

# URFA UPDATE

# YOUR UNION ON CAMPUS

A photograph of a person in a lecture hall with their hand raised, overlaid with large orange text. The person is wearing a ring on their hand. The background shows rows of blue and red seats in a lecture hall.

ANNUAL REPORT  
2019/20



UNIVERSITY OF REGINA  
FACULTY ASSOCIATION



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Cover design by Duncan Noel Campbell, U of R APT Member (University of Regina Press).

# A message from your PRESIDENT



Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your URFA President in 2019. Here is an overview of some of the activities that occurred in 2019 as well as some of the projects and challenges facing URFA in 2020.

## Bargaining

Last year, contract negotiations between the University of Regina and URFA finally came to a conclusion with a tentative agreement on March 25th, 2019. Negotiations were difficult at times and both sides came to impasse on a few articles. A strike notice was served to the University of Regina on March 22nd, but a deal was reached before job actions were to start on March 28th. I want to thank again our bargaining team, Jason Childs, Kate Cushon, Britt Hall, Andi Céline Martin, Michael Kozdron, Colin Tether, for the incredible work they did to achieve a new contract for the largest of our bargaining units. I would also like to thank all of the members who mobilized and supported their fellow members during this difficult round of negotiations, as well as the Job Action Committee, who spent many hours working to make sure that we were prepared in the event that we had to go on strike.

Campion College was also able to reach an agreement with their employer at the end of 2019. Thanks to Dawn Flood, Dwayne Meisner and Paul Omoyefa for their work on the bargaining committee to reach an agreement for Campion members.

## Western Regional Conference

Every year, the University Faculty Associations west of Ontario meet for three days of dialogue and networking. From October 17 to 19, the gathering took place in Regina, at the Delta Hotel. Western Faculty Association members were very impressed with the presentations from URFA members Emily Eaton, Hirsch Greenberg, Roger Petry, Katherine Arbuthnott and the lawyers at

Gerrand Rath Johnson. Through fees and sponsorships, the conference was able to net a profit of an excess of about \$2,000, money which URFA sent in support of the strike of the University of Northern British Columbia Faculty Association in the fall.

## The need for better representation of U of R APT members.

Let's take a look at the following chart, showing the increase in membership since 2003.

Year	U of R Sessionals	In-scope U of R Faculty	U of R APT	FTE Students
2003	451	455	172	12,518
2004	419	460	212	12,681
2005	520	451	215	12,786
2006	506	454	221	12,266
2007	489	441	238	11,997
2008	492	435	268	11,664
2009	511	446	278	11,886
2010	467	444	294	12,267
2011	549	449	313	12,877
2012	433	452	318	13,115
2013	532	452	326	13,586
2014	619	456	322	13,902
2015	600	464	330	14,360
2016	585	465	344	14,849
2017	594	468	366	15,276
2018	613	465	379	15,568
2019	609	473	401	16,501

A few trends can be observed between 2003 and 2019. First of all, during that period, the number of students increased by 31.8% (3,983 in total). In the same period of time, the number of sessionals increased by 35.0% (158 in total), faculty members increased by 3.9% (18 in total), while the number of APT members increased by a substantial 133.1% (229 in total). Of course, some important parameters have to be taken into account.

For example, not all sessionals teach the same number of classes. Some teach one, two, or three or more classes per year. So these numbers have to be interpreted very carefully.

If the increase in students was matched by an almost identical increase in sessionals, the same is not true for faculty members. We need to continue to ask serious questions to the Administration as to why the number of Faculty members has not increased proportionally during years when the student population has grown substantially.

Clearly, the largest change in numbers is with U of R APT members. At the rate the membership is increasing, APT members could be on par with the number of permanent U of R Faculty members within a few years. Representation of U of R APT members within URFA should reflect that fact. Currently, on the Council of Representative (COR), there are five seats for U of R APT members and two seats for FNUniv APT members out of a total of 40 seats. This is a proportion of only 17.5% and representation will have to be revisited in the near future.

Sessionals also have only 5 seats on the URFA Council of Representatives and currently have

no representation on the Executive Committee. Changes are needed there too, and URFA is working to make sure that all bargaining units within the URFA membership are fairly represented.

### **Strategic Planning**

Any organization needs to take a pause once in a while to reflect on its future directions. On October 26, 2019, members of the Council of Representative (COR) had a day long retreat at the College Avenue Campus. After this first step, consultation was brought back to COR. However, since COR meets only 5 or 6 times a year, it was deemed necessary to create a Steering Committee that could meet more often and help guide the process. The whole exercise should be done before September 2020.

I want to again thank our many volunteers for their hard work in ensuring URFA's success, and look forward to the work URFA will be doing on behalf of the membership in the year ahead.

