programs must go through the long-existing Faculty-level approval processes, and proposals are getting careful scrutiny by those committees.

I think the present Administration is, in fact, remarkably supportive of these moves towards invigorating the mechanisms of collegial governance. Let's hope that the VPAP search committee is able to find someone who sees the importance of keeping those mechanisms in good repair to preserve the much-prized flexibility and nimbleness of UW. But however well intentioned administrators happen to be, it seems to me that it is rank-and-file faculty members who must be the main defenders of the academic quality of UW. The career rewards for senior administrators go to those who do something "new" and "innovative." Since administrators are human, this inevitably colours their estimation of what is worth doing. Many faculty association presidents would agree that nothing is more dangerous for a university than an administrator intent on *building a legacy*—unless it's an administrator who wants to build something flashy as CV enhancement for a move to a bigger job at another university. Such administrators are often long gone before the extent of the red ink is revealed, and some later administrator is left to clean up the

mess. I'd urge faculty to be especially sceptical about the suggestion that in a time of financial crisis "we have to do something to bring in money." We don't need to emulate the mayor of London who, in a time of plague, ordered that all the cats and dogs be killed.

Updates

Both the *merit process working group* and the *working group on salary equity for women faculty* will be producing their reports very soon. The merit process group, of which I was a member, will make many recommendations that they feel would, if implemented, result in a process that is more transparent, better understood and fairer, and that addresses many of the concerns we heard in the extensive consultations we did across campus. It will be up to the Faculty Relations Committee to decide how to proceed with the recommendations. The strategy that FAUW and the Administration agreed to with respect to the salary equity committee, in light of the difficulty of the questions the group would confront, was to have the Provost and the Association President *agree on the people* who would make up the committee, and to allow them to select their own methodology. It was very heartening to see that the Provost and I had the same names at the top of our lists. I conclude that there was no desire on the part of the Administration to use this committee to whitewash the problem. I am sure that the result of this process will be open to criticism in some way, because I am sure that there is no uniquely best solution to the problem. But I know that the committee members worked extremely hard, that they all had their hearts in the right place, and that there could not have been a group with more appropriate qualifications for the job.

Since January, I have been acting Chair of the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. **Frank Reynolds**,

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who has spent many years doing a whole range of jobs for FAUW, has provided effective and dedicated service as the Chair for the past few years, even into his retirement. One of the key goals I announced in my very first President's message was to do what was necessary to ensure that this crucial committee—the main business of which is helping colleagues when a problem arises with the Administration regarding the terms and conditions of employment—did not have to rely on the good will of retirees. Unfortunately, on that score I have fallen short. I am now actively recruiting members for this committee, which could easily stand

to double or triple in size, and the Board is working on having a permanent Chair in place soon. If you have tenure and think you might be interested in becoming part of the AF&T Committee, please let me know. It is interesting and important work. Service to FAUW counts as service to the University for purposes of annual performance reviews.

FAUW has hired **Miriam Kominar** as our new Administrative Assistant/ Communications Coordinator. We had several very promising applicants for the position, but Miriam was the most promising of all so we were very pleased that she accepted our offer. Welcome, Miriam!

Finally, I must thank all the people

who have worked so hard for FAUW in my time as President. I don't want to attempt a laundry list because I will leave someone out, but they include Board members, those servings as FAUW representatives on committees and working groups, and former FAUW Board members I have called for advice. I will, though, take the chance to thank my two indispensable vice-presidents, **Susan Leat** and **Shelley Hulan**. Be nice to them so they might consider being FAUW Presidents some day. And, of course, I must thank **Pat Moore**, FAUW's Administrative Officer. She is a joy to work with, is very good at her job, and FAUW is very lucky to have her.

President Elect's Message



George Freeman, Electrical & Computer Engineering

As I came to the end of my term as Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, I could see all of my internal service duties coming to an abrupt end. Since I liked being involved, it was a welcome change to join the FAUW Board of Directors and broaden my outlook from one department and undergraduate matters to the larger scope of the university and

employment conditions and policy issues. The work is interesting, stimulating, and I believe it makes a real contribution to the quality of life for faculty members at UW. It is one of the few tasks which I continued into the sabbatical leave which I am currently enjoying. Thus, when the call for nominations for FAUW President came along, I was not far enough away and here I am as President-Elect.

