

**ULFA EXECUTIVE**

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- President  
Bryson Brown  
Philosophy/2506
- VP/President Nominate  
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CCBN/-Neuro.Sc/3987
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Ed Jurkowski  
Music/2342
- Academic Welfare Chair  
Trevor Harrison  
Sociology/2552
- Economic Benefits Chair  
Wayne Lippa  
Chem-Biochemistry  
2326
- Grievance Chair  
Kate Chiste  
Management/2139
- Board Representative  
Leah Fowler  
Education/2457
- ULFA OFFICE/2578  
Brenda Rennie  
Executive Office
- Sue Edwards  
Administrative  
Assistant

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*Report of the President*



Dear ULFA members,

There are two important topics I want to address in this month's newsletter.

First, ULFA held an information session on September 30 to address the possibility of APOs at the U of L becoming members of ULFA. We heard presentations from Walter Dixon, President of the Association of Academic Staff, University of Alberta and Linda Bonneville, President of the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations and member of the Athabasca University Faculty Association. Both these associations include APOs as members, and have experience with the kinds of benefits and challenges we could face if APOs at the U of L became members of ULFA. The session was sparsely attended, but the presentations were interesting and helpful. Historically, AASUA has expanded to include almost all staff working at the University of Alberta; this seems to be due to the administration and board there having decided that they would prefer to deal with just one organization rather than deal with a wide variety of associations representing different employee groups. On one hand, being such a 'big tent' organization can be complicated. It has required AASUA to develop internal structures to ensure that different groups get a hearing and that particular groups are well represented when issues of particular concern to that group arise. On the other hand, it seems to have encouraged a more consultative approach to decision making by the administration at the U of A. AUFA represented both APOs and faculty from its inception; they too have detailed structures for committee membership to ensure balanced and appropriate representation. The proposal presented last spring to ULFA members included such provisions as well. The agenda for our fall general meeting, scheduled for Wednesday October 28 includes a discussion of this issue; we hope members will come prepared with questions, concerns and suggestions for how we should deal with this issue.

Second, there was a University Town Hall on the afternoon of Friday, October 9. The audience heard statements from President Cade, V.P. Academic Hakin and V.P. Finance Walker, beginning with comments from President Cade on the meeting that Tuesday, between university presidents and board chairs and the Minister of Advanced Education. It appears the Minister did not provide a lot of new information; previous advice, that universities in Alberta should plan for no increase in their base grants over the next two years (2010-11 and 2011-12), was



extended to 2012-13. As things stand, basic grants constitute 67% of funding at the University of Lethbridge. Some slight tuition increases will be allowed, subject, we understand, to the current policy linking the Consumer Price Index to tuition). Encouragingly, our total enrolment is up despite a large early shortfall in applications. On the cost side, salaries were reported to be 71% of the operating budget (with 10% more for benefits). Pension costs are also expected to go up substantially as of next July. President Cade indicated once again that there seems to be no prospect of the government stepping in to help with the pension plan problems, despite the Government's role in creating them.



The administration still foresees a \$5M shortfall in the projected 2010-11 budget, and \$6.5M for 2011-12. These are continuing operating cuts, but it is clear that achieving a \$5M cut in the first year would include cuts in continuing costs, and thus imply a substantial revision to the anticipated 2011-12 budget, leaving a much smaller cut to be made then. Emphasis was placed on active management - some cuts in administrative positions were pointed out as an early cost cutting measure, along with the 0% COLA for administrators in this year, which seems likely to be repeated in the coming years. At this point there is no new budget for 2010-11 or 2011-12, so what we are seeing is still the 'before cuts' picture still. This is why there has not been a significant change in these figures since the town hall last spring.



The most alarming concern raised at the meeting was that substantial cuts in staff may well be part of the budget cuts to be made. A ballpark figure of 50 to 70 was mentioned in the question period. In fact, we were told that staff cuts might have been necessary this year if registration numbers hadn't recovered (this seemed a bit odd, given that the University actually did receive the grant increase that had been planned for this year). The possibility of a 0% COLA for 2010-11 and 2011-12, and whether this, or this coupled with the very drastic measure of giving up increments as well, would be enough to stave off staff cuts, was also raised during the question period. However, as President Cade clearly noted, this is a matter for negotiation. It's premature to contemplate or discuss such measures before a budget plan for the coming years has been drawn up by the administration. That said, ULFA is actively preparing for the coming negotiations and sharing information with other members of CAFA and with The University of Calgary Faculty Association, to ensure that we get as much information and as much good advice as we can before serious discussions begin.



As a closing point, this week's UWeekly newsletter includes information and links on flu shots (including both H1N1 and seasonal injections). These shots will be available off campus this year, a change from previous years. We believe all ULFA members should make an informed decision about whether to get a shot, and act on it, especially this year. On a personal note, all too often in the past I've skipped getting a flu shot simply because I wasn't paying close attention and the opportunity slipped by. This year, I plan on getting whichever shot(s) Alberta Health suggests I should get.

With best wishes for a happy and healthy fall,

Bryson Brown,

President of ULFA.



