

# URFA Update

Summer, 2020



Closed Campus: How the COVID-19  
Pandemic is affecting URFA members



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# A message from your PRESIDENT

My name is Britt Hall and I am an environmental scientist and professor in the Department of Biology on the main UofR campus. My research examines the movement of pollutants in the environment with a particular emphasis on the influences of climate change on the biogeochemistry of mercury and carbon in prairie wetlands and I am your new URFA President-Elect.

First off, thank you to everyone for entrusting me in my new role. So far, my new role has been overwhelming – both in the support and good wishes I have received in the last couple of days, and the sheer weight of the responsibility you have trusted me with. However, I am looking forward to tackling the steep learning curve, engaging in URFA business, and working with people all over campus in a new capacity.

In addition to supporting the on-going work URFA engages with, I have a couple of issues that I intend on tackling during my first term. Primarily, I would like to work to strengthen the relationship among members and URFA and between URFA and our partner institutions. I look forward to working with the joint relations committees to support our collective agreements, improve our criteria documents and performance metrics,



and increase transparency and communications between administrations and members. I hope to help strengthen collegial governance by boosting the voices of URFA members at Faculty and Unit meetings and in other venues. Finally, the set of challenges that the COVID situation presents; challenges such as increased workloads, a decrease in work hours due to lack of elder and child-care, reduced ability to do lab and field research, the decrease in income for our sessional members, and increased anxiety and decreased mental health, will be foremost issues that impact all aspects of my initial time as URFA President.

Most importantly, I would like to send my most heartfelt thank you to our out-going President Sylvain Rheault. In addition to the hard work of day-to-day activities of the Association, Sylvain guided us through one of the most contentious periods of bargaining in recent times. He did so with a steady hand and good humour and sets a high bar for me to strive for. Thank you, Sylvain. Enjoy your summer everyone!

**Britt Hall**

# A message from your outgoing President

Congratulations to Britt Hall! I know she is up for two exciting years at the head of URFA and I know she has all the skills to firmly steer the ship. I will be a phone call away if there is any information she needs. The transition date has been set for June 24th, St-Jean Baptiste Day!

My two years as president were very interesting. The U of R Academic Bargaining Unit served the University of Regina its first strike notice back in March 2019. That is something I will never forget. Entering the COVID confinement was another event that I will always remember.

But before I say my final goodbye, I have lots of

people to thank. I want to thank my brothers and sisters on the Executive, with whom I enjoyed every single meeting. I want to thank the URFA staff for their unfaltering support: Colin, Dana, Debbie, Eric, Frank, Heather, Kathy. I want to thank Kevin, the Executive Director, whose organization skills are from another planet. There are also many URFA members with whom I interacted in the last two years, too numerous to all be named here, that I would like to thank. Thank you for giving your time to URFA and contributing to move forward this wonderful organization.

In solidarity,  
**Sylvain Rheault**

# 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; part time Financial Officer, Debbie Head; and Member Services Officers (MSO), Frank Menten, Colin Tether and Heather Ritenburg. Second, I want to thank all the volunteer members of the Association as they are the head, heart and hands of your Association.

## **COVID-19**

As per COVID-19 measures, your Association office has been working remotely since March 17; however, member services continue, just done so remotely.

## **Labour Relations**

Even with COVID-19 measures, your Association continues to work with the four employers in pro-active, collaborative, resolution focused labour relations relationship.

With that said, COVID-19 measures require a specific response and your Association has started working toward a COVID specific Letter of Understanding (LOU).

## **Bargaining**

Of the seven collective agreements under your Association's umbrella, at the time of this report the following tables are at various stages of bargaining:

- Luther College
- First Nations University of Canada Academic
- First Nations University of Canada Sessional

A huge thank you to Dorothy Lane and Louis Awanyo, Luther College's Bargaining Team – supported by Member Services Officer Frank Menten; Tara Turner, Edward Doolittle, First Nations University of Canada Academic Bargaining Team; Christian Thomson, Juliet Bushi, First Nations University

of Canada Sessional 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 doing an amazing job, particularly under COVID-19 measures.

## **This Academic year**

The upcoming academic year will be a time of continued evolution as your Association gets better and stronger as it completes its first ever multi-year strategic plan; which will help define the areas your Association wants to focus and dedicate resources toward. It can be a living document that could evolve with your Association.

Your Executive approved a review of your Association's financial policies and procedures by a third party and the Association's auditor has been asked to provide this service. It does not appear such a review had ever been done and is a good step in ensuring sound financial oversight. Lastly, the Association's office is looking to develop standard operating procedures for grievance and member services.

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.

Take care, and please practice social distancing.

