

From the President:

Working together is the FSA's strength as we grow as a union

This is my last newsletter submission as President of the FSA. Being President for the past seven years has been an amazing journey filled with just the right mix of challenge and growth. The challenge offered opportunity in considering how we could best handle the issue of the day. The growth is a reflection of our path from 2005 until today.

When I became President in 2005 there were many aspects of the FSA that were in transition. Much of my time as President has been spent working toward building a stable foundation. As the puzzle pieces have started to create a picture, it seemed like a good time for me to step aside and allow someone else an opportunity to take us forward. Teresa Place has stepped forward to do just that and I am committed to do what I can to give her the tools and space she needs to take over. I have had the great opportunity of working with Teresa on the Board of Directors for five years and know that her passion for the FSA and for BCIT will continue to guide her and the union.



PAUL DAYSON PHOTO

I have always found it uncanny that when doubt starts to cloud my mind someone comes forward and asks a good question, expresses a concern or an idea about how we might approach the issue. This sparks a new way of thinking about the situation; a new openness to explore what a potential answer might be to resolve the situation. Thanks to the Board, the staff, the Tech Reps, the members and to management for asking tough questions, vocalizing concerns and sharing your ideas. An institution such as BCIT relies on us all working together, representing its various interests in

order for it to be successful.

I have come to believe that I happened to be at the right place at the right time to be President of the BCIT Faculty and Staff Association. It wouldn't have been a path I would have chosen, nor was it a position that I envisioned for myself. I believed then and even more now that there is great power in relying on each other and collaborating. Through each of us fulfilling our respective roles and taking the initiative to connect with others across the institution, great things are possible.

To all of you... thank you for the advice, suggestions, and ideas you have offered along the way. Your commitment to BCIT and the students inspired me to seek out solutions that best represented what was required to fulfill that promise. I have learned so much on this journey that I can't begin to start to thank individuals – you know who you are and I hope that you know how much I have valued your friendship, counsel and advice. My sincerest gratitude to each of you.

Amy Fell,
FSA President

What's INSIDE

FSA Elections 2012: Two board members acclaimed as President, VP	2
FSA Director-at-Large by-election 2012	2
Bargaining update: Silent Spring	3
FSA supports BCTF members during their job action	4
FSA General Meeting Notice	4
I'm worth more than Zero	5
Balancing the FSA's 2012-2013 budget	7
Members voice their workload concerns at FSA meeting	8
Mental health on campus and resources for FSA members	9
When it's time to call the union	10
Understanding duty days and vacation	11
Friday@4 presents: Col. Panic at Professor Muggs	11
Your FSA looks inward towards improving access	13
BCIT, FSA seek new coordinator for PDS program	13
Be <i>scent</i> sitive to your colleagues - the scent-free workplace	14

Two Board members acclaimed to President, Vice President positions

by Paul Dayson
FSA Communications Officer

At the close of nominations, two nominations were received – one each for President and Vice-President. Teresa Place was nominated for FSA President and Silvia Raschke for Vice-President. Both have been acclaimed to the positions and no election will take place.

FSA President Amy Fell decided to step down from the position, after seven years as President, at the end of her term to concentrate on pursuing her graduate studies. Terry Gordon, the FSA's Vice-President, will also leave the FSA Board at the end of his term.

“Teresa and Silvia are both experienced Directors,” said Fell, “I’m confident that they will do great things for the FSA, and I look forward to working with them on transition.”

“Amy will be leaving the FSA in a good place,” said Place. “She has been working hard for the past seven years. There are wonderful people in the office and we have great ground work from which to go forward.”



Acclaimed candidates Silvia Raschke (left) and Teresa Place (right). PAUL DAYSON PHOTO

Both Place and Raschke are current members of the FSA’s Board of Directors with Place serving as the FSA’s Treasurer.

Place is a technical staff member in the Medical Laboratory Science Program and has worked at BCIT since 1999. She has been a Tech Rep, elected three times to the FSA’s Board of Directors and has served on two BCIT-FSA Collective Bargaining Committees.

Raschke has worked at BCIT since 1988. She has been an Assistant Instructor, Instructor and Program Head in Prosthetics and Orthotics, has sat on

various research-related steering committees and the Internal Panel (formerly the Technology Degree Committee). She is now a project leader with the Technology and Product Evaluation Group of the BCIT Technology Centre. She has been a Tech Rep and has been a member of the FSA Board of Directors since 2009.

