

Newsletter August 2016

Edited by: Lisa Robson, PhD, Department of English and Creative Writing and BUFA Secretary



President's Message

*Doug Ramsey, PhD, Rural
Development*

This has been a very busy summer with Dion and me struggling to balance our research projects with BUFA-related business. One concerning trend is the increased requests to sign off on sessional contracts that take members over the 12 credit hour limit. These requests are coming from departmental chairs and deans. The limit is in the CA to ensure that sessional labour is not abused. We ask that departments be aware of this limit when planning workload in the months ahead.

BUFA is in the process of moving offices. The request for our space came from the Employer. We agreed to give up our current office as long as the new space was larger and included a meeting room. We were successful. An announcement will be made when the move is complete but the new office, and adjoining boardroom, will be located in the basement of A.E. McKenzie (002-1).

Good luck with the new term. If you have questions or concerns please contact your

area rep or Maureen. We are trying to balance the load as an executive and these points of contact should make BUFA more efficient.

Vice-President's Message

*Dion Wiseman, PhD,
Geography*



As the summer season winds down, I hope that everyone has had a productive and restful summer. As Doug has said, it has been quite busy but I believe we have both managed to fit some research and relaxation time into our schedules.

Since our spring AGM I am pleased to announce that there have been no active grievances, although we continue to work with members to resolve several outstanding issues. We have also continued to work with the Employer on their revisions of the REP policy. A draft of the revised policy will be circulated to the campus community for comment and feedback as soon as it is completed, hopefully early this fall. We have also

worked to ensure that the new Dauphin program gets underway successfully and that the coordinator and sessional staff hired conform to the terms of the CA.

There are several issues coming our way this fall, including consultations with the Employer on the new violence and sexual violence policies. So, until our next newsletter and the Fall AGM, best wishes to all.

Policy on Course Outlines

By: Lisa Robson

Over the past year, some issues have developed around course outlines or syllabi. The most pronounced concerns arose in the Faculty of Arts, when the faculty passed a motion to require all members to submit copies of their course outlines to the dean's office. This decision prompted questions about intellectual property, academic freedom, etc., and similar questions about course outlines have subsequently cropped up in other faculties.

Past practice has often seen, in Science and Arts, for example, members willingly submitting outlines to their chair or dean, and while no restrictions on the use of these outlines were ever formalized, the primary purpose was to aid students seeking copies to help with course transfers. However, to make submitting course outlines to be held in the dean's office a **requirement** is another matter, so BUFA contacted CAUT for its position.

On the advice of CAUT, BUFA communicated to Arts that a course outline constitutes the instructor's intellectual property, so the member cannot be compelled to give a copy to the dean's office unless such presentation is directly specified in a collective agreement, as is done at some institutions. If not defined in a CA,

such submission must remain voluntary. CAUT also recommended that the faculty define the precise purposes for which the submitted outlines can be used as well as how long those outlines will be kept by the dean. Arts Review and Planning has developed a proposal defining these parameters, and the amended Arts Policy and Procedures on Course Outlines will be available on the Dean of Arts website once the changes are passed by the Arts members.

There are many valid reasons to allow the dean's office to maintain copies of course outlines, and you may have no objections to the process. Members should know, however, that such submission cannot be mandatory.

Workload Reduction

By: Lisa Robson

As we head into fall, the planning process to determine teaching workloads for the following year (2017-18) will soon begin. Like last year, full-time faculty members can apply for a reduction in their teaching load to 15 credit hours. Although we all tend to refer to this number of credit hours as a "reduction," it is actually now "standard" according to the CA; the current regular teaching load is 15-18 credit hours. See article 9.3.1:

9.3.1 Teaching Workload

(a) The standard teaching load for academic members on a full-time regular appointment shall normally be between fifteen (15) and eighteen (18) credit hours in one (1) academic year. Variation within this range shall be determined by the factors outlined in Article 9.4(a); particularly by a member's scholarship/research activities. Variations outside this range are possible (e.g. Article 7.12(d) and (e); Article 9.5(b), (c), and (d)) provided that

teaching workload is assigned as outlined in Article 9.4 and does not violate Clause 9.3.1 (b - i).

Also note 9.4 (b), which confirms the Employer's intent to see 15 credit hours of teaching as the norm:

9.4 (b) The Employer is committed to transitioning the standard teaching load from eighteen (18) credit hours to fifteen (15) credit hours in each academic year. Beginning April 1, 2016, the Employer agrees to dedicate funds equivalent to fifty (50) sessional replacement courses (three (3) credit hours) in each academic year to work towards this transition.

