

Building community through dialogue, discussion and debate

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Education: Just a By-Product?

Herbert Pimlott, Associate Professor, Communication Studies



Bullying, conditions at Brantford Campus, issues concerning contract faculty members... topics that speak to the state of Laurier. We can try and pretend that the situations of our colleagues are of little concern to those of us fortunate enough to be out of harm's way or, at least, tenured. We can pretend that what happens to others will have little impact on our lives, salaries, or working conditions. But, as we found out in Communication Studies, that's simply not the case. As an example, we learned that when a large proportion of our courses were taught by contract faculty, we couldn't avoid all the extra service and administrative committee work that would have (should have) been shared with other tenure-track faculty – not the least of which would have been the committee work necessary for hiring contract faculty. Our major contributors to this issue of *advocate* clearly outline the ways in which our growing inability (or unwillingness?) to find connections between ourselves – both personally and professionally – puts us in danger of destroying the very institution (as we know it) that has, paradoxically, brought us all together.

The fall-out of this climate, as both Pat Elliot and Gary Warrick point out, is far-reaching since our working conditions directly affect our students' learning conditions. This issue of *advocate* offers a number of insights into the "narcissistic turn" that seems to be rapidly infecting us and which will have a direct impact on the quality of students' education at Laurier, prompting us to ask whether or not education is becoming more the by-product – rather than primary focus – at Lau-

“Seven in ten South-western Ontarians believe that to fulfill their mandate, universities must combine research and teaching.”

Source: OCUFA Reports

OCUFA Battles Government Misconceptions About Professoriate



Judy Bates, President of WLUFA

As I know you are aware, the provincial government has indicated its desire to introduce far-reaching reforms in the university sector as part of its austerity program. Among the proposals is one that suggests a change to the current funding formula for universities – from one based on student numbers to one based on some form of measurable outcomes. In addition, the government would like to see a much stronger emphasis placed by post-secondary institutions on on-line learning – likely with a false belief that this is a cheaper option than in-class learning – as well as the differentiation of universities into a tiered system, with elite universities focusing on research and the rest becoming primarily teaching institutions.

Though the government seems oblivious to this, the rest of us are well aware that the role of the university professor is to create and disseminate knowledge. It is not to do one or the other.

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WLUFA Communications Committee

Editor, Chair, &
Regular Faculty
Representative:
Dr. Herbert Pimlott
hpimlott@wlu.ca

Managing Editor &
Communications:
Michele Kramer
mkramer@wlu.ca

CAF Liaison:
Dr. Helen Ramirez
hramirez@wlu.ca

Brantford Liaison :
Dr. Gary Warrick
gwarrick@wlu.ca

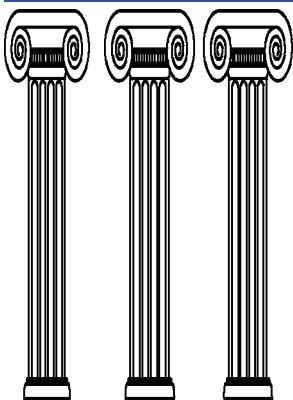
Regular Faculty Liaison :
Dr. Judith Fletcher
jfletcher@wlu.ca

CAF Representative:
Denise Davis-Gains
ddavisgains@wlu.ca

Brantford Rep:
Dr. Kari Brozowski
kbrozowski@wlu.ca

Layout & Design:
Larissa Brocklebank
lbrocklebank@wlu.ca

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The Narcissistic Turn: Neo-liberal Investments and the Death of Collegiality

Pat Elliot, *Professor, Sociology and MA
CAST*

Collegiality refers to a relationship between colleagues who are “united in common purpose” and who respect each other’s commitment to that purpose and their ability to work toward it (Wikipedia). Institutional arrangements to facilitate the acknowledgment of shared commitments that used to exist in many universities took the form of spaces like senior common rooms or faculty lounges where time would be devoted to informal meetings and discussion among peers. Without idealizing such spaces, which were no doubt more welcoming to some than to others, we might note that their disappearance coincides with a complete lack of time for any non-obligatory gathering. Increased pressure to produce knowledge measured in largely quantitative ways takes its toll on most of us who scramble to comply with its demands and who carefully monitor the consequences of our decreased participation elsewhere. Like our students, we calculate the most efficient means to the end: where students estimate how much effort is required to achieve the grades they desire, faculty estimate how many meetings can be missed, or how the work of teaching can be minimized without affecting their personal goals of achieving tenure, merit, or satisfactory teaching evaluations.

