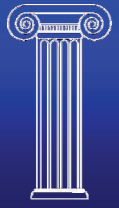




WLUFA advocate



Building community through dialogue, discussion and debate

Inside this Issue:

- Every Budget.....1-2
- Budgets vs. Financial.....1-2
- Ontario Universities.....3
- CAUT Panel.....3
- Any Questions?.....4-5
- I Walk the Line.....6
- A First Time.....7
- Anonymous.....8



Herbert Pimlott, Editor & Associate Professor of Communication Studies

As the Winter (semester) ends, this *advocate* ranges from an anonymous column on the CAS experiences to the experiences on the line as CAUT Defence Fund participants, experienced and new, talk about their contributions demonstrating solidarity with our colleagues at other universities across the country. The centrepiece includes a reflection on the role of asking questions within education and its relationship to democracy.

Indeed, it is faculty and staff asking questions, particularly around budgets and choices (as Bill does in his column), which appears to be part of a national trend, from BC to New Brunswick (page 5). I am preparing the final double issue for 2013-2014, which will have a special, albeit not sole, focus on pensions for the first week of June, so stay tuned.

This idea made more sense after several faculty, including myself, attended the Ontario Universities Pension Symposium hosted here at Laurier by Aon Hewitt. As a humanities scholar, I am always shocked when I find myself able to understand financial jargon (e.g. SEPP, JSPP), and even more shocked when I get the jokes!



Budgets versus Financial Statements

Bill Salatka, WLUFA Past-President & Associate Professor of Accounting

It is a bargaining year, and as expected, the Administration is proposing budget cuts. This has happened with regularity in all of the years I have been involved in negotiations. To the uninitiated, budgets and financial statements look very similar. They are usually looked upon as having the same purpose and same characteristics. Yet, budgets and financial statements are very different in purpose and have very different characteristics.

The financial statements are prepared by the administration to report to an external audience including government, donors, lenders and bond rating agencies. The financial statement's purpose is to provide a financial report to external parties on the university's financial condition and the actual use of university resources in the past year. The financial statements reflect financial outcomes.

'Budgets reflect the Administration's wishes and desires. Their opinions and wishes do not reflect Laurier's actual financial condition.'

The budget is produced by the administration for an internal audience, the employees. The purpose of budgeting is to control the use of financial resources by employees within the university according to the administration's wishes. Budgets are the proposed use of resources for the coming year. Budgets do not reflect financial outcomes. In effect, budgets are a wish list by the Administration.

Yet, the budgeted amounts are always "right" since they reflect the administration's wishes. It is not possible to argue that the budget is "wrong." Budgets reflect the Administration's wishes and desires, nothing more, nothing less. The opinions and wishes of the Administration do not reflect the actual financial condition of Laurier.

As you know, in the past, I have prepared analysis showing that there is no correlation between the financial performance of the University and the budgets. Yet, the administration will strongly assert that the budget is an accurate (cont'd on pg 2)

WLUFA Communications Committee

Editor, Chair, & Regular Faculty Liaison:

Dr. Herbert Pimlott
hpimlott@wlu.ca

CAF Liaison:

Dr. Helen Ramirez
hramirez@wlu.ca
&
Dr. Deb Chapman
dchapman@wlu.ca

Brantford Liaison:

Dr. Kari Brozowski
kbrozowski@wlu.ca

Brantford Faculty Rep:

Dr. Jamie LeClair
jleclair@wlu.ca

Regular Faculty Rep:

Dr. Jeremy Hunsinger
jhunsinger@wlu.ca

Layout & Design:

Larissa Brocklebank
lbrocklebank@wlu.ca

WLUFA advocate is
published two times per
semester, September to
April.

**Send your submission
via email to:
wlufa@wlu.ca**

Starting with this issue, *advocate* has moved to electronic distribution for sustainability reasons. A small number will be printed for distribution.

If you wish to receive a print copy of future issues, please contact **Larissa Brocklebank** in the WLUFA Office at wlufa@wlu.ca or x3721.

First Recipient of WLUFA's CAS Award

This year the WLUFA Executive established an annual award for a CAS Member to recognize exemplary contributions to the Association. The WLUFA CAS Award acknowledges the risks to job security that CAS Members may take when they challenge the precarious conditions under which they and their colleagues must work. It is given in gratitude for the work of a CAS Member who has demonstrated commitment to improving the working conditions of other CAS.