In solidarity,

**Sylvain Rheault**  
**URFA President**

## URFA statement of purpose

*The purpose of the Association is:*

- *To enhance the freedom and quality of teaching, learning, scholarship, debate, thought and research within the University community,*
- *To improve the working conditions of its members;*
- *To uphold the principles of equality of opportunity and human rights;*
- *To promote the sustainable economic development of the University;*
- *To promote the ecological sustainability of the University;*
- *To promote solidarity with the labour movement;*
- *To advocate university affairs to all levels of government and the broader community*

*-URFA Constitution, Article 2.1*

# A message from your EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



First, I want to thank our amazing and dedicated staff of your Association: Kathy Sthamann and Dana Tarnes in the front office; Communications Officer, Eric Bell; Financial Officer, Debbie Head; and Member Services Officers (MSO), Frank Menttes, Colin Tether and Heather Ritenburg.

Second, I want to thank our volunteer members as they are the head, heart and hands of your Association.

Aside from your Executive Committee and Council of Representative, there are seven volunteer standing committees within URFA:

- Bylaws and Resolutions Committee
- Equity Committee
- Finance Committee
- Pension and Benefits Committee
- Grievance Committee
- Sessional Advocacy Committee
- Trust Fund Committee

There are also four Ad Hoc committees:

- Grievance Appeals Committees
- Job Action Committee
- Member Mobilization Committee
- Nominating Committee.

There are also the bargaining committees and 22 joint committees, all of which require the volunteer service of URFA members to ensure that your Association keeps running smoothly.

All in all, at any given time, there can be upwards of 180 URFA members working on bettering the working conditions for over 1600 members. Now that is amazing! Thank you again to all our volunteers.

As you can appreciate, coordination of these committees is a complex and demanding job and

one that is professionally done by our front office staff.

The following is the list of actions and initiatives, in the office in 2019.

## **Labour Relations**

Your Association continues to work with the four employers in a pro-active, collaborative, resolution focused labour relations relationship. This has provided an enhanced service to our members. Along this path, URFA President Sylvain Rheault has been meeting with the U of R Provost to discuss improving the relations between your Association and the U of R after a tough round of U of R Academic bargaining.

## **Bargaining**

Of the seven collective agreements under your Association's umbrella, the office supported the successful bargaining of the U of R Academic and Champion College collective agreements. I will echoe Sylvain in giving a heartfelt thank you to Michael Kozdron, Jason Childs, Andi Celine Martin, Brit Hall and Kate Cushon of the University of Regina Academic bargaining team and Dawn Flood, Dwayne Meisner and Paul Omoyefa of the Champion College bargaining team for their volunteer efforts along with Member Services Officer Colin Tethers support. The countless hours spent bargaining has directly benefited the members of those two bargaining units and your tireless efforts in reaching the best possible agreements for our members is greatly appreciated.

At the time of this report, the following tables are currently being bargained:

- Luther College
- FNUniv Academic
- FNUniv Sessional Academic Staff

A huge thank you to Dorothy Lane and Louis Awan

yo, Luther College's Bargaining Team – supported by Member Services Officer Frank Mentès; Tara Turner, Edward Doolittle, FNUUniv Academic Bargaining Team and Christian Thomson and Juliet Bushi on the FNUUniv Sessional Academic Staff Bargaining Team – both supported by Member Services Officer Colin Tether. Thank you all for coming together in negotiating on behalf of the members in your bargaining unit. You are all doing an amazing job.

### **Training**

In 2019, your Association brought the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) to U of R campus in February to provide a "Membership Engagement" workshop and again in August to provide a "Bargaining Training" workshop. Both were superb and the members who participated enjoyed them immensely.

In February, 2019, URFA's Communications Officer, President and Executive Director attended a Media Training workshop facilitated by the Canadian Association of Labour Media. This was particularly helpful given the heightened media interest in the Association and U of R Academic bargaining at the time!

### **Communication**

In Nov 2018, the Executive approved your Association's first every Communication Strategy and plan and in 2019 that plan was acted upon.

More information is included in the Communications Report later on in this issue, but some highlights of actions and initiatives to that plan have been implemented include:

- Refreshed URFA's website
- Increased exposure in the media and by URFA's Newsletter being distributed to other Canadian Associations.
- URFA presence at UoR annual academic orientations
- URFA presence at UofR quarterly employer orientations
- Continued updating of URFA information packages and brochures.

### **Office systems**

The URFA office has begun the project to roll out a CAUT file management platform called Mobilis, as a support for the Member Services Officers, Grievance Officer and Grievance Committee.

Once that portion of the project is rolled out then it is anticipated that same platform will assist with membership engagement activity and management of Association data requirements.

### **General Meetings**

At the beginning of 2019 a membership survey on URFA general meetings was done to ask the membership how we can make URFA General Meetings better in order to increase member turnout. Ideas for shorter meetings, increased promotion, and engaging guest speakers were all ideas suggested to us by the membership that we will try to take into account when planning our General Meetings in the year ahead.

### **This year**

The upcoming year will be a time of continued evolution as your Association gets better and stronger as it continues with completing its first ever strategic planning. We cannot do it all and strategic planning will help define the areas your Association wants to focus and dedicate resources to. It will be a living document that could evolve with your Association.

