

URFA Update

Winter, 2019



Taking the University to Court
Emily Eaton's fight for Academic Freedom

Contents

- President's Message **2**
- Executive Director's Message **3**
- 2019/2020 URFA Executive **4**
- Cover Story- Academic Freedom **5**
- APT Member Highlight **7**
- Sessionals as Contingent Labour **10**
- Sessional Advocacy Committee Update **13**
- Collective Bargaining Updates **14**
- Grievance Committee Update **15**
- Member Mobilization Committee Update **16**

COVER PHOTO: URFA members speak at the Fall 2019 General Meeting held in October. Left to Right: Sylvain Rheault, URFA President; Sean Tucker, U of R Academic; Kay Doxilly, U of R APT; Dawn Flood, Champion College.

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A message from your PRESIDENT



Dear URFA members,

The end of 2019 is nearly upon us. Here is what we have done in the last few months.

In regards to bargaining, four bargaining units (Campion, Luther, First Nations University Academics and First Nations University Sessionals) are still negotiating and new contracts might be signed soon.

In regards to grievances, Hirsch Greenberg, our current Grievance Officer, will leave us at the end of December for the post-retirement life. Apparently, a trailer was bought and new adventures are waiting to be lived. Hirsch will be replaced in 2020 by William “Bill” Arnal (U of R Academic), who is currently the vice-chair of the Grievance Committee. Bill intends to carry on Hirsch’s implementation of restorative justice practices in the workplace. In the last few months, a few cases have been moved to arbitration, including the “add one, drop one” interpretation issue from the last round of U of R Academic bargaining.

From October 17-19, URFA hosted the Western Regional Conference, an annual event for the faculty associations in Western Canada. There were many great presentations and it was a good opportunity to network and reinforce our connections with our fellow Western faculty associations. Thank you to URFA members Dr. Emily Eaton (U of R Academic), Dr. Roger Petry (Luther College), Dr. Katherine Arbuthnott (Campion College), and Hirsch Greenberg (U of R Academic), for making presentations to conference attendees. We look forward to attending next year’s conference, hosted by the Brandon University Faculty Association.

On a Saturday in October, the Council of Representatives (COR) held a strategic planning exercise at

the College Avenue Campus. With the help from a facilitator, the members present drafted the framework for a strategic plan, including a core mission and vision that will guide the consultation process with the rest of COR and URFA’s membership. Stay tuned for more information, as we will be seeking member feedback in the year ahead. Thank you to the COR members who gave up their Saturday to move URFA’s strategic planning process forward.

At the end of December, Andrei Volodin, who has been our Treasurer for the past couple of years, will go on sabbatical and will be replaced by Kay Doxilly (U of R APT) until a new Treasurer is elected in April 2020. Thank you to Andrei for his service to URFA, and to Kay for stepping up to fill this important role, especially as we begin the process of creating URFA’s budget for 2020-2021.

I wish all our members a very good end of the semester, happy holidays, and a safe and healthy new year!

In solidarity,

Sylvain Rheault
URFA President

A message from your EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Season's Greetings to all!

I look forward to the upcoming holiday season, the New Year and URFA's continued support of its members in 2020. URFA's first priority in the New Year will be the negotiations at First Nations University of Canada, Campion College and Luther College. For members in those bargaining units, please be engaged in these negotiations as doing so provides important feedback and support to your hardworking bargaining teams.

A re-cap of some of URFA's successes in 2019:

Members First – Your Association continued to advocate the requirement to provide adequate supports so our members can support student success. Putting its members first is a priority of your Association.

Bargaining – Of the seven collective agreements under URFA's umbrella, the U of R Academic agreement was successfully bargained, and negotiations for Campion College, Luther College, First Nations University Academic and First Nations University Sessional are all either underway or about to begin. A huge thank you to past, current and upcoming bargaining teams. Their volunteer efforts directly benefit you and your Association.

