

NEWS & VIEWS

September 2013

From the President's Desk

Sharon Alward



UMFA and the University of Manitoba administration have been bargaining throughout the summer and early fall. The input of the UMFA Executive, the Board of Representatives, UMFA staff, the Collective

Agreement Committee and our Members over the past several months has been vital in preparing our positions.

This has been the largest divide between UMFA Members and an administration entering bargaining in our collective memory. Newly implemented systems such as the Print Management System, Concur and EPIC have made it increasingly difficult for academics to focus on our key responsibilities in research, teaching and service. It is essential that our new Collective Agreement provide as much protection as possible for UMFA Members to prevent further erosion of our working conditions, as well as to mitigate the current damage. In addition, the administration's proposed amalgamation of faculties has brought forward little or no information on how the proposed change to current faculties will affect Members. Tenure and Promotion criteria, transfers and strategic goals of the new faculties, as well as the closure of departments or faculties could have serious implications for our Members.

We are witnessing a shift in the way the University of Manitoba makes decisions and sets priorities. Faculty members, students, staff and community members are increasingly being excluded. University contracts with corporations such as Xerox are kept confidential, but UMFA has been able to access portions of the contract through

Freedom of Information requests (read more about this contract on page three). The Board of Governors is making more decisions *in camera*. Matters are brought to Senate for information only.

Over the last year or two, the University of Manitoba administration has launched a number of initiatives that are supposed to increase efficiency, improve student satisfaction, reduce costs and enhance the University of Manitoba's reputation as an "employer of choice." Members have had to adapt to the Concur Travel & Expense Tool, the Ad Astra Schedule Suite, the Microsoft Exchange Calendar and Email System, Desire2Learn, a centralized Information Services and Technology help centre, the launch of the UM Managed Print Services project and the proposed merger of four faculties into the Faculty of Health Sciences.

These initiatives have impacted university operating costs, diminished resources and support for core academic activities and elevated the administrative burden on staff and faculty. During our 31 constituency meetings, you let us know about the many problems with these initiatives.

Some departments have been informed that academics who choose not to use the Concur Travel Booking System might be penalized three times the cost of any transportation booked. Academics have been told their faculty support staff will not provide administrative support because they have been instructed not to do so. We hear stories like this from UMFA Members across both campuses.

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The Ad Astra room assignment system has resulted in a dispersal of students and academics, creating a loss of community for faculties, and discouraging both students and professors from the kind of meaningful interactions that can take place when faculties take responsibility for, and have a sense of ownership of space.

In December 2011, the university signed a contract with Xerox that resulted in the administration removing desktop printers from offices and laboratories, even though the contract did not require that to happen.

Recently, an academic's research assistant, who went to the UMSU copy centre to make copies, was informed that they could not get copies because there had not been an order placed through EPIC. Apparently, the RA would have to be trained to use the ARIBA system (a process of several hours) and then they would be trained to use the system to pay for photocopies. Otherwise, all photocopies would have to involve departmental staff/admin, because they are the only ones who have the training to use the ARIBA/EPIC system properly. We are baffled that making photocopies needs to be this complicated.

We are also opposing attempts by the administration to set performance standards, stipulating minimum numbers of publications, minimum acceptable amounts of research funding and publication venues in which work should appear. It sends a signal to academics that the intention of the administration is to move away from the formative nature of performance evaluations to a more summative (and potentially punitive) standard of measuring academic research.

In Medicine, an initial proposal stated that an increment would be withheld if standards are not met for two years. After UMFA responded to the proposed performance management policy and procedure, the administration agreed that the policy would not apply to UMFA

Bill 44 - The International Education Act

The Minister of Advanced Education and Literacy, the Honourable Erin Selby, and the Manitoba government are concerned about the current state of international student recruiting in the province and have responded by introducing *Bill 44, The International Education Act*.

The International College of Manitoba (ICM), located on the University of Manitoba campus, has made headlines recently as some of their students have expressed concerns. CBC interviewed five ICM students, all of whom spoke of their concerns regarding the recruiting tactics they were subjected to.

Members. In Nursing, there has been a draft proposal from the Dean with specific benchmark criteria for Members with research duties, including expected numbers of publications and grant monies.