Under our new FAUW Constitution, my term doesn't start until July 1. This provides a really effective opportunity to learn some of the ropes from David DeVidi, and to attend a CAUT training event called the Workshop for New Presidents, before the serious workload hits, likely in September. Aside from being the current Treasurer, and serving on the subcommittee which drafted the new constitution, I have been a member of the Faculty Relations Committee for the past two years. We don't always see eye-to-eye with the members from the administration side but there is a certain atmosphere of trust and

respect and we have accomplished quite a lot over the past couple of years, without having to resort to association grievances which are costly to both sides. What transpired over the past year at St. Jerome's University is an example of how bad things can get if the trusting, respectful relationship is lost.

I'll reserve until the next Forum announcement of any major goals and initiatives I personally would like to see FAUW pursue during my presidency, beyond the ones mentioned in David's message. As you can read, there are a lot of important things on the go which I hope to see come to fruition over the year. In my opinion, David has been an outstanding FAUW President, being persistent, calm, articulate, and reasonable in pushing faculty interests. Also, I don't see how it would be possible to have a better set of people serving on the FAUW Board. I only hope that I can live up to these standards.

FAUW is your representative on

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conditions of employment. I remind you of two things you can do to help. First, become a member. It's free and easily done by using the online form at <http://www.fauw.uwaterloo.ca>.

Second, when you have a complaint, make sure it is heard – both by the usual chain of command (Chair, Dean, etc.) and by FAUW (any member of the Board or your department representative or Pat

Moore). This allows us to be more effective in our role of sensitising the administration to faculty concerns. For more personal issues, contact Pat Moore to be directed to the right place in confidence.

Thank you!

While FAUW is fortunate to have a small but mighty staff, its success depends to a huge extent to the volunteer efforts of its members. The FAUW Board would like to thank everyone who has volunteered for FAUW this year. The biggest commitment is by those serving as FAUW representatives on various committees or who were willing to accept appointments FAUW had a hand in, but we also want to thank those serving on our Council of Representatives, responding to FAUW's calls for feedback on issues ranging from on line learning to overseas campuses to the financial crisis, or drawing the Board's attention to important issues. The Association is only as strong as the effort members put into it, and we are grateful for the support FAUW has received from its members this year.

Editorial

David Wang

Electrical & Computer Engineering

The Three “C”s

Some of you may have wondered why there hasn't been a FAUW Forum recently. It turns out that my 2009 so far has been fraught with some of the most difficult challenges that I have ever experienced. I had to take some time to recover and hopefully life is slowly returning to normal. During this chaos, work was one of the few constants in my life. However, reflecting on my life at UW did little to provide me with solace. It forced me to reflect on what would make the University of Waterloo a more welcoming institution. These characteristics, in my opinion, can be summarized with three “C”s: Community, Compassion and Communication.

Community

First, let's look at Community. My year started off with a big splash but not in a good way. My large family recently moved to Elmira and, with the downturn in the economy, our previous residence in Kitchener remained unsold. We put almost

\$25,000 into renovations to try to improve the salability of the home. Unfortunately, in late January, an end-cap on a hot water pipe blew off mid-wall on the second floor of our Kitchener residence and the steaming hot water caused about \$150,000 of damage. To make matters worse, because we were no longer living at the house, the insurance company denied our claim. Given that all our equity was tied into this property, we had no financing to even start the cleanup. Out of desperation, I emailed all my sports friends, the friends we knew from our kids' sports activities and our church friends as well. We had to organize a major demolition to prevent the stagnant water from causing further problems. To our surprise, we had over 50 people show up on a Sunday afternoon. In a matter of 4 hours, all the damaged material was removed from the house and the house was made bone dry to prevent further damage. It was like a Mennonite barn-raising, albeit in reverse. It was truly inspiring to see this network of friends come out to help us in our time of need. This made me think

about the sense of community at the University of Waterloo and what would need to be done to create the same kind of fellowship.

As our institution has continued to grow in leaps and bounds, I hear more and more discussion about how the sense of community that was there in the earlier days of the university seems to be disappearing. It is exacerbated by a focus now on publications and research dollars above all else. In the Faculty of Engineering, many have stated that our Vision 2010 felt as if it were dictated from above, despite being pitched as something which we have collectively agreed upon. We are now more of a collection of individual academics rather than a unified team. To exemplify this, how many of us really know much about our departmental colleagues or about others in our faculty or, in the extreme, about those in other faculties?

I made an attempt last year to create an online community through the

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FAUW Online Forum. However, it has been a failure thus far. There has been almost no traffic to the site. I still believe this can be a valuable resource to the university, giving the ability for the faculty to forge connections and interact with their fellow professors. In other words, this is a real opportunity to form a community, whether it be for academic discussion or ideological sharing. This issue, for the sake of community, I am imploring you all to visit the site at

www.fauw.uwaterloo.ca and click on the “Online Forum” button. All you need to do is to enter your UW userid and the associated password. In particular, go to the discussion forum at least to check it out. If we can get a critical mass of visits and posts to the site, then perhaps this can create a way for faculty members to interact, share ideas and stay connected. Then, if there are serious issues that arise, perhaps we can call out to each other like I did when we had our family crisis.