Labour Relations – Your Association continued inroads toward a more pro-active, resolution focused labour relations relationship with the four employers it works with. This provided an enhanced service to our members.

Committee Support – Your Association continued to provide support to the various volunteer committees. The committee work is invaluable to the functioning of the Association and its lifeblood. Members are encouraged to consider joining an URFA committee.

Looking forward to 2020, a revamped URFA website will be brought online, as well as a case management platform, and a review of policy and procedures, all of which focus on enhancing your Association's support of its members.

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

I want to thank the office staff for their tireless efforts in 2019: Dana Tarnes and Kathy Sthamann – Administrative Supports; Heather Ritenburg, Frank Mentes, Colin Tether – Member Services Officers; Eric Bell – Communications Officer and Debbie Head – Financial Officer. There are truly the backbone to the Association.

Have a safe and joyous holiday season and all the best to you and yours in 2020.

Kevin Siebert
URFA Executive Director

2019/2020 URFA Executive

President

Sylvain Rheault

Vice President, Academic

Paitoon Tontiwachwuthikul

Vice President, APT

VACANT

Grievance Officer

Hirsch Greenberg

Equity Officer

Claire Carter

Member at Large (Academic)

Fadi Tannouri

Member at Large (APT)

Rachel Husband

Treasurer

Andrei Volodin

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Anna Mudde

Luther College Academic

Louis Awanyo

First Nations University of Canada Academic

Kathleen O'Reilly

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Ricardo Arisnabaretta-Montejo

Dwayne Meisner
Fang Bian

U of R APT

Jennifer Love Green
Stephen Wihak
Rachel Husband
Olusola Fasunwon

First Nations University of Canada APT

Trina Joseph
Candace Cappel

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Andrei Volodin

Equity Committee

Claire Carter

Pension and Benefits Committee

Peter Douglas

Sessional Advocacy Committee

Christian Thompson
Barbara Meneley

Bylaws and Resolutions Committee

Vacant

Grievance Chair

Hirsch Greenberg

Taking the University to court: Emily Eaton's fight for academic freedom



Dr. Emily Eaton, a professor in the department of geography and environmental studies, speaks about her case at the Western Regional Conference of Faculty Associations in October.

Emily Eaton never thought that things would go this far.

Filing a Freedom of Information request with the University as part of a larger research grant looking into the corporate power of resource extraction industries in Western Canada, Eaton assumed it would be just like any other request for information. Instead, it's turned into a two-year process involving the Saskatchewan Privacy Commissioner, a court hearing, and thousands of dollars in legal fees.

In November, 2017, Eaton, a professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, at the University of Regina, filed a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the University of Regina, asking for information relating to research projects involving fossil fuels over the last decade. Eaton was asking for the dollar amount of

the funding, the funding agency, the title of the research project and the faculty or department funds were granted to.

The University said no.

"They [The University] came back and said that they would categorically deny me the name of the funder, and the name of the unit on campus receiving the funding," Eaton said. "So at that point, I challenged it with the privacy commissioner."

Following months of investigation, the Saskatchewan Privacy Commissioner ruled in Eaton's favour, recommending that the University provide the requested information. However, in Saskatchewan, the Privacy Commissioner can only make recommendations- they cannot compel the University to provide the documents. Late in the afternoon on Christmas Eve 2018, the University informed

Eaton that they disagreed with the Privacy Commissioner's ruling, and were not going to release the documents. That left her with only one more option: Appealing the decision, and taking the University to court.

"I was originally going to let it go, but it really bothered me that they were basically snubbing their nose at the law," Eaton said. "So I went ahead, and I filed an appeal."

Earlier this year, the University filed an application to have the hearing held behind closed doors, but a judge disagreed. Instead, the hearing will take place in open court in February, something that Eaton is looking forward to, saying that it's a chance for the University to try and justify why they've been fighting so hard to keep information involving research funding secret.

