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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
Faculty Association

FAST FACTS



July 5, 2018

MEETINGS & EVENTS





Coffee with the President | July 10

Stop by the Engineering Atrium on **Tuesday, July 10** and visit with UMFA President Janet Morrill and Vice-President Mike Shaw between 1:00 and 3:00 pm.

They'll have coffee, free UMFA mugs, and copies of the new Collective Agreement available!



UMFA has established a Solidarity Committee to support other labour and union activities in Manitoba and across Canada.

Members of the committee are required to commit to attending at least one event per year.

Committee activities involve:

- joining picket lines and marches in solidarity with other unions
- organizing goodwill gestures such as providing cookies or coffee at events
- being part of the larger labour movement across Manitoba and Canada

To be added to the email list of events that the Solidarity Committee will attend throughout the year, click [here](#).

[Read More](#)

NEWS YOU CAN USE 

Are your students' anonymous SEEQ comments harassing or intimidating?

The biases built into student opinion surveys and the damage those biases can cause are the focus of a [recent labour arbitration decision](#) coming out of Ryerson University in Toronto. In it, arbitrator Kaplan ordered that the Ryerson Faculty Association's Collective Agreement "be amended to ensure that [student survey results] are not used to measure teaching effectiveness for promotion or tenure." To reach his conclusions he relied on expert opinions that outlined how gender, race, and age stereotypes and biases negatively affect student perspectives on their instructors:

"According to the evidence, which was largely uncontested, and which came in the form of expert testimony and peer reviewed publications, numerous factors, especially personal characteristics – and this is just a partial list – such as race, gender, accent, age and 'attractiveness' skew SET [Student Evaluations of Teaching] results. It is almost impossible to adjust for bias and stereotypes."

The negative effects of these types of surveys impact our work at the UM, too. Sometimes anonymous comments that are harassing, intimidating, or otherwise vexatious are included in SEEQ results. Over the next few weeks, collect the anonymous comments you've received this year, and in years passed if you have them, and watch your inbox and upcoming editions of Fast Facts – a plan is in the works!

Proposed Changes to UM's Substance Use Policies

When the administration proposes changes to UM policies the Association makes detailed commentary in an effort to ensure workplace rights are protected. With changes coming to the way cannabis will be treated in Canada

and Manitoba, the administration is revising its policies and procedures on substance use, alcohol use, cannabis use, and tobacco use. We've recently outlined some concerns to the administration, which include:

- The drafts contain references to “impaired behaviour” and “disruptive behaviour”, neither of which are clearly defined. This could lead to the administration taking unnecessary or vexatious disciplinary action against staff or students.
- Where the existing policy on substance abuse outlines the accommodations and supports the administration has to offer when an employee reports a substance dependency, these are all excluded from the new draft policies.
- The administration is proposing the creation of a committee that will look at education and best practices in regard to substance use on campus, but the long list of proposed representatives doesn't include any of the labour unions on campus (i.e. UMFA, AESES, CUPE 3909, CUPE 1482, or UNIFOR).

These policies will affect the work of everyone on campus. Interested in reading the policy drafts or what's been sent to the administration? Contact FAUM@UMFA.CA and ask for copies to be sent to your inbox.

In Defense of Academic Freedom and Trade-Union Rights at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology

Please read the following appeal from the academic union Universitetskaya solidarnost in Moscow, and consider sending a letter of support.

Pressure and overt repression against activists of independent, militant trade unions is not new in the world today, certainly not in Russia. Even so, the

situation of Maxim Balahshov, professor of higher mathematics and chairperson of the union “Universitetskaya solidarnost” (<http://unisolidarity.ru/mipt/>) (an affiliate of the Confederation of Labor of Russia) at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology (MIPT), stands out for the extraordinary cynicism of the its administration. Moreover, this case poses the broader issue of labour relations in Russia’s institutions of higher learning, in which repression of various sorts is the sad norm today. The recent action of the administration of MIPT against the local union chairperson is particular in that the rector made his motives very public and clear.

In a public letter, the chair of the Department of Higher Mathematics, Grigorii Ivanov, gave clear expression to the rector’s dissatisfaction. He cited the active relations the union has entertained with the press and its allegedly insufficiently constructive position: it defends not only its individual members, but also the collective interests of MIPT’s teaching staff.

Particularly offensive was G. Ivanov’s ultimatum to M. Balashov, calling on him to resign as chair of the union, to withdraw the union’s lawsuit against the administration (undertaken against consistent violations of union rights), to apologize, and to forego any further relations with the press. There is no doubt that this text relayed the position of rector Nikolai Kudryavtsev. Missing only was the demand to repent on bent knees.

