

WLUFADVOcate

Building community through dialogue, discussion, and debate.

SPECIAL EDITION MARCH 2015

FACT CHECK: ARE FULLTIME FACULTY SALARIES THE PROBLEM?

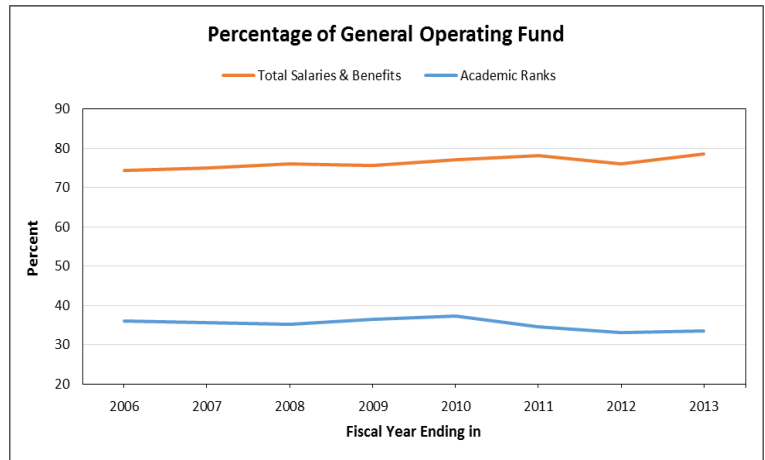
In his "Open Letter to the Laurier Community" President Max Blouw elaborates the Administration's position justifying the layoffs and teaching position cuts. Under the heading "Why do expenses continue to go up when student numbers stabilize or decrease?" the President includes a large and colourful chart titled "Percentage Change in Base Salary." The chart graphically depicts a dramatic upward swoop for Fulltime Faculty salaries since 2009. Although a causal link is never explicitly drawn, the prominence and positioning of the graph makes it reasonable for readers to conclude that expenses are attributable in some way to the seemingly disproportionate rise in Fulltime Faculty salaries.

WLUFA is concerned about this attempt to divide the Laurier community through such sensationalist tactics. And we suggest that Faculty look more closely at what precisely the chart is mapping. Most notably, the Fulltime Faculty salary calculations include the Career Development Increment (CDI). While the CDI does indeed show up in Fulltime Faculty pay cheques, it is financed such that total expenditures on a constant number of salaries do not, in fact, increase. That is, those of us at the lower end of the salary scale receive CDI increases in proportion to the savings gained by the retirements of those at the higher end of the salary scale. *The CDI, in other words, is not a significant measure of the rising cost of Faculty salaries to the overall costs of the University.*

As an organization comprised of critical scholars who are no more or less "ideologically-driven" (as Dr. Blouw

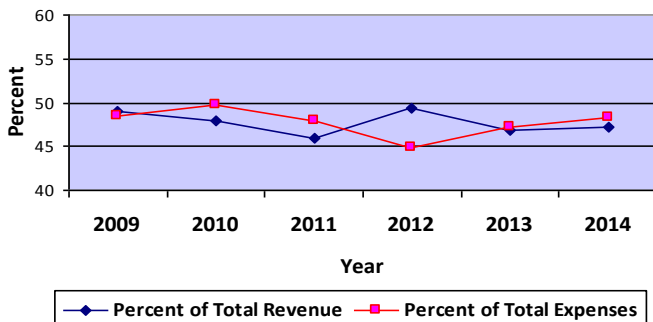
accuses us of being) in their criticism than the President himself, WLUFa offers two alternative ways of looking at the salary base. First, as the "Total Salaries at Laurier" chart below indicates, salaries as a whole *have barely changed* as a proportion of the University's overall expenses (or revenues). Second, as the "Percentage of General Operating Fund" chart details, total salaries and benefits increased by four percentage points between 2006 and 2013. But *Faculty salaries and benefits decreased* by almost three percentage points.

WLUFa urges Faculty to continue to ask for a transparent accounting for the layoffs and position cuts.



Source: Canadian Association of University Business Officers

Total Salaries at Laurier*
(wages for all employees-does not include benefits)



*From the Audited Financial Statements

We hope to provide more detailed responses to the Open Letter in the coming days. *Please also send your own responses to us at lbrocklebank@wlu.ca.*

UNIVERSITY FACULTY COUNCIL
THURSDAY MARCH 26TH 4:30-6:30
WATERLOO: SENATE & BOARD CHAMBERS
BRANTFORD: RESEARCH & ACADEMIC CENTRE,
RCW-202