"I think they are doing one of two things. They're either protecting on principle that corporations or any private funders can contract to do research at the university in secret, which I think is a dangerous thing to be doing," Eaton said. "They want to be able to send a message broadly to any research partners, that we will protect your interests, no matter the cost. That's one thing, or they have something pretty egregious to hide. I hope they don't, but the fact that they are going to such lengths makes me wonder what it is they are hiding."

One of the University's arguments for why they aren't disclosing the information is that they are protecting academic freedom, something that Eaton takes issue with.

"We know from experts on academic freedom that research funding is never part of academic freedom, academic freedom is meant to ensure that academics can pursue their research, even if it's controversial or unpopular, they can pursue that and actually have protections in order to make what they're doing public. The fact that we're serving business interests potentially, or other interests, is contrary to the mission of the university and of academic research. I think if we accept what the University's version of academic freedom, then we're in scary times."

Eaton said her case has resonated with Academ-

ics, both at the University of Regina and across the country.

"I think it really strikes a chord, because we do have a tradition about being open and transparent with our research funding, and our research goals. I think that people are really worried about the arguments the University is making about academic freedom. So I've had nothing but positive feedback from folks across all different faculties—science and engineering included. And there are a lots of academics from all over who have reached out to say that they're glad I am doing this."

One recent case of another University of Regina professor is giving Eaton hopes that the documents she requested might be released.

In October, the provincial government handed over thousands of documents requested by Journalism professor Trish Elliott, just days before Elliott's case was to be heard in court. Like the University, the provincial government also chose to ignore with the Privacy Commissioner's recommendation that the documents be released, leaving Elliott, like Eaton, with no other option but to appeal in court.

"Given Trish's case, I hope the University of Regina is watching, because they still have time to produce the documents and avoid court costs," Eaton said.

If not, Eaton is ready to take her case to court.

Note: Following the completion of this article, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) passed a resolution at their council meeting to assist in covering the cost of Dr. Eaton's legal fees. "I am humbled by your words of encouragement and support," wrote Eaton on her GoFundMe page set up to assist with the legal costs associated with pursuing her case, which to date has raised over \$11,000. "We will be in court on February 26th, and I am confident that the outcome will be in the favour of transparency."



APT Member Highlight: Duncan Noel Campbell

URFA APT members are a vital part of the day-to-day operations of the University of Regina and First Nations University. Each issue of URFA Update features an APT member profile that highlights our members and the different roles they play on our campuses.

Name: Duncan Noel Campbell

Position: Art Director, U of R Press

URFA APT Member Since: I've been at the University since January 2009, so it's approaching 11 years as an URFA APT member.

Provide a description of your position, and what a "day in the life" at your job might look like:

No day is ever the same. U of R Press is a very collaborative unit so you get to hear about and contribute to discussions that don't necessarily involve your role directly. Also, there are always new

things coming up, exciting new projects and interesting problems to solve. My role at the press, in simplified terms, is to create and maintain a high level of quality to the "look" of the press: anything we create that goes out in the public sphere has to meet my approval, and that includes all our book cover designs and book interiors. As the only in-house designer at the press all the covers and most of the book interiors fall to me to design (I oversee the few interiors that get farmed out to others). All promotional pieces like ads, posters, catalogues, promo postcards etc. are also designed by me too and have to meet a high level of graphic design and professionalism.

What about your position is the most rewarding?

I love that I get to use my skills to bring books into the world—and I get paid to do it! How great is that? Graphic designers often find opportunities in the world of capitalism and advertising, which

doesn't align well with my personal interests. Here I get to work on important things like the dissemination of knowledge through our academic publications and participate in the revitalization of Indigenous Languages through our First Nations Language Readers and Indigenous Languages for Beginners series. I feel very fortunate and honoured to be involved in that work.

What is the most challenging?

I think the fast pace of my job can be a double-edged sword. By necessity, designers have to be deep thinkers and ponder-ers. It's all about solving complex communication problems and presenting them clearly in a visual format. And for that you need time. However the world of publishing is very deadline driven and fast paced, so an old man like me gets tired. I always seem to get it done though.

