



ULFA NEWSLETTER

February 2011

ULFA Executive

Past President
Bryson Brown
Philosophy ext 2506

President
Rob Sutherland
CCBN- Neuroscience
ext 3987

VP/Pres Nominate
John Usher
Management ext 2759

Sec/Treasurer
Ed Jurkowski ext 2342

Chair A.W.C (Spring 2011)
Trevor Harrison ext

Chair E.B.C.
David Kaminski ext 5114

Chair Grievance
Kate Chiste ext 2139

Board Representative
Vacant

ULFA OFFICE/2578
Brenda Rennie
Executive Director

Sue Edwards
Admin Assistant

PRESIDENTS REPORT



For many this is a busy time with several administrative review and reappointment committees at work. I would like to remind our Members that we received a clear commitment from President Mike Mahon that the confidentiality of letters to such committees will be protected, even if individuals make requests to view them. This protection can be seen as part of a process that facilitates open and honest expressions of the views of our Members and others in the University community. Such expressions are vital to foster good governance and to enable committees to make good decisions with a substantial body of valid evidence. Members should be able to participate in these processes with confidence and take steps when necessary to safeguard the principle of confidentiality in these processes.

We are sometimes asked about the status of notes taken by committee members. It is a common practice in the University for committee Chairs to ask to collect and dispose of the materials used by members in their deliberations. In just this case, the member's notes are then governed by the policies and responsibilities of the University; the member has no further role to play in the disposition of the materials. The notes are placed into a sealed envelope and kept secure for one year, following which they are shredded. It is also an option for individual faculty members to take personal responsibility for disposal of their own notes and annotations. In this case the member assumes sole responsibility for maintaining the security and confidentiality of this material.

I would like to commend our Vice-President, John Usher and our Grievance Committee Chair, Kate Chiste for their efforts in organizing and conducting a very successful workshop on January 31st for Chairs and Members of our Salary Tenure and Promotion Committees.

A redrafting of our Association by-laws is nearly complete and will be presented to our Members for their consideration at the next General Meeting. The most significant changes include eliminating ULFA Council as an intermediary body, thereby allowing our Executive and our Members to interact more directly. / Continued.....

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In addition we are asking our Members to consider the addition of an Ombudsperson to handle concerns our Members may have about ULFA activities.

Finally, we conducted a test of a faculty social one afternoon last month. It is clear that we have experienced declining interest in our picnic and other events over the past many years. This pilot event was a hit and was attended by more than twice the number of Members that we expected. Thank you to all who participated. I am looking forward to the next one in the near future. For everyone this should be an opportunity to relax with Members, old and new, and to enjoy “low risk” conversations.

Rob Sutherland
President, ULFA

FACULTY GET TOGETHER - FUTURE DATES

Due to the success of the first get together held on Thursday 27th January, the following 'get-togethers' have been arranged for:

Wednesday 2nd March (3pm—5pm) in Markin Hall Atrium
Thursday 7th April (3pm—5pm), UofL Art Gallery, University Hall.



It is hoped that these get-togethers will become a good networking base from which faculty members (both new and established) can glean useful information, meet members they would not normally meet and just generally socialize.

A cash bar and snacks will be available, so make sure you make a note in your diary!!
Please email Sue susan.edwards@uleth.ca to book your place(s)

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Did you know?

The first couple to be shown in bed together on prime time television were Fred and Wilma Flintstone.

Coca-Cola was originally green.

Men can read smaller print than women; women can hear better.

The youngest ever pope was Benedict IX (1032 A.D.) at 12 years old.

He was elected pope three times.



**Note for your diary. CAMPAIGN
'Show Respect, Get Respect at Your U'.
Starts Week beginning March 7th 2011**



The *Gender Diversity Caucus* of the University of Lethbridge Faculty Association (ULFA) has been inspired to create a campaign for the University entitled '*Show Respect, Get Respect at Your U*' a promotion which kicks off on **March 7th, 2011.**

This awareness campaign centers around the importance of faculty and students co-existing in a respectful learning environment in an inclusive campus which celebrates the spirited discovery of critical thought and free expression. Faculty and students share a collective responsibility for their learning and both require a safe environment in which to carry out their educational enterprises.

How do faculty encourage students to challenge and respect ideas in the classroom? What makes for a respectful meaningful academic community? How do you manage the classroom with diverse constituencies without compromising or contradicting academic freedom? What happens when definitions of respect collide? The presupposition that you must give respect in order to get respect looks good on the page but how do you address the curricular goals and satisfy the cultural, religious and gender concerns of your students? Is there an absence of civility and appropriate classroom etiquette exhibited by students?

The campaign will be launched during the week of March 7th – 11th at the University of Lethbridge, culminating with a "Talking about Teaching" event hosted by CAETL on Friday, March 11th from 2:00 -4:00 p.m. which will address the topic of respectful teaching and respectful learning.

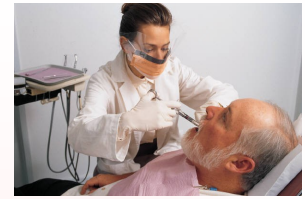
Volunteers Needed

A voluntary organization such as ULFA can succeed in serving the interests of its membership only to the extent that the members participate in formulating and executing policy. At any given time, approximately two dozen individuals carry the burden for all of the members and after a few years most of them are exhausted by the tasks which they have voluntarily borne. Their valuable experience and wisdom is then lost to us. The best way to lessen this attrition of talent is for more of the membership to give some time and effort to the Association. Please keep this in mind next month when the Nominating Committee begins its task of filling vacancies on the Executive and standing committees.