The Executive Committee is pleased to announce that **Jonathan Haxell, Archaeology and Classical Studies**, is the recipient of the inaugural WLUFA CAS Award. Jonathan's many contributions include: CAS negotiating team (2007 and 2010), Joint Liaison Committee (2006-2013), WLUFA Executive Committee (several terms between 2001 and 2013), OCUFA Collective Bargaining Committee (2008-2013), member of a two-person CAUT investigative panel, and participant in numerous conferences on bargaining, building member solidarity and academic freedom.



The author of one letter of support for his nomination said, "*Jonathan has worked countless unpaid and largely unrecognized hours in support of fair and equitable working conditions for part-time and full-time faculty and librarians at Laurier. ... Of all Jonathan's traits, I admire his healthy paranoia the most.*"

Another wrote, "*Jonathan has been a model of an academic staff association activist despite the precarious nature of [his] university position. His record of service to WLUFA exceeds that of most regular academic staff and is an inspiring example that deserves to be recognized.*"

Congratulations to Jonathan on this well-deserved honour.



Continued from Page 1: Budget versus Financial Statements

financial picture of the future of the university because budgets are a forecast of the future.

The administration will assert that the only relevant financial information is information about the future. The financial statements tell us what happened in the past and are therefore irrelevant for the future.

The problem with these arguments is that the budgets are prepared by the administration for internal control of resources, not for financial accuracy. The implications are that the assumptions of the forecasts in the budgets are not subject to independent third-party evaluation. However, the administration has complete discretion in preparing budgets and budgets may be constructed on any basis. The assumptions reflect the administration's wishes, goals and aspirations and the assumptions are not required to correspond with the economics of university operations.

Furthermore, the forecasts made in budgets typically result in considerable budget slack, where actual resources generated by the university greatly exceed the budgeted forecasts. In other words, the forecasts in the budget are likely not realistic and certainly do not convey an accurate financial picture of the university.

In contrast, the administration has very little discretion in preparing audited financial statements because of the rigorous regulations surrounding the preparation of financial statements. The basis of preparation and reporting is stable year over year, which renders audited financial statements, unlike budgets, a stable and accurate measure of a university's financial picture.

The bottom line is that if you want an accurate financial picture of the University, budgets will be of no help. The budget is a wish list, no more, no less. The financial statements are the accurate financial picture of the University.



Ontario Universities Work to Challenge, Resist and Block Program Prioritization



Kari Brozowski,
*Associate Professor, Laurier
Brantford*

Faculty associations with the support of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) at a number of Ontario Universities are employing various strategies to challenge, resist, and block attempts to engage in the 'Program Prioritization Process' (PPP), which is part of the Ontario Government's latest initiative, as revealed in conference calls with OCUFA. The Ontario Government's promotion of PPP is voluntary, and a number of Ontario universities, such as the University of Toronto, Queen's University and the University of Western Ontario, have opted out of this process.

Other universities have moved to engage in Program Prioritization; however, faculty associations at these universities have fought to dismantle these processes. This is largely due to administrations' attempts to operate the process outside of the proper governance structures according to the relevant University Acts. For instance, the Brock University Faculty Association ensured the Program Prioritization Process (also known as IPRM) was taken out of the President's task force and placed in the rightful place of a Senate committee, with proper faculty elections, composition and transparency, following the Senate by-laws and Brock Act. As such, the divisiveness between faculty members has effectively been eliminated, since faculty are more confident that the proper governance process is being followed. On the other hand, the President's task force, which is still running the staff unit prioritization, has generated a great deal of fear and concern among non-faculty employees.

Even though PPP at the University of Guelph produced a report and ranked programs, given the Guelph Act has a mechanism that allows the administration to oversee a task force outside of the Senate process, the Faculty Association (UGFA) continues to act to protect members' jobs. Recent pressure by the administration to layoff tenured faculty, through a buyout clause in their collective agreement's program redundancy article, has mobilized GUGA to challenge the university if they make any attempt to force a member into a buyout situation. In a recent UGFA survey, members have communicated their disapproval of the PPP and plan, since it usurped normal forms of university governance. UGFA has also reported that the process has created divisiveness and a toxic atmosphere among faculty.

