

BUFA VOICE



Message from the President

Michelle Webber

Changes to University Funding and the Public Reporting of our Workload and Income

As part of the Ontario government's budget announcement, funding for post-secondary institutions will increasingly be tied to institutional "performance". By 2024-2025, 60% of a university's funding from the government will be performance-based compared to 1.4% currently. Student enrolment will no longer drive the funding provided by the government. Over the 5-year life of the third round of Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMA), this enrolment-based funding will decrease to 33% from 92% of our current government funding.

Government priorities driving the new metrics are "skills and job outcomes" (including elements such as graduate earnings, experiential learning, skills and competencies, graduate employment, institutional strength/focus, and graduation rate) and "economic and community impact" (including research funding and capacity, innovation, community/local impact, and one institution-specific economic impact metric).

One of our major concerns is that these metrics are arbitrary and reflect the current government's agenda of training future workers, as well as priorities of the labour market, rather than reflecting the academic mission and mandate of our provincial institutions. *Universities play a more important societal role than simply training workers; universities help in the development of a creative, curious, and critical citizenry.*

Tying core government funding to such measures will have the potential to destabilize our institutions as funding will be unpredictable. It will wreak havoc on our ability to engage in long-term planning as we will not have predictable government funding until there is some calculation about our "performance". What would happen if we "failed" one or more measures and 50+% of our government funding was pulled in a given year?

Further, such an approach to funding may obstruct our pedagogical choices as there may be strong monetary incentives to pass students in the interests of retention and graduation rates. *The need to boost graduation rates may adversely affect admissions decisions so that the possibility of student success will supersede creating opportunities for students to grow and develop, thus thwarting equity and accessibility goals.* Our academic freedom rights may be impinged by "innovation" being measured by research funding that is secured from industry sources. Researchers may begin to shift their research agendas away from research in the public interest toward research that will bring industry dollars, or they may feel pressured to do applied research directed toward meeting the government's agenda. *Continued on next page...*

News and Views

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Performance metrics captured at the level of an institution have little ability to adequately or accurately reflect both the breadth, depth, and character of what we and our students contribute to, and benefit from, at the university. Performance metrics do little to measure performance, rather they demonstrate that institutions alter their internal processes to meet externally-set, arbitrary evaluation criteria.

Two other reporting metrics are of note for faculty (it is not clear whether these metrics will include professional librarian members). *Although not tied to funding, the government plans to “strengthen transparency” by reporting faculty compensation and workload under the category of “productivity, accountability, and transparency”.* It is unclear how the government plans to report our workloads, but, as you can imagine, this is very worrisome given we have a government who fails to meaningfully consult, who does not understand universities, and who will be sharing their conclusions with a public who think we have “summers off”.

This government has shown itself to be responsive to sustained protest. Therefore, we encourage you to raise concerns about the government actions regarding our sector. We encourage these to be raised at Senate, with members of the Board of Trustees—and with your families and your neighbours living next door. Many of the public do not understand universities, what makes universities flourish, and why a flourishing university system benefits society. And they will not understand if we do not tell them. Encourage your MPPs to reconsider the changes proposed to postsecondary education and to engage in meaningful consultation with faculty, professional librarians, students, and staff on future policy initiatives.

BUFA Member Appointments on National and Provincial Committees

Tim Ribaric

CAUT Librarians' and Archivists' Committee, Chair

Larry Savage

CAUT Collective Bargaining and Economic Benefits Committee, Member

Michelle Webber

CAUT Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, Member

OCUFA Executive Committee, Member-at-large



Let's think about ACADEMIC FREEDOM



Administrators with limited academic backgrounds are edging out academic voices and keeping them from commenting on Board decisions – a violation of intellectual and academic freedom.

Collegiality – or **shared governance** – is at the heart of what a university is and should be.

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Quality education.**



Proposed Changes to Pension Entitlement: Ford's so called "Double Dipping"

Tim Murphy, Communications Director

The Ontario government has proposed changes to employee compensation that, if passed (and it may have passed by the time this article is published), will affect about 70 of our faculty members. Mandatory retirement in Ontario was struck down in 2006. People are now free to work past the age of 65 as human rights legislation protects Ontario workers from discrimination in employment based on age. Employees over the age of 65 may choose to receive their pension; however, federal regulations *require* that people begin to draw their pension at age 71. For a variety of reasons, several faculty members continue to work past the age of 65 and some past 71. This means that, by law, people who continue to work past the age of 71 *must* begin drawing their pension, in addition to earning their regular pay.

