



2005 AGM & CONVENTION

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

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BARGAINING CO-ORDINATION & REVIEW COMMITTEE

THE BARGAINING COORDINATION & REVIEW Committee met on September 15, 2004, and January 11 and 12, 2005. The January meeting was a shared meeting with the FPSE Provincial Bargaining Caucus.

At the September meeting the committee discussed:

- ♦ membership readiness to commence negotiations;
- ♦ employer willingness to commence negotiations;
- ♦ strategies for local bargaining;
- ♦ priorities and time frames for provincial bargaining;
- ♦ communications to support local and provincial bargaining agendas.

As a result of these discussions, BCRC recommended the following motion to Presidents' Council:

That all locals who are participants at the MID table, and who are prepared to table their local demands, send a written notice to their employer that the local wishes to commence local bargaining; and that notice to bargaining be sent on Thursday, September 23, 2004.

At the joint BCRC/Bargaining Caucus meeting in January the majority of discussions centered on provincial negotiations and therefore it was agreed that George Davison, FPSE Vice-President and bargaining spokesperson, would chair the meeting.

The first item of business was a media workshop presented by Bill Tieleman of West Star Communications. The workshop was well received and useful for committee/caucus members.

Other items for discussion and action included

- ♦ MID table developments;
- ♦ reports from locals on local bargaining issues;
- ♦ setting bargaining priorities for the FPSE caucus;

- ♦ developing strategies and tactics to achieve identified priorities;
- ♦ recommending a general wage increase and term of agreement to Presidents' Council.

I would like to thank the BCRC members and Staff Representatives David Piasta and Jeff McKeil for their hard work this past year on the local and provincial bargaining fronts. It has been a difficult round of bargaining indeed and the hard work of our negotiators was critical in the achievement of a tentative MID deal. We will take the information and experience we garnered from this round to prepare us all for future rounds.

On a personal note, I would like to thank you all for your support and concern during my recent illness. It was greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Van Steinburg (Local 5),
BCRC Chair

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CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

CARC HELD ITS TWO REGULAR MEETINGS ON September 24-25, 2004, and January 21-22, 2005. These face-to-face meetings focussed on discussion of common collective agreement issues which are being addressed at the locals.

In September, a marathon round robin of local reports took up both the Friday evening and Saturday morning sessions. A number of common issues were identified; these included student complaints process, reduction/layoff notice while on leave, mental health issues as related to return to work, duty to accommodate, discipline, STD/LTD claims, search committees, evaluation, international education, and deterioration of the collegial model. Staff Representative Lee Whyte presented information on reference checks and privacy policies.

The committee discussed whether member locals could release contact information of their members to FPSE for use in the focus groups

on public post-secondary education. Time was spent brainstorming issues affecting developmental education in the college system. This information was sent to the organizing committee for the FPSE Developmental Education Conference, held on October 29-30, 2004.

In January, each member gave brief highlights from their written reports. Issues reported included layoff/workload reduction, evaluation, workload scheduling, employment contract, return-to-work/disability, regularization, student complaints, professional development, management doing faculty work/hiring, and our perennial topic - harassment (faculty/faculty, faculty/staff, faculty/student). Secretary-Treasurer Dileep Athaide, Executive Liaison to CARC, presented a Grievance Arbitration Review Committee report.

Saturday morning Maureen Parkes, a faculty member in the Nursing Department at Malaspina University College, presented a workshop on mental health issues. The workshop was very informative and addressed many of the issues and concerns which stewards had raised at our fall meeting. The background on various mental illnesses and her debunking of myths about mental illness raised our awareness and answered many questions. Over the past several years, disability claims and return to work programs for our members have become a serious problem.

In the afternoon, the issuing of reduction or layoff notices to faculty members while they are on leave (vacation, maternity, or sick) was discussed. Staff Representative Lee Whyte reviewed the BC Public School Employers' Association and BC Teachers' Federation arbitration decisions on this issue. Committee members Linda Forsythe (Local 4) and Ingrid Kolsteren (Local 15) reported on the FPSE Developmental Education Conference.