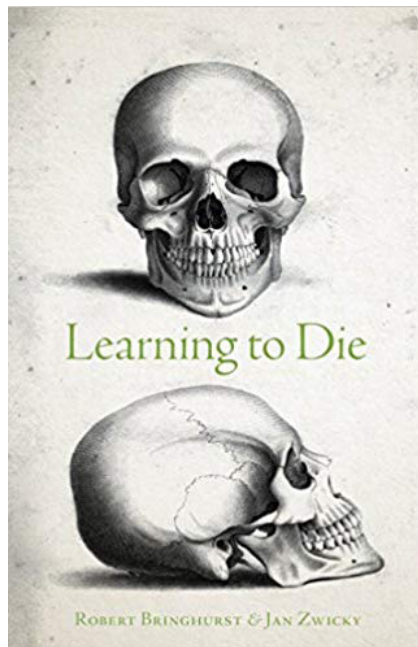
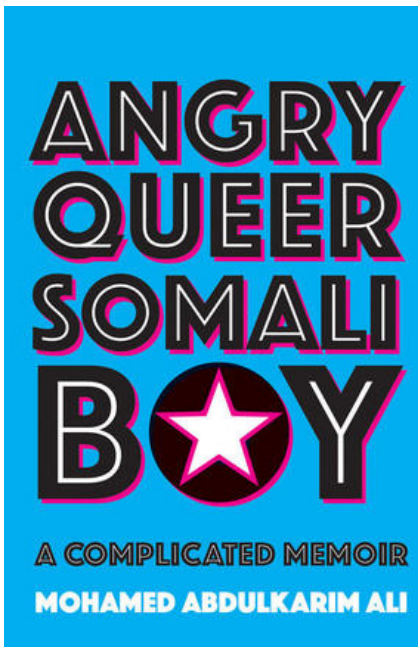
What's your favorite part of working at the U of R?

Having a front row seat to all the interesting visiting scholars and artists. There is always something interesting going on here to see and experience.

What's something interesting about your job that most people might not know about?

I designed a book about bums that received a

number of design awards and garnered some international attention for the design. The book, "Reading From Behind, A Cultural Analysis of the Anus," by Jonathan A. Allan, and published by U of R Press in the Spring of 2016, has an irreverent title but was a solid academic book by a talented scholar. The design challenge for me was to acknowledge the cheeky nature of the book and its title, while maintaining an air of sophistication and not incurring the wrath of censors. I knew I couldn't put a butt on the cover but in many ways the book really required it! The design solution turned out to be very simple: a large hand-drawn asterisk which was both a nod to the work of Kurt Vonnegut and a reference to our cultural puritanism (we often use asterisks to replace swear words when writing). The cover was well received and was even featured in a weekly column on book design in De Volkskrant, a Dutch daily newspaper. It really was a designer's once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to have such a crazy problem to solve land on your desk. You can see the cover here at the U of R Press website: <https://uofrpress.ca/Books/R/Reading-from-Behind>



Some of the book designs created by URFA APT member Duncan Noel Campbell in his role as Art Director for the University of Regina Press.

Happy Holidays!

The URFA Executive and staff wish you a safe and happy holiday season, and all the best in the new year.



URFA

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
FACULTY ASSOCIATION

University of Regina Sessional Employees as Contingent Labour



Marianne Jacobsen and Deborah Simpson hold buttons for a “Make it Fair for Sessionals” campaign created by the Sessional Advocacy Committee in 2018. Photo: Regina Leader-Post