The provincial government, under the guise of promoting faculty renewal (more on that in a moment), is proposing that for any faculty member collecting a pension and still working for the same employer, their total compensation be limited to not exceed their nominal compensation. While the details are not yet available, we imagine it might look something like the following scenario. A faculty member who has a nominal salary of \$150,000, at age 71 (when they must draw their pension by law), might see their compensation reduced by the amount of their pension entitlement. For example, if their pension entitlement is \$50,000/year, their employment earnings from the university would presumably be reduced to \$100,000, such that their total compensation would not exceed the original \$150,000. Such a proposal appears to be a workaround human rights legislation protecting people from ageism. *Pensions are deferred compensation and are thus a member's own savings. Why should their work be compensated at a rate of anything other than their full salary entitlement?* Furthermore, many academics continue to lead their fields well into their 70s.

Curiously, this reduction is only for people who continue to work for the same employer while drawing their pension. For example, the proposed legislation would not financially penalize a firefighter or police officer who retires with a full pension who then accepts a position teaching at a college. These proposed changes appear to target just those currently employed by colleges and universities who continue working for the same employer.

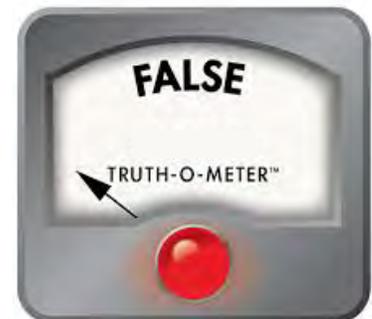
In addition, most people begin full time work in their early/mid 20's with the hope of retiring at 60-65 having worked 30-40 years. However, due to the enormous time and monetary commitments people make to work in academia, working past 65 or even 71 is not unexpected when many people do not attain a full-time, tenure-track or equivalent position until they are in their 30's or 40's. Women academics, in particular, may have delayed or interrupted career paths, given their often disproportionate familial responsibilities. Under such conditions, a typical 30-40 year career would not end until age 71, or later.

The government has termed this legal requirement of collecting both a pension and pay as "double dipping" and wants to "limit compensation" and encourage "faculty renewal" because the current system is "unsustainable". The government wants older faculty to retire so, in theory, new faculty can be hired. When asked during consultations if they could provide evidence there would be any savings, their reply was that "they had heard" the current system is unsustainable. They were also asked if the government would commit to hiring, at a minimum, one new tenure-track faculty member for every retirement and they would not answer. *If the government will not commit to financially supporting the hiring of new tenure-track faculty, then this proposal is not about faculty renewal, it is simply an attempt to force out older faculty members and not be compelled to increase the financial support for our institutions to a level that would encourage universities to hire full-time, continuing faculty.*

Rather, such a scheme will no doubt encourage institutions to continue the trend of replacing retirees with more precariously employed contract academic staff in order to reduce overall compensation rates in the sector.

Our collective agreement limits the number of courses that are taught by non-BUFA instructors and limits the proportion of non-permanent faculty so it may appear that we are protected; however, this government has shown itself to be more than willing to enact legislation that will directly, and unilaterally, affect our right to bargain with our employer and undermine the integrity of our collective agreement. The most recent proposed legislation would grant the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities much greater power to control compensation for the sector.

Continued on next page...



The provincial government has also indicated that one of their priorities will be to move towards centralized, province-wide bargaining, thus circumventing individual collective agreements. If the government begins to overturn individually negotiated collective agreements this would set a dangerous precedent. *The choices this government is making could negatively affect the quality of education in Ontario for a generation. We need to let the government know that this is not fair and that we will not stand for these continued attacks on our sector.*

Please contact your local MPP and write to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to voice your concern. Also, inform your friends and family. We will need public support to win this fight. This government has recently backed down on several of their proposals on the basis of public opinion, so pressure from us can influence their decisions.



The contact information for various local MPPS, as well as the Minister and Deputy Minister for Training, Colleges, and Universities, are listed in full on page 6.



Jonah Butovsky, Health and Safety Officer

The BUFA Health and Safety Officer (HSO) has two main roles: 1) ensuring that Brock is a safe and healthy place to work (including employee accommodations and assistance in filing incident reports) and 2) helping members navigate the short- and long-term disability programs.