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



## 2020/2021 URFA Executive

### President

Britt Hall

### Vice President, Academic

Paatoon Tontiwachwuthikul

### Vice President, APT

Megan Milani

### Grievance Officer

William Arnal

### Equity Officer

Claire Carter

### Member at Large (Academic)

Darlene Juschka

### Member at Large (APT)

Jane Desplenter Rose

### Treasurer

Youngsoo Kim

## 2020/2021 URFA Council of Representatives

### President

Britt Hall

### Faculty of Arts

Darlene Juschka

Claire Carter

Robin Ganev

### Faculty of Business Administration

Dwight Heinrichs

### CCE/ESL

Fadi Tannouri

### Faculty of Education

Marc Spooner

### Faculty of Engineering and Applied Sciences

Rene Mayorga

### Faculty of Media, Art and Performance

Mike Rollo

### Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy

Ramona Kyabaggu

### Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies

Roz Kelsey

### Faculty of Nursing

Melanie Goodwin

### Faculty of Science

Britt Hall

Karen Meagher

### Faculty of Social Work

Garson Hunter

Doug Durst

### La Cite

VACANT

### Librarians and Archivists

Michael Shires

### Lab Instructors

Maria Davis

### Campion College Academic

Gillian Ramsey

### Luther College Academic

VACANT

### First Nations University of Canada Academic

Kathleen O'Reilly

### Sessionals

Scott Stulberg

Andi Martin

Dwayne Meisner

Fang Bian

Ian Brown

### U of R APT

Jane Desplenter Rose

Stephen Wihak

Tamara Tucker

### First Nations University of Canada APT

Trina Joseph

Candace Cappel

### Finance Committee

Youngsoo Kim

### Equity Committee

Claire Carter

### Pension and Benefits Committee

Peter Douglas

### Sessional Advocacy Committee

Christian Thompson

Barbara Meneley

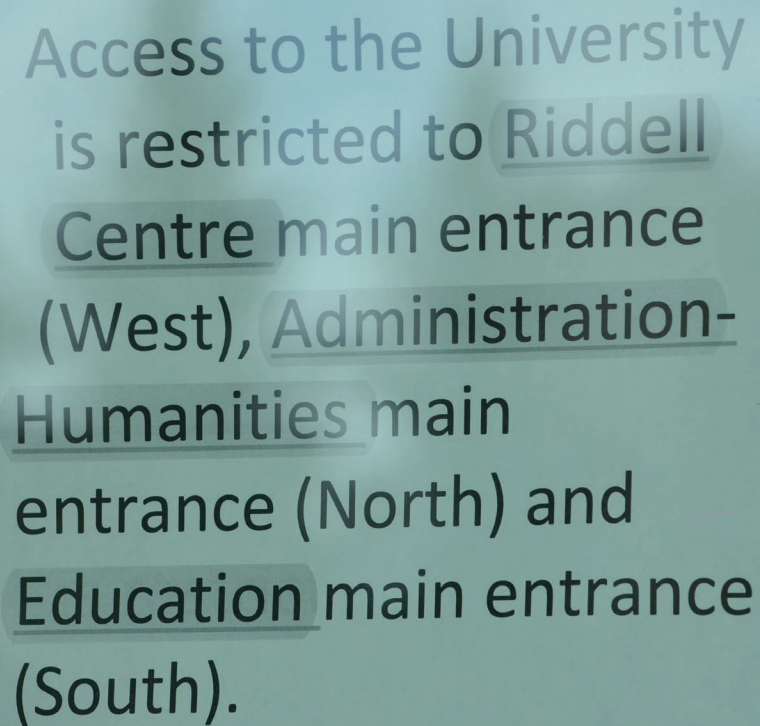
### Bylaws and Resolutions Committee

VACANT

### Grievance Chair

William Arnal

# COVID On Campus



Access to the University  
is restricted to Riddell  
Centre main entrance  
(West), Administration-  
Humanities main  
entrance (North) and  
Education main entrance  
(South).

**The COVID-19 pandemic forced the University to shut down campus in mid-March, leaving URFA members rushing to relocate their offices to their homes, adjusting to a new normal, and figuring out how to finish the semester.**

It's safe to say that at the start of the winter semester, nobody saw this coming. While there were early reports of an outbreak of a new virus across the world, few could have imagined it would spread across the globe so quickly. Once the virus reached Canada, it was only a few short weeks before life as we know it was upended, and the country began to shut down in order to stop the spread of COVID-19. By the end of March, campus was closed, members were rushing to move courses online, spring convocation was cancelled, and plans were made to teach spring and summer, courses online. Almost overnight, our lives were all changed for the foreseeable future.

As the Universities and Colleges prepared to send students home and shut down for the rest of the semester, URFA members had a matter of days to transition to new work environments, and, for many academic members teaching in-person

courses, find a way to finish the rest of the semester remotely.

The sudden and unprecedented transition to remote work and course instruction has undoubtedly had a major impact on the day-to-day work of URFA members. A recent survey revealed the ways in which members from across all units are dealing with this new reality. Conducted in April, the survey was completed by 320 members from across all seven bargaining units. Looking at the results, it's clear that the shift to working from home has had an impact on many URFA members, who are doing their best to work from makeshift offices and kitchen tables while also trying to manage childcare, elder care, and other obligations.

