



## President's Message

Mark Hudson

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Unless you're locked in your lab, you've probably

heard that the UM Board of Governors passed a budget last May that's \$14 million skinnier than the previous one. Over \$8 million of that is being sliced straight from your faculties, colleges, and libraries, despite robust and creative resistance to the cuts last spring from students, faculty, and staff through the Stop the Cuts Coalition. UMFA's look at the books suggests that cuts this deep are simply unnecessary, and can't help but hurt the quality of post-secondary education in Manitoba. It's going to be a tough year ahead as the cuts hit home, and President Barnard's signalling of a further 4% cut this year isn't doing anything to soothe the anxiety. Buckle up, UMFA members. It's in this context that I watch with some pleasure and a lot of unease as my name goes on the UMFA President's door.

As I step in, enormous thanks are due to our outgoing President, Tommy Kucera, for his tireless work in what was a relentlessly busy past year. He has served UMFA with amazing dedication, and has our gratitude for continuing to do so as Past President. In the midst of a hundred fires during 2014-15, Tommy managed to find the time and energy to begin the building process for the next round of bargaining.

Yes, you read that correctly. We're back at the bargaining table shortly, as our current Collective Agreement runs through until the end of March 2016.

Most of us think about bargaining as something that begins when our negotiating team sits down at the table across from the University administration. But the work that goes into bargaining starts long before that, and our "bargaining team" is not just the group of people sitting at the table. It's all of us. Gains in bargaining come not only from negotiating skill, but from the sense across the table that when our representatives speak, they speak with the voice of all 1250 UMFA members who make this University what it is.

We have work to do to on this front. We need you to help do it in the upcoming year. The bargaining survey recently went out to get your input on bargaining priorities. Please fill it out and send it back. There will be meetings called to hear from you and your colleagues on what matters most to you. Please prioritize attending those meetings. Your conditions of work, your compensation, and the shape of university governance depend crucially on these small things.

Remember finally that UMFA is not "the" union. It is *your* union. Get involved. If your unit doesn't have somebody on the Board of Representatives (there's a [list](#) on the UMFA website), nominate somebody (you, maybe). If you do have a Rep, talk to them about your priorities. Let them know what you think is working and not working in the Association. The Board members are the eyes and ears of the Association. Lastly, if you're unsure of how to get involved, or if you have something on your mind, please get in touch with me at the UMFA office. I really do want to listen to what you have to say, and if you call me or drop by it'll spare me from ambushing you in the hallway after your lecture!



## UMFA Welcomes New Executive Director

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On September 1, UMFA welcomed Gregory Flemming to the Executive Director role. Greg previously worked as Grievance Officer on the Executive Committee of

CUPE Local 3903 at York University in Toronto. In this role, he was also involved in bargaining a collective agreement, handling inquiries about the collective agreement and member rights, and advocating for members. Prior to his work with CUPE 3903, Greg worked as the Officer of Public Information for the City of Ottawa. He holds a PhD in Social and Political

Thought, a Master of Arts in Communications and Culture, and a Bachelor of Science with an Advanced Major in Psychology. Welcome Greg!

As part of the Executive Director transition, Linda Guse will remain with UMFA on a part time basis through to October. Her direct line during that time will be 204-795-7389 should you wish to reach her, or you can call the UMFA number at 204-474-8272 to leave a message.

The UMFA Executive, Board of Representatives and staff wish to thank Linda for all her work and dedication during her 14 years of service. Her expertise, knowledge and tireless efforts on behalf of UMFA Members will be greatly missed.

## UMFA Welcomes New Administrative Assistant

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Ilze Cepelis joined UMFA in early August as administrative assistant at the front reception area, and has already met many UMFA Members. Prior to joining UMFA, Ilze worked as the U of M's RESOLVE newsletter editor where she administered all aspects of the publication of the newsletter with RESOLVE departments at the University of Manitoba, University of Regina, University

of Calgary, and the *Prairieaction* Foundation.

She brings years of administrative and graphic design skills to the Association. We welcome Ilze and are glad to have her on board!

## Getting Involved in the Upcoming Federal Election

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On October 19, Canadians will go to the polls to elect a new federal government. Under the current government, researchers and scientists have seen discussions about their work become increasingly

controlled, restricted and muzzled. This is unacceptable. According to the Canadian Association of University Teacher's (CAUT)

["Get Science Right"](#) campaign, muzzling scientists could harm our health, safety and

environment. Government scientists must be free to speak about their research.

"The federal government has changed the composition of the boards of the granting councils, appointing industry and political figures at the expense of scientific experts. Furthermore, public agencies such as the National Research Council are seeing their mandate narrowed and explicitly tied to industrial interests," CAUT reports.

It's time for a change, and change happens when people become actively involved in pre-election activities.



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### **What can I do?**

It can be as simple as talking to candidates when they're canvassing your neighborhood. Explain the challenges that post-secondary education is facing. Explain how these issues impact you, your colleagues and students. Share how you think things can be improved.

Raise post-secondary education issues at a public forum. Debates and forums have been organized at Université de Saint-Boniface (September 30 at 11:30) and at the University of Winnipeg (October 5 at 7:00 PM). Encourage

everyone you know to attend with you and to ask questions of the candidates.