Performance standards sway academics to structure their research, teaching and service duties to maximize their performance scores. There is a clear threat to the academic freedom of academics to pursue their research interests. When the value of research is determined by the dollars attached to it, it becomes too great a risk for academics to follow unpopular or controversial research that may not get funded. If standards are not met, academics may be forced into teaching-only streams. Performance standards and formulas fail to take into account the complexities of our academic teaching and research.

Throughout the bargaining process we have remained hopeful that an agreement can be reached at the table, but we have begun our preparations for possible job action and we have secured a strike headquarters. Over the next few weeks, we will be sending out bargaining updates to keep you informed on our progress, or lack of it. At the last Board of Representatives meeting, a motion was passed enabling the Executive to set a Special General Meeting which would authorize a strike vote. Membership meetings have now been scheduled to provide information on the status of bargaining at this point, to get your feedback and to answer your questions (meeting details on page five).

If there is a strike vote, it will take place in early October.

We continue to remain hopeful that those matters of critical importance – compensation, working conditions, governance, Members' rights and academic freedom – that you said must be taken into bargaining, will be resolved at the table.

In an [interview](#) with CBC news, former ICM student Nabeel Fakhur said that an ICM recruiter misled him during the recruitment process, claiming Fakhur could apply for work and citizenship in Canada.

ICM was established at the University of Manitoba in 2007. The current agreement is for an initial 10-year term, after which there was to be a review of their operations. Dr. David Barnard, President of the University of Manitoba, has announced that a review is scheduled for the upcoming 2013-14 academic year; however, it appears that the review will focus solely on the academic

programming and not on the recruitment practices or other aspects of ICM operations.

UMFA believes that the review should be comprehensive and encompass all aspects of ICM operations, including recruitment procedures, the use of university facilities, the students' experiences, the courses and working conditions of their staff as well as a review of the outcome when ICM graduates attend regular university classes.

The review must also consider whether the University should continue its relationship with ICM, or if there is more benefit in expanding programming options and support for international students offered at the University of Manitoba.

Bill 44 aims to regulate recruiting tactics and operations by

public and private educational institutions in Manitoba by governing "the education providers that enroll international students as well as the persons who recruit international students."

Approval as an education provider will be automatic for any body that is currently recognized, such as the University of Manitoba. Any new body, including any corporation, will undergo an approval process.

Purporting to be an educational body without proper designation or misleading international applicants with false information during recruitment can result in hefty fines of up to \$25,000 for individuals and recruiters and up to \$100,000 for educational providers.

The government expects to have *Bill 44* approved by 2014.

Xerox Master Services Agreement

In December 2011, the University of Manitoba signed a contract with Xerox, who then became the exclusive provider of networked printers.

In the fall of 2012, the University began confiscating desktop printers from Members' workspaces. The administration's explanation was that the contract with Xerox did not allow the use of desktop printers and that the administration was not only to remove all desktop printers, it should also not allow new purchases of desktop printers.

UMFA submitted a FIPPA request for a copy of the Xerox contract, and a heavily redacted copy was provided by the UM Privacy Office. UMFA reviewed this document and identified some concerns regarding the issues such as personal printer use, Members' right to privacy, email use, safety and print costs.

In fact, the contract states that "existing devices may be retained and used by Customer outside the scope of this Agreement..." and that "Customer may purchase new single-purpose printers and/or multi-function devices independently of this Agreement and remain out of scope of service."

At a March 1st Town Hall Meeting, President Barnard confirmed that desktop printers would indeed continue to be allowed. He said there were no restrictions in the contract that would prevent Members from keeping existing desktop printers, or from purchasing new ones.

UMFA has proposals in this round of bargaining that confirm Members' rights to have desktop printers.

The UM Privacy Office has said that with respect to the Xerox technicians and equipment, the privacy rights of Members will be respected. The contract states that the "Customer acknowledges that Xerox, in providing Services and Equipment, may be provided with or be given access to personal information, and/or personal health information for business or processing purposes." Xerox technicians are required to complete the University's PHIA orientation and sign a pledge of confidentiality document.

Xerox networked printers contain internal hard drives that encrypt and store files for up to one week. Files stored on these hard drives are subject to the same [PHIA procedures](#) that currently govern the decommissioning of desktop or laptop computers.

