

From the President:

A busy FSA takes the time to look forward

The Faculty and Staff Association office is always very busy this time of year -- particularly this year. Whether it be collective bargaining, strategic planning, policy renewal and revision, post-secondary sector liaison, conducting an election, updating an orientation and training program for new directors, representing and advocating for member rights, negotiating a new contract with CUPE, training and orienting new staff, or communicating all of the aforementioned with the members (not to mention taking care of all of the day-to-day business of the association) all of these functions are happening at once with the small but mighty team of dedicated FSA staff and Executive members. Preparing for this newsletter was yet another task to add to 'the list' but it helped me realize the vast number of activities the FSA carries out.

Strategic Planning

The FSA Strategic Planning process is well underway with Donald Golob hired as the consultant through our RFP process to lead our planning efforts. The planning process began with an all-day meeting of the FSA Executive to answer some fundamental and interrelated questions about who and what we are now, what we want to be in the future, and how we get



there from here. We used our mission -- Representation. Negotiation. Advocacy -- to keep us focused on our purpose as an organization. We have also done information gathering through facilitated sessions at the April Tech Rep meeting and for FSA staff. Summary reports of these sessions are available in the strategic planning documents section (accessible only after member log-in) at bcitfsa.ca.

For general members, we are asking for your input through the Strategic Planning area of our forums on bcitfsa.ca. We will then pull together all the information collected to establish some strategic directions for the Association and an implementation plan to make sure we get THERE.

Policy Review

The FSA Executive has been diligently working through a review and update of our policies. Our revisions include removing policies which are no longer relevant, combining policies to make them easier to follow, incorporating our current practice to reflect technological shifts and removing any redundant information which is covered by acts that govern our work such as the Society Act. Taco Niet showed a knack for asking the tough questions and through his leadership we are almost at the end of our quest. We hope to have an updated Policy Manual to rely on in guiding our actions by the end of this year.

Sector's focus returns to bargaining

As for news from the post-secondary sector, with the Ministry of Advanced Education reunited following the appointment of Christy Clark as Premier, the sector returned its focus to bargaining. "No' is not a solution" is the Federation of Post Secondary Educators' campaign to answer the lack of movement by the Post-Secondary Employers Association (PSEA). From full blown walkouts to withholding grades, our colleagues across the sector are demonstrating their frustration with the government mandate of 0 and 0.

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A busy time for FSA

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FPSE has graciously invited us to their Annual General Meeting where the theme is 'Connect the Dots: Advocacy, Access, Activism.' This is the third time I have attended and Terry Gordon, FSA Vice President will join me. We are honoured to be invited and look forward to connecting with our colleagues in the sector and hearing about their bargaining plans in the short and long term.

New Directors

Lastly, I am very pleased to welcome new members to the FSA Executive. Kathryn Stewart (Faculty in Broadcast and Media), Joe Newton (Program Head for the Product and Process Applied Research Team), Alistair Calder (myBCIT Coordinator in Business Application Services of ITS) and Ted Rutledge (Part-time Studies Instructor in Communications) were all successful in the recent FSA Election. They take office on June 1 and are already engaged in many initiatives currently underway. Each of them brings new ideas, a wealth of knowledge about BCIT, and all have expressed a desire to serve their Association as a means to give back. On behalf of the current and returning Directors, we are looking forward to working together in the years to come.

I would also like to acknowledge Judy Shandler (Senior Systems Analyst in Strategic Practices of ITS) and Pat Cumming (Librarian, Publications and Marketing) for running in the recent election. Thank you both for putting your names forward. Leadership of the FSA requires members to act on their passion and pride in working at BCIT to ensure that into the future the Association continues to build on its foundation to represent, negotiate and advocate for the membership to the best of its ability.

Make sure you take time to enjoy the summer sun!

Amy Fell,
FSA President

FSA elections see tight race, higher turnout

By Paul Dayson,
Communications Officer

In a tight race to the finish, the FSA membership has elected a full slate of seven Directors-at-Large and a Director (Associate Members) to the FSA executive. The last time the FSA held a contested election was a by-election for the Vice-President position in the spring of 2007. Voting numbers were up over 10 percent, including a significant number of Part-time Studies members.

"I'm encouraged by the number – and quality -- of candidates who put their names forward for election," said FSA President Amy Fell. "I look forward to working with the new and returning executives on behalf of our members."