Make no mistake: these institutional pressures are as real as the predictable effects that I call “the narcissistic turn.” What is involved in such a turn? The pressure to put our research first diverts our energy away from other valu-

able activities that concern our common goals, including the vital work of faculty associations and unions that have the potential to promote our collective interests. Efforts to engage with more time-consuming pedagogies not oriented toward the technology of entertainment appear a superfluous waste of time, especially when increasing class sizes become a major institutional goal. Participation in the running of our respective departments and programs also becomes dispensable since the time required detracts from one’s personally valued and institutionally rewarded commitments to publication. Except for those who are paid to do so, meetings with students outside of class or specific office hours becomes an expendable choice because contributing to the development of others on one’s own time impedes the pursuit of one’s professional self-interest.

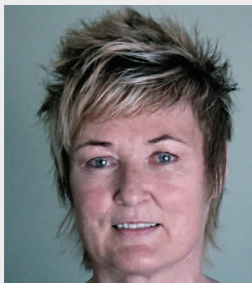
“Real commitments to common purpose become exceedingly rare...”

The impact of this institutionally created narcissistic turn is as profound as it is demoralizing. There is little to no recognition of “common purpose” since the only logical response to the institution is to retreat into one’s own scholarly production, however broadly or narrowly we define its terms. Real commitments to common purpose become exceedingly rare, and those who assume leadership positions out of such commitments are routinely dismissed by others. They are seen as serving some hidden personal agenda such as wielding the fictional power one imagines Chairs to possess, or as possessing
(continued on page 7)

“Increased pressure to produce knowledge measured in largely quantitative ways takes its toll on most of us who scramble to comply with its demands...”

Bullying & Incivility: Part 2 - Consequences and Approaches

Judith Fletcher,
Professor, His-
tory, Full-time
Liaison Officer



In the last issue of *Advocate* I described the rising problem of bullying and incivility in the academy, a problem under scrutiny in Canada and abroad. Current research reveals workplace bullying to be a widespread phenomenon with deleterious effects ranging from absenteeism and reduced productivity to costly investigations, lawsuits, and settlements. As educators we have the distinction, along with health care workers, of having the highest prevalence of bullying in the workplace.

Over the past fifteen years various jurisdictions have introduced measures – some quite robust, others less so – to address workplace bullying. As a result of a pioneering study by psychiatrist Marie-France Hirigoyen (*Le Harcèlement moral*, 1998), France made workplace bullying punishable by jail terms and severe fines. Canadian law is less stringent. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act* prohibit harassment based on race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, and gender. Unfortunately many acts of bullying do not fall under the purview of these laws. In 2009 Ontario passed Bill 168 (the *Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act*), which defines workplace harassment as: “a course of vexatious comments or conduct against a worker in a workplace, that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome” (Section 1.1). Nonetheless, as NDP leader Andrea Horwath pointed out, the legislation does not sufficiently recognize psychological harassment and bullying, since employees can only refuse to work if they are in physical danger.

Even so there are compelling reasons for Laurier’s senior administration and faculty association to develop a zero tolerance policy towards workplace bullying.

Studies show that the consequences of employees harassing, intentionally insulting, isolating and excluding coworkers are severe and wide-ranging; if left unchecked, notionally minor occurrences often lead to more serious acts of psychological violence. Taken as isolated incidents, each act of bullying may seem inconsequential, but cumulatively they are pernicious. The literature emphasizes that in most cases bullying is a process that develops over a period of time. It could start, for example, by an off-color remark directed at a colleague in a private conversation, or a taunt made in front of students. The next week it’s a rebuke at a meeting, perhaps followed by a harassing phone-call at home, and then later a defamatory email circulated among a wider audience. Departments become incrementally more toxic over a period of months or even years.

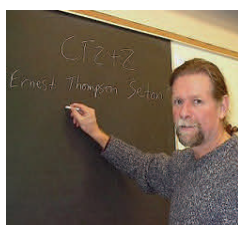
The financial costs of incivility, bullying and mobbing (group bullying) are considerable: targets deal with anxiety, stress and possibly depression, resulting in medical leaves and increased insurance premiums. In her critique of Bill 168 Andrea Horwath observed that 10% of suicides are linked to workplace bullying, a figure that may be under-reported. Keashley and Newman (2010) describe a more oblique repercussion as “retiring on the job,” characterized by reduced service activities and less engaged teaching. Furthermore, the noxious atmosphere created by bullying has a spillover effect. Witnesses of aggressive behavior are also vulnerable to stress and intimidation, especially if they perceive the aggressor to be acting with impunity.