The UM Privacy Office states that an overwrite of all Xerox hard drives is scheduled to occur every Sunday at 3 a.m. The overwriting process completely erases all stored data on the drive, including all printed and scanned documents. Photocopies are not stored.

Should a hard drive need to be replaced or taken off campus for repair, a Xerox technician will perform an unscheduled overwrite, and IST will confirm the overwrite has occurred before the drive is removed.

In the event of an identified security breach or a formal complaint regarding a privacy breach, the UM Privacy Office says that an incident response team will be formed and will plan a course of action to contain or respond to that breach as efficiently as possible. The team would consist of the IST Office, Privacy Office, and Dean or Vice-President of the affected faculty or department. A Xerox technician may be required to perform an immediate overwrite of a hard drive in response to the breach, if deemed necessary by the incident response team.

The UM Privacy Office said that only under circumstances involving criminal investigations of Members under Federal or Provincial law would any personal and/or personal health information be accessed by outside parties.

The contract states that “Xerox may use Customer email addresses for purposes that include but are not limited to the following: establishment and maintenance of business relationship and provision of ongoing service, understanding customer needs, and development, enhancement, promotion, marketing or provision of products, services and support; the foregoing permission may be changed by Customer by accessing the privacy link at www.xerox.ca.”

The phrase “but not limited to” is open ended, and we do not

“Story Time” Contest for UMFA Members

In the President’s message is an example of a research assistant’s failed attempt to make photocopies because she needed to take hours of training on multiple systems first.

We know you are spending more time and experiencing more frustration as a result of new systems, such as Concur, Ad Adstra, EPIC and Desire2Learn.

know what other uses might be made of Members email addresses. There should be strict limits on the use of Member email addresses.

Regarding the safety issue, a [study](#) commissioned by Safework Australia on the environmental effects of networked printers reported that many printers have shown to significantly reduce the air quality up to two metres around them because of the emissions of toxins. The health and safety of UMFA Members is important, and we need more information about the safety parameters regarding the installation, use and maintenance of Xerox equipment, as well as if toxins are being emitted.

There are minimum and maximum monthly print volumes assigned to units, with penalties for not reaching the minimum as well as for exceeding the maximum. The University wishes to reduce overall non-student print volume by 30%.

UMFA will seek more information on the contract with Xerox and will continue to advocate for fair working conditions of our Members in the current round of collective bargaining. The Privacy Office says that a less redacted copy of the agreement will be delivered to UMFA shortly. Stay tuned for updates on the Xerox Contract.

Submit your stories by email to faum@umfa.ca with “Story Time” in the subject line.

We’ll share some of the best stories in an upcoming newsletter and award prizes. First prize is a jar of “just plain nuts!”

Names will be withheld to protect the frustrated.

Call To Action for Loubani and Greyson

Sign the [petition](#) to free these Canadian Academics, who have been imprisoned in Egypt without cause.

For more information, click [here](#).

UMFA Member Information Meetings

UMFA has scheduled meetings to provide you with updates on the current bargaining and to get your feedback. Please make every effort to attend one of these meetings!

We have set up meetings at different times, in different locations.

Bannatyne Campus

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 12:00-1:30 pm, Theatre C
Basic Medical Sciences Building

Fort Garry Campus

Monday, Sept. 23, 2:30-4:00 pm, rm 206 Tier Building

Tuesday, Sept. 24, 4:30-6:00 pm in rm 306 Tier Building

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 4:15-5:45 pm, rm 208 Armes Building

Thursday, Sept. 26, 4:00-6:00 pm rm 343 Drake Centre

Monday, Sept. 30, 11:30 am-1:00 pm, rm 224 A-C University Centre

New UMFA Staff

Debbie Abraham started her position as UMFA Administrative Assistant in May and is the new face at the front desk. She brings a wealth of administrative experience and is a welcome addition to the UMFA office. She is looking forward to meeting more Members.

Matt Di Ubaldo is our temporary communications officer, filling in for Candace Weselowski, who is away on leave. He is a freelance writer and social media specialist with experience working in member focused organizations.

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Stay up to date with UMFA news and information by following us on Twitter [@UMFA_FAUM](https://twitter.com/UMFA_FAUM).

*Your feedback and suggestions on the newsletter are welcome.
Please send any comments to*

faum@umfa.ca

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