New to the FSA executive as Directors-at-Large are: Alistair Calder, the myBCIT coordinator with IT Services; Joe Newton, Program Head for the Product and Process Applied Research Team (PART); and Kathryn (Kat) Stewart, a radio instructor in the Broadcast Program. James Routledge was acclaimed as Director (Associate Members) to represent the FSA's Part-time Studies faculty and staff – filling the position for the first time since 2004.

Returning to the executive are Directors-at-Large Steve Finn, Program Head of Sustainable Energy Management; Taco Niet, Program

Head of Mechanical Engineering; Teresa Place, Technical Staff in the Medical Laboratory Science; and Silvia Raschke, a Project Leader with the BCIT Technology Centre

These directors' terms will start on June 1, 2011 and run until May 31, 2013.

Pat Cumming, a BCIT Librarian, and Judy Shandler, a Senior Business Analyst with IT Services, were narrowly defeated, losing by only a small number of votes.

The results of the election as certified by the FSA's Returning Officer Kevin Cudihee are:

Directors-at-Large - 7 positions:

Alistair Calder - 109 votes
Pat Cumming - 96 votes
Steve Finn - 114 votes
Joe Newton - 117 votes
Taco Niet - 114 votes
Teresa Place - 99 votes
Silvia Raschke - 126 votes
Judy Shandler - 87 votes
Kathryn (Kat) Stewart - 98 votes

Director (Associate Members) - 1 position:

James Routledge - acclaimed

Number of members casting ballots - 258

Number of spoiled ballots - 0

Number of ballots ruled ineligible - 0

FSA Strategic Planning

Tell us what you think.

Log In to bcitfsa.ca, visit the Strategic Planning area of the forum and have your say on our next three years.

Bargaining Update:

Bargaining province-wide tight or stalled

By Paul Reniers,
Executive Director

The last three months have seen some interesting developments on the provincial bargaining scene even though the common table for our sector has not met since October.

Of greatest note, the Vancouver Island University Faculty Association in Nanaimo recently ended a four week strike. The VIU and its unions are not party to the common agreement in our sector (nor are the FSA and BCIT). Despite the long work stoppage, both sides acknowledge that the resulting agreement remains within the terms of the provincial mandate. Features of the agreement include:

- No economic increase (a “net zero” settlement in which any cost increases are offset by savings within the terms of the agreement)
- Improvements in the notice provisions prior to layoff
- A requirement for regular financial disclosure to the union
- An existing pooled sick leave bank was eliminated in favour of increased pay for supervising directed studies from \$250 to \$379 per student
- Technician scales will be set as a percentage of the faculty salary scale, so salaries will remain in step regardless of future faculty salary increases
- Unresolved union issues intended to increase job security have been referred to non-binding mediation

The BCGEU vocational instructors at VIU also signed a new “net zero” agreement.

More recently, Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops and its Faculty Association came to terms as well. This agreement is not covered by the Post-Secondary Employers Association (PSEA) but is covered by the same provincial bargaining mandate. Details

have not yet been released but we understand the agreement includes the following:

- No overall economic increase (“net zero”)
- The top of the faculty scale was extended to \$129,000, but very few if any employees will reach the top of scale
- Faculty in the new law school will be paid a differential for a limited time
- A number of non-cost issues were resolved.

Earlier this winter, the UBC Faculty Association settled a new agreement with several interesting features, including:

- Converting formerly contingent bonuses into automatic bonuses
- Creation of a new classification of “Professor of Teaching”
- Improvements in professional development expenses

Reportedly, UBC was able to make these changes because they were drawing on amounts already budgeted for wages and benefits even though the previous collective agreement did not always require that they be paid.

The signs are that the change in leadership in Victoria has not made for a change in commitment to the provincial bargaining mandate. The pattern of settlements also indicates that employers under the PSEA, like BCIT, have less room for creativity than employers outside of the PSEA (like TRU and UBC). The government also seems prepared to let unions go out on strike and stay out rather than issue back to work legislation.

Talks at VCC are continuing after a positive strike vote. The Langara Faculty Association got the attention of their employer with a strong strike vote and, more recently by withholding grades. An agreement still has not been reached, however, and grades were submitted after a brief delay.

The bargaining environment provincially remains very tight. While minor progress is being made at a few institutions, other unions feel far away from settlements. There are no plans at this time to reconvene the common table.