As Health and Safety Officer, I work proactively to assess and address potential workplace hazards as a member of the Joint Health and Safety Committee. Potential hazards include physical hazards (e.g., air quality, noise levels, ergonomic concerns) and social/psychological hazards (e.g., harassment, bullying). A member should get in touch with BUFA if they have any concerns about these types of hazards. It is crucial to document with BUFA all problematic incidents on campus in order to accurately capture their prevalence, assess the Employer's response, and assist when necessary for an acceptable remedy. I can also assist in the assessment of your

workplace and submitting requests for workplace alterations and/or accommodations.

Navigating the short and long-term disability programs can be complicated.

Members who are unable to perform their duties as a result of illness or accident can access short-term disability to a maximum of 105 days. Members under the age of 65 years who require more than 105 days to recover would apply for long-term disability (LTD). Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP) is the provider for LTD. Long-term disability pay is non-taxable and based on a percentage of a member's nominal salary. Members who are over 65 may be eligible for an extended short-term disability benefit. When a member is close to being medically able to resume their full duties, a return-to-work protocol is established. The Health and Safety Officer can also assist members with this protocol process. Members should contact the BUFA HSO when they need assistance with any of the following processes: navigating sick leave benefits, LTD, return-to work protocols; requesting accommodations; and filing incident reports.

You are welcome, and encouraged, to get in touch with the BUFA HSO if you have any questions or uncertainties associated with the above or other health and safety related issues. As your BUFA HSO, I can be reached at jbutovsky@brocku.ca, x4371.



Alternatively, you can contact our wonderful staff in the BUFA office and they will forward your message and/or redirect you to the appropriate contacts (bufa@brocku.ca, x3268).

Meet *Your* Negotiating Team

Our current Collective Agreement expires on June 30, 2020. While formal negotiations will likely not begin until April 2020, our team will begin their work preparing for bargaining in September 2019 and work through until bargaining concludes. Please find below an introduction to each of the team members.

Larry Savage – Chief Negotiator

Larry Savage is a Professor in the Department of Labour Studies at Brock University. Larry is a founding member of Brock's Social Justice Research Institute. He has also served as Vice-Chair of the University Senate, Chair of the Senate Governance Committee, and Chair of the Undergraduate Student Affairs Committee of Senate. Larry is a member of the Brock University Alumni Association, having earned both a BA and MA from Brock.

Larry has served on the BUFA Executive in various capacities over the years, as Communications Director, Grievance Officer, Member-at-Large, and as a member of the Joint Committee on the Administration of the Agreement, where he successfully negotiated a retirement incentive program for BUFA members in 2010. Larry represents BUFA as a member of the Collective Bargaining Committee of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations.

Larry has plenty of collective bargaining experience. He served as BUFA Chief Negotiator in the 2017 round of bargaining and vetted proposals for the previous two BUFA Negotiating Teams. Prior to joining Brock as a faculty member, Larry worked for a labour union in the private sector. He has taught a collective bargaining simulation course at Brock since 2001.

In addition to his deep record of union service, Larry is also a very active researcher. He has published seven books and has served as Principal Investigator on three SSHRC grants. His published work has appeared in over half a dozen academic journals, including the Supreme Court Law Review, the Canadian Journal of Political Science, and Labor Studies Journal. As a result of his research on faculty associations, Larry has been invited to deliver talks across the country on the current state of labour relations in Canadian universities.

Cathy van Ingen – Deputy Chief Negotiator

Cathy van Ingen is an Associate Professor in the Department of Kinesiology. Cathy has served two terms on the BUFA Negotiating Team (2013, 2017). She has also served on the BUFA Executive as Equity Officer (2017-2018).

Cathy researches the relationship between sport, inequality, and social change. Her work focuses on gender-based violence, sport for development and peace in the global north, and men's and women's boxing from both a historical and contemporary standpoint. She is the co-founder of Shape Your Life (SYL), a free, non-contact boxing program for female and trans survivors of violence in Toronto. SYL has been running for twelve years, and has worked with over 1800 participants. The project is currently funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Cathy was recently awarded a research fellow with the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport.

Spy-Dénommé-Welch – Team Member

Spy Dénommé-Welch is an interdisciplinary academic and artist. He is a composer, producer, and librettist/playwright of Anishnaabe identity. Spy's academic research focuses on various topics including Indigenous education, arts, music and performance. His Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Development Grant (SSHRC) examines the implications of gender representations and performance in historical Indianist music and cultural production.