Compassion

The second “C” that I have reflected on is Compassion. A former colleague of mine in Systems Design Engineering was denied tenure two years ago.* This was despite having unanimous departmental support and majority faculty support, including that of the Dean. He was turned down at the University Tenure and Promotion Committee based on quantity of research even though it was noted that his teaching and quality of research was not in question. Now, at the time of this decision, this colleague had papers in the pipeline that were not taken into consideration. Within a few months of the deliberation, two of these papers were accepted into very prestigious journals. However, because they were not accepted at the time of the decision, the university would not consider them and stuck with their devastating decision. It is fine to stick with the letter of the law but it seems that the “law” also indicates that those committees

closest to the candidate should have the most influence on tenure. One cannot pick and choose when to follow the law arbitrarily. Likely as a result of the stress of this decision and the ensuing uncertainty of his job situation, my colleague ended up needing open heart surgery, greatly endangering his life. To make matters worse, very few colleagues ever bothered to talk to him after this event, making him feel even more isolated. To top things off, this past month, the last student that he and I co-supervised was having his Ph.D. defense. The professor in question was an active supervisor and funded the student over the years. However, as he did not have an official faculty appointment, he could not even sit on the examining committee. All that was needed was a temporary adjunct appointment, which I clearly stated in my supporting memos. However, for reasons that are still unclear to me, this was denied. A fine young academic was once again shown no compassion and was kicked hard when he was already down for the count. In this extremely sad situation, many of us have failed to show any concern, both in the administration and among his colleagues. Seeing this happen to a friend and colleague saddened me; if something similar happened to me, how could I possibly see fit to come to the university for justice or compassion? How could one work and make notable contributions in research, teaching and administration for six years, and then lose their job because a couple of publications were not accepted in time? Perhaps we need to examine whether our institution needs to have some heart surgery of its own.

Communication

Finally, the last “C” is Communication. After dealing with my house disaster followed by seeing a former colleague treated abysmally, the icing on the cake occurred when I was told that massive construction was happening right next to my office. This was inconvenient, especially since I was given only

three weeks notice, but a few of the other professors actually had to move out of their offices and pack up entire labs. Ironically, one of the professors had only moved into his office from another location for one week and then had to pack up again and move his office back to its original location. One of the displaced professors related that they resented being reduced to an entry in a spread sheet. Some grad students may even have graduation delayed by a term due to this disruption; is any offer of compensation to them (via a term with no tuition for example) being made or even considered? It cannot be denied that, somewhere along the way, somebody probably assumed that the professors and students who would be affected by this construction had been told ahead of time that these disruptive events would be taking place, not realizing that the message was never relayed down to those affected. It is no wonder that, as I ingest my eight daily Tylenols during the course of the day to deal with my headaches from the construction noise and smell of welding torches next door, I feel as if I am just a pawn in a game in which I have no control. Communication in an organization the size of the University of Waterloo is not an easy task, but, in my humble opinion, is something that has to be improved.

When I joined the faculty twenty years ago, I was very happy and excited to be a member of this wonderful university. Perhaps my mood recently has been impacted by all the negative situations that I have encountered. Perhaps these were all just isolated incidents. Perhaps I am just getting old and grumpy. Regardless, I’d love to get your feedback and whether you have had similar experiences or feelings. This would be a great time for you to get online and join our Online Forum. I look forward to hearing from you!

* Normally, FAUW would not discuss details of an individual case in a way that would make the person identifiable. I do so here only with the explicit consent of the former colleague.

SJU Faculty Vote to Form a Union

David Seljak

President, St Jerome's University Academic Staff Association

President, St Jerome's University Faculty Association

On March 31st, the faculty at St. Jerome's University voted overwhelmingly to form a union. Twenty-seven (90%) of the 30 faculty named in the bargaining unit cast a ballot and more than 80% voted yes. The newly formed St. Jerome's University Academic Staff Association (SJU-ASA) will act as the sole representative for academic staff (faculty and the librarian) at SJU. At its April Council meeting, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) voted to give the SJU-ASA independent status; its members had previously been represented by the Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo.