Ingrid also reported on the CAUT Senior Grievance Officers Workshop, which she had kindly agreed to attend in my stead.

Thank you to Staff Representative Lee Whyte, Executive Liaison Dileep Athaide and FPSE administrative staff for their support. I would like to thank all CARC members, current and past, for their willingness to share their expertise and wisdom and for their willingness

to openly discuss issues that arise at their locals, as it is the sharing of this collective wisdom and experience that makes for informed stewards and effective contract administration across our system.

As my term as Chief Steward for Local 3 will end in May, I can no longer serve as CARC Chair. Linda Forsythe was elected as Chair, commencing September 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Connors (Local 3),
CARC Chair

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DISABILITY MANAGEMENT & REHABILITATION COMMITTEE

THIS IS THE THIRD YEAR FOR THE JOINT Rehabilitation Committee. This committee came into being as a result of the common agreement to provide colleges with a joint management and union committee that supported employees upon returning to work.

The role of this committee is to support and track faculty who are away on illness, as well as those who are likely to require assistance upon returning to work, such as accommodations or graduated return. Many committees are also assisting members with the paper work required to successfully attain their short-term and long-term disability benefits.

The committee has met only once this year due to complications with bargaining. The focus of our committee meeting this year was to (1) share successes and frustrations as we continue to develop the committee's roles, (2) provide education for our existing and new committee members, and (3) complete a best practices document.

The major issue that many local committees are facing is the appropriate involvement of our faculty members on the committee. Many locals' management are continuing to have difficulty involving the union members in the decision making, or giving enough information for the union representatives to be equal

participants on the committee, as per our mandate. This is an issue that the committee needs to continue to address.

At our spring meeting we had a presentation by Dave Scott, the Rehabilitation Program Coordinator for the BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF), who provided an excellent presentation and discussion on how the BCTF provide support, manage rehabilitation and successfully return their teachers to work. One important difference between our plan and the teachers' plan is that the BCTF is self-funded and, therefore, the teachers have control of the return to work plans. At this time our plan is employer-paid, and that may be one of the reasons that most committees are struggling to be actively included as equal members of the decision-making process.

Fran Miller (Local 3) has completed an excellent "Best Practices" document for the committee to use as a resource as our local committees continue to develop and evolve. Thank you, Fran, for all your excellent and hard work on the document. It is very much appreciated.

We developed a work plan for next year that continues to focus on best practices and on the support that the local committees need in order to successfully meet their mandates. As well, the committee wants to start a process to educate the general membership about disabilities, both visible and invisible. The goal would be to build understanding and support for colleagues with disabilities, as well as how to support these colleagues as they return to work.

We would like to thank FPSE Staff Representatives David Piasta, Jeff McKeil and Linda Sperling, and Executive Liaison George Davidson for their support this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Jajic (Local 4),
DMRC Chair

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EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE

AT THE 2004 AGM, THE COMPOSITION OF THE Education Policy Committee was changed so that it now has representation from each local, the FPSE President or Secretary-Treasurer or their designate, and an elected Chair. Although there was some discussion at the first meeting about broadening the mandate of the EPC, the committee decided that it would remain the same. Therefore, the EPC continued to discuss and report on education policy issues and initiatives that have the potential to, or currently do, affect the BC college, university-college, institute and agency system.

Some items that were brought to the committee as major concerns in the system are as follows:

- ♦ Commercialization
- ♦ Academic freedom
- ♦ Copyright
- ♦ Developmental education
- ♦ Online learning
- ♦ Learning outcomes
- ♦ High tuition and decreasing enrolment

To respond to these issues, the EPC recommended to Presidents' Council that they be included as topics of interest for the Joint Committees Spring Conference and/or the AGM.

