

STAFF NEWS

Message from UWSA President

It's been quite busy at the Staff Association in the last couple of months. We are continuing our re-structuring to fine tune how the SA runs. For example, release time for the Executive has been changed. The past president and secretary are now given more time to perform their SA duties and directors also are given a more defined amount of time to perform theirs. This gives the supervisors of our regular day jobs more direction and clarity.

We will also be creating a "Service Agreement" to better serve you, the members. The Service Agreement will state what services you can expect and in what time frame you can expect them.

I would like to draw your attention to the new SA logo and the new website. The website is continuing to undergo development and over the next month all SA members will be given access to the UWSA SharePoint site where members-only documents will be kept. Our blog will also be more fully incorporated with the site. The goal is to encourage discussion and make it easier to get opinions and feedback.

Jean Zadilsky has resigned from her position as Director on the Staff Association Executive Committee. Jean's knowledge, advice and sense of humour will be missed by the Executive Committee.

Cheers,
Doug Dye, UWSA President

SOCIAL COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Social Committee has been busy planning fun events. The Wine Tour that is happening on May 23, 2009 is now FULL!! Thank you for your support and to Jennifer Fleet, Kelly Wilker-Draves and Darlene Garside for their planning efforts. What fun it will be to visit four wineries in one day! Don't forget about our annual Shopping Trip to Erie, Pennsylvania in the Fall. More information will be circulated as it becomes available. If you are interested in joining the Social Committee or have any questions/recommendations, feel free to contact me.

- Marta Bailey, UWSA Director
marta@uwaterloo.ca

PENSION & BENEFITS & COMPENSATION (PB&C) SUB-COMMITTEE

In my new role as a UWSA Director, one of my responsibilities is to chair the Pension & Benefits & Compensation (PB&C) Sub-Committee. The purpose of the sub-committee of the UW Staff Association, not to be confused with the university-level Pension and Benefits Committee, is to monitor the UW pension and benefit package and the UW compensation package relative to perceived reasonableness and acceptability by staff.

With economic uncertainty at the front of our minds, I recognize the need to improve communication to staff regarding pension, benefits and compensation. As the chair, I will liaise with our staff representatives on the UW Pension and Benefits Committee and the Provost's Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation (PACSC), and facilitate communication with members through regular area representative meetings, Staff News, and PB&C sub-committee meetings once per term.

In this edition, I'd like to share an update on our pension fund from staff representatives Stephen Cook and Nelson Carrillos. "UW's pension is down by 16.8%, but it has performed better than some other plans due to our investment in real return bonds. We are not in trouble, but we are looking at funding models very seriously. To ensure the fund remains in a healthy position, on March 27 the Pension & Benefits Committee voted to temporarily increase both employees' and UW's pension contributions effective May 1, 2009. The staff contribution rate will be adjusted to 5.8% of pay - up 0.75%. UW will continue to maintain its current funding ratio of \$1.45 for each dollar contributed by the members." Stephen and Nelson will continue to provide us with updates as information becomes available.

I encourage you to communicate your questions about the UWSA Pension & Benefits & Compensation Sub-Committee to me, and I hope you will attend our Winter 2009 term meeting on Thursday, April 23 from noon-1pm, location to be announced.

- Chantel Franklin, UWSA Director
ckfrankl@uwaterloo.ca

UW POLICY 18, ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND FUNDING-CONTINGENT POSITIONS

[UW Policy 18](#), Staff Employment, Section 7 provides for several benefits, protections and processes for staff whose positions are reorganized, redistributed or eliminated. While elimination of staff positions is always regrettable, it is a rare occurrence, and the Provost has said that "...Laying off people is the last thing you want to do in dealing with this kind of crisis [the current economic climate]" (Ref: <http://www.bulletin.uwaterloo.ca/2009/mar/26th.html>).