Forty-Nine per cent of members survey noted that they had experienced unexpected circumstances



as a result of the changes made to their working environment. As one member commented “I just had no idea what to expect. My work has had to change drastically to meet the needs of students, as my job primarily involves working with students face-to-face.” Members also reported equipment issues, delayed research projects and sabbaticals, difficulty running labs, added stress due to the short turnaround to move classes online, and the challenge of staying connected with their colleagues. Nearly half of the members surveyed reported facing technical difficulties since working from home.

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what to expect.  
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of students...”

-URFA Member responding to URFA's  
COVID-19 member survey

Extra work caused by transitioning to working remotely was expressed by URFA members, 73 per cent of whom reported in the survey that they have experienced an increased workload as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Of those members who have experienced an increased workload, 60 per cent said that it had not been addressed by their Dean or supervisor. One member noted that “my workload has increased dramatically,” while another stated that “I am working more overtime in the last few weeks than I have in the past 16 years.”

Many members expressed the difficulty of managing child care and the care of their loved ones

while also performing the regular duties of their job at home. “It is incredibly stressful,” said one survey respondent. “The timing of kids’ online school activities often conflicts with my meetings,” noted another, while many responded that having to balance childcare and work duties has had a negative impact on their ability to get their work done.

Sessional URFA members have also reported working additional hours, with 51 per cent reporting that they have not been compensated for additional hours worked to move their courses online. Sessionals also reported uncertainty of fall enrolment numbers and the move to online instruction, and how that could affect the number of sessional contracts offered. Half of sessionals who responded to the survey said that they rely on sessional contracts as their main source of income, and that they would not have an additional income source if fewer contracts were available in the fall semester.

Members also highlighted the struggles faced by their students. “Many students reached out with mental health issues, and need additional support,” one member noted in their survey response. Another member wrote that many students rely on the university to stay connected, saying “It’s much harder to stay in contact with students, especially those who don’t have access to computers all the time.”

The member survey provided important information and gave vital insight as to how URFA members are dealing with the unprecedented changes that have been made to the working environment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we’ve noted in previous emails and newsletters, URFA has a team of members working on a draft Letter of Understanding for the University of Regina, Campion and Luther Colleges, and FNUUniv. The feedback received from this survey has been incorporated into drafting an LOU, which URFA hopes to discuss with University/College administrations in the coming month. Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey and provided feedback.

At URFA, member services remain at the forefront. The URFA Executive has been meeting every two weeks to deal with pressing issues as a result of

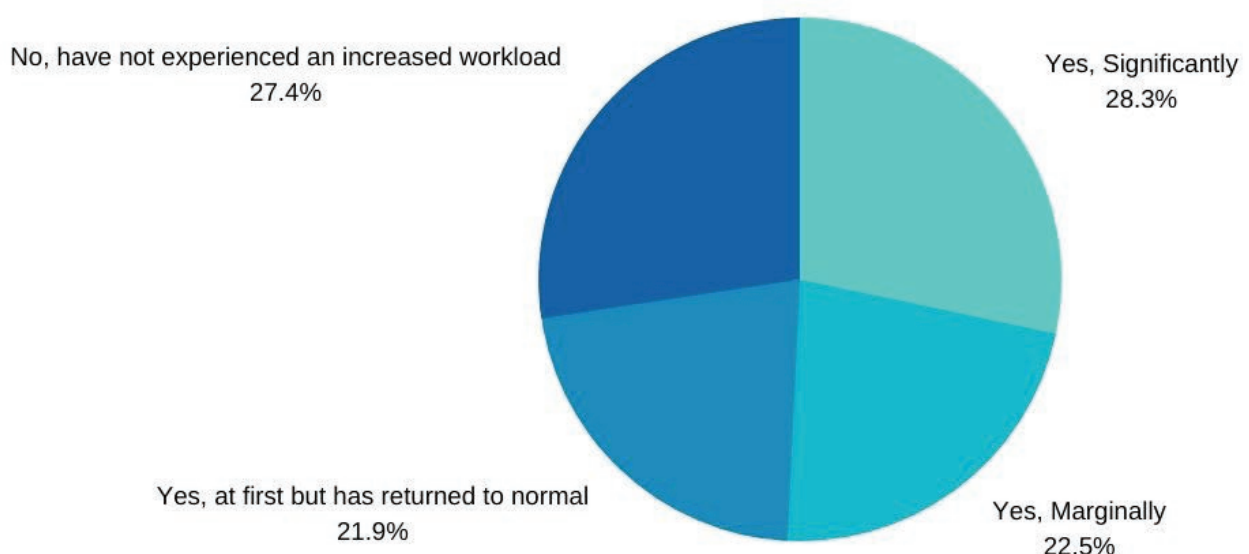
COVID-19, committees are continuing to meet via Zoom, and in April, we held our first ever online meeting of the Council of Representatives. The Winter General Meeting and the Executive Elections were also successfully conducted online. We have also continued with bargaining, reaching an agreement for FNUniv Academic members in May, and continuing negotiations for FNUniv Sessionals and Luther College Academic staff.