Commercialization continues to be of great concern in our institutions. To measure its extent, the EPC worked on a survey that was presented to Presidents' Council and distributed to each institution for feedback. The results were then collated and reviewed at the February EPC meeting and presented at the *Public Education Not for Sale II* Conference, co-sponsored by the BCTF, FPSE and others. This conference was a follow-up of the one held in 2001.

EPC discussed the changes to the *Degree Authorization Act* that have opened the door to more private institutions entering the post-secondary system. This regulatory change is of great concern to public educators for articulation and transfer reasons. More adults in BC are taking courses from private providers than anywhere else in Canada, and many

institutions are being approached to form partnerships with private organizations. EPC will continue to monitor this situation and try to offer policy recommendations.

Academic freedom and copyright were accepted and presented as key topics at the spring Joint Committees Conference. Jim Turk, Executive Director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, delivered a key-note presentation, *Academic Freedom and Faculty Rights*, at the conference. Since these topics have been discussed for some time by the EPC and are such huge issues for educators, EPC will continue to monitor these issues and will offer recommendations or resolutions as it can.

The committee followed up on a request from the participants of the first Developmental Education Conference that was held in the fall to recommend to Presidents' Council that FPSE collect information on the state of developmental education, and increase public awareness and lobbying at the local and provincial levels. Template letters were developed by FPSE and distributed to locals to send to MLAs as part of this follow-up. Many articulation committees followed up and invited the Minister or her representative to attend their meetings.

Online education continues to be a concern. EPC representatives continue to report on what is happening with online education at their institutions. A sub-committee on distance learning was struck last year. Some of these issues have been taken to the bargaining table.

A Learning Outcomes research project was proposed by a local representative at EPC. The proposed draft of the survey will be submitted to the EPC members by the end of March for review and the final draft will be ready for distribution by May or in September. A resolution was passed to encourage Presidents' Council to support the Learning Outcomes Survey.

High tuition and decreased enrolment is another concern. The committee passed a recommendation to Presidents' Council to have FPSE advocate that the first year of education in a public post-secondary institution be free for permanent residents and Canadian citizens. It also recommended that FPSE research the cost and consequences of such an initiative.

With regard to the provincial election, the EPC also recommended to Presidents' Council that it encourage local executives to facilitate, support or assist with voter registration at their institutions for the May 17th election.

Due to personal circumstances, I was unable to attend the Joint Committees' Spring Conference and the February EPC meeting. In my absence, the committee passed a resolution that enables me to continue as Chair of the EPC for 2005-06. I appreciate the opportunity to chair this committee and, as Chair, would like to thank the FPSE Executive, Presidents' Council, Staff Representative Roseanne Moran, the members of EPC, and all other FPSE members who have supported the work of the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Harkess (Local 6),
EPC Chair

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HUMAN RIGHTS & INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE

THE COMMITTEE HELD TWO WELL-ATTENDED meetings over the 2004/05 academic year on October 1-2, 2004 and, in conjunction with the Joint Conference, February 11-12, 2005.

Ongoing business included:

- ♦ a review of the status of local HRISC representatives vis-à-vis their standing on local executive committees/councils. All FPSE locals do not yet have an HRISC representative on their executive nor an active reporting relationship.
- ♦ a review of the status of HRIS Committees at each local as a follow-up to the resolution passed by HRISC, October 2002, recommending to PC that locals establish HRIS Committees. Some locals do have human rights faculty committees; others have committees with college-wide representation; some have neither.

- ♦ re-affirmation of the FPSE's relationship with CoDevelopment Canada, including the annual financial support of two projects in Central America. Carol Wood, CoDev Program Director, met with the committee on February 11th to further acquaint members with CoDev's work, and to explore ways in which the FPSE and member locals can cooperate on projects and campaigns.

Informing locals of CoDev's projects and campaigns, promoting CoDev events with its southern partners, participating in development and distribution of K-12 school resources, and organizing a delegation to visit a southern partner were a few of the ways suggested to raise interest in and support for CoDev.