Ultimately the consequences of a poi-

soned work environment radiate beyond our campuses so that Laurier’s public image becomes tarnished. Our competitive edge in recruiting and retaining the most talented young faculty is blunted when there is obvious tension between faculty members at job interviews. Studies show that the quality of interpersonal relations and level of collegiality are important factors in retaining faculty (Keashley and Newman 2010). Despite the tight job market, there are always opportunities for the brightest young academics to move on to friendlier institutions.

If you believe that you are being bullied, or have witnessed bullying, there are several courses of action. As part of our EAP, full-time faculty and librarians have access to counseling through Mosaic Counselling Services, and our benefit plan provides up to \$1000 a year for additional therapy. Unfortunately, part-time members, who are particularly at risk, do not have this option. It is useful for all targets of bullying to discuss the situation with a doctor. Be sure to document your experiences, and report them to WLUFAs grievance officer. If you are the recipient of a malicious email, report it as a violation of Laurier’s ITS policy; penalties can include a warning, curtailment of email privileges and, in the worst cases, criminal charges. You will also want to contact Laurier’s new Senior Conflict Resolution Officer, Dawn Ricker, who has expertise in dealing with bullying and harassment. The Faculty Women’s Colleague will be hosting a workshop featuring Ms. Ricker to be announced shortly. Incivility and bullying are compounded by institutional changes according to Angelo Soares – a depressing prospect as Laurier begins its IPRM exercise. As the study of resource (continued on page 7)

Brantford Campus Faculty: Canaries in a Coal Mine



Garry Warrick, *Contemporary Studies & Indigenous Studies*, Associate Professor

Between 1911 and 1986, canaries were used in British coal mines as early warning detectors for dangerous levels of carbon monoxide because the metabolism of a canary will respond to even very low levels of the gas. If the canary showed signs of distress, the miners would be alerted and would have time to evacuate the mine before they were asphyxiated. A miner who ignored the canary's warning did so at his own peril. In a similar way, faculty at the Brantford Campus, both Full-time and CAF, are – unfortunately – serving as proverbial canaries in our own academic mine. Failure at the Waterloo Campus to address this canary's distress will, inevitably, lead to similarly dangerous ends for all parties concerned.

Since the Brantford Campus opened its doors in 1999, faculty there have laboured under a far heavier workload – for less pay – than our Waterloo colleagues. Over the last few years, Brantford faculty have raised their concerns with the administration but nothing much has been done to remove or even to alleviate work-

load and pay inequities at the Brantford Campus. Brantford faculty are growing impatient, however, and have become increasingly vocal in their opposition to IPRM and other university initiatives that require Brantford's participation. As a result, Brantford's commitment to collegiality has been questioned by our own administration.

The service workload situation at

“...workload issues at Brantford extend far beyond service.”

Brantford was reported in a previous issue of the *WLUFAs advocate*. Brantford faculty are responsible for two to four times the service workload of their Waterloo colleagues. For example, I have served on 28 DAPCs for tenure track and LTA position hires in 12 years of employment (this involved a couple of summers of attempting to direct field research *and* attend hiring committee meetings at the same time). But workload issues at Brantford extend far beyond service. In the “Bilateral Committee on Brantford Campus Workload” filed with WLU in April 2011, it was found that Brantford faculty teach large writing-intensive classes with no teaching assistants,

receive relatively few course releases for research and for program development and program-coordinator service, and have less administrative support from staff. To compound the problem, in July 2011 a WLUFAs-commissioned consultant report found that Brantford faculty, on average, earn \$3000.00 less than their colleagues in the Faculty of Arts in Waterloo – more work for less pay. And yet, despite the troubling working conditions, Brantford faculty continue to attract students to the Brantford Campus, fulfilling the multi-campus university dreams of the senior administration and board of governors of WLU. The Brantford Campus has grown from 39 students in 1999 to 2,700 students in 2012-2013. It is considered a success story and is held aloft by WLU administration as a model for how to build a multi-campus university. Former VP for Brantford, Leo Groarke, published a book in 2010 about Brantford's downtown campus (*Reinventing Brantford: A University Goes Downtown*), praising WLU for a job well done.