URFA staff are working remotely, and are available to assist you during the weekday. Please do not hesitate to contact URFA with any questions or concerns that you have, COVID-19 related or not. We will work to assist you in a timely manner.

The past few months have been challenging. Despite the difficult circumstances, URFA members have been working to the best of their ability to ensure that The University of Regina, Campion, Luther, and FNUniv are able to continue to carry out their mission. Successfully running online courses, managing operations, and dealing with the needs of students from makeshift offices is no easy task! Everyone deserves recognition for the work that you are doing during these difficult times. A special thanks also goes out to the members who are still working on campus throughout the pandemic, and to the CUPE members who are working to keep campus clean and safe for those still at work.

As Saskatchewan begins the process of reopening, remote work for the majority of URFA members will be the norm for some time still as the University plans to deliver courses remotely for the fall. As we continue to adjust to a new normal, remember that, in these times, we are all doing our best to do our jobs, while taking care of our families and staying healthy.

“  
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**When filling out the survey, 73% of respondents reported an increased workload as a result of COVID-19.**



# A new reality

URFA members share experiences working from home



**Nova Scheidt (U of R Academic) joins a Zoom call with a furry friend.**

Since the middle of March, the majority of URFA members have been working from their homes in makeshift offices. This has brought new challenges for members, who found themselves having to figure out how to move their offices to their homes while learning new digital platforms and programs, all while dealing with family, child care, and other household issues that come with a global pandemic.

At URFA, we were curious as to how members were adjusting to this new normal. How were members maintaining a work/life balance when both work and life are now intertwined? We decided to ask members- but to make it a little different from our usual member surveys. Instead, we asked members to send us photos of their remote workspaces, and answer a few questions about what their experiences have been like. URFA then

draw three names from all who submitted entires, and sent coffee and treats delivered to their new workplace, courtesy of URFA.

Thank you to the dozens of URFA members who entered. Congratulations to Kelly-Ann McLeod (U of R APT), Keaneena Agecoutay (FNUUniv APT), and Tim Maciag (U of R Academic) whose names were drawn for the prize.

On the next few pages, you'll find photos and quotes from URFA members who shared their experiences working from home with us. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many challenges, but URFA members continue to rise to the occasion, ensuring the continued success of our institutions. We hope to see you all back on campus soon.

### On the challenges of remote working:

"I miss my colleagues more than I realized I would. I mean, I knew I would miss them, but I really didn't know how much I would miss them."

**-Wendy Tebb (UR APT)**

"The main challenge is just staying connected with people. So, our team has created Zoom chat rooms, including a Zoom coffee break room, where occasionally we get together and just casually talk, with no agenda and no work driving the conversations. This is where we maintain our connections on a personal level, and bring back the social elements that several of us are missing."

**-Amanda Noubarian (U of R APT)**

"The biggest challenge is connecting with students... working with students on a daily basis I can tell that students are feeling less connected to campus."

**-Victoria Johnson (U of R APT)**

"Using Zoom for music teaching is far from adequate because of poor audio quality. Unless both



**Amanda Noubarian**

instructor and student have a good microphone and strong internet, it's very difficult to teach a really thorough one-on-one music lesson, which is a large part of my workload."

**-Helen Pridmore (U of R Academic)**

"The biggest challenge is adapting to meet the needs of constant change. Working with employers and students remotely, means taking extra time to reach out and access situations we have not encountered before..."

**-Deanna Selin (U of R APT)**

### On the unexpected benefits of remote working:

"I feel more rested, and have been very focused."

**-Rebecca Coppens (UR APT)**

"I am able to spend more time with my 86 year old mother. I have saved money on gas and lunch. I have more time to prepare meals."

**-Keaneena Agecoutay (FNUniv APT)**

More time for the important things in life – less time driving to and from work and more time with my daughter and husband.

**-Anne Lauf**



**Kristen Peigan**



"I get to run in the morning just before I work as I don't have the drive to work anymore."

**-Jason Bird (FNUniv APT)**

"It's been a bonding experience with my family members"

**-Olusola Fansuwon (U of R APT)**

**What do you look forward to the most when life returns to normal?**

"Going to my favorite local coffee shop and watching people's happy faces"

**-Rubina Khanam (U of R Academic)**

"Being able to ride my bike to work."