As one could expect from the foregoing, the procedure for filling the post of professor of higher mathematics, a post occupied for five years by M. Balashov (who has worked at MIPT for 19 years in various capacities) and that had to be renewed through a formally competitive procedure, took place amidst gross violations of various local normative acts, the Constitution of the Russian Federation, and the federal Law on Trade Unions, not to speak of common decency. During that meeting, the rector, former assistant rector Volkov, and others close to the administration expressed their many criticisms of Professor Balashov, who talks to the press and is active as head of the union. (All these complaints are inscribed in the stenographic report of the Academic Council of MIPT; there is also an audio recording).

It should be emphasized that the decision of the Academic Council, despite the administration's extraordinary pressure, was adopted by only an insignificant majority: Balashov's competitor received 51% of the votes. And it is no coincidence that the votes for Balashov coincided closely with the number of active scientists and teachers on the Academic Council, as can be judged by the number of its members holding the degree of doctor of science. Moreover, since the professor chosen to replace Balashov is 80 years old, an additional person had to be appointed to the Department of Higher Mathematics to give Balashov's lectures.

The union has for several years now been fighting for the rights of MIPT teachers. Under union pressure, salaries at MIPT have risen significantly from their former miserable level. The union blocked inordinate increases of professors' teaching loads, as well as the introduction of the so-called "effective contract", a measure that has had catastrophic consequences in universities across Russia. The union has also actively fought the rector's initiative to end the electiveness of department and faculty heads (a right provided by art. 332 of the Labor Code). It is especially the union's resistance to the latter authoritarian tendencies of the administration that has aroused the rector's ire.

We urge you to send the following declaration to the rector of MIPT, N. Kudryavstev, at rector@mipt.ru, with copy to the union at mipt@unisolidarity.ru

To Rector N. Kudryavtsev, MIPT

The undersigned declare our solidarity with Maxim Balashov, professor of higher mathematics at MIPT and union leader. We express our profound protest against the blatantly unjust treatment of a colleague. We demand an end to persecution of union activists and the reinstatement M. Balashov as professor in the Department of Higher Mathematics with a contract of unlimited duration, as provided by the law of the Russian Federation.

Name

Institution

Position

Send to: rector@mipt.ru,

cc: mipt@unisolidarity.ru

We would also ask you to request your university to limit any contacts with the administration of MIPT and with rector N. Kudryavtsev until this conflict is positively resolved.

For more information, please contact the union at mipt@unisolidarity.ru



OCUFA Academic Matters

For interesting blogs, articles, and reports, visit the Ontario Confederation of

University Faculty Association's website and online magazine [here](#).

This is great place to find resources in the continued struggle for fair faculty rights across Canada.

KNOW YOUR CA

Knowing and Using Your Collective Agreement was developed to bring clarity to some of the more confusing aspects of the CA. Each section of Knowing and Using Your Collective Agreement lays out the basics and the practical takeaways that are important for Members to understand so they can continue to maintain the principles that we've fought for through collective bargaining and strike action.

When in doubt, however, the language in the CA takes precedence over the descriptions included here. If you have questions or concerns, contact the UMFA office at 204-474-8272 or faum@umfa.ca.

Current articles:

NEW! [Grievance Procedure and Arbitration \(Article 32\)](#)

A brief looks at how to protect your rights and resolve workplace issues.

A must read! [Meetings Concerning Discipline or Investigations \(Section 19.B.1.8\)](#)

If your Dean or an administrator asks you for a meeting, this section outlines your right to ask what the meeting is about, to have it scheduled at a reasonable time, and to bring a representative from the Association to the meeting.

[Retirement and Reduced Appointments \(Article 10\)](#)

A brief description that gives insight into the potential of working at a reduced workload in the lead up to your retirement.

[Hiring of Members \(Article 18\)](#)

An outline of the process for determining departmental hiring priorities, search procedures, and methods of evaluating applicants.

[Tenure and Promotion Recommendation Information for Recent Applicants \(Articles 19 and 20\)](#)

An outline of the general provisions for tenure recommendation procedures.

[Workload Provisions](#)

How to make sure you maintain input in what your workload looks like.

[Read More](#)

If you have information or an event that you'd like to share in an upcoming issue, please email the item to umfa-communications@umfa.ca for consideration.

We make **UofM** happen

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
Faculty Association



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