“Amy and Terry’s shoes are going to be hard to fill,” said Raschke.

Place and Raschke will take their positions on June 1. By-elections will be held in May to fill their current positions on the Board of Directors.

FSA Directors By-Election 2012

Tues., April 17
Tues., May 1 at noon
Fri., May 4
Wed., May. 9 at 2:30 p.m.
Fri., May 16
Tues., May 29 at noon
Thurs., May 31 at noon
Mon., June 4 at noon

Nominations Open
Nominations Close (deadline for receipt in office)
Bios posted on BCIT FSA website
All Candidates Meeting, if necessary. Location TBA
Electronic Voting turns on
Electronic Voting turns off
Results released to membership
Deadline for request of re-count, followed by counting and posting of results by Thurs., June 7 (noon), if required

These dates for the 2012 FSA Director-at-Large By-Elections have been reviewed by Colin Jones, FSA Returning Officer.



Silent Spring

No sign of a thaw in this province's bargaining climate

PAUL DAYSON PHOTO

by Paul Reniers
FSA Executive Director

The weather has been so changeable this spring, the moments when I can walk out to my garden seem particularly glorious. I notice not just the sun but the intensity of the colours, the rustling of the leaves and branches, the birds fluttering and singing, and the bees buzzing.

The metaphorical spring we were all looking forward to in collective bargaining has been much more quiet. The provincial government's agenda and priorities have been as changeable as the weather but much less fertile. The impact on collective bargaining across the province has been more toxic than productive.

Like the return of certain birds and the budding of certain plants, the bargaining climate provides its own signs of spring. Bargaining's first swallow of spring 2012 was the provincial budget, complete with its fresh public sector bargaining mandate for 2012-14. As the birds migrated south last fall, the government promised in the throne speech that it would work co-operatively with public sector unions to find the means to pay for wage increases that employees reasonably expected. That song can no longer be heard. Instead, Kevin Falcon now says that the government needs the money more than we do. Ministries and government institutions can find money for wages once they find efficiencies to return cash to the government's coffers. At bargaining tables around the province, there is silence.

A second sign of the bargaining spring was the public service master agreement negotiations with the province. The BCGEU's bargaining unit is so big and so important to both the government and the economy that these negotiations fre-

Representation. Negotiation. Advocacy.

quently take the lead in the public sector bargaining cycle. The BCGEU went to the table singing the government's tune with proposals to generate revenue for wages, as the government had asked. The first suggestion involved extending operations for government liquor stores. The government answered by announcing it would sell the distribution warehouses, with the money going to government revenue, not wages. This call and response continued until the BCGEU decided it couldn't sing along anymore. Now its holding a strike vote.

A third sign of the bargaining spring was the negotiations with the teachers. If anyone could change the tune of the province, surely it would be the teachers. Teachers had backed up the sympathy of the public with a court decision saying the government had illegally stripped provisions from their contract in 2002. Surely these negotiations would produce something to sing about. Well, we all know how that tune goes.

At the FSA we've been listening for signs of a thaw in the bargaining climate, signs of life that indicate it's time to end the hibernation and that growth might again be possible. We aren't hearing it. Rather than accept a barren, even toxic, negotiating environment, we're getting our house in order. We're working through the large store of memoranda, sorting through all the implications of keeping them and letting them go. We're also making the most out of the current agreement, finding new arguments to pursue the rights of Part-Time Studies instructors, Assistant Instructors, members with workload issues, and members seeking professional development. We'll keep saving our energy for serving members until we hear the sounds that say that spring is truly in the air.



FSA Board members Teresa Place, Steve Finn and Silvia Raschke walk the line with teachers at Moscrop Secondary School during the BCTF's job action on March 7. PAUL DAYSON PHOTO

FSA supports BCTF's 3-day job action

by Paul Dayson,
FSA Communication Officer

FSA members including members of its Board of Directors – President-Elect Teresa Place, Vice President-Elect Silvia Raschke and Director-at-Large Steve Finn – joined striking BCTF members at Moscrop Secondary School at noon on Wednesday, March 7. FSA staff members also joined the teachers on their lunch breaks during the three-day job action.

The FSA's Board of Directors have been closely watching the current dispute between the BC Teacher's Federation and the provincial government for the past year. The FSA has had several reasons to be interested.