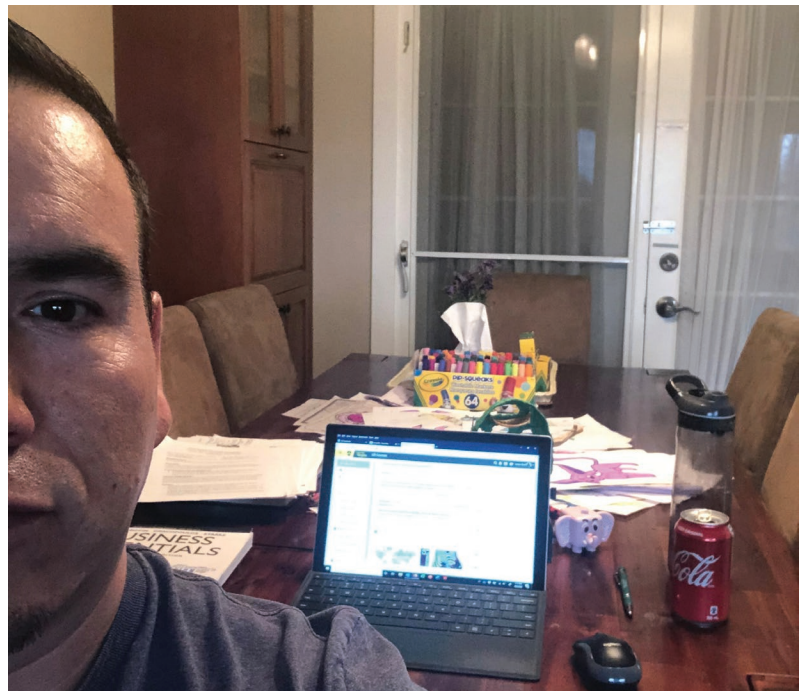
**-Michael Shires (U of R Academic)**

"Visiting my family – I very much miss my parents and siblings."

**-Tim Maciag (U of R Academic)**

"Hugging my nieces and socializing with family and friends in person (I imagine there will be lots of hugs and tears) and going out for a nice supper".

**-Kelly-Ann McLeod (U of R APT)**



**Jason Bird**

"Meeting with my students face to face – to discuss learning plans; to review exams and quizzes."

**-Kristen Cosford (U of R Academic)**

"Seeing my coworkers and actually talking to them!"

**-Kristen Peigan (U of R APT)**



**Olusola Fansuwon**



**Tim Maciag**

# Who will be our *next president?*



## **Making the case for transparency in the search for the next U of R President**

Earlier this year, University of Regina President Vianne Timmons announced she was leaving the University after serving as president for over a decade. After departing the University at the end of March, University Administration began the process of a search for her replacement.

While searches for Administrative positions are quite common at post secondary institutions, perhaps no search is as important as the search for who will lead the University in the years to come. The President plays a key role in shaping the direction of the University of Regina. They will make decisions that will affect the day-to-day working lives of URFA members, and navigate the University through many different challenges, including student population growth, limited

resources, increased worker precarity, underfunding from the federal and provincial governments, and unknown challenges stemming from COVID-19- just to name a few.

That's why URFA believes that an open and transparent search for the next president would be of great benefit to the University Community. After all, the University of Regina is a public institution, and we (the public) should have a say in who leads it. A closed search, conducted behind closed doors with minimal consultation from the university community, goes against the values of collegial governance and decision-making that are the core values of academic institutions. An open search is a chance for the entire University community to come together and help select a



president who will value the University's role as a public institution, and champion public higher education and research.

In February, URFA sent a letter to the University Board of Governors requesting a presidential search that would be open and transparent, and outlined how an open presidential search could work. The URFA Equity Committee also sent a letter to the BOG, requesting that Equity be at the forefront of the search process. You can read both letters on the URFA website [here](#). The BOG responded to both letters in brief, assuring URFA that equity would be considered, but not committing to very much else.

Since then, the BOG has moved forward with the search process. A President Search Advisory Committee (SAC), has been formed, chaired by the chair of the BOG. The committee will be responsible for reviewing applications and ultimately making a recommendation to the BOG, who will have final authority on who is hired. The SAC includes three URFA members, two from U of R Academic, and one from U of R APT.

While URFA is pleased that we have representation on the committee, more openness and transparency is needed in order to open up the search for increased public input from the University community. For instance, according to SAC's Terms of Reference (which you can read [here](#)), all members of the committee are bound to confidentiality. URFA members on the committee won't be able to give updates or discuss SAC's process with the broader URFA membership. SAC is a closed-door committee that is run by the BOG chair. All documents from the committee will be kept confidential, and the University Community will only be asked for input when developing the position profile that will ultimately be used by Boyden, a private consulting firm that has been hired by the BOG to headhunt candidates.

Having URFA members on SAC, providing vague commitments of diversity and inclusion, and collecting minimal input from the University community is not enough. More proactive measures need to be done to ensure that the search for the next president is open and transparent, and that everyone has the opportunity to give their input. URFA advocates that the SAC take several steps

to open up the search process, including:

1. Publish their short list of candidates
2. Be as open as possible with documents, including meeting minutes and the contract with the private search firm, Boyden, by posting them online on the webpage dedicated to the presidential search.
3. Include and make sure the voices from diversity group members including women, the indigenous community, and LGBTQ2S+ are heard.
4. Short-listed candidates give public presentations to the University community and community members, in turn, be able to provide feedback to SAC, following the current practice for Administrative positions at the University such as the recent search for the VP of Research.
5. As the University of Regina is committed to diversity and inclusion and believes that our workforce should reflect the diversity of our community, equity must be one of the primary criteria by which the search committee assesses and recommends candidates.