This is perhaps one of the most reluctant labour unions in Canadian history. However, the certification vote came at the end of a difficult year that saw eight of 24 staff members declared redundant, fired or resign in protest. (In fact, a ninth staff member left two weeks after the vote.) Moreover, one tenured faculty member, Steven Furino, resigned in August 2008 after having lost faith in the President. Dr. Furino, who won the UW 2007 Distinguished Teacher Award, left St. Jerome's to join the University of Waterloo's Centre for Education in Mathematics and Computing – despite the fact that the move meant a loss of rank (from Associate to Lecturer) and the sacrifice of a sabbatical to begin in January 2009.

The movement to certification followed a vote of non-confidence (20 in favour; 2 opposed) in the President, Fr. David Perrin OMI, taken by faculty (and conducted by FAUW) in January of this year. The President and Chair of the Board dismissed the non-confidence vote as a “symbolic” gesture (the President of

Harvard University recently resigned after such a “symbolic gesture”).

In response to that vote, Fr. Perrin stated in a newspaper interview that he was merely implementing the “standard management practices at Canadian universities.” Indeed, Fr. Perrin and the Board Executive have introduced new practices, but what faculty object to is that a number of these changes violate a) SJU board-approved policies; b) traditional standards of collegiality and academic freedom; and c) the standard management practices of universities in Canada. Faculty felt that a union was necessary to protect the sense of community for which St. Jerome's was well known as well as traditional values of collegial governance, academic freedom (which includes the right to criticize the administration) and the right to participate in the definition of the terms of employment.

A recent example involves the President's arbitrary and unilateral addition to the Tenure and Promotion procedure, specifically a personal interview with himself before the application could go to the Board of Governors. The faculty at St. Jerome's were concerned because a) there is nothing in the T&P policy that says an interview with the President is part of the procedure; b) the change was made at the 11th hour and was not part of the procedure when the applications by two faculty members were made; c) there have never been such interviews with presidents at SJU in the past; d) the faculty have expressed their non-confidence in this particular President; e) the President is part of the appeals process in our T&P policy and a scheduled interview might prejudice that process; and f) we have never heard of such

interviews at *any* other university (it is not a feature of the UW process, for example).

Moreover, on Monday March 30th, the candidates were given a letter outlining six specific topics that they would be asked to address in the interview; they were informed that the Associate Dean would also be in attendance at the interviews. These interviews could no longer be construed as informal and collegial. The President had introduced a new step in the Tenure and Promotion process – without consulting faculty, our Academic Committee, College Council or even the Board of Governors.

I know of no university in Canada where last-minute tinkering with the Tenure and Promotions process – an action that would invite enormous risk of liability should tenure be denied – would be considered one of what Fr. Perrin has called the “standard management practices at Canadian universities.” After protests by concerned faculty and on the very day of the union vote, the President sent a memo cancelling the interviews. This is only one example of the arbitrary and unilateral use of power that inspired the faculty to form the St. Jerome's University Academic Staff Association and to give it the right to bargain collectively on behalf of faculty.

The creation of a union to represent faculty at St. Jerome's will certainly change the relationship of SJU faculty to its administration. However, since SJU faculty members are fully integrated into UW departments and programs in the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Mathematics, it is natural to wonder

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how it will change how SJU faculty members relate to their counterparts at UW. In thinking about these changes, it is essential to recognize the following:

1. The SJU-ASA will be the sole representative of faculty interests at St. Jerome's although our constitution includes a resolution to establish an affiliation with FAUW. The SJU-ASA is now an independent member of CAUT and is seeking membership in the Ontario Council of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA).
2. Like most unions at Canadian universities, the SJU-ASA is a "local union;" it has no affiliation

with any larger labour organization.

3. The SJU-ASA has no interest in promoting certification at the University of Waterloo. Our certification was not driven by self-interest or ideology; it was a defensive action to protect the traditions of collegial governance and academic freedom shared by UW and SJU.
4. The SJU-ASA is keenly aware of the advantages that its members have by being part of UW. It is committed to negotiating a collective agreement that allows smooth integration of the practices, policies and procedures at SJU with those at UW.

Faculty at St. Jerome's formed this union to defend the principles of collegial governance and academic freedom. There is no necessary tension between collegiality and certification, and, in fact, some 90 percent of faculty associations across Canada are unionized. We have created this union in order to re-establish the collegial working environment for which St. Jerome's was known and admired in decades past. We hope to bring that ethic of collegiality to our relations with our administration and Board as well as with our colleagues and the administration at the University of Waterloo.