"Primary and secondary school instructors, professionals, and technical staff are our direct counterparts and share our commitment to students and to developing skills and knowledge for a prosperous British Columbia," said FSA Executive Director Paul Reniers, who serves as the FSA's chief

negotiator in our own bargaining. "Their bargaining structure is directly parallel to our own. It is controlled by the same government and same agenda."

"In our own bargaining, the FSA has strategically looked to the teachers and their potential for breaking the government's damaging "net zero" mandate, he said.

With the passing of Bill 22, dubbed the 'Education Improvement Act', the FSA sees the government stripping bargaining rights from teachers and hitting the BCTF with punitive measures for otherwise legal activities.

"These are the same rights the FSA depends upon for our own bargaining strength and we know that we share in the teachers' struggle for respect," said Reniers.

Many other FSA members also found their own way to support the teachers, some joining teachers at their neighbourhood schools.

FSA Annual General Meeting

**Wednesday, April 25, 2012 at 2:30 p.m.
SE6-233 (Telus Theatre)**

Why are you worth more than zero?

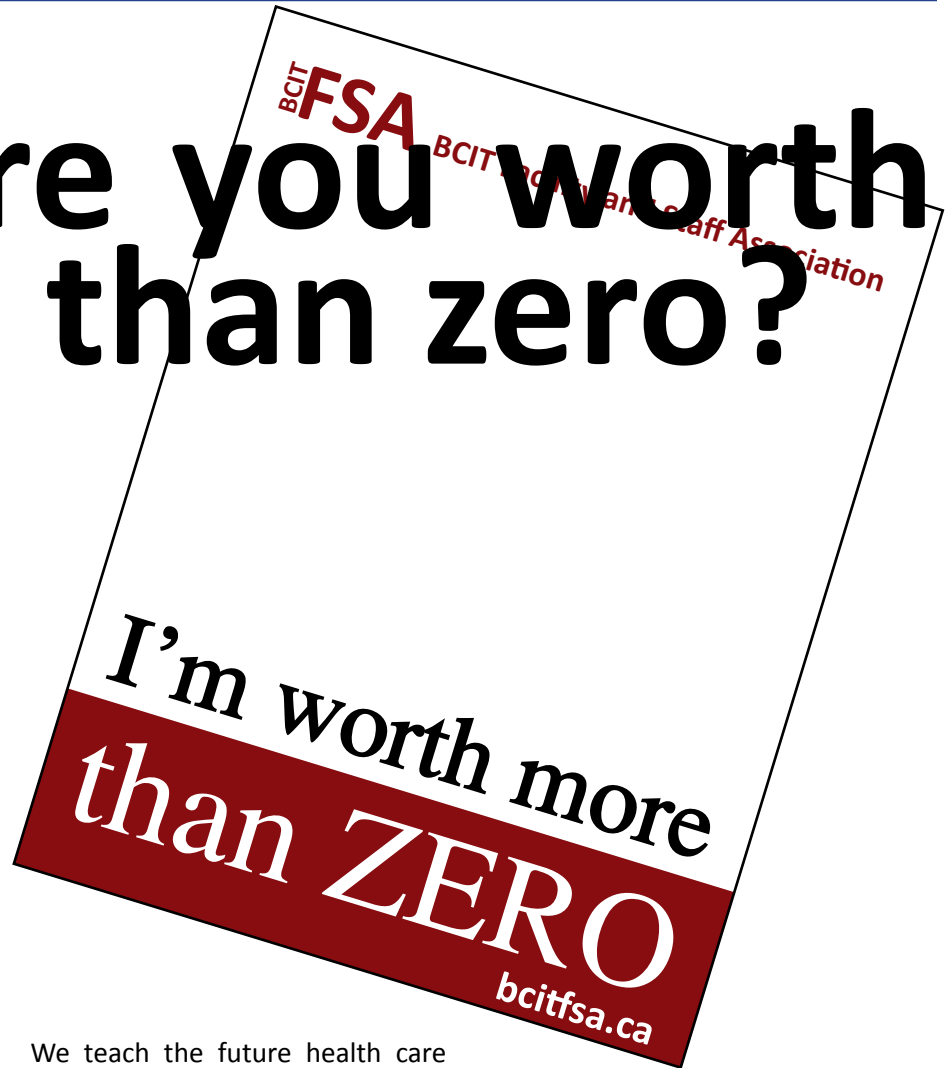
by Paul Dayson,
FSA Communications Officer

The FSA has been calling on all its members to share with us and the campus community – as well as those we are bargaining with – why each of you is worth more than the zero-mandate being put forward at the bargaining table by the province and its agents. To do this, we’ve handed out window cards and created a posting area on our website.