- ♦ the review and monitoring of human rights issues at member locals for provincial trends and policy development; awareness of the CAUT Retirement Policy.

Resolutions forwarded to Presidents' Council for their discussion included:

- ♦ Fair Trade beverages: that only fair trade beverages be used at FPSE-sponsored events (coffee, tea, hot chocolate); that Coca Cola products be boycotted; and that member locals be encouraged to implement such policies at their respective institutions.
- ♦ Positive Space campaign: that member locals urge their institutional administrators to implement the Positive Space campaign on their campuses; that informed counselling be available to faculty, staff and students; that policies be developed for the display and discussion of contentious materials on campuses; and further, the committee recommends that a rainbow ribbon (or equivalent) be made available to delegates at the FPSE 2005 AGM.
- ♦ War Resisters campaign: that the FPSE support the rights of war resisters to refugee asylum in Canada.

Recommendations for workshops for the Joint Committees Conference and/or for the 2005 AGM included:

- ♦ to work with partner organizations to sponsor a Canadian speaking tour by a Palestinian post-secondary educator, as a

means of animating the 2004 AGM resolution on Solidarity Actions to Support Palestinian Educators.

- ♦ that there be an educational panel on the current state of Union repression in Colombia and Haiti.
- ♦ that there be an educational panel on current Canadian legislation, Bill C-36 and the Safe Third Country agreement with the United States, which limits the human rights of war resisters and political refugees.

HRISC members' activities at their respective locals are inspiring. Many are involved in developing varied programs of events with educational/international speakers, films, etc., on human rights and social justice issues. Two locals (Local 8 and 14) sponsored a World Community Film Festival. Local 10 supported an Amnesty International Film Festival. Local 8 also sponsored a Child Labour Conference. At NWCC (Local 11), notable human rights anniversary dates are being included in student daytimers, Citizenship & Immigration Canada's curriculum "Cultivating Peace" is being used in two courses, and a college-wide human rights committee is awarding monies to support students' human rights projects. Langara (Local 14) is the hub for the Canadian Coalition to Oppose Missile Defense. Some Positive Space workshops have been held. Marvelous activists! ... Just another busy year!

Thank you, Tom Friedman, Executive Liaison to HRISC, for your leadership and valuable advice. Thank you, Lee Whyte, Staff Representative, for your wise and patient support of the committee. And thank you, Presidents' Council and President Cindy Oliver, for respecting and moving forward the recommendations and resolutions of HRISC.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Ball (Local 10),
HRISC Chair

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NON-REGULAR FACULTY COMMITTEE

THIS YEAR THE NON-REGULAR COMMITTEE met twice, once in November and then again in February.

Many new members attended the November meeting and, as such, much effort was spent getting to know each other and the common issues shared by the locals. During this meeting, elections occurred whereby Non-Regular representatives were elected to the Standing Committees, and a new Chair was elected. It was suggested because of the great turnover rate on this committee, especially with the drop-out rate when people get regularized, that the local representatives to the Non-Regular Faculty Committee commit to two years. Also during this meeting the committee's name was changed from the Committee on the Status of Non-Regular Faculty to the Non-Regular Faculty Committee.

The February meeting identified important issues that impact non-regular faculty. The topics of discussion included job security issues of regularization, the right of first refusal and the right of accrual, and the posting of jobs internally throughout the post-secondary system.

As well as job security, the Non-Regular Faculty representatives were deeply concerned with compensation equity and the plight of non-regular faculty who work at more than one institution in the system. The committee developed five resolutions and a workshop suggestion for the AGM in Kamloops. The resolutions included:

- ♦ That FPSE compensate the non-regular faculty representatives to Common Table Bargaining when release time is not feasible.
- ♦ That FPSE encourage locals to compensate non-regular faculty to the local bargaining tables where release time is not feasible.
- ♦ That FPSE encourage locals to ensure that all faculty members are afforded the same rights to academic freedom under their Collective Agreements.
- ♦ That FPSE encourage locals to adopt as a bargaining priority a system-wide internal

posting system for all vacancies prior to external system hiring.