The Executive approved a review of your Association's Financial Policies and Procedures by a third party. It does not appear such a review had ever been done and is a good step in ensuring sound financial oversight.

Remember, if you have a question regarding your collective agreement, an accommodation, a return-to-work, your benefits, your workload, etc.; please contact the URFA office to speak with one of the Member Services Officers. Those amazing people are there to help you.

**Kevin Siebert**  
**URFA Executive Director**

# Collective Bargaining

2019 saw the negotiation of two new collective agreements, and the start of negotiations for two collective agreements that are currently still underway. Below is a summary of the collective agreements negotiated by URFA in 2019, and the agreements that will be negotiated in 2020.

## U of R Academic

After dozens of bargaining sessions with the University Administration beginning in 2018, an 87.5% strike mandate from the membership, 40 hours in conciliation with the University assisted by a government-appointed mediator, and the official serving of strike notice, the Bargaining Committee was able to reach a tentative agreement with the University on March 25, 2019. The four-year agreement was ratified by the membership in April and went into effect on May 1, 2019.

The agreement made gains in compensation, pension contributions, improvements to work/life balance, and improved job security for sessionals.

The 2019 U of R Academic negotiations was the closest URFA has come to taking job action in many years. A Job Action Committee was formed, and an active group of members spent countless hours preparing URFA to be ready for the possibility of job action. The news of job action generated a great level of interest and engagement from URFA members, the University community and the public. In 2020, URFA will

once again be starting to engage with and mobilize U of R Academic members as we prepare for the next round of negotiations when the current agreement expires in 2021.

## Campion College Academic

The collective agreement for Campion College Academic members expired in 2017, and negotiations for a new agreement began in October, 2019. Priorities for Campion College included maintaining comparative salary scales, benefits and pension provisions with the University of Regina, providing stronger supports for achieving work/life balance and improved job security and compensation for sessionals.

After several bargaining sessions with the College administration, the bargaining committee was able to reach a tentative agree-

ment in December, 2019. The agreement made gains in all of the bargaining committees identified priority areas, including the ability for sessionals to participate in and be compensated for service to the College. The four-year agreement was ratified by the membership in January, 2020.

## Luther College Academic

The collective agreement for Luther College Academic members expired in 2019 and negotiations for a new agreement are expected to begin in 2020. A bargaining committee has been formed, and preparations for negotiations are underway.

## FNUniv Academic

The FNUniv Academic collective agreement expired in 2018, and negotiations for a new agreement are currently underway. A bargaining committee for FNUniv Aca-



Students gather at a town hall meeting during U of R Academic Negotiations in March.





**U of R Academic Chief Negotiator Jason Childs addresses a crowd of students at a townhall meeting in March.**

demographic negotiations was formed in the spring of 2019, and negotiations began in October.

For negotiations, the committee is working with the employer using an interest-based model. In this model of negotiations, the two parties negotiate through the assistance of a facilitator provided through the Ministry of Labour to come to agreement on non-monetary articles. When negotiations move to monetary article, the parties return to a more positional bargaining format.

Both the Bargaining Committee and University Administration received interest-based training through the Ministry of Labour in October, 2019 and a pipe ceremony to open negotiations was also held later that month. Negotiations for a new agreement are still underway.

### **FNUniv Sessional Academic Staff**

The collective agreement for FNUniv Sessional Academic Staff expired at the end of 2019. A bargaining committee has been formed, and negotiations for a new agreement are currently underway.

A pipe ceremony was held to open negotiations in October. Like FNUniv Academic, the FNUniv Sessional bargaining committee is also negotiating using an interest-based model. Interest-based training was provided to both the Bargaining Committee and the University Administration in October, and negotiations for a new agreement began in November.

### **University of Regina APT**

The Collective Agreement for U of R APT members expires in 2021. In 2020, URFA will begin the process of reaching out to members

in order to form bargaining and bargaining advisory committees, as well as survey the membership on priorities for the next round of negotiations.

### **FNUniv APT**

The Collective Agreement for FNUniv APT members expires in 2021. In 2020, URFA will begin the process of reaching out to members in order to form bargaining and bargaining advisory committees as well as survey the membership on priorities for the next round of negotiations.



**U of R Academic members meet to hear a presentation on the tentative collective agreement in April.**

# Treasurer's Report

URFA's goal of balancing its operating budget continued in the 2019/20 fiscal year. This year, the URFA Executive and staff spent a lot of time developing the budget and finding ways to bring down the operating deficit. The 2019/2020 budget was approved by the Executive in May, 2019. Financial statements, as well as the previous year's audited financial statements, are available on the URFA website in the Member Section.

In order to reduce the deficit, reductions were made on various budget lines, including administration, travel and conferences, and the suspension of payment of dues to three affiliate organizations: The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL), the Regina and District Labour Council (RDLC), and the National Union of Canadian Association of University Teachers (NUCAUT). The suspension was a temporary measure that was a difficult decision to make as URFA is committed to solidarity within the labour movement. However, the Executive felt that it was necessary in order to reduce the deficit in 2019.