Join your colleagues in letting the campus know why you are valuable. Here are a few ideas we’ve seen posted by members around campus to start you off:

- Students are our #1 priority. I am dedicated to their success.
- Ask me why...
- Industry experience has a cost!
- Nothing, is not the answer.
- Students lives are in our hands!
- FSA Members make BCIT work.
- I need adequate time to prep your labs...
- I teach students to do lifesaving tests in the Medical Laboratory.
- I teach our students how to be safe in the workplace and this will save their lives.
- We teach the future health care workers who will help save lives.
- We help our students gain the confidence they need to be successful in this profession...
- “BCIT Works” because its instructors work hard to serve students.
- The world has changed, my pay hasn’t.
- When I have to take my work home evenings and weekends.
- “BCIT Works” because I do.
- How can we recruit from industry when our pay continues to fall further behind?
- I don’t spend enough time with my kids.
- We deserve the same maternity leave benefits that all other BCIT employees receive.
- Instructors matter, students care.
- If I work 9-5 Mon-Fri all year round... Why am I still a part-time instructor?
- Volunteering time to allow students to prepare for a competition – bringing recognition to BCIT and enhancing their learning experience.

To share your reasons with the campus community, you can pick up an office window card from the FSA office, your Tech Rep, or by downloading it straight from bcitfsa.ca and display it with pride in your office window.



Balancing the FSA's 2012-2013 budget

Resources directed to strike fund and members rights

by *Teresa Place,*
FSA Treasurer and President-Elect

The biggest change in this year's FSA budget is a proposed dues increase. Our dues have been at 1.35% since 2006 and we have been operating with the lowest dues in the sector for over 10 years. University of the Fraser Valley was the next lowest at 1.50%, but they have recently increased their dues to 2.00% making Douglas College the closest to us at 1.75%. BCGEU Vocational Instructors at BCIT pay 1.85%.

We are proposing an increase to 1.65%, still making us the lowest in the sector and giving our membership excellent service at a high standard. An Instructor at the top of the salary scale would see an increase of less than \$10 per pay cheque.

There are four main reasons for the increase; building the strike fund, acting on our strategic plan, change in President and VP, and a small amount for staff salaries.

We strongly feel that the strike fund will give us more leverage negotiating if we have enough money to take



members out long enough for BCIT to lose a full semester. We are now including strike fund contributions in our budget and not just counting on surpluses for contributions. If we contribute \$100,000.00 per year it will take us just over 11 years to reach our target.

Our three key priorities for the FSA strategic plan are Member Engagement, Association Management plus Bargaining and Labour Relations. Implementing these strategic priorities

will require release time for those Directors who become goal champions and utilize other FSA resources such as staff time, equipment, and other costs.

We have been incredibly fortunate to have had Amy Fell in the role as President for the last seven years and Terry Gordon as VP for much of that time. The stability allowed us to cut back on release time and use that money to increase staff and for other resources. In June 2012 we will have a new President and VP and, as they take over and settle into their new roles, release time will need to be increased.

Lastly, we have a commitment and obligation to our staff. They are hardworking, dedicated individuals who give strength and value to the membership. Over the next few years they will be receiving a reasonable pay increase as we expect from our employer.

In short, the dues increase will support resources to our Collective Agreement. We have a strong CA and, with the threat of no increase to our wages, we need to be prepared to encourage and support our members in using the rights they currently have.

FSA dues and sector comparisons

School	2011	2012	Increase or decrease
Vancouver Community College	2.15%	2.15%	Same
Langara College	2.00%	2.00%	Same
Capilano University	1.95%	1.95%	Same
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	1.95%	1.90%	Decrease
Douglas College	1.75%	1.75%	Same
University of the Fraser Valley	1.50%	2.00%	Increase
BCGEU - BCIT Vocational	1.85%	1.85%	Same
Average	1.88%	1.94%	
BCIT - FSA	1.35%	1.65%	Increase