These steps will help make sure that the search is open, inclusive, and transparent. This will also help ensure that URFA members have confidence in the search process, and that the search is thorough and the net is cast as wide as possible to make sure that the ideal candidate is found.

We encourage members to learn more about open presidential searches by visiting our website, and take action by sending a form letter to the board of governors letting them know that you support and open search for the next president. The letter is available on our website and can be sent at the touch of a button. No name is required.

As the presidential search progresses, URFA will be continuing to advocate for openness and transparency. When it comes to deciding who will lead the University over the coming years, we all deserve a say.

# URFA members show “Incredible effort” during COVID-19 pandemic

**William Arnal**

**Chair, URFA Grievance Committee and**

**Kate Cushon**

**Vice Chair, URFA Grievance Committee**

It has been an astonishing spring for all of us. In March, with the suspension of classes for a week, and our return to “remote” teaching for the remainder of the semester, all of the employees of the University of Regina — both URFA members and others, including staff in CUPE, as well as URFA’s own staff — have been working diligently, suddenly, at times chaotically, at times heroically, scrambling to ensure that our institutional mission carries on with as little disruption as possible, in the face of a rapidly-emerging and unpredictable pandemic whose final outcomes are still far from clear. Special mention should be made of all the people — members and non-members of URFA — who were not able to work from home. Among others, security staff and

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The costs and burdens of the transition of work to our homes have fallen on different people in different ways.”

facilities management together ensured that the campus remained as safe and healthy as possible, an accomplishment that might not be immediately visible to those of us working from home. This incredible effort and its results — a Winter 2020 semester completed under uniquely challenging

circumstances — speak to the dedication, intelligence, solidarity, and deep professionalism of all of our membership in all of our constituencies. This includes members at the federated colleges and First Nations University; it includes APT members; and it includes our diverse academic staff of librarians, sessionals, and full-time instructors.

The costs and burdens of the transition of work to our homes have fallen on different people in different ways. For some — especially full-time academic faculty — transition to remote delivery involved skills we had already acquired, and the use of equipment we already possessed. But even in these cases, work from home coupled with the closure of schools has meant for many faculty the imposition of full-time child care and home-schooling in addition to their usual work. And full-time faculty have encountered some serious challenges to their on-going research duties, especially when that work involves specialized equipment or access to labs.

For sessionals the situation was, and continues to be, even more problematic: unlike salaried faculty who have considerable flexibility in how they schedule their duties, sessionals are paid on a by-course basis with the expectation that this will involve a predictable amount of work. There is no question that the disruption of classes and their transition to on-line and other modes of delivery has required far more work than the norm, but without corresponding compensation. Some sessionals (especially new ones) may also have been less familiar with UR Courses and other on-line technology, and may have had more limited access to necessary equipment (including access to reliable internet connections).

And none of our pedagogical accomplishments would have been possible without APT members continuing to work, sometimes from home, sometimes still on campus, sometimes struggling like the rest of us with child-care issues, and in many cases working considerable overtime, to ensure that administrative support, registration help, technical support, financial support, and



many other services continued to function essentially as normal. In particular, APT members have worked overtime to assist and offer guidance to instructors having to make the sudden transition to distance delivery — those of us in the academic ranks could not have done our jobs without them. Many of them have been required by their jobs to remain on a rather ghostly campus, as well, and this has created its own strains, burdens, and, yes, risks.

It is one thing to make this extraordinary effort and perform this extraordinary work when we are suddenly presented with dramatic changes of circumstances. It is quite another, however, for our employer to proceed as if this is the new normal. The expectations placed on us by these new circumstances continue to be deeply stressful to many, and issues around work environment, safety, mental health, childcare issues, workload and overtime, quality of instruction, and many other concerns remain unresolved.

In a perfect world, the administration and faculty, APT members, sessionals, and others, would col-

ly or unilaterally circumvent the terms of these agreements. If you believe that any elements of your collective agreement are being violated, especially as we plan for probable remote delivery of courses in the fall, please do not hesitate to contact the URFA office.

Our Member Services Officers have a unique range of skills in conflict-resolution, hard-won experience in representing the interests of our members, and intimate knowledge of the collective agreements. They can help resolve problems before they rise to gravity of formal grievances, and can offer sound advice for how you can respond to employer demands. Dealing professionally and responsibly with a unique situation does not mean giving up your rights.

With your help, and a little luck, we can come out of this time stronger and better, and with a renewed commitment to our institutional values and responsibilities. In the meantime, be safe, be well, and be kind to yourself and others.