Overall, URFA has been cautious on spending over the past year. Spending on conferences, Administration and Committee expenses are all under budget. Revenues are above initial projections, and URFA's hosting of the 2019 Western Regional Conference, an annual conference of Western Faculty Associations, was under budget and in fact generated revenue for the Association. However, legal expenses have been higher than initial projections, due to multiple grievances that have gone to arbitration during the fiscal year.

A second increase to member dues occurred in May, 2019. This increase will assist URFA in reaching our goal of a balanced budget.

This year, URFA continues to be mindful of our spending, and will continue to reduce costs where we can in order to continue with our plan to bring the budget to balance.

In December, 2019, URFA Treasurer Andrei Volodin

In December, 2019, URFA Treasurer Andrei Volodin (U of R Academic) stepped down due to an upcoming sabbatical. Kay Doxilly (U of R APT) took on the role of Treasurer for the remainder of Andrei's term until April 30, 2020.

**Kay Doxilly**  
**URFA Treasurer**  
**Chair, URFA Trust Fund Committee**  
**December 2019-April 30, 2020**

**Andrei Volodin**  
**URFA Treasurer**  
**Chair, URFA Trust Fund Committee**  
**May 2018-December 2019**

“

**URFA continues to be mindful of our spending, and will continue to reduce costs where we can in order to continue with our plan to bring the budget to balance. ”**

# Member Services

Each year, your team of Member Services Officers (MSOs) spend hundreds of hours assisting and advocating on behalf of members across all seven bargaining units, both on the main campuses and those who work remotely.

In 2019, URFA Member Services Officers:

- Worked with bargaining committees to negotiate two collective agreements and began negotiations on three collective agreements.
- Provided representation and advice during meetings between members and the employer
- Filed Grievances on behalf of members
- Worked with members to resolve member conflicts
- Assisted members in obtaining workplace accommodations
- Held information sessions on the appeals process
- Provided guidance and advice for performance reviews
- Provided guidance, advice and support during workplace investigations
- Provided guidance and advice on appointments and terminations
- Assisted with return to work following leaves
- Answered member's questions about information in their collective agreement
- Answered member's questions about retirement and pensions.

Whether you need advice, want clarification, or have a workplace issue you need to discuss in private, URFA offers a welcoming and safe environment. URFA MSOs are experts on your collective agreement, and are trained and skilled in various conflict resolution strategies. They are able to offer you advice and guidance that are in your best interest.

All three URFA MSOs have received Mental Health First Aid training through the Mental Health Commission of Canada. URFA MSOs are trained to provide immediate support and guidance in a safe environment, can comfortably have conversations about mental health issues, and are able to provide members with assistance in finding professional and other mental health supports.

No question or issue you have is too small, and all conversations and correspondence with URFA are kept strictly confidential. URFA will never share information with the employer or contact the employer without obtaining your consent.

In 2019, URFA MSOs received professional development keeping them current in labour and accommodation law, including progressive discipline. They also attended investigation training with a particular focus on harassment investigations. As an ongoing key aspect of their work, MSOs also furthered their skills in conflict resolution. MSOs are also continuing ongoing training with a focus on diversity, inclusion, and indigenizing faculty associations.

Your team of URFA Member Services Officers looks forward to continuing to represent and advocate on your behalf in the year ahead, and remind members that they can be contacted at any time through the URFA office.



**URFA President Sylvain Rheault (left) and Sheila Campbell (U of R Business Admin) march with the URFA banner in the 2019 Queen City Pride Parade.**

# URFA Council of Representatives

URFA Council of Representatives (COR) members continue to advise the URFA Executive on a variety of issues, including recommendations from the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee, URFA Affiliations, and other issues brought to COR from either the Executive or the General Membership.

In 2019, COR focused on the development of a strategic plan for URFA. The strategic plan will help URFA define the goals and objectives for the association to focus on and delegate resources to in the coming years.