BCIT Faculty & Staff Association Operating Budget For Year Ending June 30, 2013

	Approved Budget 2011/12	Proposed Budget 2012/13
Revenue		
Membership dues (based on current rate of 1.35%)	1,000,000	996,000
Dues increase (to 1.65%)	-	221,300
Interest income	8,500	18,000
Total revenue	1,008,500	1,235,300
Expenses		
Books & Publications	4,500	4,500
Conference fees	5,000	5,000
Election expense	600	600
Equipment leases	4,500	4,500
Insurance	9,500	9,500
Meetings	13,000	13,000
Miscellaneous	1,700	1,700
Office supplies	13,500	13,500
Professional development and training	24,700	30,000
Professional fees	20,000	25,000
Publications (Communications)	1,500	1,500
Public Relations	7,000	7,000
Research & Consulting	5,000	23,000
Salaries & Benefits		
Staff salaries & benefits	760,500	770,000
Release time	105,000	152,000
Scholarships	8,000	8,000
Social committee	2,500	2,500
Travel & Accommodation	2,000	2,000
Total expenses	988,500	1,073,300
Surplus before:	20,000	162,000
Contribution to strike fund	-	(142,000)
Contribution to capital fund		
Amortization	(7,000)	(7,000)
Capital expenditures	(13,000)	(13,000)
Surplus (deficit)	-	-
Annual dues increase based on top of faculty scale plus \$2,400 PD step		\$258.00
Increase per pay period		\$9.92



FSA members attend a meeting on workload issues on February 8. Over 80 members attended.

PAUL DAYSON PHOTO

FSA meeting draws members to discuss their workload concerns

*by Paul Dayson,
FSA Communications Officer*

Over 80 FSA members attended a meeting on workload issues held by the union on Wednesday, February 8. That close to 10 percent of the FSA's full-time members came highlights the widespread concern felt across the campus.

Organized as an exploration of the workload issues members are facing here at BCIT, the meeting highlighted some broad ranging and some department-specific concerns about the increasing workload of FSA members. Issues raised included:

- Increases in administrative work
- Uneven distribution of workload
- Cutback in staffing levels, with no cutback in goals
- Implementation of new technology,
- Increasing class sizes resulting in more marking
- Students demanding more time from instructors
- An increasing number of international students with language difficulties
- Inadequate time for course development

While some feedback was given to members at the meeting on how to deal with their workloads, members of the Board of Directors and the FSA's labour relations staff are organizing the information garnered and are preparing a report to members on different methods for dealing with the problems raised.

Perpetually understaffed in part due to people being on leave and not having the positions filled

New projects and tasks assigned without consultation and without relief from other tasks and duties

ITS: Expectations to support new tech/ devices without additional staff or budget

Specialized content that needs updating each term

International students including whole classes of international students being added to workload

Department facing issues of how to equitably account for workload across courses that are of substantially different class sizes

Mental health on campus

Resources available to FSA members

by Paul Dayson,
FSA Communications Officer

Campus mental health initiatives are most frequently framed in terms of students but campus faculty and staff share the same environment as their pupils and, while not suffering from exam anxiety, they face a host of other parallel pressures including the stresses of balancing workload, personal life and frequently the additional work needed to maintain professional competencies in their industry. For these reasons, the FSA encourages members to inform themselves of the mental health resources available here at BCIT to help both themselves, their colleagues and their students.

Employee Assistance Plan

bcit.ca/hr/services/counselling.shtml

Provided by Shepell.fgi, the Employee Assistance Plan is a part of your BCIT employee benefits package. Employees may take advantage of the EAP's professional counselling services at no additional cost to themselves. These confidential counselling services range from work, family, life, financial, transitional and legal issues and also includes 24/7 assistance by phone at **1-800-387-4765** or online.

In addition, Shepell.fgi makes available on its website nutrition support services, smoking cessation support, a stress management program and other wellness resources. It also publishes three series of articles – Balancing Act, Healthy Living, and Healthy Working – on mental health issues in a newsletter format and keeps them in an archive on its website.

Helpful Resources and Employee Supports

Mental Health Works (mentalhealthworks.ca) is an excellent website provided by The Canadian Mental Health Association with a specific resources for Employee Supports (mentalhealthworks.ca/employees).

Manulife's Mental Health Website – *Workplace Solutions for Mental Health* – provides information on

mental nervous conditions, topical issues like stigma prevention, and tips and advice for employees on how to prepare for a return to work. This site is available at manulife.ca/wellconnected or by signing in to manulife.ca/groupbenefits.