By Kiegan Lloyd

Since the early 1990s, North American public and private universities and colleges have been employing an abundant amount of sessional track appointments rather than offering tenure track professorships (Bauer, 2011, p. iii). This problem has become an overwhelming epidemic in the post secondary institution, and is fairly well hidden from the eye of the public. A sad reality is that obtaining tenure is out of arms reach for many sessional staff who hold doctoral level credentials. Sessional track appointments have become the bread basket for the institution. In other words, institutions of higher education view these groups of people as contingent labour, and ultimately replaceable. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) concludes that: “more and more academic work is being performed by people hired on a per course or limited term basis. These positions are often poorly paid, have little or no benefits, no job security and

no academic freedom. This has serious implications not only for contract academic staff, but for students, and the university system as a whole” (Canadian Association of University Teachers cited in Bauer, 2011, p. 2). This paper argues that there is an inequality among the post-secondary workforce at the University of Regina: sessional lecturers are used as a cheap teaching force. One of the effects on the university environment is that these qualified people do not have a sense of stability or belonging, thus effecting commitment to the organisation and possibly even teaching output.

Providing some form of faculty protection from loss of employment dates back to the Holy Roman Empire. Throughout the Middle Ages, European university tutors enjoyed safeguards that were put in place by territorial rulers. With the Great Schism of 1378, however, these university tutors experienced initial stages of greater free-

dom of thought (Hertzog, 2017, p. 23). Terms of a more secure faculty employment was not discussed until the eighteenth century. Professional rank faculty or individuals hired as full-time tutors at universities had some form of employment security where they were allowed to continue their job positions provided they exhibited good behavior (Hertzog, 2017, p. 36). It was in the nineteenth century that colleges and universities across the world, replaced the tutor system with professorships that consisted of various levels of employment. This change in status from tutor to professorial rank positions introduced a new hierarchy in universities and colleges. The ranks developed, from lowest to highest were: Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor (Hertzog, 2017, p. 36-7).

During this time period higher education in North America expanded as new privately funded universities were established through large donations from both wealthy public and private donors (Hertzog, 2017, p. 49). As faculty advanced applied technology and science, universities benefited through acquired patents and publications that were credited to the university. No provisions were made to guarantee faculty employment after their research was completed (Hertzog, 2017, p. 50). Faculty members had no claim to the research they conducted, because as viewed by the university administration, the faculty conducted their research on university time rather than on sabbatical. This lack of job security led to increased tensions between faculty and administration (Hertzog, 2017, p. 50). Faculty began to feel as though they were disposable commodities with little or no employment security whose jobs would be terminated when their research was concluded (Hertzog, 2017, p. 50). As faculties and departments demanded accommodations and concessions from the university administration the university administration turned their eyes towards financial savings, employing far fewer tenured professorships, and utilizing a far greater amount of sessional staff positions. The question arises, has the lack of job security become chronic in post-secondary institutions today?

Andrew Stevens an Associate Professor of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management from the University of Regina (2018) explains

that since the 1980s research employment conditions in post-secondary institutions have focused on the growth of contingent academic workers labelled “non-full-time instructors” (p. 22). To clarify, non-full-time instructors are typically categorized into three groups: sessional lecturers who are employed on a per-course basis; graduate student instructors; and others such as lab instructors (Stevens, 2018, p. 25). All of these positions are characterized by lack of employment security as such appointments come with the understanding that they are temporary (Stevens, 2018, p. 25). Stevens cites Mysyk stating that, “sessional lecturers are indeed the quintessential worker. They are a form of migrant labour: inexpensive, temporary and mobile” (Mysyk cited in Stevens, 2018, p. 25).