Section 7b, Provisions for Loss of Employment gives regular staff the following provision in the event that a position is eliminated:

- Notice of termination equal to roughly 2 ½ weeks per year of employment (see Appendix B for precise details).
- Pay in Lieu of Notice, allowing a staff member to receive a lump-sum payment corresponding to the notice period. For employees with more than five years' service, this will be supplemented by severance pay, as defined by the Ontario Employment Standard Act.
- Working Notice, which give the staff member an option to work for some portion (usually a month) of the notice period.
- Retention of Internal Status grants the staff member equal rights to apply for "internal" positions at UW. The internal status period lasts throughout the notice period plus an additional six months.
- Re-employment (getting another job at UW) provisions ensure that staff members retain their service credit if rehired within 12 months (or the notice period if longer), which affects vacation credits and similar entitlements.
- Relocation assistance, including information and referral to external agencies for assistance with finding employment.
- Reinstatement to former position, in the event that the position that was eliminated is re-established within 12 months of termination.

Officially, these provisions are not available for staff whose positions are classified as funding-contingent (see Section 2, Eligibility). However, in practice, some of the provisions, such as relocation assistance, are routinely made available to affected funding-contingent staff.

Notably though, the notice of termination and pay in lieu of notice are not. This is a consequence of the nature of funding-contingent positions, which are used in situations where the funding for a position is not permanent, such as

fixed-term grants, external research funds, and other ancillary operations (which may include "operating budget" positions). In many situations, funding is unpredictable and it would be infeasible to provide extended notice periods, especially for long-term staff. HR encourages department managers of terminated funding-contingent staff to be as fair as possible (within financial and timing constraints) – but ultimately the legal obligation in such situations is to follow the provincial Employment Standards.

The UWSA Executive believes that it is important to provide equitable treatment to all staff wherever possible. Through its participation on the Staff Relations Committee (SRC), The UWSA is working to revise Policy 18 to improve employment-loss provisions for funding-contingent staff.

-Trevor Grove, UWSA Secretary

Current UWSA Executive Committee

President: [Doug Dye](#), Safety Office, COM, Ext. 35613
Past-President: [Jesse Rodgers](#), IST, TC 0203, Ext. 33874
Treasurer: [Dawn McCutcheon](#), Health Studies & Gerontology, BMH, Ext. 32921
Secretary: [Trevor Grove](#), CSCF, DC 2554B, Ext. 34679
Director: [Marta Bailey](#), CTE, LIB, Ext. 33153
Director: [Chantel Franklin](#), Dean of Engineering Office, CPH, Ext. 37799
Director: [Darlene Ryan](#), International Student Office, NH, Ext. 32814
Executive Manager: [Gail Spencer](#), DC 3608, Ext. 38668
Office Manager: [Darlene Garside](#), DC 3603, Ext. 33566

Congratulations to the following staff who were hired or promoted in January and February 2009:

New Hires:

Martin Scherer, DOE - Engineering Science Quest
Sherilee Diebold-Cooze, Dean of Arts
Tina Cochrane, CBRPE
Lorraine Craig, Psychology
Barbara Zupko, CBRPE
Frank DeMaio, CEMC
Adrian Moloney, Federation of Students

Promotions and Transfers:

Janice Halliday, Combinatorics & Optimizations
Michael Patterson, Information Systems & Technology
Beverly Rodgers, Management Sciences
Paula Murphy, Waterloo International

STAFF ENHANCEMENT GRANT HELPS STAFF MEMBER VOLUNTEER IN EL SALVADOR

For most of Scott Murie's working life here at UW, he has been surrounded by course learning materials. Textbooks, course notes, cd's (and in the old days cassette tapes) line the shelves in the warehouse of Distance and Continuing Education, where Murie is now Supervisor of Duplication and Distribution. These materials were something he took for granted until he began getting more serious about his own education and gained experience volunteering both in the KW community and in South America. He saw the undeniable connection between poverty and those who lacked access to education.

In Honduras, Murie helped by volunteering his own physical labour; however, a more urgent and repeated request from the people there was to be taught English. Murie looked for an agency to work with to provide this educational service for this demographic. When he realized there wasn't one, he created his own. This was the founding of [Can-Teach International](#). Working with a friend from El Salvador with a connection to schools there, and a group of local volunteers with various experience and expertise, Murie and his team got started in November 2005.