Council of Representatives Reboot

Shelley Hulan

English Language & Literature

This year's advent of satellite campuses at Dubai and (possibly) Stratford prompted some faculty to voice concern at what they regarded as a too-streamlined process for getting these campuses up and running. This concern coincided with the FAUW's revival of the Council of Representatives, which after a two-year hiatus met on April 7 before the Association's annual general meeting. The Council is an advisory body to the FAUW Board of Directors consisting of a representative from each department and school at UW, and a representative from each of St. Jerome's University and the Library. On the Council's agenda were a draft protocol for the approval and monitoring of satellite campuses, procedures which Needles Hall has acknowledged are best formed with strong faculty participation. Items in the draft protocols included requirements for faculty to be furnished with the business plan for the satellite campus at least eighteen months prior to its projected opening,

for faculty to approve the academic programs to be offered on the new campus, and for the terms and conditions of employment to be identical on all UW campuses regardless of location. The conversation among Council representatives ranged widely and included a question raised about the experiences of other North American campuses in the UAE and the possible representation at Senate of overseas faculty via live satellite links. More immediately, some ambiguity around health insurance coverage for faculty members travelling internationally was put on the FAUW's radar.

Second on the Council's agenda was a discussion of the University's intellectual property policy (73), particularly in the context of the recent expansion and ongoing digitization of UW's online course offerings. Council representatives discussed their experiences designing and delivering distance education courses in a digital environment and

the challenges that environment poses to protecting faculty's intellectual property rights.

Both agenda items, and several others that we hope to discuss at the Council in the future, require input from every academic unit, the first because satellite campuses are almost certainly part of UW's future and will likely involve many more Faculties campus-wide in coming years, and the second because new technologies continue to demand that new decisions be made regarding the way we teach. While it's occasionally tempting to regard the need for more committees, discussion groups, etc. on campus as equivalent to Montréal's need for more bagels and smoked meat, the Council is the only body that brings together faculty representatives from each academic unit to discuss matters that impact directly on faculty working conditions in connection with university governance. It's also the body that enables FAUW members to

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see the “big picture” of faculty experience in a very diverse institution.

Over the past year the Board has pressed the central administration for more and broader consultation with faculty, and the administration has

expressed a strong interest in getting the results of that consultation through FAUW on a regular basis. The FAUW needs a fully-populated Council to make this kind of consultation possible. The time it requires is not onerous, but it is vital to the ongoing dialogue between faculty and other stakeholders at UW apropos the institution’s future

directions. To find the name of your representative, go to <http://www.fauw.uwaterloo.ca> and click on About FAUW and Council of Representatives. If you would like to volunteer to represent your academic unit, please contact Pat Moore through pmmoore@uwaterloo.ca.

Constitution Update

George Freeman

Electrical & Computer Engineering

At the Spring General Meeting in April, a new FAUW Constitution was approved. What changed?

The financial year end was moved from January 31 to December 31 (still subject to approval by the Canada Revenue Agency). It has been really difficult to get all accounts settled, auditing done, and a budget prepared in time for notification for the general meeting, even for superbly organized people like Pat Moore. This should relieve that pressure.

The role of the Vice President was clarified and that position was given specific duties in managing membership and the Council of Representatives. This is part of revitalizing the role of the department representatives. Shelley Hulan held the first of what we hope are regular get-togethers with the council in order to discuss ongoing concerns, such as what we should hope for in policies regarding distant campuses.

Good language was borrowed from the Memorandum of Agreement and from the constitutions of other faculty associations. Borrowing money (which I don’t believe we have ever done) is now harder. Indemnification legalese was “clarified” to slightly more readable legalese. (We are still investigating liability insurance beyond what is implied by University of Waterloo policy.) We adopted a two-thirds majority rule for changes or for

removing people.

A bunch of rewording and rearranging of clauses was done to give the document more clarity. Accumulated changes over the years had made it look patchy. We eliminated the use of case (“member” versus “Member”) which used to distinguish between those we represent and those who have explicitly joined (please do so).

The transition date for newly elected Board members and President was moved to July 1. This more naturally aligns with the ebb and flow of activity (most of the work is September to June) and allows a nice overlap to learn the ropes before diving in. We also made it easier to nominate people in elections. The term of president is now limited to three consecutive years (rather than three total years).

The standing committee structure was adjusted slightly in order to somewhat equalize workload and equalize the specificity so that the committee chairs have similar flexibility in determining the detailed goals within the framework desired by the Association. Three very important FAUW interests are: pension and benefits, compensation, and academic freedom and tenure. The first two are now combined under one standing committee. The clause describing the last was clarified to reflect the current practice. The President is now explicitly a member of Faculty Relations Committee. The Association Admin-

istrative Officer (Pat Moore) is Secretary so that board position is removed.