In the case of Trent University, the Provost has recently stated publicly at a Senate meeting that the university has no interest in Program Prioritization. Finally, Lakehead University Faculty Association has actively spoken out against Program Prioritiza-

tion, and continues to monitor any actions by the administration to pursue such an initiative.

In our own situation at WLU, Program Prioritization, referred to as the IPRM, is operating outside of the Senate's purview according to the Act, and does not follow Senate by-laws or the Act, despite what the administration claims. Furthermore, it has been reported to the WLUF Executive that transparency and proper rules of governance are not being followed in the IPRM process. Recent Divisional Council non-confidence motions at the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, and the Faculty of Arts have also pointed to the flaws in data collection and methodology. These motions also call for the cessation of the IPRM immediately. Perhaps Senate needs to review the entire process, and reconsider its validity. The number of faculty situated in these three faculties constitute a significant portion of the professoriate and around half of all students at Laurier.

By all accounts, the Program Prioritization Process is an attack on our academic freedom, and a problem for collegial forms of governance. Given the experiences of other Ontario universities with PPP, Laurier faculty would be wise to be critical of the IPRM in its current form.



CAUT Panel on the PPP

by Kari Brozowski

I was invited to a Program Prioritization panel at the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) Council Meeting, on May 1, 2014, to comment on the experience of Program Prioritization (or IPRM), here at Laurier.

Craig Heron from York University, author of a recent critique of Robert Dickeson's methods, presented on the methodological flaws of Dickeson's evaluation of academic programs. He referred to Dickeson's model as the resurrection of 'Taylorism' (aka 'Scientific Management'). The University of Saskatchewan, the University of Moncton, and Laurier described the serious problems faculty have faced with Program Prioritization and its implementation. The presentations appeared to be very helpful to universities in Canada, since I had eastern universities request copies of my presentation, since they see the PPP on the horizon, and their faculty associations are planning to be prepared before their administrations' announce the launch of PPP on their campuses. Comments by the CAUT Executive Director, Jim Turk, on PPP are that they are very concerned, since PPP attacks proper forms of collegial governance and ultimately academic freedom. He also offered CAUT support to any University Faculty Association who requires it.



“Any Questions?” The Integral Connection between Education and Democracy



Mark A. Davidson,
*Assistant Professor,
Laurier
Brantford*

As academics, we tend to take for granted the ideological context that informs the purposes and practices of higher education as a social institution. Our explicit personal belief that we are training students to engage critically with society, as citizens, reveals our implicit belief in education as fulfilling a democratic mandate, and it is difficult and uncomfortable for us to imagine education without this mandate. Everything from lesson plans to governing structures connects with our commitment to enhancing democracy.

For sake of argument, let's say that democracy is a ubiquitous ideology that surrounds and permeates social institutions and their inhabitants,

value, which it necessarily assumes to be measurable and observable. It's important to stress that the market myth is not a friend to democracy: unlike citizens, market actors prioritise their own interests above social and institutional interests, and those with more 'power' have more say.

Over the last forty years in Canada the market myth has risen to the status of a religion. Although the democratic mandate of many public institutions has been replaced by a market mandate, there is one important public institution that has been more able to resist it: the public liberal arts university.

But the current Ontario government's Program Prioritization Process (PPP a.k.a. IPRM) could shift the university's mandate toward the market myth. At the most basic level, the PPP confines the assessment of the value of what we do to primarily measurable terms and it fragments the collective nature of the university

agination to envisage different forms of social organisation and relations.

For the university to accomplish its democratic mandate, the people who ask the (substantive) questions must have the freedom to structure their environment in ways that encourage unfettered questioning. In other words, faculty must be able to decide which questions to ask because they are the ones asking the questions. This doesn't negate the need for administrators.

But it does suggest that administrative power is also obligated to advance the university's social mission by providing the largest possible institutional scope for the question askers to decide which questions will best enhance a democratic ethos.

Given scarcity of resources, there will be some areas of questioning that cannot be supported. But the process for deciding this must be focused on the university's social mission: which questions need to be prioritised for the betterment of society? This question can only be answered in a collegial environment because the answers depend on the collective wisdom of all institutional actors.