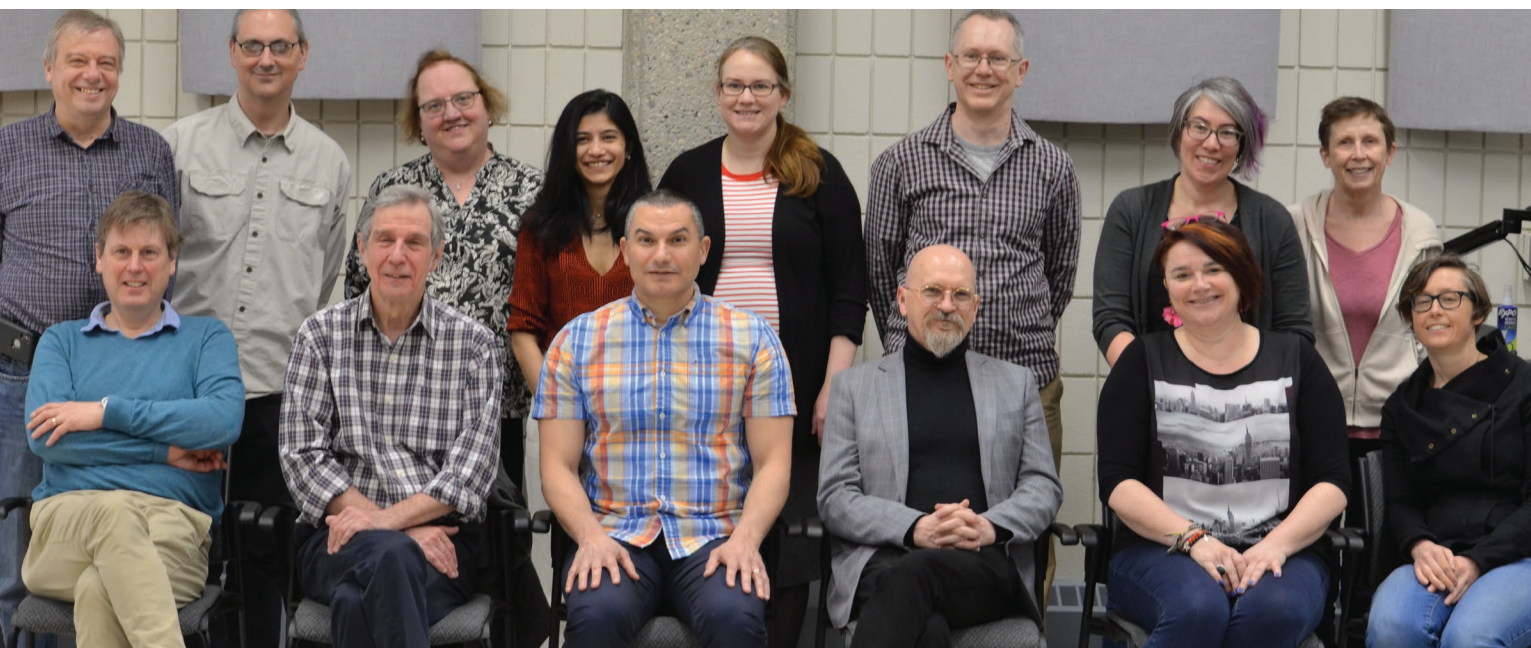
In November, a one-day strategic planning retreat was held, and through that a strategic planning framework document was developed. The document is currently being reviewed by a committee of COR members who will recommend next steps in the process of developing URFA's strategic plan.

In the fall, council members had an opportunity to meet with representatives from the University of Regina's Board of Governors. The meeting was a chance for members to ask questions and have a discussion on the role of the Board of Governors and board transparency.

Your representative on COR is the link between you and URFA. They are responsible for communicating to you the activities of COR and URFA. COR Notes, a quarterly E-Newsletter is sent to all members on behalf of your COR representative.

There are still vacancies on the Council, listed on the Council of Representatives page on the URFA website. If your constituency is without a representative, consider putting your name forward to ensure that your voice is being heard by URFA. COR meets quarterly for meetings that last approximately two hours.

URFA members can bring issues and suggestions to COR for discussion at any time by contacting their Representative. A full listing of current COR Representatives can be found on the URFA website. COR meetings are also open to all URFA members. Those who wish to attend the meetings may do so at any time as a non-voting member.



**Members of the 2019-20 URFA Council of Representatives.**



**Danette Starblanket (FNUniv Academic) poses for a photo outside of the FNUniv Main Campus in August.**

# Equity Committee

The Equity Committee has been meeting regularly and working on numerous initiatives and issues over the past academic year.

We held Equity Week in March 2019, and though timing was not in our favour, it was great to connect with members and the campus community and raise our profile on campus.

In brief, below are some of the initiatives we have been working on over the year:

We have been looking into the translation of key URFA documents into different languages, notably Cree, Michif, and French as well as potentially others. We have heard from colleagues across campus on this and have shared this information with URFA.

We have invited members of the campus community to come and speak about different initiatives, including Erin Limacher from External Relations about the You Belong, Racism Doesn't campaign, and Hirsch Greenberg, Grievance Chair, about the proposal for a restorative justice option as part of the grievance process. We have provided suggestions for speakers to Erin for You Belong and are interested in how the program develops. We have been in touch with URFA Grievance Chair William Arnal about having equity committee representation with some grievance files/issues.

We are doing research on workplace support for members experiencing Intimate Partner Violence

and have been in contact Human Resources, community organizations, such as PATHS, and other faculty associations in Canada. Once our research is complete, we will provide an information document on IPV for URFA to share with members.

As highlighted during Equity Week, there is a new Breastfeeding position statement and soon to be breastfeeding space on campus. Vanessa Mathews has led this initiative and we are delighted by the support from the campus community.