“

With your help, and a little luck, we can come out of this time stronger and better, and with a renewed commitment to our institutional values and responsibilities. ”

legally and cooperatively work together to find satisfactory solutions to these challenges. In the real world, this doesn't always happen. URFA is currently engaged in several initiatives to protect our members from arbitrary or burdensome work demands. It is important to remember that all of the collective agreements remain in force. (The terms of our seven collective agreements can be found here: <https://www.urfa.ca/bargaining-units> — click on the link corresponding to your constituency, and there will be links to current and past contracts.) The University cannot arbitrari-

# Sessional Advocacy Committee update

The URFA Sessional Advocacy Committee (SAC) continues working to represent Sessional faculty at University of Regina, Luther College, Campion College and First Nations University of Canada. SAC members serve on URFA bargaining committees, achieving important gains for Sessionals in the latest contract at Luther College and working hard to finalize a strong contract on behalf of Sessional faculty at First Nations University.

SAC members continue to serve on URFA Grievance Committee and Council of Representatives and have actively represented Sessional faculty on Scholars at Risk and to develop the COVID Letter of Understanding. SAC has also advocated for a voting position on the URFA Executive Committee and look forward to representing Sessional faculty on URFA Executive.

Finally, SAC is delighted to welcome three new committee members for 2020/2021!

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](https://facebook.com/groups/URFASessionals).

**Barbara Meneley**  
**Christian Thompson**  
**Sessional Advocacy Committee Co-Chairs**

## Sessional Professional Development Fund

A new provision was negotiated in the URFA U of R Academic Collective Agreement (Appendix A, Article 4.2, Page 138) creating an annual fund of \$12,000 to assist U of R Sessional Academic Staff who have priority status with costs associated with creative, scholarly, or professional works.

A similar provision was negotiated in the Campion College Collective Agreement (Appendix A, Section 4.2). At Campion College, \$10,000 per year is provided to Campion Sessional Academic staff to support their professional development. Sessionals at Campion do not need priority status to apply for the fund.

Acceptable expenses for the fund may include registration, travel, publication fees, or discipline-specific equivalents. U of R Academic Sessionals with priority status are able to apply for up to \$1,500 from the fund. Funds are distributed three times per year in April, September, and December.

We are pleased to announce that we are now able to accept applications for the next round of fund distributions, due on September 1.

The application form is available on the URFA Website under "About Us- Policies and Forms-Sessional Professional Development Fund.

All applications must be submitted to the URFA office by end of day on September 1, 2020 in order to be eligible for fund distributions.

Late submissions will not be accepted, and will not be included in the next fund distribution period (December 1, 2020), unless you re-submit your application.

Please note that this fund is ONLY for U of R Academic Sessional members with priority status, and Campion College Sessional Academic Staff. Those who or are sessional members in other bargaining units are unable to apply for these funds.

We look forward to receiving and reviewing your applications. If you have any questions about the Sessional Professional Development Fund, please contact the URFA office.

# Collective Bargaining Updates

## **FNUiv Academic**

Negotiations for a new agreement for FNUiv Academic Staff began in October, 2019. For negotiations, the bargaining committee worked with the employer using an interest-based model. In this model of 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 article, the parties return to a more positional bargaining format.

After many rounds of negotiations, the FNUiv Academic Staff bargaining committee was able to reach a tentative agreement with FNUiv Administration in May, and members voted in favour of ratification in June. The agreement ensures that parity is maintained with U of R Academic members, and makes gains in several other areas as well including increased pension contributions, improvements to parental leave, and improvements to sabbatical terms.

Thank you to members of the bargaining committee Tara Turner and Edward Doolittle for their hard work reaching an agreement for FNUiv Academic members.

## **FNUiv Sessional Academic Staff**

Negotiations for FNUiv Sessional Academic Staff began in October, 2019. As with FNUiv Academic, the bargaining committee is working with the employer using an interest-based model. The bargaining committee has met multiple times with FNUiv Administration, recently moving negotiations to an online format as a result of COVID-19. Negotiations are still ongoing and the bargaining committee has multiple dates scheduled with FNUiv Administration in June.

Thank you to bargaining committee members Christian Thompson and Juliet Bushi for their continued work and many hours dedicated towards reaching an agreement for FNUiv Sessional Academic members.

## **Luther College**

Negotiations for a new agreement for Luther College Academic members began in May. Due to

COVID-19, negotiations between the bargaining committee and Luther College Administration have been held online. The bargaining committee has dedicated many hours drafting language proposals, and have multiple dates scheduled with Luther College Administration in June. Thank you to bargaining committee members Louis Awanyo and Dorothy Lane for their work towards reaching an agreement for Luther College Academic members.

## **Collective Agreements Negotiated**

University of Regina Academic (Expires 2021)  
 University of Regina APT (Expires (2021)  
 Campion College (Expires 2021)  
 FNUiv APT (Expires 2021)  
 FNUiv Academic (Expires 2022)

## **Collective Agreements Expired**

Luther College Academic (Expired 2017)  
 FNUiv Sessional Academic Staff (Expired 2019)

## **Find your collective agreement**

All of URFA's collective agreements are posted online at [www.urfa.ca](http://www.urfa.ca). A limited number of printed copies are also available by contacting the URFA office.



# Thank You.

Normally, this space is reserved for highlighting URFA APT members and the vital role that they play in the day-to-day operations of the University of Regina and FNUniv. Each issue, we pick one APT member and interview them about the role they play within the two Universities.