The goals and objectives were reordered and clarified. Since this is what we are trying to accomplish, it is perhaps worth repeating that part here:

- To represent the academic staff of the university, including but not limited to professors, lecturers, professional librarians and researchers, in the processes determining the terms and conditions of employment.
- To promote fairness for and equitable treatment of the individuals it represents by negotiating and defending sound policies, practices and procedures.
- To defend and promote academic freedom and tenure within the university.
- To promote a climate of freedom and collegiality, and in other ways to promote the welfare of the university as a community of scholars.
- To promote quality teaching and research.
- To promote a diverse and inclusive university where the advancement of human rights is a priority.
- To deal with all other matters considered to be in the interests of the Association and its members.

With thanks to the other hardworking members of the constitution subcommittee: David DeVidi, Shelley Hulan, Pat Moore.

CAUT Spring Council Highlights

Dave Devidi
Philosophy

Twice each year representatives from the various faculty associations across Canada meet to discuss issues of common concern. The most recent Council sessions were held in Ottawa from April 23-26. A few items were of particular relevance for Waterloo faculty.

The economic crisis

Wage rollbacks: One useful feature of CAUT Council is the opportunity it provides to hear from faculty across the country. One thing that is always striking is the extent to which university administrations are singing from the same song book.

A coming trend in administrative rhetoric is to call faculty “greedy” when they don’t immediately agree to salary rollbacks. Waterloo’s administrators have not used such corrosive language, but the Provost has recently found it difficult to resist pointing out at every public opportunity that each percentage of salary increase “amounts to \$2.5 million, give or take”, which is then translated into some large number of “colleagues” that could be paid with that \$2.5 million. Resisting the urge to talk about where on campus salaries have gone up by over 150% since the late 1990s and where not, I will say that it is important not to lose track of certain facts:

- We have had what the administration has been calling a “structural deficit” at Waterloo for at least the last eight years. For rhetorical effect it always seems markedly worse as contract negotiations approach.
- It will not be entirely a matter of circumstance if next year we end up simultaneously with a building boom on campus and layoffs. For years the administration has been

socking away money into various pots while cutting departmental budgets. Hence the “structural deficit.” (Part of the “flexibility” of Waterloo’s structure is a remarkably un-transparent budget.) Putting away money in flush times so that one can take advantage of opportunities like the infrastructure program is not something I would necessarily condemn, but we should be clear that it has happened. The administration is in the business of picking winners and losers, and has considerable capacity for strategic adjustment of its spending.

- Administrations also jealously guard their control over decisions. There is no obvious mechanism to guarantee that any rollbacks on wages will be used to “preserve jobs”, nor to have any influence on which units would benefit—this is especially so at Waterloo, but is true even at universities where employee groups have much more formal power. Most of the pots into which the University’s moneys are divided have porous boundaries. A wage rollback would be taking money from employees and handing some millions to key people in the administration to spend strategically, unless some innovative arrangements between the Faculty Association and the administration were worked out. Nobody from the administration has to date called in faculty representatives to discuss which of various proposals should count as “mission critical,” and I don’t expect such calls to begin soon. The best guide to where the money would be spent going forward is where strategic dollars have gone in recent years: overseas initiatives, distant campuses, and perhaps to such things as matching

moneys for new buildings.

- One thing that the Waterloo administration has understood better than most in recent times is that the real advantages one university can have compared to another have to do with the people it can attract and keep. Declining wages relative to other universities are a way to implement a policy of declining comparative quality.

Restructuring: University administrators are well aware of the adage “never waste a good crisis.” When people are scared, you can get them to agree to things that they would have no time for when thinking clearly. Discussions at CAUT Council made two things clear. First, some administrations are using this as an opportunity to eliminate programs for what are either irrational or political reasons. For instance, the elimination of the Women’s Studies program at Guelph cannot sensibly be for financial reasons (it’s a program, not a department, so admin costs are minimal, and its classes are full). Secondly, *faculty need to carefully scrutinize administration claims: will a particular proposal actually help solve the problem it’s advertised as solving.* If not, ask what the real motives might be. To choose another example from Guelph, we can see that professional Master’s programs can and do fail, as they are also closing their Master’s in Leadership. Moreover, rumours abound that the small number of overseas programs that have drowned in a sea of red ink is about to grow considerably. So if someone is advertising an innovation as a potential moneymaker, ask these questions: how does this solve the problem, which is a budget shortfall *next year*? What are the chances that it will really make money? What are

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the costs that are not being taken into account? It's always a time for good new ideas. A crisis is a time when people are more likely to confuse bad ideas for good ones.