- ♦ That FPSE encourage locals to make the right of first refusal and right of accrual for non-regular faculty a bargaining priority.

The AGM workshop suggestion was "Non-Regular Faculty: Who Cares? Toward a Culture of Inclusion". A sub-committee has been struck to work on this workshop.

Although privileged to have someone as widely respected as Linda Sperling as our Staff Representative, we were sad to know it was her last meeting. On behalf of the committee, we would like to thank Linda for her guidance, for sharing her wisdom, and for being an exemplary person.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheree Ronaasen (Local 11),
NRFC Chair

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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

THE FPSE OH&S COMMITTEE MET TWICE THIS year, with good representation from locals at both meetings.

We continued our mission of having professional development sessions at our fall meetings. In October, we participated in a workshop entitled "Violence in the Workplace and Privacy Rights", facilitated by Maria Koroneos of McGrady Baugh and Whyte. There was lively discussion and lots of questions for Maria surrounding this topic. All agreed a topic for a workshop for Fall 2005 could be how to conduct effective workplace inspections.

Staff Representative Barb Brown briefed us on legislative changes. These included changes to occupational exposure limits and first aid requirements. Further changes to WCB regulations have been postponed till October 2005. Barb also circulated plain language material explaining Bill C-45, which amends the Criminal Code to include the criminal liability of organizations.

Carolynne Fardy briefed the committee on conferences that she had attended: the first CAUT OH&S Conference, held in Halifax, as well as the Western Pacific Safety Conference which was held in Richmond. The CAUT event was a valuable conference for making contacts at other institutions throughout Canada.

All locals reported on their attempts to address the scent-considerate motion that was passed at the 2004 AGM.

The committee recommended a workshop dealing with 'diffusing difficult situations and recognizing the signs of anger in others' for the Joint Conference in February. Barb was able to secure an individual from the Justice Institute who presented a workshop at the conference.

Other discussions included qualifications of OH&S officers at various institutions, as well as working alone guidelines and risk assessment guidelines and forms.

Carolynne Fardy was re-elected as OHSC Chair for another term. She briefed the group on the CLC Health, Safety & Environment Conference that was held in Ottawa in January 2005. Materials that were obtained from this conference were given to Barb to use as reference material for the new FPSE website.

The following motions were passed by the FPSE OH&S Committee:

1. *Whereas more than 69,000 workers are injured by needle sticks and/or sharps each year in Canada; and*

Whereas safety-engineered needles are available and much safer; and

Whereas Saskatchewan has committed to mandate the use of safety-engineered needles and medical sharps;

Therefore be it resolved that FPSE lobby the provincial government to mandate the use of safety-engineered needles and medical sharps in British Columbia.

2. *Whereas the International Labour Organization estimates that 100,000 workers die per year from cancer caused by asbestos, and unknown tens of thousands of other workers are dying from asbestosis and other asbestos related diseases; and*

Whereas Canada is the world's second biggest exporter of chrysotile asbestos; and

Whereas Canada exports to the developing world where there are poor, if any, safeguards for the use of asbestos; and

Whereas the Canadian government promotes the safety of asbestos to these countries by financing the Asbestos Institute, a Canadian-based organization which has been lobbying for increased asbestos use around the world since the mid-1980s;

Therefore be it resolved that FPSE call on the Canadian government to ban the export of asbestos, withdraw its financial and political support from the Asbestos Institute, and lobby for a world-wide ban on the use of asbestos.

3. *Whereas the BC Liberals passed legislation that would permit employers to hire children aged 12 to 15 with only a note from a parent; and*

Whereas there is no longer a formal permitting process and independent third party regulatory body like the Employment Standards Branch looking out for the safety and efficacy of employing young children;

Therefore be it resolved that FPSE call on the BC Liberals to rescind changes to the BC Child Law in Bill 37, and

Be it further resolved that the government ensure the Employment Standards Branch is adequately staffed so that laws regarding working children aged 12 to 15 are enforced; and

Be it finally resolved that the BC government ensure that all BC families have a liveable income so that children do not need to work to support their families.