BCIT Library

The Library's shelves contain a host of books, CD-ROMs and other electronic resources available to the campus community and it has produced a bibliography of its holdings – *Wellness Resources* – which is available online in PDF format. bcit.ca/files/library/pdf/bcit-wellness.pdf

BCIT Counselling

bcit.ca/counselling

While BCIT's counselling department is a student service organization, it does provide a number of resources to the wider campus community:

- A listing of after-hours resources – bcit.ca/counselling/afterhours.shtml (These are also in the recognizing and responding booklet - PDF link below)
- *Unmasking distress* - A set of online resources developed for the BCIT community about recognizing, responding, referring (and ultimately retaining) students in distress on this campus. commons.bcit.ca/counselling/unmaskingdistress/
- A PDF Handbook, *Identifying and Referring Students in Difficulty* is also available at: bcit.ca/files/counselling/pdf/identifying_and_referring_students_in_difficulty.pdf

Speak up/Speak Out: *Mental Wellness Week at BCIT* April 16 to 20

Organized by the BCIT Student Association's Advocacy Office, *Speak up/Speak Out: Mental Wellness Week at BCIT* will feature displays around campus and speakers from BCIT's Counselling Department on campus mental health issues. For more information on these events visit bcitsa.ca

SPEAK UP
SPEAK OUT

Mental Wellness Week at BCIT

April 16-20



When it's time to...

Call the Union!

by Tess Rebbitt
FSA Labour Relations Representative

You have rights under the Collective Agreement. When they are not being met we want you to call us for advice. Don't wait; call right away! Our ability to obtain remedies for you may be affected by the timeliness of our action.

Examples:

- **Check your pay stub!**
 Make sure you are receiving all of your entitlements: correct salary step and FTE %, allowances you qualify for, such as Article 15.16 Qualification Differential after one year at 'top of scale' ('top of scale' is step 7 for AI's, and step 12 for Faculty), and PD Allowance (for Faculty at step 13 or above and Article 15.6 Administrative Allowance. If you aren't being paid correctly, call the FSA.
- **Is your contract in place before you start?**
 You have the right to be paid on time for the work you perform. Members have worked up to two months without pay because the

ehires weren't complete. If this happens to you, call the FSA.

- **PD Request/Application Denial?**
 If your application/request is denied and you think the reasons do not comply with Article 10.3, 10.5 or Memag 09FSA40 (available on our website under member resources) call the FSA as soon as possible for advice.
- **Workload.**
 Is there an unbalanced workload in your department? Have you seen your departmental work loading plan? Have you been consulted on your assignments? Articles 8 and 14 give you rights regarding workload. Call the FSA.
- **Consultation.**
 Is a change being implemented by management that your department hasn't been consulted on? Article 14 provides rights to you and your department. Call the FSA.
- **Does something not feel right?**
 If you are in a situation you don't feel is right, fair or in compliance

with the Collective Agreement or the Human Rights Code, call the FSA for advice.

- **Placement on the salary scale.**
 Do you think you should have been placed higher on the salary scale (Article 11)? You may only have six months to appeal this. Call the FSA.
- **Regularization.**
 Are you a temporary employee who wants to be permanent? Do you know when your snapshot date for regularization is? Do you know what you need to do to become permanent? Call the FSA.
- **Interpretation Questions.**
 Are you unsure about how the Collective Agreement applies in your situation? Call the FSA.
- **Do you need an advocate?**
 If you have a meeting that you are worried about attending and think you might need advise or representation, the FSA is here to provide representation as needed. Call the FSA.



Understanding duty days and your vacation rights

by *Christine Nagy*,
FSA Labour Relations Representative

Summer is fast approaching – has your department finalized its summer vacation and duty day schedules? To be on duty or not to be on duty – what is your duty with respect to duty days and vacation scheduling?

At the November 16th Tech Rep meeting, the FSA conducted an exercise to learn how the various departments plan, schedule and execute their summer duty day and vacation schedules, and their month free of teaching activities. Two methods were discovered: one controlled by management; and one controlled by the department. The FSA’s opinion is that the department led processes were far superior, and in compliance with the collective agreement, to the management controlled processes. These incorporate some ‘best practices’ and some other considerations, including: establishing criteria such as staffing coverage levels; distinguishing peak periods in the academic cycle; identifying

project timeline requirements; setting duty-day schedules before vacation schedules; consideration of members’ seniority dates; decision-making by consensus; delegation of duties; randomly assigning duty; unspoken practices; and duties delegated to Program Heads.