Lakehead leads way in bad faith manoeuvres:

The Lakehead University administration has announced, with no negotiation and no consultation, that it intends to close for four days at Christmas, giving employees four "unpaid holidays", in spite of the existence of collective agreements negotiated with employee groups there. This is, in effect, a lockout of faculty who are under legal contract. Expect to hear much more about this in the press.

Equity

Council heard an excellent presentation from Angelica Stacey, Vice Provost for Faculty Equity at Berkeley. (There have been some conceptual-level discussions of the possibility of such a position at Waterloo. While views were mixed on the idea at the FAUW Board, I personally think it's on balance a good idea, and am more strongly of this view after hearing Dr Stacey.) She warmed up the audience by reviewing empirical literature on how even the best intentioned people can unconsciously make discriminatory decisions (e.g., 30-55% increase in number of women hired by orchestras once blind auditions were introduced; among Psychology professors (!!), both men and women, there was a 2-1 preference for Brian Miller over Karen Miller as a job candidate, in spite of their having the same CV; and more). She also had really excellent information about just where in the pipeline the number of women declines. I hope to write a more extensive piece for the next Forum. For now, I will mention a few highlights.

- At Berkeley, the percentage of women who are full professors is low in part because of their

concentration in "book related disciplines". In Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, the few women employed reach full professor at the same rate and in the same time as their male colleagues. But outside STEM, fewer people reach full professor and it takes longer for those who do. And most women faculty are outside STEM.

- By studying the hiring practices of units that are successful at improving equity and those that are not, they have been able to identify some differences that seem to make a difference. Having a designated affirmative action officer actually is much more common in departments that are *failing to become more diverse*; everyone advertises their willingness to consider candidates, but the academic units that do well have *broad* searches (narrow descriptions of desired field seems to allow goalposts to move—a women who does both X and Y fails to get the job one year because it's an X that's wanted, and the next because it's a Y, though all things considered the department might prefer her to either of the successful candidates); since women *under-apply* for jobs (i.e., there are many more PhDs than the proportion that show up in candidate pools, in every discipline), success depends on doing things that *invite women to apply* (and that's more than just "inviting" them in the job ad). And it's crucial to have people from the under-represented groups on the hiring committees.
- The truly crucial difference to whether an equity program works or not is the commitment of the people running the university to making it work. The current Berkeley Chancellor is former U of Toronto President Robert Birgeneau. When he was at MIT in the 1990s, the equity situation was improving rapidly. When he left,

according to Stacey, not so much any more. She gives Birgeneau much of the credit for the marked improvement in the equity situation at Berkeley since he arrived.

Impact of the Federal Government

Associations from across the country are dismayed by provisions in the federal budget and other actions of the present government. These include cuts to the granting councils, the politicization of decisions about what will be funded and the undermining of peer review; and lack of operating funds for facilities on which lots of money was spent to build, meaning that expensive facilities get shut down, presumably because there are no headlines to be gained by continuing to fund something that is already built.

While Council was going on, there was a most peculiar "press conference" in the same hotel. Only selected journalists, and the presidents of the universities that did well in the competition, were invited to the event where the Prime Minister announced the results of the competition for "Canada Excellence Research Chairs." Obviously, the goal for the government was to try to ensure a good news story about research by controlling the message. The university presidents, of course, have very limited ability to point out that a particular decision about spending was unwise at the very meeting where they are promised a bag of money, though they surely recognize that spending great whacks of money to recruit a few stars while other stars are leaving because the facilities they need are closing down is not wise stewardship of the country's research infrastructure. It will be up to faculty, and the community of active researchers more generally, to ensure that the story about the dire implications of the government's agenda for Canadian research gets out.

Inflation in the Grades UW Professors Get

Ken Westhues
Sociology

As a follow-up to Greg Mayer’s careful documentation of inflation in students’ final grades at UW (*Forum*, Dec. 2008), the present article documents a related trend: inflation not in the grades we professors give, but in the grades we get. The numeric data below are from our 200-member Faculty of Arts, but the trend is university-wide.

When I arrived at Waterloo as chair of sociology in 1975, the annual performance review involved assigning each professor one of four possible grades upon which the next year’s salary increase would depend. J. S. Minas was Dean of Arts at the time. He informed me of the expected rough distribution across the four grades:

- Less than satisfactory – none or few, an exceptional rating;
- Satisfactory – the modal grade, more than half the faculty;
- More than satisfactory – half the number in the modal category;
- Much beyond satisfactory – a quarter the number in the modal category.