I would like to thank Barb Brown, our most efficient Staff Representative, for all her hard work. Thanks as well to our Executive Liaison George Davison, who has worked tirelessly for us all this year.

Respectfully submitted

Carolynne Fardy (Local 2),
OHSC Chair

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PENSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FPSE'S PENSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAD a year of adjustment as we dealt with new terms of reference, which resulted in a new Chair. We thank John Wilson (Local 1) for his excellent work as past Chair of PAC. John was elected in October 2001 and served in the position for three years.

As usual PAC had two full meetings, each with an education session and a good deal of discussion and information. Meeting attendance continues to be excellent, with some locals sending observers to ensure a smooth transition from current members to future members.

At the request of the FPSE Presidents' Council, we are recommending a change to our terms of reference to clarify the role that is played on the committee by those who are in receipt of a pension from the College Pension Plan. We are fortunate to have so many members continue, as was envisioned by the four year commitment expected of members.

Education sessions

Our education sessions were very useful. In the fall, we had David Shymko, financial planner and a partner in MacDonald, Shymko and Company Ltd, fee only financial advisors. Mr. Shymko talked to the committee about the basics of financial planning and participated in a discussion about the financial planning needs of faculty and staff, and the options and services available. As both FPSE staff and local representatives are often asked to deal with issues related to personal financial planning for members, locals are encouraged to invite Mr. Shymko to their locals for further discussion and consultation as a resource to members.

At PAC's January meeting, we had a thought-provoking workshop on the College Pension Plan: Actuarial Assumptions and Implications. The workshop was offered by Jack Levi, a partner in the firm Eckler Partners Ltd. and the actuary for the College Pension Plan. We have recommended an abbreviated version of this workshop for the larger membership at the May 2005 AGM or in some other appropriate forum.

Committee business in the past year

The committee continued to monitor benefits issues related to the College Pension Plan, as well as the financial performance of the plan.

Specifically, the committee:

- ♦ reviewed and discussed the Actuarial Valuation as at August 31, 2003, and the resulting contribution increase for employers and employees.
- ♦ made recommendations concerning College Pension Plan seminars and how to improve access for FPSE local representatives to Pension Corporation Plan training seminars.
- ♦ reviewed progress towards the development of a College Pension Plan chapter of the BC Retired Teachers' Association; we are pleased to report some progress has been made, thanks in part to the hard work of past PAC retiree representative Sam Lewindon.
- ♦ reviewed changes to College Pension Plan options for retiring members.
- ♦ discussed the implications of the development of UBC Okanagan for the College Pension Plan.
- ♦ reviewed developments related to the salary definition for pension purposes.
- ♦ urged FPSE to make progress towards developing a proposed pension plan investment policy that takes social and ethical considerations into account, and towards seeing a new investment fund with social and ethical screens as part of the College Pension Plan investment strategy.

Pension negotiating issues and plan redesign

The committee spent some time discussing issues for any pension negotiations that might happen at a pension partners table. The committee reviewed a draft discussion paper, developed by Dominique Roelants (Local 8), and had an initial discussion of issues and options related to moving towards an age neutral retirement model. Committee members identified a number of concerns about the complexity of the issues, the implications for bargaining, and how such a model would meet the needs of different groups of members.

Thanks to the College Pension Plan trustees, who are appointed by FPSE: Dennis Anderson (Retiree), Staff Representative Roseanne Moran, Dominique Roelants and John Wilson. The contributions of trustees to protecting our pension plan and to assisting FPSE locals to be effective advocates for members are very important to the organization.