Factors that guide and affect these processes are outlined in the collective agreement under Articles:

- 1.4 – Professional Responsibilities of Employees;
- 1.8.5 – Definition of Department;
- 8.6 – Month Free of Teaching;
- 8.7 – Break Periods;
- 9.2.3 – Vacation Selection Period; and
- 14 – Departmental Objectives and Operations.

Memorandum of Agreement 01FSA31 – Break Periods is also applicable to some departments at BCIT.

See the next page for three steps and a checklist for managing duty days and vacation in your department

Friday@4 presents:

Col. Panic at Professor Muggs

Friday, May 11 from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Live music

Free burger draw

Appetizers

Door prizes

United Way 50/50

Duty days and vacation checklist

The FSA offers this checklist of advice to guide members on how to tackle the issue. Further, we suggest the three step approach outlined in the next column, as a means to implement and manage duty day and vacation leave schedules.

- Develop a clear process around departmental objectives; there will be a greater chance of successful implementation, and will likely gain wider support from the members.
- Decide on the required coverage days at the start of the year.
- Distribute the duty days fairly and equitably, with consistent treatment for each employee.
- If it's determined there is a need for duty coverage, examine whether the duty can be performed off campus. If duty is required on campus, set aside productive work to perform while on duty.
- If the department is doing something that works well, keep doing it.
- Decide what the 'ODOC' expectations are, including: retrieving email and voice mail; working on-line; attending campus if necessary; etc.
- Smaller departments may wish to pair up with other departments to share their coverage.
- Members wanting to take vacation during busy periods need a plan and approval of the department.
- If departmental objectives greatly limit vacation scheduling, then workload may be an issue.
- Ensure the manager communicates the duty and vacation day schedules to BCIT's reception and the Registrar's Office.
- And lastly, it's your right to take your vacation – please schedule (and take) all of your vacation days! If it's not possible to schedule and take your vacation leave (less any carryover you wish to reserve), you are entitled to have the balance paid out.



Steps to managing duty days, vacation in your department

Step 1 – Set the departmental objectives

In consultation with the members, the manager and staff, meet to devise a plan that is consistent with the collective agreement, and one that will provide for: coverage of necessary services and operations; allocation of professional duties required to meet the department's objectives; a vacation leave schedule; and access to break periods and the month free of teaching provisions. Determining whether the objectives include performing duty days 'on campus' during breaks, or whether the duty can be performed 'ODOC', is a departmental decision.

Step 2 – Determine the vacation selection schedule

Employees have the right to select a vacation period of their choosing, and, at their option, to take the leave in a continuous period or in segments, as long as the schedule is approved by the department, with notification to the Dean. The annual vacation leave shall be calculated exclusive of break periods (including Term, Spring, Christmas). However, the annual vacation schedule is subject to approval based on the essential requirements of the department (see Step 1 above).

Step 3 – Allocate the assignment of duties for month-free of teaching (MFOT)

Faculty are entitled to one month per year to be free from teaching and student evaluation duties. The MFOT activities are determined and scheduled by the department, and will ensure the effective operation of the department (see Step 1 above). Further, the MFOT activities: need to be allocated with consistency and fair treatment of each employee; may be scheduled in segments or taken at one time; are not considered part of the employee's vacation leave or break periods (including Term, Spring, Christmas); do not require the employee to be on campus, unless the department decided it was necessary for the duties to be performed on campus.

Please contact any of the Labour Relations Representatives at the FSA if you need further clarification of any of the foregoing.

Your FSA looks inward to improving member access

For the past year, the FSA has been providing American Sign Language interpretation at our meetings upon members' request. It has made us realize that the provision of services like this is an important part of how we serve members and conduct the business of our union. When we better support our members in participating and engaging in the activities of the union, we collectively grow stronger.

We are now looking to incorporate other ways to improve the accessibility of the FSA's services and events into our operations, and are planning to add an access request button on bcitfsa.ca, to allow members to make access service requests.

If you have ideas on the kinds of services needed or the best way to make them available to members, please contact Paul Dayson, the FSA Communications Officer, at pdayson@bcit.ca.