While the Brantford Campus may be a financial success story, it is not an educational one. Its great-

ness has been achieved through the hard work of faculty and staff strangled by a shoestring budget. While the campus has managed to attract increasing numbers of students because of the reputation of its professors and their development and delivery of innovative and exciting one-of-a-kind programs, Brantford still has no academic library, lacks study space for students, has no food services, has an over-crowded recreational/athletic centre, has centralized undergraduate advising, and delivers about 33% of its courses

“The reality of the Brantford Campus and its attending cruel choices, however, means that sometimes students must be dreadfully short-changed in their education.”

es with CAF (who, in some cases, have been forced to share office hours when consulting students). Staff assistants in various programs in Brantford deal with anywhere from two to thirteen times more students than their colleagues in Waterloo’s Faculty of Arts. Brantford faculty teach large classes in the liberal arts with no teaching assistants. Marking assistance is provided as per our collective agreement, but with only senior undergraduates available it is problematic (if not impossible) to have them assist with grading their peers’ term papers. Writing-intensive courses with enrolments over 200 students, such as English and Contemporary Studies, have become more common. Instructors of such courses face a cruel choice –

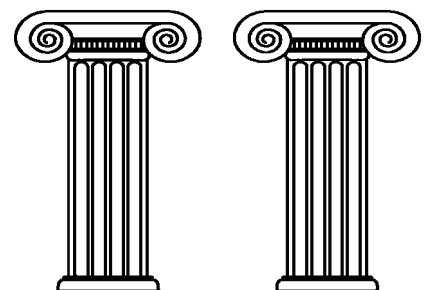
either demand writing assignments and spend a full three weeks grading at the end of term or dispense with written work altogether. But how does one, in good conscience, teach liberal arts without written assignments? The reality of the Brantford Campus and its attending cruel choices, however, means that sometimes students must be dreadfully short-changed in their education.

Faculty are expected to conduct research, attend conferences, and publish. At the Brantford Campus, research takes a back burner to teaching and service. Two faculty members who were hired to develop programs for Brantford sacrificed their research and publishing in order to help to build the campus and were rewarded with the termination of their employment – both had been denied tenure due to poor publishing records. Other faculty who have helped to build the Brantford “success story” have traded research and writing time for program and curriculum development and designing; most are teaching new courses annually as well as attending countless committee meetings. For pre-tenure faculty, this is a recipe for disaster. Tenured faculty at Brantford, in an effort to lighten the workload of their tenure-track colleagues and help them to avoid career-ending tenure denial, serve on numerous extra committees at the expense of their research and writing – all with no possibility of future course release. In addition to heavier workloads, full-time faculty in Brantford receive lower salaries than their Waterloo colleagues. In preparation for negotiating the full-time collective agreement that expired in June 2011, WLUFA commissioned a study of Brantford salaries. The consultant hired found

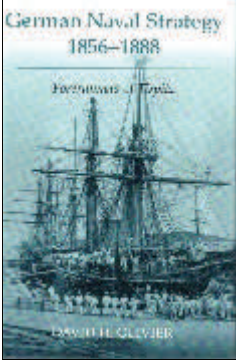
that, compared with the Faculty of Arts at Waterloo, Brantford faculty received \$2,500.00 – 4,500.00 less on average, adjusting for sex, age, rank, and type of appointment. WLUFA was unsuccessful in securing salary increases for Brantford faculty in the last round of collective bargaining, so Brantford faculty will continue to be underpaid until at least July 2014.

Those reading this article from the safe confines of the Waterloo Campus, must be counting yourselves lucky that you’re a ways up river from here – but you need to know that this is not just a “Brantford Issue”. The “canaries” in Brantford are in distress (have been for some time, actually) but the WLU “mine” is still making a healthy profit and, worse yet, few in Waterloo seem to have their eyes on the gasping bird (even in the face of IPRM). The question for the future may not be whether or not Brantford will be given equity with Waterloo, but whether or not the administration will find a way to make sure that Waterloo is given equity with Brantford. The warning signs are here and they are clear. If we ignore Brantford, all of us may find ourselves in the same place a few years down the road.

“While the Brantford Campus may be a financial success story, it is not an educational one.”



Second Class at the Second Fiddle: The CAF Experience at Laurier Brantford



David H. Olivier, CAF History, Laurier Brantford

Laurier Brantford attracts many good instructors to serve as Contract Academic Faculty. Some of these bring expertise from their professions while others, as is usually the case on university campuses, are trained academics – many with PhD and publications in hand.

I have been at Laurier Brantford for ten years, having had previous multi-year limited term appointments and now as strictly “CAF”. All of the CAF at Brantford, regardless of our classifications at one time or another, share in our determination to provide the best quality education possible for our students, despite the limitations that working on this campus can impose.