We continue to work on issues that members bring to our attention and welcome any suggestions or feedback from members

**The URFA Equity Committee meets regularly throughout the year. If you are interested in joining the committee, or have an equity issue you'd like to bring attention to, contact URFA at [urfa@uregina.ca](mailto:urfa@uregina.ca).**





**2019 in Photos: Simon Granovsky-Larsen ( U of R- Arts) and Andre Magnan (U of R- Arts) hold the URFA banner during the Global Climate Strike in Regina.**

# Sessional Advocacy Committee

The Sessional Advocacy Committee (SAC) meets bi-weekly throughout the year to discuss means by which we can inform, encourage and advocate for Sessional colleagues in relation to the interpretation and implementation of our respective Collective Agreements. We work towards expanding active engagement among Sessionals, raising awareness of Sessional issues amongst students, throughout university campuses and beyond.

In the past year, SAC committee members have participated in bargaining with University of Regina, Campion College and FNUniv. We look forward to building on the gains we have achieved for Sessionals in our latest contracts at U of R and Campion. Bargaining at FNUniv, where Sessionals bargain independent from permanent faculty, is ongoing.

As one of the only URFA standing committee not currently represented on URFA Executive Committee, this year SAC successfully petitioned the Council of Representatives to put forward the constitutional change required for SAC participation on URFA Executive. We anticipate that the constitutional change will go forward at the Winter General Meeting in April, and we look forward to our active participation on the URFA Executive.

In addition to continuing our work with URFA staff to consult with Sessional members through surveys and to develop and distribute information on Sessional issues through print, emails, and social media, SAC is currently developing a number of actions and initiatives to support and expand our work on and beyond our campuses. Later this spring, SAC members will travel to meet and consult with URFA Sessional Faculty in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. To extend and support Sessional outreach and inclusion, we are currently forming a SAC Social Sub-Committee. SAC is also planning a spring food drive on campus to raise awareness of Sessional issues and the role of URFA, while at the same time assisting individuals in need. In collaboration with faculty colleagues at Archer Library, we are currently planning the University of Regina

Sessional Colloquium for fall, 2020.

We are proud that the URFA Sessional Advocacy Committee is welcoming and supportive. Together, we build and enjoy Sessional collegiality. If this is your first semester teaching or if you have many classes under your belt we would like to meet you. If you would like to attend a meeting and voice ideas, questions or concerns, would like to get involved with the Committee, or meet over a coffee and chat about your work as a Sessional, we are here to listen and support in whatever ways we can. There are many ways to participate, so please get in touch. The SAC email addresses are posted on the URFA webpage so drop us a line or visit the URFA Sessional Academic Staff Facebook page.



**Members of the URFA Sessional Advocacy Committee tabling during Fair Employment Week in October.**

# Grievance Committee

The Grievance Committee provides oversight, assistance, and direction to URFA in its weighty task of ensuring the enforcement of the seven Collective Agreements negotiated between the employer and our members (Campion College; First Nations University Academic; First Nations University APT; First Nations University Sessionals; Luther College; University of Regina Academic; University of Regina APT).

A major element of this work involves oversight of individual and policy grievances, including recommendations about whether to pursue grievances, whether an unresolved grievance should be taken to arbitration, and what kinds of resolutions would constitute acceptable results of a grievance. The overriding principle that guides these recommendations is ensuring that our members are being treated fairly by the employer, and that members are being fairly represented in the grievance process.

In addition, the Grievance Committee bears responsibility for ensuring that members are informed about their rights. It also aims to improve the process for members by making appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee, to URFA's Council of Representatives, to the Equity Committee, and to Bargaining Committees, as circumstances warrant. The Grievance Committee works closely with, and relies upon, the insight, experience, and integrity of the URFA staff, and in particular of the URFA Member Service Officers, Frank Mentes, Heather Ritenburg, and Colin Tether.

Here are some recent developments that have occurred over the past year.

- Hirsch Greenberg has retired from the U of R, and so has stepped down as Chair of the Grievance Committee effective December 31, 2019. William Arnal is the new Chair of the Grievance Committee. The position of Vice-Chair has been taken up by Kate Cushon.

- The MSOs are very close to establishing a database which will allow us more effectively to

track over-arching patterns in grievances. Going forward, this database will, hopefully, allow us to provide regular grievance reports, which will inform the membership of the general state of affairs without compromising the confidentiality of individual cases. In the meantime, a snapshot of current grievances reveals that of 23 open cases, 13 are from the U of R academic contract, seven from U of R APT, two from FNUUniv sessionals, and only one from the four other agreements.

- A major policy grievance, concerning differing employer-URFA interpretations of the add-one, drop-one provision in Appendix A of the most recent U of R Academic collective agreement, has been put forward to arbitration. The arbitration is scheduled to take place in the fall of 2020.

- The Grievance Committee met last semester with members of the Equity Committee to discuss shared concerns. As a result of this meeting and of conversations between the two committees' chairs, we plan to strike a four-member joint sub-committee to draft principles and guidelines for hiring that reflect URFA's commitment to equity.

- The Grievance Committee aims to be rather more active in communicating to the membership their rights under the collective agreements, and the recourse they have when those rights are violated. By the summer of 2020, we hope to begin communications with the membership focusing on problematic issues, how to approach a grievance, what constitutes a grievance (and what doesn't), and what procedures and protections are in place for members.

