



## President's Message

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Tommy Kucera

It has been a very busy fall term for all of us here in the UMFA offices. On November 19, I sent another appeal to the Membership to become more fully involved with the work of UMFA, through our Standing Committees or the Board of Representatives. I have been heartened by the many volunteers who have stepped forward in the last week. If you missed it, the letter is available on the UMFA web site under [Committees](#). There are still positions to be filled, and I would encourage anyone who might be interested to get in touch with me, or with one of the committee conveners mentioned in that letter.

President Barnard's late Friday afternoon message (November 14) on the University budget process and the likelihood of budget cuts of approximately 4% this year and next year, galvanized interest and outrage amongst faculty, staff, students, and the public at large. At its regular meeting on the same day, the UMFA Executive had passed a motion supporting the Canadian Federation of Students' "Stop the Cuts" campaign in principle, followed by a similar motion from the Board of Representatives. Please check the UMFA website and the UMFA Twitter feed regularly as we will add new information as it becomes available. I have been interviewed twice by the Manitoban and once by the Winnipeg Free Press on UMFA's position on the University budget. The University's budget planning process is far from transparent, but doesn't come to an end until the

spring. I encourage all Members to remain alert and become involved whenever the opportunity presents itself.

I hope that you all find a little bit of time between grading at the end of this term and planning courses for next term to relax and unwind a little over the break; and I hope for the same for the UMFA Staff and Executive. The work may slow down a little over the break, but there never can be a real holiday from the job of representing our Members.



## CAUT Urgent Action Appeal

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The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is asking members to sign an open letter asking for justice in the recent deaths of six college students and the disappearance of 43 others in Mexico.

The letter states: "...on September 26 police from the Municipality of Iguala, Guerrero, Mexico, savagely attacked a group of college students from the Escuela Normal Rural Manuel Isidro Burgos Teacher Training College, killing 6, wounding 17 (one remains in a vegetative state) and kidnapping 43 whose whereabouts remain unknown. According to numerous news sources and human rights organizations, the police have been accused of direct links to "narco" criminal gangs, and students may have been brutally tortured, killed and buried in mass graves. There are allegations that the Guerrero State Attorney General's office is also linked to

criminal gangs, raising concerns about the impartiality of its current investigation.

We urge the international community, particularly those working in the educational sector, to consider this grave occurrence beyond an isolated event, but in relation to growing violence, increasing marginalization, economic disparity, and state linked to extra-state violent repression around the world."

The rest of the letter is posted on CAUT's website, where anyone who wishes to sign it can do so. See more at: <http://www.caut.ca/petitions/2014-mexico-petition#sthash.pptvBevD.dpuf>. The link is also available on the UMFA website.

## Western Regional Conference 2014

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The annual Western Regional Conference was held in Calgary last month, hosted by the Faculty Association of the University of Calgary. Sixteen associations and provincial organizations were in attendance.

UMFA Executive Director Linda Guse presented as part of a panel presentation on "Internationalization and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Contracts." She spoke about the U of M's goal to increase the number of international graduate students attending U of M, and the current enrolment numbers showing that the target number of 10% has been surpassed. Additionally, she discussed the operation of the International College of Manitoba (ICM) on campus, including reports that some students were misled about tuition fees and believed, based on the information about ICM, that they would be U of M students, when in fact, that is not the case.

The other panelists included Julian Christians, President of Simon Fraser Faculty Association and Paul Rogers, Past-President of the Faculty Association of the University of Calgary. Simon Fraser also has an International College run by Navitas. The University of Calgary administration is in talks with Navitas to establish an International College and the U of C Faculty Association is leading the fight

opposing the establishment.

UMFA Executive Council member Mark Gabbert, together with John Baker from the University of Calgary, participated in a presentation on Code of Conduct/ Respect in the Workplace Policies, identifying the dangers such policies present to academic freedom.

Each association reported on the issues they have faced in the past year. Simon Fraser University Faculty Association (SFUFA), University of North British Columbia Faculty Association (UNBC-FA), and the University of Victoria Faculty Association (UVicFA) have spent much time working towards union certification and negotiating their first collective agreements. All research universities in B.C. are now unionized.

In Alberta, the Athabasca University Faculty Association (AUFA) is nearing the end of a 3-year salaries and benefits contract, which included a wage reopener in year 3. Negotiations are expected to begin in February. The Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA) and The University of Calgary Faculty Association (TUCFA) are also preparing to begin bargaining in the summer of 2015.

In Saskatchewan, the University of Regina Faculty Association (URFA) is preparing to bargain five collective agreements. The Association is also involved in a strategic planning initiative to engage and mobilize members to support a redefined vision, mission and priorities. This plan will be presented to the URFA membership at an AGM this month.

The University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association (USFA) has had an eventful year with the firing and rehiring of tenured professor Dr. Robert Buckingham and the resignation of the provost and termination of the President. Dr. Buckingham was fired for criticizing the university leadership's controversial cost-cutting TransformUS plan. The negative publicity that ensued from this blatant denial of academic freedom resulted in both the university's Board of Governors and the Provincial Government interceding to protect the university's reputation.