However, in March, COVID-19 uprooted and changed the day-to-day working lives of many URFA members. Suddenly, members found themselves working at home in makeshift offices, trying to balance work with child care and other family and household obligations.

Despite these challenges and the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, you all rose to the occasion, working to ensure the Universities could continue with their operations, and that Academic members could finish the rest of the semester instructing their students online.

So, instead of highlighting a single member, we'd like to give a shoutout to all of you. You all deserve recognition and accolades for the work that you are doing throughout the pandemic and less-than-ideal circumstances. Thank you.

We'd also be remiss not to mention the APT members who have remained on campus throughout the pandemic to ensure that essential University operations are maintained. Your work and dedication allows everyone to be able to successfully carry out their work.

Stay healthy, stay safe, and we hope that we can see you all on campus again soon.

# Member Retirements

**The following URFA members have or are retiring from their positions in 2019-2020 after many years of dedicated service:**

**Devon Anderson (Business Admin)  
Marilyn Andrews (Library)  
Thomas Bredohl (History)  
Marcia Calkowski (Arts)  
Glenn Donelly (Nursing)  
Karen Eisler (Nursing)  
Marci Elliott (Business Admin)  
Ian Germani (Arts)  
Hirsch Greenberg  
(Justice Studies)  
Natalie Hemingway  
(Student Affairs)  
David Hilderman (Science)  
Randy Johner (Social Work)  
Cyril Kesten (Education)  
Cindy Kuster-Orban (Nursing)  
Aldene Meis-Mason  
(Business Admin)  
Beverley Montague (English)  
Gary Morin (CCE)  
Barrie Parker**

**(Information Services)  
David Senkow (Business Admin)  
William Sgrazzutti (Library)  
Satish Sharma (Engineering)  
Lisa Steifler (MAP)**

**On behalf of all URFA members,  
congratulations on a successful  
career!**

**Your years of hard work has led to the  
ongoing success of this institution.  
Your efforts have helped to shape and  
define the University and has made  
our campus a better place.**

**We wish you all the best as you  
embark on a new chapter.**

# 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 2020

Early on in the semester, our MMC was meeting regularly to strategize publicity and educational activities. The COVID-19 pandemic has required the committee to rethink the normal activities of member outreach such as tabling and events, and how we can reach out to members while we remain off-campus.

The Member Mobilization Committee has been involved in URFA's campaign for an open search for the next U of R President. We encourage all members to visit the URFA open search webpage to learn more and to send a letter to the U of R Board of Governors requesting a search for the next president that is open, transparent, and equitable.

Other business has included identifying concerns

APT and Academic members have and promoting those issues to membership in a more non-confrontational manner before the next round of bargaining starts. URFA can give notice to the employer as early as January 2021.

MMC will be scheduling information events in the coming months as we continue to plan the best ways to reach out to members during COVID-19.

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**



## Three students receive URFA bursaries

Three students have received bursaries from URFA over the past academic year. Combined, the bursaries are worth \$4,500. The awards are given out each year by the scholarship committee on the basis of financial need as well as academic achievement.

URFA has three bursaries that are awarded each year:

The **Dr. Sarah Shorten Memorial Bursary**, valued at \$1,500, was established to support the participation of women in the profession of engineering and in scientific fields. It was named to commemorate the contribution of Dr. Sarah Shorten to the status of Academic women in Canada and to her legacy of leadership with the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

The recipient of this year's Dr. Sarah Shorten Memorial Bursary was **Oluwapamilerin Adeyojo**. Oluwapamilerin is a Bachelor of Applied Science student majoring in Petroleum Systems Engineering.

The **Dr. Peter Hemingway Bursary**, valued at \$1,500, is named to recognize the exemplary

contributions of the late Dr. Peter Hemingway to the creation and effective functioning of the University of Regina Faculty Association.

The recipient of this year's Dr. Peter Hemingway bursary was **Mykyta Chernenky**. Mykyta is pursuing a Bachelor of Applied Science degree with a major in Computer Science.

The **Faye Rafter Bursary**, valued at \$1,500, was established by the University of Regina Faculty Association to recognize the contributions of Faye Rafter for her work as Executive Director of the Association during a time of growth and change. The bursary is awarded to a single parent on the basis of financial need as well as academic achievement.

The recipient of this year's Faye Rafter bursary was **Alexandria Powalinsky**. Alexandria is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Indigenous Social Work.

The Faculty Association congratulates the recipients of this year's bursaries, and wishes Chia-koziem, Akabom, and Alexandria all the best with their studies.



### A SIGN OF THE TIMES

A “For Sale” sign sits in the front lawn of the University of Regina President’s residence located near campus at 1001 McNiven Avenue.

Home to U of R Presidents since 1991, the Board of Governors recently made the decision to sell the 3,800-square foot property, saying that it made “good economic sense.”

The University has pledged to donate up to \$100,000 of the proceeds from the sale to the Student Emergency Fund.

Future Presidents will now be responsible for securing their own accommodations.