Though I am lucky enough to live in Brantford, many of my colleagues commute by car or train to teach their courses. Our contract faculty come from all around the area with some regularly commuting 100 K or more: from the London area to the west, the Kitchener-Waterloo and Guelph region to the north, Hamilton and even the GTA to the east. Many must supplement their teaching at Laurier Brantford with work at the Waterloo campus or at other universities in the areas mentioned above. This means long hours of commuting which is not only taxing on the time needed for one’s professional responsibilities, but also drains the remaining precious hours needed for young families or obligations to elderly parents. In addition, this is a financial burden that significantly depletes our already meagre CAF stipends.

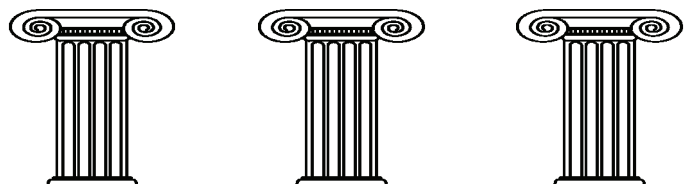
While sharing office space is a typical working condition for all WLU contract faculty, it is especially difficult at Brantford where space and equipment are at a premium. While staff work diligently to try and accommodate different schedules and to ensure that offices are not crowded at the same time, it is virtually impossible to avoid some desk-shuffling or competition for computers. The office I’m in is allocated to twelve users who must share two desks and two computers. Adding to the sense that we do not really have a designated office space is the fact that telephone extensions we’re assigned do not ring through to our

desks; we have to check our virtual mailboxes for messages because it is impossible for us to actually be telephoned while observing office hours. In addition, access to faculty support products (like codes for printers) seem to be changed each term in Brantford (unlike Waterloo) even though many CAS are teaching courses in both Fall and Winter terms. This leads to confusion and adds to our frustration.

In Fall 2011, almost half the courses at Laurier Brantford were taught by CAS (100 of 211). While the growth of Laurier Brantford as a campus has been remarkable – and has been held up as an example of successful multi-campus development by our university – a lot of that growth has been accomplished through the significant contributions of (and Brantford’s continuing reliance on) contract faculty. In just over a decade, Brantford has expanded to 90 times its original enrollment and CAF have been here to handle the onslaught as professionals, even though we are not always treated as professionals. Many of us who have helped to grow this campus and its programs are repeatedly looked-over for tenure-track interviews and/or limited-term hires. The one thing that many of us lack is security – security that we will be hired next year and security that our courses will be available.

“...it is difficult for CAF at Brantford not to lose hope...”

It is, unfortunately, a condition of contract instruction that most of us cannot expect job security. At Brantford, however, this condition aggravated. With workloads that frequently outweigh our Waterloo counterparts and with working conditions that are frequently sub-par, it is difficult for CAF at Brantford not to lose hope. The fact is, though, that we continue – in the effort we put into just getting here, in the time we give to make ourselves available to students, in the professionalism we bring to our classrooms. The results in our classrooms and for our campus speak for themselves.



Narcissistic Turn (cont'd from page 2)

some personality quirk, or the inability

to fulfill other aspects of one's profession. Appeals to colleagues to work towards some agreed upon common goal, even if one would be compensated for doing so, are frequently viewed as punishing attacks on colleagues' professional goals. After all, if meetings with colleagues or students do not serve one's own research and/or they represent a drain on one's personal time, why make the sacrifice? In fact, these collective obligations can be refused with impunity as there are no institutional consequences for failing to participate in these types of activities except at some minimal level – and this level drops off precipitously post-tenure.

Structurally produced, one's investment in the narcissistic turn appears to be the only *rational* response, and it does of course further the personal and professional goals of those who make it. For those who refuse that turn, who continue to hope for and foster collegiality, there are problematic consequences since the collective well-being they enhance is the result of work carried out at their own expense. Held accountable for their reduced productivity elsewhere, they suffer the negative effects of engaging in unrecognized work. In taking on the work that others refuse to share, they make sacrifices that can only be deemed *irrational* and for which there is no recourse.

Given the institutional strangulation of collegiality and the recent, unqualified support for the narcissistic turn which rewards those who invest in it, those who

invest in the common purpose are fighting a battle that has already been lost. They will either burn out or retreat. Relieved of the burden of collegiality, others will be unable to recognize its defeat as our common loss. ¶

Bullying (cont'd from page 3)

allocation proceeds, it is appropriate to consider the high cost of ignoring interpersonal aggression. Our institution prides itself on its sense of community, an unquantifiable but by no means renewable resource that is jeopardized by an increasingly uncivil campus culture.