University of Regina employment records show that of 2667 people employed at the university, fifty-four percent (1427 people) are considered term/casual, while only about forty-six percent (1240 people) of employees are permanent (Stevens, 2018, p. 27). Although the use of temporary and non-tenured employees is a long established tradition, what has changed is that extent to which the constituency has become a staple of university level education (Warne and Lundy cited in Stevens, 2018, p. 25). Between 2011-2014 sessional appointments went up twelve percent, despite the University of Regina’s obligation to reduce the proportion of sessional appointments in accordance with the “URFA-University of Regina Academic Staff Agreement” (Stevens, 2018, p. 28). The University of Regina administration value having a “reserve army of contingent labor” subject to poorer working conditions solely as a means through which the university gains surplus value. This permits expenditures in other budgetary lines of the university and secures a certain degree of fiscal stability (Bauer, 2011, p. 14). Bauer cites Rajagopal explaining that this devaluation of sessional staff by university administration is problematic. Arguing that this “temporary” label legitimizes the neglect of sessional staff in their professional development related to merit, specialization and quality of academic work (Rajagopal cited in Bauer, p. 14). Stevens (2018) notes that over sixty percent of academic workers at the University of Regina hold term or casual appointments (p. 28).

Robert Clark, an American sociologist, outlined the Entrepreneurial University Model (EU-Model) which was designed to help the traditional university to become a more corporate and outward facing institution. His model consists of a strengthened executive core, an advanced developmental periphery, a diversified funding base, and a stimulated and more entrepreneurial academic heartland (Clark cited in Symposia, 2018, p. 365). In contrast to this model, Goddard, Hazelkorn, and Vallance have developed an alternative model for the civic university that intergrades teaching, research, and engagement with the outside world, such that each enhances the other (Symposia, 2018, p. 366). Many university administrations including that of the University of Regina, seem to like Clark's EU-Model and base their institution off it rather than Goddard, Hezelkorn and Vallance's model. Clark's model evidently proves detrimental to the sessional staff because the model limits any academic promotion at the institution. To note, most sessional lecturers are required to work unpaid hours in order to complete their duties with no overtime pay. For example, Stevens in his research study interviews a group of sessional lecturers from the University of Regina, one of these sessional said the following:

"Fourteen hours per week paid time plus planning, phone calls, emails, assignment review/marking, necessary learning for the instructor equals 16 hours' unpaid time as well. Then there are meetings randomly called. It's very difficult to have another job...The faculty is supposed to provide an office or work in but does not...Personally I want a permanent position, active leadership, and benefits such as pension and vacation pay" (Stevens, 2018, p. 31).

Stevens (2018) explains that throughout the study sessional interview participants believed that the University of Regina's academic mission was compromised through the increased deployment of precarious academic labour, and was reason enough to question the University of Regina's place as a top employer in Saskatchewan (p. 33). Below the writer of this paper provides two answers from interviewed sessional lecturers from the University of Regina stating their concerns of the unrecognized extended hours and work overload:

"I mean I think that everybody in the University has been frustrated. I think that whether or not you have a full-time faculty position or you're a precarious worker as part of the academic workforce there's been a disintegration of the academic mission as administrators are hiring more and more of their own that's putting that ratio of administrators to people that are fulfilling the academic mission of the University out of whack... It's toxic" (Stevens, 2018, p. 33).

"Other faculty members, it's a recognized part of their job so when a full-time faculty member publishes a paper, when they do this community work, when they participate on panels for the students' benefit and so on that's a part of the job... If I eventually get a full-time job maybe some of this will matter but right now its unpaid [and] unrecognized" (Stevens, 2018, p. 32).

Mysyk (2001) writes that once sessional lecturers become better organized it is imperative that they form and maintain political alliances with other activist groups. There is a need both inside and outside the academy to lobby the federal and provincial governments to restore and increase support for a wide array of public services, including better resourced post-secondary education (p. 8). Until then, these qualified people will not have a sense of academic recognition or belonging, thus effecting their teaching output. Furthermore, the state of impermanence limits their contributions producing research or improving their departments, faculty and the overall institution as a whole.

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About the Author

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Sessional Advocacy Committee Update

The Sessional Advocacy Committee (SAC) continues working to represent sessional faculty at University of Regina, Luther College, Campion College and First Nations University.

SAC members currently serve on URFA bargaining committees, Council of Representatives, and the Grievance Committee.