Changes to the Blue Cross Premiums

We want to remind everyone of the coverage changes to your Benefits effective January 1, 2011 and to inform you of the premium renewal changes with Blue Cross.



With the 2010 Faculty Negotiations there are three major benefit coverage changes.

- Update dental schedule to 2010 Alberta Blue Cross Dental Schedule (ABCDS), effective January 1, 2011 and to the current year's ABCDS on July 1st, of each subsequent year of the agreement
- Update to 100% coverage of medically prescribed physiotherapy (remove \$400 cap)
- Add an Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

Blue Cross updated their system with the 2010 ABCDS and the physiotherapy coverage as of January 6, 2011. If you submitted any claims for services in 2011 prior to the system being updated, please contact the Lethbridge Blue Cross office at 403-328-6081 and they will do a claim resubmission and get another cheque issued for the balance of the claim. We are currently working with the ULFA over the details of the Employee and Family Assistance Program.

Renewal

Every January we have lengthy discussions with our agent Mercer and with our carrier Blue Cross to determine the new rates for Extended Health, Dental and Vision. The results of these discussions are as follows:

1. Extended Health premiums will increase by 17.5%. This is based on the increased volume of claims and a higher usage of biologic drugs (an increase of 12.5%) plus an additional 5% increase for the physiotherapy coverage change.
2. Dental premiums will decrease by 14%. This is based on the decreased volume of claims (18%) and an increase of 4% based on the change to the 2010 ABCDS. Premiums will also increase an additional 4% July 1, 2011.
3. Vision premiums will also be decreasing by 12% based on volume of claims submitted.

The decreases of the dental and vision plan are more than the increase in the Extended Health; therefore, the changes will not affect your paycheque. All premiums are employer paid as per Schedule B of the Faculty Handbook.

Please direct any enquiries about these changes to Pension and Benefits team via return e-mail or contact David Kaminski.

Note from David Kaminski



I thought I would take this opportunity to mention that HR has posted a new Employee Benefits Booklet reflecting some of the recent changes to our benefits package. It can be accessed through the 'Benefits Info' link on the ULFA website ulfa.ca. The booklet is going to change again in the not-too-distant future when our newly added Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) becomes available.

One member recently discovered that 100% reimbursement of prescription drugs provided for in our Extended Health Plan isn't without its limitations. Only drugs listed in the current 'Canadian Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties' and prescribed by a physician (or dentist) are eligible for reimbursement. This Compendium may sound very broad, but is in fact a drug formulary. If you find that claims for prescription drugs are being disallowed, ask your physician to find an equivalent (if available) in the Compendium. If in doubt, Blue Cross can be contacted with the drug's DIN (drug identification number) for a ruling as to whether reimbursement is covered under the plan.

We have received some other news of problems people have encountered with recent changes to our benefits, and we would like to hear from you of difficulties that HR has not been able to resolve.

David Kaminski, Chair, Economic Benefits

Report from the Academic Welfare Committee

Amendments to the Faculty and Sessional Lecturers Handbooks have now been ratified and made to the respective documents. The Academic Welfare Committee will soon begin discussions with the Board on new items of concern. The first of these new items involves the issue of Term contracts. The Association's team is set to meet the Board's team on February 16 to clarify the matters of mutual concern in this matter.

A second major issue is that of the work circumstances of Academic Assistants. Before proceeding to negotiation, the Academic Welfare Committee conducted a survey of Academic Assistants. This survey was concluded in early February the results of which are now being calculated in order to provide the Committee with a better profile of Academic Assistants and the issues of concern. When this is done, the negotiating team intends to meet with the Board to examine solutions to the identified problems.



As matters proceed on each of these two issues and others, the membership will be given updates.

Trevor Harrison, Chair, Academic Welfare Committee

Strange but True

One of the strangest things ever to happen in February took place in England during the night of the **8th February 1855**.

During the night, heavy snowfall blanketed the countryside and small villages of Southern Devon. In their houses, people huddled beneath their bedclothes on a night of intense cold. Slowly the first light of dawn came to reveal a bleak frozen landscape - and the **footprints**.

To the astonishment of all, when people left their houses they found thousands of mystery footsteps. These were in the shape of a cloven hoof, but they moved in single file. More astonishingly was the fact that they covered a distance of one hundred miles or more and went through fields, gardens, towns, and even over rooftops.

At first people were intrigued, but then became very frightened. The news swept quickly over the country and many people believed the footprints belonged to the devil. The London newspapers published the story and experts came to investigate the footprints, before the snow melted.

Nobody could offer any satisfactory solution to the mystery



Some Famous People born in February

John Ruskin: English essayist and critic, born 1819. **William T. Sherman:** Union Army general in the Civil War, born 1820. **Jules Verne:** French novelist, born 1828. **George Washington:** first President of the United States, born 1732. **Abraham Lincoln:** sixteenth President of the United States, and **Charles Darwin:** British naturalist, both born February 12, 1809. **Charles Dickens:** British novelist, born 1812. **Thomas Edison:** American Inventor, born 1847. **Galileo,** Italian astronomer and physicist born 1564. **Victor Hugo:** French poet and novelist, born 1802.

Quote of the day: "Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one."

- *Malcolm S. Forbes, Publisher, Forbes Magazine.*

Finally, some **Valentine** trivia:

Why do people sign their letters with xxx's (kisses)?

When the majority of people were unable to read and write, an X was a valid signature. They often kissed the mark to show their agreement and complete sincerity. The practice of kissing the X led to its becoming the symbol of a kiss.

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Association or of its Executive unless so specified.

Current and past issues of the ULFA newsletter can be found on the ULFA website. <http://www.ulfa.ca/>