- One such issue concerns letters of expectation, which supervisors have been adding to individual members' files. The Grievance Committee is looking carefully at the "mission creep" of these instruments, and whether or not some supervisors are using these letters in a disciplinary way. Members should be aware of their rights: if you receive a letter of expectation, and regard its contents to be disciplinary in nature, please contact the URFA office. You should also be aware that your collective agreement specifically allows employee re-

sponses to be placed in the file. If you receive a letter of expectation, you are absolutely entitled to respond, and the response must be placed in your file (see, e.g., URFA Academic CA 10.7; APT 12.1).

- The Grievance Committee is actively interested in gathering information on workplace conditions, specifically with respect to academic staff and the workplace conditions that facilitate — or inhibit — instruction. We are working to develop a reporting mechanism for classroom issues like missing or broken computer equipment, projecting equipment, DVD and Blu-ray players, and even chalk, dry-erase markers, and lecterns.

The Committee is, as always, interested in our members' input and participation. If you have ideas about how the URFA Grievance Committee can better serve you, please feel free to get in touch with the Chair ([Grievance.URFA@uregina.ca](mailto:Grievance.URFA@uregina.ca)), Vice-Chair ([kate.cushon@uregina.ca](mailto:kate.cushon@uregina.ca)), or the committee members listed on the URFA website.

**William Arnal**  
**Chair, URFA Grievance Committee**



# Member Mobilization Committee

Following U of R Academic Bargaining in 2019, where URFA achieved a strike mandate from the membership and came close to taking job action, it was realized that more work needed to be done in order to keep members engaged and active in the time outside of negotiations. In 2019, the URFA Member Mobilization Committee was formed, and has been very active in strategizing innovative ways to engage the URFA membership, students, and allies by having an ongoing and more open dialogue about the issues faced by URFA members, and how our working environment also affects student's learning environment, and the overall wellbeing of the university community.

So far, some committee highlights include:

- Organizing “Here to Hear,” an informational social in the Riddell Centre Multipurpose Room in January. There were free refreshments and students and members of MMC and the URFA Executive met in a sharing circle. The event was well attended, with around 50 students and 15 URFA members discussing how what we can all do to make the University a better place to work and learn.

Plans for the coming year include:

- Pop up tabling in February and March
- Spearheading a campaign in 2020 calling for an open and transparent U of R Presidential search
- Strike preparation workshop to educate members on what we need to do in the event that future negotiations lead to job action
- Continued outreach to students and other campus groups and stakeholders
- 2021 Symposium: What are Universities For? Exploring roles, challenges, conflicting tensions and promising re-imaginings
- Provide support for future rounds of bargaining negotiations.

The Member Mobilization Committee is a small group of members who meet once every three weeks. The committee is always looking for new members from across all campuses and bargaining units. If you would like to get involved, please contact the URFA Office.



# Communications

In 2019, URFA continued the work outlined in its communications plan. The goals of that communications plan, which includes goals and a timeline for the next three years, fall into five categories:

1. Member engagement and mobilization
2. Member education
3. Visual identity and visibility
4. Increasing committee support and communicate with and through the URFA COR
5. Improved communications tools and processes.

Communications projects and initiatives in 2019 included:

- The design and launch of URFA's first annual report, as well as four issues of URFA Update, URFA's quarterly newsletter
- Continuation of COR Notes, a quarterly e-newsletter informing members of the activities of the URFA Council of Representatives, as well as the the URFA E-Update biweekly e-newsletter
- Development of URFA Brand Standards Guide to ensure consistent visual identity

- Launch of the URFA New Member Welcome Package, an information guide sent to all new URFA members
- Formation of the URFA Member Mobilization Committee, a dedicated group of URFA members who drive URFA campaigns and initiatives
- Communication support to the U of R Academic Bargaining Committee and the Job Action Committee during bargaining negotiations
- Updated URFA information packages and brochures
- Increased social media presence and engagement with members and the broader labour movement online.

A major project in 2019 was the development of a new website for URFA. Launched in 2020, the new website is more user-friendly and features a password protected member section, where URFA members will have access to meeting minutes and financial updates.

URFA was able to continue its increased media presence in 2019, with extensive coverage in local media surrounding the potential of job action during U of R Academic negotiations. In 2019, the URFA President and Executive Director both were able to receive media training through the Canadian Association of Labour Media, in order to further their media interview skills.

Plans for 2020 include plans for the development of additional member resources, an outreach strategy for members working away from the main campus, preparing communications strategy for the next rounds of bargaining, and several campaigns designed to engage and mobilize the URFA membership. URFA will also be reviewing its communications plan to ensure that it is in line with the goals and objectives of the URFA strategic plan, which is still currently in development.



# URFA by the numbers 2019

**1,624** URFA members

**110**  
Committee  
meetings in  
2019.

**7** Bargaining Units

**2** Collective  
Agreements  
negotiated in  
2019.

**3** Collective Agreements to  
negotiate in 2020.

**Countless** hours from members  
serving as volunteers,  
committee members and  
council representatives.

**121**

URFA members who gave their time to the  
association as volunteers, committee  
members and council representatives.