By February 2006, he had volunteers heading to El Salvador to make connections and establish need. By June 2006, volunteers were visiting English classrooms in El Salvador. Can-Teach was well on its way to fulfilling its mission statement: "Can-Teach will send Canadian volunteers to host countries to assist with the teaching of



Students at a rural school in El Salvador

English to school-aged children and adults with limited access to English classes".

Although teachers from El Salvador can read and write English, they are unable to practice conversational English with their students. This is where the volunteers play a key role. They assist teachers and students with pronunciation and conversation using various exercises coordinated by Salvadoran school officials, teachers, and Can-Teach staff. Can-Teach also fundraises in Canada and organizes donations such as teaching supplies, books, paper, toys, sports equipment, back-packs and toothbrushes.

For these Latin American School children, learning conversational English creates opportunity. Murie notes that Can-Teach volunteers working in these schools have the potential to reach thousands of children throughout El Salvador who come from families that are at or below the El Salvadorian poverty standards.

Murie applied for a Staff Enhancement Grant (SEG) in April 2007. He received funds in July 2007 for his fifth trip to El Salvador. As volunteers pay their own way, this helped with expenses such as accommodation in a hostel, food, and transportation between schools.

The SEG was the vision of Bruce Lumsden who retired as Director of Cooperative Education in June 2005. It was established to "help cover costs associated with courses (excluding tuition) or pursuit of other experiences undertaken for individual personal and professional



Scott with a teacher in El Salvador

development” of UW staff members. The Staff Association donated \$5,000.00 at that time and it was Bruce’s hope that UW employees would continue contributions with an aim that staff would support each other’s opportunities for development.

The Staff Association reviews applications and approves the grants on behalf of the University of Waterloo. The amount of each Staff Enhancement Grant is up to \$500.00. To date, a total of five staff members, including Scott, have received a grant and they have involved a wide variety of activities.

Murie was very happy with the SEG contribution noting that, “SEG funds can push you beyond where you thought your limits were in volunteering”. He believes that volunteering is essential to a healthy community and he plans to continue bringing this educational opportunity to children and teachers in areas where there is a need, possibly Nicaragua and Cuba next year.

Check out the SA website for the SEG Terms of Reference and Application form. Is there a personal or professional opportunity that the SEG can help you attain?

- Gail Spencer, UWSA Executive Manager



Students in El Salvador

SECRETARY’S REPORT:

A CHANGE IN THE SA EXECUTIVE AND UW COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

In February, Jean Zadilsky resigned from the Staff Association Executive for personal reasons. According to the Association’s Constitution, the Executive can appoint a replacement member onto the Executive to serve until the next election. The election is scheduled for October 2009, with the Call for Nominations being issued in August 2009 (4 ½ months from now). As Jean’s seat on the Executive would have been up for election anyway, the current Executive decided not to appoint someone to sit for such a short period and has decided to leave the seat vacant until the next regularly-scheduled election.

Jean was extremely active in committee work with the UWSA, sitting on both the Staff Relations Committee (SRC) and the Provost’s Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation (PACSC). Her absence would mean that the UWSA would be missing important representation, and so the Executive has made the following committee substitutions:

- Marta Bailey, a current Executive member, a member of PACSC and the designated SRC “alternate” member will take Jean’s place at SRC.
- Cathy Jardine, a former Executive member and currently a non-voting member-at-large of PACSC, will become a full-fledged voting member. Cathy has been a member of PACSC since January 2008.

Trevor Grove, Secretary of the Staff Association, commented: “We decided to leave the seat vacant because the familiarization period for incoming Executive members it typically three or more months, and there seemed to be little benefit in appointing someone whose term would be done just as they were becoming comfortable in the role. However, we felt it was important to maintain full representation at the UW committees, so we are grateful to Marta and Cathy for agreeing to take up these additional duties”.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- UW Town Hall Meeting, Wednesday, April 8, 3:00-4:30 pm Humanities Theatre
- Pension, Benefits & Compensation Sub-Committee Meeting, Thursday, April 23, 12-1pm, location TBA.
- Niagara Region Wine Tour—Saturday, May 23, 2009 (sold out)