This fall, SAC continued to meet on a bi-weekly basis. In October, the committee tabled on campus for Fair Employment Week, a week initiated by the Canadian Association of University Teachers to bring attention to the issues faced by sessional and contract faculty in Universities and Colleges across the country. The goal of tabling was to raise awareness of the issues sessionals face on our campuses. The committee prepared a leaflet for students with information about sessional instructors that they might not be aware of, including how sessionals have little to no job security and rely on short term teaching contracts from one semester to the next.

We are always interested in hearing from sessional members across all campuses- sessional members from the University of Regina, Campion, Luther, and FNUniv are all welcome to get involved in the committee. We are also currently exploring ways to involve sessionals who work remotely and on other campuses. If you are interested in getting involved, please email urfa@uregina.ca and you will be put in touch with one of the com-

mittee co-chairs.

We also have a Facebook Group where sessional members can connect to discuss issues, ask questions and share information. You can join the group here: facebook.com/groups/URFASessionals.

Looking forward to 2020, SAC is working to develop additional outreach initiatives for URFA sessional faculty and forming a SAC social committee to start early in the new year.

Barbara Meneley
Christian Thompson
Sessional Advocacy Committee Co-Chairs

Collective Bargaining Updates

Currently, there are four collective agreements that have expired or will expire later this year. The agreements for Campion and Luther Colleges, and FNUUniv Academic units have expired, and the FNUUniv Sessional agreement expires at the end of 2019.

Campion College Academic

Special thanks must go to Dawn Flood for agreeing to act as Chief Negotiator, Dwayne Meisner and Paul Omoyefa for serving on the bargaining committee, as well as Philippe Mather and Katherine Robinson for acting on the Advisory Committee.

On October 9, 2019, the Bargaining Committee reviewed the current proposals with the membership and received a mandate to proceed. Our first bargaining meeting was scheduled for October 24, 2019 and there have been a total of five bargaining meetings with the College. To date, URFA presented a total of 26 proposals and have agreement on 24. Currently the outstanding issues include the length of the Collective Agreement and Appendix A – Salary Ranges and Compensation.

Bargaining priorities for Campion include:

- Maintaining comparative salary scales, benefits and pension provisions with the University of Regina;
- Providing stronger supports for achieving work/life balance; and
- Improved security and compensation for sessionals.

Luther College Academic

A bargaining committee has been formed. The next steps are to hold a member meeting to discuss bargaining priorities and review the language changes negotiated in the University of Regina Academic collective agreement.

FNUUniv Academic

A call for volunteers for the Bargaining Committee was sent out earlier this year, and a committee has been formed. Special thanks must go to Tara Turner for serving as Chief Negotiator and Ed Doolittle for serving on the Bargaining Committee. URFA would also like to thank Jody Belle-

garde for acting as an advisor to the committee. Olga Lovick and Leta Kingfisher were also instrumental in early preparations for this round of negotiations.

For negotiations, the committee intends to work with the employer using an interest-based model. This model of negotiating was successfully used during FNUUniv Sessional Academic Staff Member negotiations and last year's FNUUniv APT negotiations. The two parties negotiated through the assistance of a facilitator provided through the Ministry of Labour to come to agreement on non-monetary articles. When negotiations moved to monetary articles, the parties returned to a more positional bargaining format. Negotiations for FNUUniv Academic are expected to begin this fall.

The Parties received training through the Ministry of Labour on October 2, 2019 for interest based negotiations.

A Pipe Ceremony was held on November 13, 2019 to open negotiations formally for both FNUUniv Academic Staff Member and FNUUniv Sessional Academic Staff Member negotiations. Negotiations also began on November 13, 2019 for the FNUUniv Academic Members with dates scheduled until the January.

FNUUniv Sessionals

The FNUUniv Sessional contract expires at the end of 2019. A Bargaining Committee has been formed, and a bargaining priorities survey was sent to members in the spring. Special thanks go to Juliet Bushi and Christian Thompson for serving on the bargaining committee.