He wrote and co-composed the Dora Mavor Moore-nominated opera *Giiwedini*. Recent credits (as writer and co-composer) include: *Contraries: a chamber requiem* (2018 - premiered at the Royal Conservatory of Music), *Sojourn* (2017 – commissioned by Signal Theatre for the dance opera *Bearing*); *HATE MAIL & Irreconcilable Trolls* (2017 – premiered at Native Earth's Aki Studio); *Bottlenecked* (2017); *Victorian Secrets* (2014 – presented at Native Earth's Aki Studio); *Spin Doctors* (2014); *Bike Rage* (2013). He is currently completing his second full-length opera, aimed at being premiered in the next couple of seasons.



Martin Kusy – Team Member

Martin Kusy is a Professor in the Department of Finance, Operations and Information Systems. Martin joined the Goodman School of Business in 1998, serving as Dean from 1998 to 2008. During this time, the MAcc, MBA, MSc, International programs, and AACBS accreditation were established at Goodman. He served as the Vice Chair of the Canadian Federation of Business School Deans (2007- 2008). He has served on numerous University, Senate, and Faculty committees. Martin has extensive experience with respect to university/faculty negotiations. He has served on administrative and faculty association bargaining teams at both universities.

Prior to Brock, Martin was at Concordia University where, inter alia, he served as Dean of Graduate Studies and Research for the School of Graduate Studies and Office of Research Services. His area of research is in stochastic programming. He has published in major journals and has received NSERC and SSHRC grants.

Felice Martinello – Team Member

Felice Martinello is a Professor in the Economics Department and a founding member of the Labour Studies program. He has served on Senate, as Chair of the Economics department, and as Director of Labour Studies. He is currently a member of the Brock University Pension Committee and the Niagara Community Observatory.

Felice's earlier research examined labour unions, with publications on wage determination in heavily unionized industries, union organizing activity, and stock market responses to union certification drives. His more recent work has focused on post-secondary education, including studies of faculty salaries, students' transitions across post-secondary programs and different types of institutions, decreases in students' grades from high school to university, and the effect of withdrawal dates on university students' retention. He is currently writing two reports on poverty in Niagara (and a Regional program focused on poverty) as part of a Brock evaluation/research contract with the Region.

Felice has considerable experience with faculty collective bargaining. He chaired the BUFA Collective Bargaining Committee for several years and has prepared several salary briefs for BUFA and other university faculty associations. He has also participated in the salary negotiations in several rounds of collective bargaining here at Brock. Felice served as Vice-Chair of the OCUFA Collective Bargaining Committee for three years and, in 2011-12, was awarded the Lorimer Award for outstanding contribution to faculty association bargaining in Ontario.

Beatrice Ombuki-Berman – Team Member

Beatrice (Betty) Ombuki-Berman is a Professor, Graduate Program Director and Project Course Coordinator in the Department of Computer Science at Brock University. Her PhD and ME specializing in intelligent systems were both granted in Japan, while her undergraduate double major in Mathematics and Computer Science was from Kenya, where she was born and raised. Her research is on computational intelligence for optimization and modeling problems. Her primary teaching areas include artificial intelligence, machine learning, neural networks and evolutionary computation courses. She co-founded the Bio-inspired Computational Intelligence Group at Brock and actively promotes AI research among students and others at Brock.

Betty is an elected Senator, currently serving on the Senate Governance Committee, and has also served in previous years on committees such as the Senate Graduate Studies Committee and as a BUFA Observer. She has served on various University/BUFA committees including the University Instructional Development Sub-Committee, Committee on Tenure and Promotion, Teaching Awards Committee, Status of Women in Science, and chaired a corporate sponsorship sub-committee.

Betty has completed grievance training and gained valuable collective bargaining experience while serving as part of the BUFA Negotiating Team in the 2017 round of bargaining. She looks forward to applying this knowledge and experience to BUFA's next round of CA negotiations.

Heather Whipple – Team Member

Heather Whipple is the Data/Liaison Librarian at Brock University. In that role, Heather supports Brock community members in finding and using published datasets and managing their own research data; she is also responsible for collection development, research help, and library instruction for faculty and students in Geography & Tourism, Labour Studies, Political Science, and Sustainability Science and Society. Before coming to Brock in 2010, Heather worked in academic libraries in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Oregon. Her research areas include cultural geographies of outer space and the work of Ursula K. Le Guin.

Heather served on the BUFA Executive as the Professional Librarian representative for 2013-2016 and on the BUFA Negotiating Team in 2016-2017.

Campaigns and Events at Brock and in the Community (Visit us online for more information)






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