Thank you to Roseanne Moran who, in her role as Staff Representative, helps to ensure that committee meetings are informative and well-supported. I want also to thank the Pension Advisory Committee for its hard work. Members give up their time and energy and I want to acknowledge how important that is to FPSE as an organization and to each individual member of the College Pension Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Valleau (Local 5),
PAC Chair

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (PDC) met in October 2004 and February 2005. Committee members attended a workshop on "Flawless Communication" and examined effective group functioning and challenges to facilitation within a public sector environment. The session produced a variety of recommendations which are available to FPSE members.

"Discussion and Information Exchange: Supportive Educational Environments" was also addressed by the committee. Issues included the generational division in most institutions and strategies such as orientation, mentoring, and handbooks to support new faculty. A 'culture of inclusion' was recommended and we encourage locals to develop mentoring or peer coaching programs and to seek institutional funding for such programs.

The PD comparison chart compares locals in terms of: scholarly activity, education leave, PD days, PD funds, and sabbaticals. The PDC contributes to a section of the new FPSE website devoted to PD issues. The comparison chart

data will be added to the site and feedback is encouraged to keep the information current.

Recommendations for workshops for the FPSE 2005 Annual General Meeting included:

- ♦ Academic Freedom, with a focus on a primer for new faculty. Worth noting is the Dorsey decision, which is a significant victory in defence of faculty rights, academic freedom and copyright in relation to curriculum development.
- ♦ Commercialization/corporatization of education and implications for teaching and learning.

The committee also identified other topics that may be useful for future spring conferences or for committee workshops at regular meetings. These include: the growing field of study in the area of the scholarship of teaching and learning; the development and support needs of faculty who take on the role of chairs and coordinators (focusing both on collective agreement provisions and institutional supports); ethics in education; internationalizing the curriculum; event planning; writing for publication; and the need for a session on what kind of support faculty need from chairs/coordinators.

Documentaries & Professional Development

This initiative proposes giving the scholarship of our colleagues a wider audience through documenting lectures, special presentations, and interviewing faculty. Presenters would be selected on a voluntary basis and the programming provided for viewing on local cable TV. Documentaries and educational videos produced by faculty and students might also be made available on-line through the FPSE website. Given the community outreach component of the project, institutional and Ministry funding might be sought. More on this to follow.

Thanks to Staff Representative Jeff McKeil, Executive Liaison Melanie Fahlman Reid, and Administrative Assistant Nancy Yip.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Clayton (Local 21),
PDC Chair

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STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE

THE STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE MET IN October and February, with most locals in attendance. Issues that have been prominent around our table include:

Bargaining issues

The following issues have been identified as having particularly strong implications for women members:

- ♦ Workload of Non-Instructional Faculty: Most locals do not have workload language for counselors or librarians. Both of these job categories are highly gendered, with most being women. There is certainly no standard across the province for how workload should be defined or limited for these job categories. In many locals, the pressures to economize have hit counselors and librarians particularly hard, as these are, in the short run, relatively “invisible” places to make cuts (i.e., they do not directly result in cancelled classes or programs). Consequently, these people have borne a disproportionate burden in increased workload and lost positions. The SWC supports the development of and bargaining for workload clauses to protect non-instructional faculty.
- ♦ Compassionate Care Leave: The “Family Friendly Workplace” survey that we distributed among locals in 2003/2004 clearly indicated that elder care and bereavement are big issues among our members. The new EI Compassionate Care leave benefit provides inadequate income for many members who would like to take advantage of it. The SWC strongly supports bargaining for a top-up to this benefit.

Educational policy issues

- ♦ Academic Freedom: Several members have had challenges to course content from students who object to explicit sexual, religious or political issues being raised in class reading or discussion. The rise of the religious right seeks to put instructors on the defensive in defending course content. In addition, college administrations that are under financial pressure may feel justified

in asking instructors to tone down content and to avoid offending community members. In practice, colleges have varied in the manner and degree to which they have supported faculty members against challenges to academic freedom. The SWC affirms the principle of academic freedom and calls upon colleges to defend, in policy and in practice, the right to teach challenging issues.