Another option is to organize telephone calls to candidates. Call their campaign offices and express your concerns about post-secondary issues. Recruit your colleagues, friends and families to do the same. Getting as many people as possible to call in about an issue is important because according to CAUT, during elections, each call into a candidate is logged by issue. The more calls a candidate receives on an issue, the more likely they will see it as a priority.

## **Bargaining Preparation Begins!**

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The UMFA Collective Agreement Committee has begun to prepare for bargaining in 2016. The first step has been drafting the bargaining survey, which was recently sent to Members. The survey helps to determine Member priorities and ensure that UMFA bargains matters that are important to the Membership. When you receive the survey, please be sure to take some time to complete it. As with all UMFA surveys, the bargaining survey is anonymous.

Constituency meetings are now being organized, which will give Members an opportunity to talk to UMFA

representatives and share ideas and concerns. If you'd like to set up a meeting in your constituency, talk to your Board Representative (there's a list on the UMFA website) and encourage them to organize one. If you don't have a Rep, contact UMFA at [FAUM@umfa.ca](mailto:FAUM@umfa.ca) and we'll work with you to make a meeting happen. Also if you don't have a Rep, consider becoming one, or ask around to see who is willing to represent your constituency on the UMFA Board.

## **CAUT Communications Workshops**

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CAUT offers a number of free workshops to member organizations as part of the membership package. This month, members of the UMFA Executive, Board of Representatives, Communications Committee and Collective Agreement Committee took in a two day series of workshops organized by CAUT's communications officer, Angela Regnier. Angela outlined some of the basics of communications, including identifying audiences, developing key messages, and some tactics used to get the message out. She also conducted sessions on communications in bargaining and in times of crisis. Thank you to Angela for customizing the sessions for us, and to everyone who was able to attend.

# UMFA Raises Major Concerns Over Workload Changes

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This year Dean Jeff Taylor of the Faculty of Arts revised the Teaching Responsibility Guidelines that have been in place since 2010. Proposals for new guidelines were first presented to the Faculty of Arts Council on Feb. 12, 2014 and finalized by the Dean on September second.

There have been some worrisome alterations made to teaching loads. Two of the changes made by Dean Taylor are of particular concern to UMFA: one regarding the overall workload of Instructors, and the other regarding supersection teaching credits.

## ***Changes to Instructors' Workload***

Dean Taylor has imposed a workload increase for Instructors with continuing appointments in the Faculty of Arts. Instructors with continuing appointments were, under the 2010 Guidelines, expected to maintain significant service duties and had teaching load assignments of 18 credit hours per academic year.

The 2015 Guidelines now state that Instructors with continuing appointments will be expected to do 24 credit hours of teaching per academic year and carry a normal service load. In order to have their teaching load reduced below 24 credit hours, they must now demonstrate that they are performing levels of service significantly over-and-above those normally expected.

This is a reversal of onus: where service duties were assigned along with no more than 18 hours of teaching to those Instructors holding continuing appointments, Instructors are now expected to work 24 credit hours a year and accept that as "normal." If they seek a reduction in that load, they must *prove* that they are handling significant service responsibilities in addition to regular service.

UMFA strongly believes that this unilateral increase in Instructors' teaching loads is unfair, and that it threatens the quality of teaching and the student experience in Arts by demanding an unreasonable teaching load on the part of Instructors.

If you are an Instructor who has been assigned a teaching load in excess of 18 credit hours and you believe that,

considering your service responsibilities, you should be assigned fewer hours, contact UMFA immediately for advice.

## ***Credit Hours for Supersections***

In addition to the changes in how work is allocated to Instructors, Dean Taylor has also changed the guidelines for providing teaching credits in supersections.

Academic staff teaching courses that have enrollments of greater than 175 students are eligible to receive extra teaching credits at a rate of 1.5 per three credit hours. This is in recognition of the extra work required for very large sections. In the new guidelines this provision has become ambiguous: adding in stipulations regarding course drop dates and enrollment numbers, the Dean makes it unclear whether or not Members will be guaranteed extra credit hours for the extra work they do.

UMFA Members in the Faculty of Arts teaching supersections could be treated as if they are teaching a regular-sized section. Before volunteering to take on a supersection, our advice is to ask your department head if you will be guaranteed the extra credit hours. If you are told that you must teach that section and that you will not be guaranteed the additional credit hours, contact UMFA immediately for advice.

## ***UMFA Calls for Fair Guidelines***

No UMFA Member should be in the position of taking a teaching assignment that has an uncertain number of teaching credit hours attached to it. Members in such a position might have to make up credit hours in a future academic term.

Instructors should not have to take on onerous teaching loads because the Dean has raised the bar on what constitutes "significant service." In both instances, what the University Administration is trying to do is to get more work out of academics in order to save money.

UMFA sees these provisions in the new Faculty of Arts Teaching Responsibility Guidelines as leading to an unfair increase in the workloads of some of our Members, and a threat to our Members' ability to provide high quality

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instruction. We urge the Dean of Arts to reconsider these changes in light of fairness to UMFA Members, and in light of their negative effects on collegiality, equity, and pedagogy.

UMFA invites your comments on this matter and strongly encourages you to contact the Association regarding your individual concerns.

UMFA welcomes your feedback on this newsletter as well as suggestions for future newsletters.

Please email any comments to [umfa-communications@umfa.ca](mailto:umfa-communications@umfa.ca).

## 2015-16 Executive Council

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