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## TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS, WAIVERS, AND BURSARIES

This just in from the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT):

“On August 12, 2009 the Canadian Revenue Agency issued new guidelines for employer-paid educational costs. The section on *Tuition, scholarships, and bursaries paid for employees’ family members* is germane to members of Academic Staff Associations.

In two cases before the Tax Court of Canada the judge ruled that scholarship or tuition amounts paid to an employee’s family member were benefits to the family member, not to the employee. These cases were upheld on appeal to the Federal Court of Appeal.

As a result, the CRA revised its position on employer-provided scholarships, bursaries, and tuition for an employee’s family member. Previously, the CRA held that scholarships, bursaries and tuition provided to an employee’s family member were taxable for the employee, unless the scholarship was awarded to a limited number of individuals selected on the basis of objective criteria that focused on the accomplishments of the recipients.

The CRA now accepts that when an arm’s length employer provides scholarships, bursaries, and free tuition to employees’ family members, it is income to the family member, not the employee, regardless of the criteria used to award the amounts.

Retroactive to the 2007 taxation year free tuition provided to an employee’s family member will no longer be included in the employee’s income. Instead the amount must be reported as a scholarship on a T4A slip for the family member.

If the value of free tuition, a tuition waiver, scholarship or bursary for a family member was included in your members’ income for 2007 or 2008, the employer is now obliged to amend members’ T4 slips for those years and issue T4A slips for the family member who received the benefit. [NOTE: VP Finance & Administration, Nancy Walker, has informed us that amended T4s and T4As will be done in spring 2010 at the same time as those for this tax year.]

The guidelines and additional information are available at the following website:

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/pyrll/bnfts/dctn/ttn-eng.html>





## Report from EBC



The Economic Benefits Committee is preparing for the upcoming negotiations next term. As part of those preparations, the Economic Benefits negotiating team has been struck, consisting of Marc Roussel (chief negotiator), Trevor Harrison, Ilsa Wong, and myself.

The EBC has also been digging deeper into the budget supplied to us by the administration in order to more fully understand the numbers they have presented to the University community. Since the current financial climate is a province-wide problem, we have been involved in ongoing discussions with other CAFA members; many other faculty associations are entering into negotiations next term so an exchange of information is beneficial to all. We will also be seeking input from our members regarding what benefits can use improvements, and what benefits are fine the way they are.

In closing, I'd like to reiterate what Marc expressed in his message to the membership this past summer and urge all ULFA members to remain calm in the midst of the University's current financial situation. The Economic Benefits negotiating team and the EBC are working hard to ensure that we go into negotiations as prepared as possible.

Wayne Lippa  
Acting Chair, ULFA EBC



## 2009 ULFA Scholarship Recipients

### University of Lethbridge

Rylan Boudreau	B.A.Sc.
Erin Smith	B.Sc.
Benjamin Young	Pre B.A./B.Mgt
Elizabeth Young	B.A.

### Other Institutions

Alia Adatia	B.Sc.	University of Saskatchewan
James Bomhof	B.Sc.	University of Alberta
Jesse Dyck	B.A.	Trinity Western
Elizabeth Patitsas	B.Sc.	University of British Columbia
Qiuli Julie Xu	B.A.	University of Pennsylvania



Total Funds Available	\$6,000.00
Number of Units	9
Amount per Unit	\$650.00

*We wish to congratulate the above-noted recipients.*

## The Joint Workplace Occupational Health & Safety Committee

The Joint Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JWSHSC) has the goal of ensuring that all university employees have a safe environment in which to work. With representatives from the university administration as well as all employee groups, we are your link to the administration for issues regarding health & safety concerns.

In addition to meetings at which we can pass along health & safety concerns and stay updated on progress addressing those concerns, the JWSHSC also inspects work areas upon request. While health and safety are of particular concern in laboratory environments, we are interested in ensuring that all work areas have adequate lighting, space and ventilation, and these inspections allow us to identify areas that need work. Recent inspections have included fine art studios, parking lots and The Zoo.

On the health front, the Wellness subcommittee has organized a number of excellent events promoting mental and physical health, both at work and in general. Recent events include the Bee Heart Smart Contest in which the University of Lethbridge staff and students were encouraged to walk, bike and swim their way to healthier lifestyles, and the Employee Life Balance Fair at which topics included nutrition, life balance and stress management.

Of course, the health issue of most concern at the moment is pandemic planning and the potential for an outbreak of the swine flu (H1N1). The university has responded by setting up an online flu reporting system, and stationing hand sanitizers around campus. Please be aware that hand sanitizers should be used in addition to regular hand washing and not as a substitute for it. Also, be aware that most of the antibacterial products flooding the market are only designed to kill bacteria, and are often not effective at killing viruses like the flu virus. Our best defence against a flu outbreak is a combination of sanitation, vaccination and isolation (ensuring that anyone who contracts the flu stays at home so as not to infect the rest of their department).

If you have any health or safety-related concerns, please feel free to contact your ULFA rep on the Joint Workplace Occupational Health and Safety Committee, currently Susan Lait ([susan.lait@uleth.ca](mailto:susan.lait@uleth.ca)).

Minutes for our monthly meetings can be found at the Risk and Safety Services Website under JWSHSC.



The best way to become acquainted with a subject is to write a book about it.

*Benjamin Disraeli*