**33** member meetings, events,  
training opportunities and pop-up  
information tables.

# URFA Executive & Staff 2019/20

## URFA Executive



**(L to R):**

**Grievance Chair**

Hirsch Greenberg (2018-2019)

William Arnal (2019-)

**President**

Sylvain Rheault

**Treasurer**

Andrei Volodin

**Academic Vice President**

Paitoon Tontiwachwuthikul

**Equity Chair**

Claire Carter

**Academic Member-at-Large**

Fadi Tannouri

**Not Pictured:**

**APT Vice President**

Janelle Schwartz (2018-19)

**APT Member-at-Large**

Rachel Husband (2018-2020)

**Treasurer**

Kay Doxilly (2019-20)

## URFA Staff

Kevin Siebert

**Executive Director**

Frank Mentès

**Member Services Officer**

Colin Tether

**Member Services Officer**

Heather Ritenburg

**Member Services Officer**

Eric Bell

**Communications Officer**

Debbie Head

**Financial Officer**

Kathy Sthamann

**Administrative Assistant**

Dana Tarnes

**Administrative Assistant**





**Jody Bellegarde (FNUniv APT) poses for a photo inside of the FNUniv Main Campus in August.**

# Thank you

To our many volunteers who stepped up over the past year to keep our Association running strong, thank you. Whether it was through serving on a committee, joint committee, Council of Representatives, or marching with us in the pride parade, your support and contribution to the ongoing success of URFA is greatly appreciated.

Melanie Goodwin  
Jennifer Love Green  
Marc Spooner  
Duncan Campbell  
Jason Childs  
Kate Cushon  
Andi Martin  
Britt Hall  
Marilyn Andrews  
Darlene Jushka  
Michael Shires  
Kay Doxilly  
Robert Thomas  
Hirsch Greenberg  
Jody Bellegarde  
Dawn Flood  
Noel Chevalier  
Francesco Freddolini  
Paul Omoyefa  
Mark Lajoie  
Ted Morris  
Paul Simard-Smith  
Juliet Bushi  
Christian Thompson  
Candace Cappo  
Barbara Meneley  
Dwayne Meisner  
Bridget Klest  
Claire Carter  
Lei Zhang  
Olga Lovick  
Richard MacLennan  
Tanya Pivovar

Barbara McNeil  
Gwen Grinyer  
Jean Hillabold  
Jesse Bazzul  
James Daschuk  
Peter Douglas  
Saman Azadbakht  
Greg Lendrum  
Gaynor Kybett  
Andrei Volodin  
Youngsoo Kim  
Olusola Fansunwon  
Edward Doolittle  
Ara Steininger  
Stuart Wilson  
Jane Desplenter Rose  
Saman Azadbakht  
Fiji Gendron  
Keanenna Agecoutay  
Jackie Nixon  
Cory Gauthier  
Lionel Peyachew  
Danette Starblanket  
Leta Kingfisher  
Trina Joseph  
Carrie LaVallie  
Faye Cote  
Natalie Owl -----  
Karen Meagher  
Mohammed El-Darieby  
Dorothy Lane  
Larry Miller  
Gaynor Kybett

Lisette Tillman  
Louis Awanyo  
Greg Bawden  
Sandeep Mishra  
Justin Feeney  
Cindy Hanson  
Terri Allard  
Michelle Beitel  
Sandy Pipko  
Rose-Marie Bouvier  
Sultan Ahmed  
Jan Bell  
Stacey Crooks  
Alexis McQuigge  
Imtiazur Rehman  
Maria Davis  
Brenda Green  
Justin Longo  
Rene Mayorga  
Patrick Neary  
Jeff Loucks  
Lee Aument  
Vincent Ignatiuk  
Michelle van Ginneken  
Tamara Tucker  
Erika Folnovic  
Simon Granovsky-Larsen  
Claire Polster  
Dwight Heinrichs  
Anna Mudde  
Phillipe Mather  
Richard From  
Gagandeep Gill

Doug Durst  
Daniel Kikulwe  
Celine Magnon  
William Arnal  
Louis Awanyo  
Kathleen O'Reilly  
Bridget Keating  
Ricardo Arisnabaretta-  
Montejo  
Fang Bian  
Robert Truszkowski  
Stephen Wihak  
Rachel Husband  
Paitoon  
Tontiwachwuthikul  
Trish Elliott  
Lisa Bighead  
Maria Davis  
Lisette Tillman  
Cristyne Hebert  
Zhou Zhang  
Yasser Morgan  
Kevin Fiessel  
Cynthia Sanders  
Lauren Bradshaw  
Allan East  
Katherine Robinson  
Fadi Tannouri  
Darrell Agopsowicz  
Sylvain Rheault  
Kirsten Hansen  
Megan Milani  
Chris Riegel





# Get in touch.

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