I don’t recall the actual distributions in the seventies. Most chairs probably tried to skew the distribution upward, recommending more grades above the modal, “satisfactory” category than the dean preferred. I certainly did. Even so, roughly half of all professors were held to the grade of “satisfactory.”

In the twenty years after I finished my term as chair, UW’s faculty grading scheme grew more complex. The annual grade came to be calculated from separate grades for scholarship (weighted 40 percent), teaching (weighted 40 percent), and service (weighted 20 percent). Rolling three-year averages were introduced, and special rules for sabbatical years and administrative appointments. Categories were renamed from time to time. One new twist looked like an adaptation of Newspeak: satisfactory plus and satisfactory doubleplus.

In 2002, when I commenced a study of our performance review system, I discovered that the four grades of 1975 had morphed into seven, each having a numeric value: unsatisfac-

tory (0.0), needs improvement (.5), satisfactory (1.0), good (1.25), very good (1.5), excellent (1.75), and outstanding (2.0). The earlier ordinal scale had thus become interval, and the numeric values had come to be applied as multipliers to the dollar amount fixed each year for merit increments in salary.

For the 187 members of the Faculty of Arts in 2002, the actual distribution of final grades is shown in the table below (nominal, numeric, and percent values, along with the number and percentage of faculty receiving each grade).

The contrast between the 1975 and 2002 distributions is stark. The proportion of professors graded above satisfactory rose from about 50 to more than 95 percent. The new grade of “good” was not good, since 80 percent of professors did better. Nobody was judged unsatisfactory or in need of improvement. The lone professor graded 1.0, satisfactory, got the faculty booby prize.

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Nominal Grade	Numeric Grade	Percent Equivalent	Number of Faculty	Percentage of Faculty	
Unsatisfactory	0.0	0	0	0	
	Needs Improvement	0.5	0	0	
	Satisfactory	1.0	50	1	<1
Good		1.1	1	<1	
		1.2	5	3	
		1.3	65	6	3
Very Good		1.4	25	13	
		1.5	75	24	13
		1.6	80	44	24
Excellent		1.7	85	14	7
		1.8	90	39	21
		1.9	95	9	5
Outstanding	2.0	100	19	10	

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By the common rule that 80 percent or higher counts as an A, these data show that in 2002, 67 percent of Arts professors at Waterloo got A's. Indeed, 10 percent of faculty got 100 percent in all three areas (scholarship, teaching, and service), thereby qualifying for a perfect score overall.

From inspection of grade distributions for Arts faculty in the three years following 2002, the inflation appears at first to have been contained. Only 60 percent got A's in 2005, and the average grade declined from 1.66 (83 percent) to 1.56 (78 percent). In the 2005 evaluation, one professor out of the 205 in Arts was actually graded "Needs improvement," and another was graded just above "Unsatisfactory."

In fact, the inflation has accelerated since 2002. In 2004, a new wrinkle in the salary policy established an "Outstanding Performance Fund" from which the provost gives about

10 percent of faculty (usually 14-18 in Arts) an additional raise. The recipients are chosen from the top 20 percent of professors in the basic grade distribution. In effect, these professors are graded "Beyond Outstanding."

Over the past few decades, inflation in faculty evaluation has occurred here in additional ways. Honorific designations have multiplied. There are annual awards for "Distinguished Teaching" and "Excellence in Research." In 2003, two ranks higher than full professor were created: "University Professor" and "University Research Chair." There are numerous new named professorships and about 50 Canada Research Chairs, Waterloo's share of the national program.

The university has also sweetened recognition of retired faculty. Until 1994, the title of "Professor Emeritus" was reserved for the few whose achievements were judged to be exceptional. Since 1994, anybody who

has served on the UW faculty for ten years is named "Professor Emeritus" on retirement, while those judged exceptional receive the title, "Distinguished Professor Emeritus."

Waterloo's academic culture may be more hyperbolic than most. Collectively, professors here have internalized the top spot *Maclean's* awards UW year after year in its reputational ranking. Even those uninvolved in the prestigious new think-tanks (Institute for Quantum Computing, Perimeter Institute, CIGI, Balsillie School, sig@waterloo, etc.) bask in reflected glory. The region's high-tech prowess and relative prosperity boost our institutional self-concept.

My guess is that Waterloo is an exceptionally clear case of an inflation in professorial evaluation, a collapse of checks on superlatives, that has occurred across the continent. The cultural forces propelling student grade inflation are deeper and broader than is generally acknowledged. We professors are beneficiaries of the same inflationary trend.

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Pat will help you with questions about terms and conditions of employment, policies, the Memorandum of Agreement, and historical information. She also serves as resource person to the FAUW Board of Directors and committees.

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