- ♦ Contentious Displays: While on the one hand instructors have been challenged for teaching contentious issues in class, there has been a rise in off-campus groups using public space on campus to display contentious and, in some cases, offensive material aimed at women. For example, the anti-abortion “Genocide Awareness Project” (GAP) has mounted displays on several university campuses in Canada portraying, in very large format, photographs of aborted fetuses alongside images of Nazi concentration camps and the extermination of European Jews. Some students and faculty complain that such displays constitute a hostile environment for working and learning. The recent involvement of the religious right in the same-sex marriage debate raises concerns also of material offensive and threatening to GLBT students and faculty being displayed in a similar fashion.

Such displays do indeed affect the learning and working environment inasmuch as they single out vulnerable groups for ideological and emotional attacks. The SWC has struggled with weighing the right to expression and free debate against the right to attend school and work without confronting material that is tantamount to harassment. The SWC supports locals in working toward clear policies for the display of contentious materials on campus, with the goal of fostering free, open and safe participation by all members of the community, including those whose minority status may make them particularly vulnerable to intimidation and silencing by the powerful religious right.

- ♦ Support for GLBT Students and Faculty: In the current political climate, and with the topic of same-sex marriage being very salient to students, it is particularly urgent

to provide safety for GLBT students and faculty against harassment, intimidation, violence and discrimination. The SWC supports the provision of Positive Space programs for college campuses.

Political issues

The SWC has given considerable focus to the general status of women in BC, and how this affects students, faculty and staff in our institutions. Hence, we are extremely concerned about the erosion of women's jobs, wages, social assistance and supports (including child daycare) under the provincial Liberal government. The evidence is overwhelming that the current blend of fiscal and social conservatism in BC's legislature has disproportionately harmed women and children.

A short list of components to what we have come to call the "War on Women" includes:

- ♦ elimination of the Ministry of Women's Equality
- ♦ elimination of funding to women's centres
- ♦ elimination of the Employment Equity program
- ♦ pay equity under review
- ♦ \$15.6 million scrapped from the Universal Childcare plan; cutbacks in existing childcare funding through more restrictive eligibility criteria; redirected funding from licensed to unregulated care
- ♦ welfare has become leaner and meaner, through the elimination of welfare exemptions for child support (\$100/mo) and part-time earnings (\$200/mo for a mother and child); the reclassification of single mothers with children over three as "employable"; reduction in allowable assets to \$2500; tight caps upon crisis grants; tightening of criteria for disability classification; waiting periods of three weeks for benefits; and more
- ♦ reduced training wage to \$6.00/hr; women make up 64% of training wage workers
- ♦ reduction in the BC Family Bonus for parents and elimination of the BC Seniors Supplement, both of which benefited women disproportionately to men
- ♦ elimination of legal aid for most family law cases

- ♦ loss of over 20,000 public sector jobs, nearly 75% of which belonged to women
- ♦ 30% cut in home support for the frail, elderly and disabled
- ♦ tuition deregulation
- ♦ students can no longer receive welfare and student assistance
- ♦ first year grants for students eliminated
- ♦ Work Study, Skills for Employment, Job Start and Employment Bridging programs cut
- ♦ changes in the *Employment Standards Act* affecting low wage earners, the majority of whom are women

These and other changes have made it much more difficult for women of all ages in BC who do not have the patronage of a high earning male spouse. We have noticed in particular the effects upon female students, and upon female faculty and staff.

The SWC sponsored a workshop on these issues, entitled "How to Stop the War on Women", at the FPSE Spring Conference. Mable Elmore and Patti Ducharme of the BC Federation of Labour presented on the impact of the cuts over the last 4 years on women, and on strategies for organizing before the election.

Workshops sponsored:

- ♦ Spring Conference: "How to Stop the War on Women"
- ♦ May AGM: "Academic Freedom and Human Rights and Censorship in the Learning Environment" (proposed)

Respectfully submitted,

Serena Patterson (Local 16),
SWC Chair

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