FNUUniv Sessional Academic Staff members also intend to negotiate with the employer using an interest-based model. Interest based training facilitated through the Ministry of Labour is scheduled with the employer for December 11, 2019 and this will be our first day of formal negotiations.

Grievance Committee Update

I wish to extend the best of the season to our members celebrating holidays in December and January. To all, have a safe and happy season with family and friends.

My time as the chair of the Grievance Committee is winding to an end effective December 13. My gratitude goes to the volunteer committee members for their selfless effort, ensuring that our campus is safe and healthy for us all.

And, I wish the best of the season to the URFA staff: Colin, Dana, Debbie, Eric, Frank, Heather, Kathy, and Kevin. With their advice and support, volunteering is an enjoyable experience. Don't lose your good humour. It creates a sense of connection.

Looking back on my term as chair, what stands out is how slowly member grievances are resolved. The process, as laid out in the various Agreements, is intended to ensure interventions are just and fair, and it does this. But, on its sur-

face, the more egregious the problem, the longer it seems to find a resolution. We established a triage committee made up of grievance committee members and staff to vet member complaints and move them forward more expeditiously.

I leave a good number of ongoing projects and outstanding grievances to our incoming chair, William 'Bill' Arnal (U of R Academic). Please join me in thanking Bill for his role as vice-chair and in his new role as Grievance Committee Chair and member of the Executive Committee.

And last but not least, all my best to President Sylvain Rheault and the Executive Committee for their unwavering dedication to the association.

Hirsch Greenberg
Chair, URFA Grievance Committee



URFA Grievance Chair Hirsch Greenberg retires from the University in December. Greenberg has been Chair since early 2018.

Member Mobilization Committee Update

The URFA Member Mobilization Committee (MMC) represents the interests of all URFA members at the University of Regina. This is a committee of, by and for the members of URFA and is a standing committee of our association. Members' terms are for one year from May 1st to April 30th. Prior to the end of their term, members will be asked if they wish to continue for another year.

This committee undertakes publicity and educational activities to:

- Encourage the active participation in URFA affairs by the association's members.
- Raise awareness among the URFA membership of specific interests and issues arising from collective bargaining.
- Encourage members to conduct outreach in their academic units to raise issues and concerns for debate among their colleagues.
- Circulate relevant information and arguments on specific issues to all members thereby encouraging open, informed debate on matters affecting the terms and conditions of employment at the University of Regina.

MMC activities in 2019-20

Your MMC has been meeting regularly this semester to strategize publicity and educational activities. Some upcoming events are below with details to come:

- Staffed informational pop up tables around campus (throughout the year)
- Job action workshop to help mobilize and train URFA members and assist the association to be more prepared in the event of job action in the future (Winter 2020 Semester)
- "Here to Hear" social - URFA members, students, and student leaders are invited to an informal Q & A session on January 16, 2020 - details at <https://www.facebook.com/events/741492619683953>

- International Symposium: What are Universities For? Exploring roles, challenges, conflicting tensions and promising re-imaginings (Spring 2021)

The MMC and URFA recently drafted an URFA-Your Union on Campus power point. It provides a high level overview of your association, what we do, and how we can help our members. The presentation was created as a way to be a "refresher" for those who have been URFA members for a while and an introduction to URFA for members who are newer to the University of Regina, Campion College, Luther College, and First Nations University of Canada. The presentation has been made available to all members of the URFA Council of Representatives to share with colleagues at their next faculty, department or unit meeting.

Additionally, URFA is happy to attend any meetings to give a short presentation and answer any questions members may have. For more information on that, please contact the URFA office.

The MMC also helps with the transition of URFA forming the next U of R Academic Staff Member Bargaining Team and briefing it with issues and concerns from association members. We welcome comments anytime.

If you are interested in getting involved with the MMC, please contact the URFA office. We always welcome new members, and would like the committee to be representative of all URFA bargaining units.

Michael Shires
Chair, URFA Member Mobilization Committee