The CA outlines the criteria used to determine members' workload (9.4(a) below), as well as the process to apply for a reduced teaching load. (See 9.4(c) on pages 38-39 of the CA.) A written request must be presented to the department, which makes a recommendation to the dean/director. In this request, you simply need to explain what you will do with the time that you would otherwise have devoted to teaching activities. While the most common reason to request a teaching workload reduction is scholarly activities, other types of professional activities can be justification as well. You should also note that in a request based on research, the planned scholarly activities do not need to be excessive; on the contrary, your regular, active research agenda justifies a teaching load of 15 credit hours.

Departments should also remember that they must use only the criteria outlined in the CA when making workload recommendations; no other criteria can be constructed or considered in assessing a member's request for a 15 credit hour teaching workload.

Finally, October 15 is the deadline for departmental recommendations around workload, so make sure to have your request to your department in time for there to be a

meeting and for the recommendation to be forwarded to the dean/director.

For quick reference, we've copied here the criteria for workload decisions. Also note that the Vice President – Academic & Provost's web page has a link, "Transition to 15 CH Teaching Load at Brandon University," that provides two templates you may choose to use, "Faculty Request for Reduced Workload" and "Departmental Request for Reduced Workload," as well as a FAQ sheet.

9.4 Assignment of Teaching Workload

- (a) The teaching workload assignment of members shall be recommended by the Department and approved by the Dean/Director who is responsible for ensuring the teaching assignments are fair and equitable. Factors to be taken into account when assigning a member's workload shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - i. the number of new courses
 - ii. the number of new preparations
 - iii. class size
 - iv. marker/demonstrator assistance
 - v. nature of the discipline
 - vi. pedagogy
 - vii. class scheduling
 - viii. program needs
 - ix. the teaching load of the member in previous years
 - x. the type of appointment held by the member and other duties of the member outlined in Article 8 or in Appendices B, C, and D
 - xi. Scholarship/Research as described in Article 8.2(c)
 - xii. Service to the University and the Community as described in Article 8.2(d)
 - xiii. Program needs, including reliant programs in other units/departments
 - xiv. Program design and/or renewal initiatives proposed by members

xv. Student enrolment initiatives (recruitment and retention).

Bill Paton



By Doug Ramsey and Dion Wiseman

We mourn the sudden passing of Dr. William (Bill) Paton. Born in 1944, Bill was a Professor in the Department of Botany, and later Biology, from 1974 until his retirement in 2014. He had recently received Emeritus status, enshrining his presence on campus.

Beyond his devotion to teaching and research was his passion for service. Bill was ever present, whether it was running the Hort Line at BU since 1976, or voicing his concerns about water quality and about post-secondary funding issues, or simply advocating on behalf of students and faculty.

Bill was quite active in BUFA. He served on the BUFA Executive first in 2002-2003 as Science Representative and consecutively as Secretary from 2003-2004 until 2011-2012. Bill also served as a member of BUFA's negotiating teams, as the BUFA representative in the Manitoba Organization of Faculty Associations

(MOFA), and as a BU pension trustee, including times as chair.

Bill was passionate in his beliefs. He was also, quite simply, a very nice person. He is dearly missed.

Collective Agreement

Our Collective Agreement (2015-2019) can be accessed at www.bufa.org. Here are some points and links to access gains we made in the last round of bargaining.

Health Spending Account

In addition to Blue Cross coverage, each year members have access to a health spending account: \$400 for full-time employees and \$200 for part-time employees. Details can be found at:

<https://www.brandonu.ca/hr/files/Health-Spending-Account1.pdf>

Tuition for Dependants

Members now receive a waiver for tuition for their dependants taking courses at Brandon University (less other fees). This is a taxable benefit. Details can found at:

<https://www.brandonu.ca/hr/files/Tuition-Waiver-for-Employees-and-Dependants1.pdf>

Fees for Dependants

Prior to gaining tuition for dependants in the current CA, BUFA had a fund that members could apply to that would cover a portion of their dependants' tuition. The membership voted to rename this fund to cover fees not covered by the provision above. Please contact Maureen Barrett for details.

BUFA OFFICE

If you have any questions, please contact an executive member (see www.bufa.org for contact information) or Maureen Barrett, our Administrative Assistant:

A.E. McKenzie (002-1) (September 2016).

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www.bufa.org

CAUT

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is the national voice for academic staff in Canada. They have a wealth of resources that can be accessed at:

www.caut.ca.