USFA has also had to deal with the matter of the university president exerting a veto over tenure and renewal recommendations. Former U of S President MacKinnon had refused to forward to the Board of Governors a positive recommendation by the Renewal and Tenure Appeal Committee for the tenure of one of USFA's members. He claimed that, pursuant to The University of Saskatchewan Act, he had the power to veto such a recommendation. A grievance was filed by the Faculty Association, which resulted in an arbitration decision in favour of the USFA. In June, the U of S Board of Governors chose to appeal the decision, but the decision of the arbitrator was upheld. The Board of Governors then

announced it would appeal that decision. The administration seeks to determine whether the University of Saskatchewan Act supersedes the USFA Collective Agreement. This is despite the fact that the newly ratified collective agreement, accepted by the Board, is viewed by many as ending the controversial "presidential veto." It includes the board's withdrawal of its delegation of final authority over tenure decisions to the President, changes to address perceived problems with tenure procedures and a clear statement that the parties have respect for and confidence in collegial decision making processes. By appealing the arbitration decision, USFA says that it sends the message that one person controls the careers of faculty.

UMFA reported on last year's negotiations, including the matters submitted to arbitration and the administration's reversal of its earlier statements that all outstanding matters should be subject to arbitration. The arbitrator by -and-large agreed with the administration that only financial matters should be arbitrated. Additionally, UMFA reported on two active investigations by CAUT at the U of M regarding academic freedom. Other items from UMFA's report included the recent decision by the provincial government to eliminate COPSE, the inclusion of Dental Clinical Staff under the UMFA bargaining certificate, the amalgamations of five schools and faculties into a single Faculty of Health Sciences, and the association's submission to the administration on the UM's draft strategic plan for 2015-2020.

## **CAUT Statement on 25th Anniversary of the Massacre at École Polytechnique de Montréal**

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*December 6, 2014 marks 25 years since 14 women were murdered at École Polytechnique de Montréal.*

*CAUT has released a video statement to honour the women who lost their lives in that senseless act of violence, and for all women who have been victims of violence.*

*The video is available on CAUT's website, as well as on UMFA's home page. Click [here](#) to view it.*

## Meet the Executive

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In the next few issues of the UMFA newsletter, we will be running a feature introducing you to some of the individuals that sit on the UMFA Executive.



### MARK HUDSON

Mark Hudson is the recently elected Vice-President of UMFA. He joined the Executive in 2013 as a Member at large, motivated by his concern about the trends toward corporatization of post-secondary education and the

weakening of collegial governance at the University of Manitoba. He believes that UMFA has an important role to play in combating these processes and in maintaining the university as an institution of free inquiry and learning.

Mark has also sat on the Board of Representatives and is Chair of the ad hoc Strategy Committee. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and the Coordinator of the Global Political Economy Program.

Mark holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Economics from the University of Manitoba, a Masters in Environmental Studies from York University, and a Ph.D in Sociology from the University of Oregon. Before coming to work at the University of Manitoba in 2009, Mark worked as an Assistant Professor at Ursinus College in Pennsylvania and at Northern Arizona University.

Mark enjoys keeping active and plays soccer with the Crescentwood Saturday Soccer Club. He also likes snowboarding, scuba diving, hiking and cross-country skiing.

He is married to Mara Fridell, who is also an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology. They have an 8 year old son named Quinn and two cats.



### ORVIE DINGWALL

Orvie Dingwall joined the Executive Council in the summer of 2014 as a Member at large. She hopes to bring her organization skills to the Executive and is generally excited about the opportunity to become more involved in UMFA. She

has also been a member of the UMFA Board of Representatives since 2012.

After obtaining her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Masters of Library and Information Science from the University of Western Ontario, Orvie became the first librarian at the Canadian Patient Safety Institute. In 2010, she came to the University of Manitoba as the Head of Outreach Services at the Neil John Maclean Health Sciences Library.

From 2009-2012, she served as Vice President, President and Past President of the Canadian Health Libraries Association. Orvie is passionate about evidence-informed practice, providing access to information, pan-Canadian collaboration, patient safety, and contributing to the evidence base.

Orvie is a recreational triathlete and half-marathoner in addition to being an avid bike commuter and an alto saxophone player and auxiliary percussionist in the Northwinds Community Band. She also enjoys spending time with her husband, her imaginative four year old son, and very independent 18 month old daughter at the cabin she and her husband built in Northwestern Ontario.

## Grievance Update

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Since our last grievance report in the July/August newsletter, two investigations have been concluded in favour of our Members. Also, dates have been set for arbitrations of two grievances related to work assignment.

# Upcoming Events

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- UMFA Executive Council meeting  
December 5  
11:30 – 1:30
- UMFA Board of Representatives meeting  
December 11  
4:00 – 6:00
- CAUT workshop for senior grievance officers  
December 12-14 in Ottawa
- Winnipeg Labour Council General Meeting  
December 16  
5:30-7:30 WLC Boardroom

*The UMFA Executive and staff wish you and your families a joyous and restful holiday season.*

## 2014-15 Executive Council

**TOMMY KUCERA**

President

*Mathematics*

**MARK HUDSON**

Vice-President

*Sociology*

**MICHAEL SHAW**

Treasurer

*Biology*

**ALISON CALDER**

Executive Secretary

*English, Film & Theatre*

**JAMES HARE**

Grievance Officer

*Biological Sciences*

### Members at Large

**BRENDA AUSTIN-SMITH**

*English, Film & Theatre*

**MARK GABBERT**

*History*

**VANESSA SWAIN**

*Dentistry*

**PETER BLUNDEN**

*Physics & Astronomy*

**ORVIE DINGWALL**

*NJM Library*

### UMFA STAFF

**LINDA GUSE**

Executive Director

**BARB YAPPS**

Professional Officer

**JASON GISSER**

Professional Officer

**CANDACE WESELOWSKI**

Communications Officer

**DEBBIE ABRAHAM**

Administrative Assistant