Works Consulted

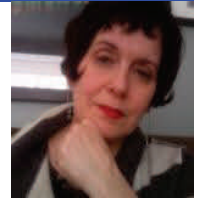
L. Keashley and J.H. Neuman (2010) "Faculty Experiences with Bullying in Higher Education," *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 32: 48–70

J. Lester (ed.) (2012) *Workplace Bullying in Higher Education*. New York
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D. Twale and B. De Luca (2008) *Faculty Incivility: The Rise of the Academic Bully Culture and What to Do About It*. San Francisco

News from your Contract Faculty Liaison:

Helen Ramirez,
*Women & Gender
Studies*



There is a level of political hope that Kathleen Wynne just might arrest the direction many universities have taken that on the one hand endangers an education that is nurtured in the Humanities and on the other has deepened the underclass status of contract academic faculty. But many of us also fear that she won't be able to halt the damage the present ideological surge has caused in what is a hostile and adversarial political climate.

Many contract academic faculty have spent the last number of years watching their devaluation as legitimate academics intensify. We have been faced with an ideology that suggests that we are failed academics, therefore placing the blame of our insecure status on us and not on a system that has deliberately sought to foster productivity and efficiency by increasing class sizes and decreasing labour costs. We are an economic advantage to the institution but one that can only be justified if we are dismissed as good scholars.

Because of these political realities it is a critical time for the exercise of vigilance. The protection of all our rights is only attained through commitment to one another and the defence we extend as we resist the barriers that keep us divided in these times.



CAS Negotiations Approaching Quickly!

Sheila McKee-Protopapas, *Biology Dept. CAF, Chief Negotiator: CAF Negotiations & WLUFAs Executive Director*

Our CAS Collective Agreement expires on August 30, 2013 and we are scheduled to begin bargaining in mid-May. There are many steps involved in preparing for bargaining and one of the first is to select a negotiating team. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce your CAS negotiating team. The team consists of me, Sheila McKee-Protopapas, CAS member in Biology, as Chief Negotiator, Holly Baines who has done most of her teaching in Sociology, Jim Gerlach from Chemistry and Biology, and Michele Kramer from English and Film Studies (who, by the way, is going on record as saying that I never wanted my photo posted anywhere, any time — I can do that because I'm editing this newsletter...).

Another important step in the lead-up to negotiations is the member survey. A preliminary survey went to all CAS members in January. We are currently analyzing the results and will use the information to formulate questions for our second survey which will go out to CAS members around Reading Week. It is critical that we hear from you, our members, so that we can bring to the table the issues that you feel are important. Your survey responses are directly responsible for our negotiating agenda. Prior to the last round of negotiations, we had an astounding 60% response rate for our survey and this allowed the team to feel confident that they were accurately putting forward your concerns. Let's repeat that success this year!

The next edition of the WLUFAs Advocate will expand on issues of concern to CAS. Please continue to be involved in the negotiation process – complete the upcoming survey, attend Bargaining Unit meetings, volunteer for the Strategy Committee, speak to your colleagues, wear your CAS T-shirt, and email us with your questions and concerns. ¶

In order to do battle with at least one of our provincial government's misconceptions about university education, OCUFA has taken up the challenge of identifying the important ways in which research and teaching are highly interconnected to produce the best learning opportunities for Ontario's students and the best outcomes for our communities.

We Teach Ontario uses videos of professors who discuss the many ways that they connect their teaching with their research. Among those featured are Lisa Philipps, Professor of Law, York University; Barry Smit, Professor of Geography, University of Guelph; Vinita Srivastava, Associate Professor of Journalism, Ryerson University; Ross Upshur, Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto; and Mary Wells, Professor of Mechanical Engineering, University of Waterloo.

Take a few minutes to browse through some of these videos in support of OCUFA's stand and, perhaps, to let your students know when and how your research makes its way into your classrooms and their lecture material.

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The views expressed in WLUFAs Advocate are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of WLUFAs, the Communications Committee, and /or the editor, except where such views are clearly indicated. The editor reserves the right to edit and reformat submissions to meet the format and requirements of the newsletter. It is the policy of WLUFAs Advocate to encourage discussion and debate that is respectful. We do not (re)print or publish *ad hominem* attacks on fellow members, nor any submissions that might be deemed libellous or discriminatory. Submissions to the newsletter must include name and contact information, and name(s) may be withheld upon request.