If faculty are competing against each other instead of allocating resources collegially, they will likely give too much weight to their individual interests.

This brings us to the last point of tenure. Tenure is not an end in itself. It is a way of creating an environment to promote people to ask difficult and unpopular questions. Tenure, and all the characteristics identified here, are creatures of the university's democratic mandate and are at risk whenever something threatens that mandate, such as the Ontario government's PPP.

First and fundamentally, by confining discussions of value to that which is measurable, the PPP will encourage faculty and programs to produce measurable outcomes, including monetary ones. Faculty recognise that finances are important to deciding which programs to support. But that's

“Tenure is not an end in itself. It is a way of creating an environment to promote people to ask difficult and unpopular questions.”

much like water does to coral reefs and fish. Unlike water and fish, however, there are other ubiquitous ideologies in which education can function, albeit with different purposes and practices.

One ubiquitous ideology that democratic educators must presently worry about is the market myth, that is: first, the reduction of the value of things to what others are willing to sacrifice (pay) for them through an exchange system, and second, the belief that these sorts of exchanges are the most efficient and fair way to distribute resources.

Market-ism relies heavily if not exclusively on the quantification of

community into individual actors and 'units'. Further, it could render obsolete the defining features of the liberal arts university: its social purpose, governance structure, collegiality, and tenure.

To risk oversimplification, the liberal arts university's social purpose is to question established truths and infuse democracy with freshness. It is difficult to imagine a vibrant inclusive democracy functioning without the freedom and ability to ask *anything*.

The freedom to ask questions lies at the heart of parliamentary democracy, e.g., debate. Questioning confronts abuses of public and private power and liberates the political im-

only part of the picture, and much of a researcher's or program's value cannot be reduced to measurable data.

We can't quantify democracy, so how could we possibly quantify that which contributes to it? By shifting the discourse that frames the university's mandate to an essentially economic (market) one, we denigrate a researcher's or program's contribution to a democratic society.

If the value of what we do is gauged by grants awarded, publications cited, students graduated, and so on, then the task of resource allocation becomes almost exclusively administrative and faculty become ancillary to the process. So self-governance is unnecessary if our value is measured by a monetary or point system.

Further, if resources are allocated this way, it makes sense to promote competitive relations among faculty and programs. Forcing faculty to prove the value of themselves and their program in market terms will force them to demonstrate that they can produce more value—a higher rate of exchange—per resource dollar than others.

So far in other universities this way of measuring program worth has *logically* resulted in the closure of smaller arts programs: market forces tend to encourage concentrations of resources, and those programs that align with job market trends will enjoy an increasing ability to draw resources away from smaller programs.

As for tenure, it might remain, but it will be hollow for most of us. Most students want programs that will lead to employment, so virtually all programs will have to restructure themselves in that direction to survive.

Those who have already made the transition to vocationalised programming will be unaffected by the PPP. The PPP will also encourage us to structure our research away from unpopular topics to ones that will be 'popular'. As for tenure granting committees, the honesty, professionalism and integrity we have come to rely on from our colleagues could also be replaced by administrative measurements.

Promotion will hinge on whether the applicant will fetch a good 'return' on investment, and not whether she will

'Every Budget is a Choice': Western & Brock latest to Challenge Claims for Budget Cuts

Herbert Pimlott, Editor & Associate Professor of Communication Studies

The growing level of dissension between faculty and senior administration across the country is being expressed increasingly in public battles over budget choices, transparency (or lack thereof) and/or academic quality, collegiality and respect. At the University of Regina last August, for example, CBC and CTV covered the faculty petition over budget cuts to teaching positions while administrative positions continue to increase; at the University of New Brunswick and Mount Allison University, non-confidence motions were passed by faculty, which "are strong indicators of faculty frustration and growing concern over lack of transparency, disrespect for staff and 'years of mismanagement'" (*CAUT Bulletin*, April 2014, p.1).