BCIT, FSA seek new coordinator for PDS program

*by Paul Reniers,
FSA Executive Director*

Faculty and Staff Association members participate in a performance appraisal system that is strictly concerned with employee development. The Performance Development System or PDS is designed to provide feedback to guide members in seeking opportunities to be better at their work. The system is separate from any discipline process. The information collected from student, client, and peer assessments is the property of the employee, not management. A few departments maintain appraisal systems that pre-date PDS but have similar purposes and values.

PDS has been on auto-pilot for the last 18 months since the retirement of the last PDS co-ordinator. The PDS Co-ordinator has been a half time position for a bargaining unit member to guide and advocate for the system. The Co-ordinator has resolved concerns about the operation of the system, advocated for its consistent use across campus, addressed inconsistencies or requests for changes by specific departments or groups of members, developed policy

approaches as indicated, and co-ordinated a union-management steering committee.

The retirement of the last co-ordinator coincided with some changing thoughts on the use of the system. The employer and the union agree that the information must remain the property of the individuals and be used for individual development, not performance management. Both parties also see lots of value in the aggregate data as a tool for measuring and developing performance on a broader level. Along with that potential, significant questions remain about how best to extend PDS to small units of specialized employees.

In the meantime, the PDS has been maintained through the indulgence of the Institute Planning and Analysis Office, which normally only processes the data. As time passes, issues well beyond IPAO's authority have arisen and new practices with significant implications for the system, like on-line assessments, have developed. Coordination must be restored to the system while a fresh look at policy issues is undertaken.

The FSA is looking for a new PDS Co-ordinator. We expect confirmation from the VP Education that the position will be reconstituted as carrying half-time release from regular duties. New terms of reference for the co-ordinator have yet to be agreed upon. Responsibilities are expected to include:

- reconstituting the working committee,
- addressing current operational issues,
- developing a plan for the system's sustainability and further development,
- developing and executing a communications plan for the community, and
- addressing policy issues with the committee such as maintaining the integrity and security of the system in an on-line environment.

The FSA is putting together a selection committee and a process for selecting a member for this position. Several expressions of interest have already been received. We will advise all eligible members when selection criteria and a time line have been determined.

Be *scents*itive to colleagues

by Heather Neun,
FSA Senior Labour Relations Representative

For many people, heavily scented products do not pose a problem. But for some members of the BCIT community, that is not the case. For this group, it isn't a question of personal dislikes or preferences. Fragrances and scented products pose real, adverse health risks, and the potential consequences can range from very unpleasant to life threatening.

No Scents is Good Sense

In an effort to create more awareness and to work towards a scent-free environment, the FSA encourages members to be aware and learn more about the issue. Consider that some people may experience effects that range from upper respiratory symptoms, to asthmatic reactions, migraines, dizziness, fatigue, and in extreme cases, anaphylactic reactions. The products that can trigger these effects range from the personal care products you apply to any cleaning products you are using in your workspace. Most manufacturers offer scent-free alternatives. So be scent-aware, choose scent-free products and help ensure that all members enjoy a healthy, scent-free environment.

Welcome to our Scent-Free Area

The FSA has been tracking different efforts to remind BCIT community members. Here are a few of the signs we uncovered...



Signs denoting Scent-Free workplaces in the School of Health and Disability Resource Centre. PAUL DAYSON PHOTOS

The BCIT Faculty and Staff Association Team

Board of Directors

- Amy Fell, President
- Terry Gordon, Vice-President
- Teresa Place, Treasurer
- Alistair Calder, Director-at-Large
- Steve Finn, Director-at-Large
- Joe Newton, Director-at-Large
- Taco Niet, Director-at-Large
- Silvia Raschke, Director-at-Large
- Kathryn Stewart, Director-at-Large
- Ted Rutledge, Director (Associate Members)

Staff Members

- Paul Reniers, Executive Director
- Heather Neun, Senior Labour Relations Representative
- Christine Nagy, Labour Relations Representative
- Tess Rebbitt, Labour Relations Representative
- Sascha Swartz, Labour Relations Administrative Analyst
- Maria Angerilli, Executive Assistant
- Paul Dayson, Communications Officer
- Marian Ciccone, Office Assistant

Contact Us

Phone: 604.432.8695
 Fax: 604-432-8348
 E-mail: fsa@bcit.ca

SE 16-116
 3700 Willingdon
 Burnaby, BC
 V5G 3H2

bcitfsa.ca