Closer to home, both Western and Brock universities have provoked debate over the budgets being put forward by challenging the assumptions and claims being made. Faculty associations are increasingly looking to analyze the audited financial statements that often reveal a different story to the narrative put forward to justify cuts in the budgets being put forward by senior administrations. Western's Faculty Association (UWOFA) prepared a financial analysis of the audited statements of the previous four years which reveals a surplus of \$202 million while asking some faculties to model 20% cuts. (See the box below.) Of course, senior administrations are not keen for 'critical thinking' when it comes to their budgets. As Bill Salatka, whose expertise lies in analyzing financial statements, has pointed out on page one, 'budgets are about choices'. The perception has largely been one that university teaching (i.e. faculty) cost a lot of money. However, you know from previous issues of the *advocate* that the full-time complement has increased at a about one-third the rate of student enrollment (and one-sixth the growth in management).

encourage students to ask questions of democratic significance. Indeed, we'd be wise to dump anyone who asks questions that might turn off students or decrease the likelihood of industrial grants: the gadflies.

The history of education teaches us some frightening lessons about severing the link between democracy and education. In fascist Germany and Italy, education was declawed of its emancipatory potential by (a) confining the scope of question asking within the ubiquitous ideology of Nazism, and (b) making education 'practical' preparation for employment.

The market myth and the PPP could similarly declaw education in Ontario. This doesn't imply the destruction of democracy, but it does reveal the inherently political nature of what we do. Unless we see that clearly, it could change without us noticing.



UWOFA Report "Every Budget is a Choice"

\$202 MILLION

Surplus racked up since 2009

\$800 MILLION

Internally restricted funds as of
April 30, 2013

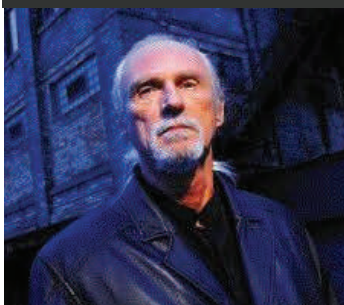
\$1.1 BILLION

In total University investments

\$313.2 MILLION

In total debt

'I Walk the Line': Faculty & Librarians on the Picket Line



Garry Potter,
*Associate Professor,
WLUFU
Defence Fund
Representative*

It was minus twenty in Saint John but felt colder. After you have spent hours in such temperatures the cold seems to make its way into your bones no matter how warmly you are dressed. This is typical of faculty strike picket lines. Cold, wind, snow or rain seem always to be prevalent when faculty are on strike. There is some objective truth to this subjective perception: the cycle of collective bargaining timing most frequently produces the breakdown in negotiations in the winter.

The CAUT Defence Fund, in addition to providing the strike pay and helping out with loans and lawyers to its member unions, sends flying pickets to all strikes and lockouts. It is one of the duties of trustees of the fund.

The Defence Fund and the CAUT are related but separate organizations. The CAUT has virtually all the faculty associations in Canada as members. But not all faculty associations are unions and only unions can belong to the Defence Fund. Each member union pays per capita membership dues to the Defence Fund and in return is eligible for the support mentioned above, as well as various other services such as help with arbitration.

The trustees of the DF are volunteer representatives of the member unions. I have been one of the WLUFU trustees for seven years now but many of the trustees have been so for much longer than that. The position requires a fair amount of time and commitment, dependent mainly upon the number of strikes and lockouts occurring in any

one year; and administrations have often been loath to count such work as service. So there is not a host of people seeking the positions. To my knowledge for example, it has never been necessary for there to be a WLUFU election for it. And yet that said, it is incredibly rewarding!

First and foremost, you feel like you are doing something very worthwhile. It is hard to doubt this. When you walk the lines with your striking colleagues they are so grateful. They really are. They appreciate that you have come a long way to demonstrate solidarity with their struggle. Of course what I always tell them is the truth that their struggle is our struggle too. When a senior administrator at one university has a bad idea for their university it is almost certainly to be tried at another.

"He wasn't trying to kill me, just to make me aware he was thinking about it."

Striking colleagues often turn to you for information and reassurance. Striking can be quite frightening! People have genuine worries, not only about money but about possible administrative punishment. The communities in which they live may be more or less supportive . . . or more or less hostile!

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has two campuses, one in Sudbury and one in Thunder Bay. I attended the picket lines on both of them. Sudbury is a union town and people frequently honked and waved in solidarity with us. In Thunder Bay people shouted insults and one student forced me to jump out of the way as he crossed our line at speed.

The 2011 forty-five day strike in Brandon was the longest academic strike in Manitoba history. There they had strong support from the students but not the parents who formed their own protest group over the strike. Nor was the community supportive. Brandon won first and second prize in my book for the stupidest insults shouted at me. "Get a job" one pick-up truck driver yelled at us. "I work for minimum wage" screamed another very upset young man. I bet you do, I thought, but did not respond. Behaving non-aggressively is part of the DF guidelines for being a flying picket.

There is a wonderful feeling of solidarity amongst flying pickets. They are from every discipline imaginable. Scientists and medieval scholars, anthropologists and film studies experts, and yes, even people from business faculties. The current president of the DF is in Windsor's Fine Arts Department. You have great conversations about everything and anything.

But the bottom line is commitment. All the DF trustees share a commitment to preserving, not merely proper pay and conditions of work in higher education, but to preserving decent higher education itself. There are many, many more calls by negotiating unions for strike support than those that actually result in strikes. Sometimes simply showing a willingness to strike if necessary convinces administrations to negotiate more sensibly.

Participating in these conference calls makes one keenly aware of overall patterns. We are all basically fighting the same battles.

Faculty have a very different vision of what higher education could and should be than do its neo-liberal administrators.

Continued from page 8: Anonymous

What makes me angry is that I know too many of my valued tenure track and tenured colleagues teach about exploitation and the technologies of oppression and yet they find ways to avoid their own participation in the very systems they teach about.

I am also angry that I don't have more courage to fight not just for myself but all of us.

In the hallways you meet the congenial me. I will perform for you so that I am not designated as a "problem". But if you wonder why I don't show my teeth now you know why. I am congenial and profoundly tired. I am tired of believing that someone with power will like me and like my other CAS colleagues well enough to stand up with a stronger voice in their department meetings, in their Councils, in the Senate to fight for us. I am tired worrying about being acceptable enough so I can do what I am passionate about – in a field I love.

I can repeat the usual invitation to support CAS by saying that it is to our collective advantage to stand together. It wears me out trying to be convincing. I wish my colleagues, you would do it because somehow you know you are also complicit in my poverty and the poverty (material and emotional) of a large body of people who are listed as CAS that is neither ethical nor courageous.

2014 Award Recipients

Ken Maly (Chemistry) Teaching Excellence for full-time faculty

Terry Sturtevant (Physics and Computing) Teaching Excellence for CAS

Donna Kotsopoulos (Education) Hoffman-Little Award, Alumni

Margaret Walton-Roberts (Geography and Environmental Science) Faculty Mentoring Award, Alumni

Daniel Lichti (Music) Honorary Alumnus of the Year, Alumni

Kaiming Zhao (Mathematics) University Research Professor

Continued from page 7: A First Time for Everyone

Universities contributed from 500-5,000 dollars, by the end of the first rally, MAFA president, Lorelea Michaelis raised a fist full of white envelopes that represented Canadian University Faculty Associations support.

CAUT brought a million dollar cheque that gave MAFA the strength to stand behind its convictions.

A First Time for Everyone: Mount Allison Faculty Association Strike Winter 2014

Denise Davis-Gains,
CAUT Defence Fund

This past fall an email came around looking for a CAUT Defence Fund Trustee Alternate volunteer. I will ashamedly admit that I truly had no idea what that meant. The "Alternate" part caught my attention, I thought, "how much can an alternate have to do?"

I looked up the responsibilities of the Defense Fund Trustee and found that the requirements seemed quite reasonable. Sign cheques in the event of a strike, vote on the Defense Fund committee, and attend an annual general meeting seemed to be the general gist of the position. The Alternate would only have to do these things should the Trustees not be available. I volunteered.

In the first month of the position, I was privileged to attend the CAUT Defence Fund annual general meeting to find out that there would no longer be Alternates! It was an interesting and informative meeting that helped me to broaden my understanding of the position and the responsibilities of the committee. There was considerable conversation about 'Flying Pickets'. My colleagues explained what 'Flying Pickets' did and I was asked if I would be interested in participating in flying to various university destinations in the event of strike action. I remembered how I felt visiting with faculty members from across Canada during our last strike in 2008 and immediately volunteered.

A few weeks ago I received a message from our Defence Fund Trustees asking if I could go out to Mount Allison University to support the striking members there. I checked my schedule. Colleagues at Conestoga College were supportive and they volunteered to cover my classes so that it would be possible for me to fly out to New Brunswick. The real deciding factor was the weather, it was going to be zero degrees!

Not really knowing what to expect, I booked my flight and hotel, got on a plane and headed to Moncton. I met other university faculty members on the plane headed in the same direction. The feeling on arriving was warm and inviting. I had arrived on the East Coast and there was an immediate sense of being in a different place. We were driving out to Sackville the next morning and had the pleasure of meeting many of the faculty at Mount Allison as we settled into the strike office and put on our signs "WLUFA supports MAFA".

Walking the picket line, the opposing feelings of tension and camaraderie kept us warm and engaged in collegial dialogue. Our hosts were gracious and in a well organized, amply attended Rally shared feelings of gratitude for our presence and financial support.



Anonymous: A Contract Faculty “Colleague” Speaks

The term is coming to an end and many of us are wondering how we’re going to survive the summer much less the decrease in courses available to us to teach in the Fall. I am writing this column anonymously for a number of reasons.

I’m afraid of threatening what little security I have. There are so many of us now competing for a smaller pool of courses. I feel as though I have to be “nice enough” to make sure I get considered for the paucity of courses available.

How I am evaluated is not based on what I am told is an objective hiring process, but through a more personal evaluation of me as a person by those with whom I have had conversations and who sit on the PTAC. I need to maintain my public “niceness.”

As tenure-track and tenured faculty negotiate their contract, I am hoping they remember us. I’m hoping they choose not to use us as bait as they fight for changes.

I have to apply for EI this summer. Having a regular government cheque does not symbolize freedom or security for me.

It means that while others are talking about new toys or houses they’re buying, vacations they plan on taking, I’m hoping I can pay my rent and eat. New glasses and an appointment with the dentist are out.

I want to know why we as CAS never seriously address the issue of being among the working poor?

I wonder why my secure working colleagues never move beyond the usual rhetoric and fight for the vital systemic changes that would provide us with some level of security and choice in our lives?

Why are they not willing to use the priv-

ilege of their security for us?

I’m tired of the talk I hear in gatherings, sometimes in meetings that seem to reflect our fragile status and promote them as being our allies, but really how quickly that robust call to justice is lost in the details of their decision making in departments.

What surprises me, beyond their decisions that hit us directly, are the arguments used to justify those decisions.

I wonder why it is that while we are called their “colleagues”, they extend little responsibility to our inferior status.

Is the work of fighting for better working conditions in every arena again left to those of us who have the most to lose?

Why is it we can’t talk about poverty and have it connected to a system that we all seem to protect and to defend?

“Why we as CAS never seriously address the issue of being among the working poor?”

Why is it we have to expose our fragility and use our time and energy in a direction for which there is so little support or real willingness to be daring?

The refrain from those with security is that they are busy and pulled in too many directions. Try figuring out how to make the milk in the fridge last until the next pay cheque.

Why is it I am always aware when I open my mouth that I am being evaluated in against some mythical academic standard?

In the true spirit of maintaining privilege, I know that my words, when I speak them at meetings, confirm my subordination. They are heard and dismissed because apparently I am not smart enough.

The worst is when that covert critique works to increase the shame I feel about myself. Everyday I have to tame the monster inside that tells me I should be grateful for what little I have because that is all I am deserving of.

Yes I know there are CAS who don’t need to worry about their economic lives. Many of us also keep secret the extent to which we are poor and what it feels like to be devalued. And like the monsters in my head the suspicion that I am being judged becomes more extensive.

My response of course demonstrates the success of the technologies used by the power system. We are hit by an administration that profits from our labour, but closer to home we are easily discarded when tenure track and tenured faculty feel they must meet the untenable demands of the administration.

Our actual lives are made invisible. Our personhood is of no worth – we are a number and we can be sacrificed.

I did what I was told I should do. At

each level of study my teachers urged me forward telling me I was Ph.D. material. Whenever I taught for them or wrote I was called in for congratulatory meetings. I got funding that again told me I was worthy. I was the good student who did what I was told to do and embraced the promise that came with it of the ultimate job.

WLUFAs Advocate Editorial Policy

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.