Local BCIT-FSA talks remain slow

Local bargaining with BCIT is proceeding slowly. Since October, there have been eight bargaining sessions with agreement reached on four minor items. Some sessions have felt co-operative, while others very adversarial. BCIT refuses to discuss any items associated with a cost until the issue of the FSA’s ability to withdraw from Memoranda of Agreement (MemAgs) is resolved. This is not scheduled for arbitration until October, with a decision sometime afterwards.

BCIT is seeking concessions that would weaken our regularization language even though job security is not a provincially-mandated issue. Nor are they offering anything in return for these concessions, as they insist on holding to the provincial mandate of zero percent increases over both years of a two-year contract.

At the same time, BCIT has reduced its salary budget for this fiscal year. About \$2 million, unspent in past years due to budgeting for top of scale salaries and temporarily unfilled positions, has been directed mostly to non-salary expenses.

Under the present circumstances, we can afford to wait for an agreement. With nothing being offered at the table, there is no point in rushing into an agreement. Instead, we intend to get the MemAgs issue resolved and then get an agreement that’s worth signing.



*By Christine Nagy,
Labour Relations Representative*

Notice to the Union

Notice to the union for FSA positions is provided by the Associate Dean or the Program Head. Department members are contacted by email, or notice is issued at a department meeting of the need to form a selection committee. For management positions, BCIT's Human Resources sends a request for representatives to the FSA.

Selecting reps to the committee

Selection committee members for FSA positions are chosen by the department. This is done through a variety of methods across BCIT: volunteers; standing committees; by vote or lottery; all department members (small departments); all Program Heads (large departments). The FSA has the right to sit as an observer as full participant, non-voting, on all FSA selection committees. If requested by a member(s), a Labour Relations Representative will observe, subject to availability. However, this normally only occurs to uphold Article 18 rights for members seeking to avoid layoff by transferring, bumping, or being recalled to another position.

Representation. Negotiation. Advocacy.

For management positions, the FSA appoints its representative(s) in accordance with the number of seats the FSA has on the committee. The formula for determining seats is based on the unionized direct reports to the position. In choosing the reps, the FSA relies on its Tech Reps to communicate with members interested in sitting on the committee. FSA members on management selection committees are representing the FSA; not just their department.

Duties

Participating on an FSA selection committee comes with a number of duties, including ensuring that selection decisions are made in an objective manner, and that the process is free from unfair and discriminatory practices. Selection decisions may be challenged for fairness by an applicant, and under the Collective Agreement, a member may request written reasons for lack of success. Proper note-taking is essential, and objective processes for weighing and comparing applications will go a long way to ensuring fair selections decision-making and in assisting committee members on how they would defend a decision.

A members' guide to participating in hiring and selection committees

Responsibilities of committee members

Members of selection committees have a variety of responsibilities, including:

- **Determine the position scope, description and competencies.** Representatives of Odgers-Berndtson, an executive search company that addressed our March Tech Rep meeting, recommended thinking about key opportunities and challenges facing the role being hired. The time devoted to creating a candidate profile up front will provide a touchstone document to provide focus throughout the process.
- **Establish levels of education, experience and skills, or other required qualifications.** The posting should be up to date, and detail the education, experience and skill sets one would need to possess in order to perform the position. Make conscious decisions about any changes, and distinguish between required and desired qualifications before posting the position or reviewing applications.

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- **Formulate advertising.** All advertisements and postings need to be approved by the selection committee members. This includes the wording and in which publications, or where online, they are placed.
- **Short-list the candidates.** Committees are required to prepare a written report that includes the criteria used to prepare the shortlist.
- **Develop interview questions.** Committees should ask each candidate the same list of questions. However, there should not be an absolute bar on posing follow up questions that beg to be asked; in fact, it might be unfair not to do so. As long as the same approach is taken with each candidate, this should help to ensure a fair and objective assessment of all candidates. Odgers-Berndtson recommended using questions that seek specific examples to draw out consequences, and to dig into examples. They suggested using “PARLA” – Problem, Action, Result, Learning, Application to guide questions posed to applicants, and ask about their motivation and interpersonal style as well as their technical expertise.
- **Rate the applicants post-interview.** A good candidate profile will help this process but don’t neglect the notion of the applicant’s potential fit into your area.
- **For FSA positions, determine placement on the salary scale.** The FSA has determined that this is not being practiced in all areas across BCIT, but it is our right under the Collective Agreement. The FSA has no input on salary scales or placement for management positions.

- **Maintain confidentiality.** It is your duty to maintain confidentiality of the proceedings of the committee, including all discussions and notes.
- **Attend all committee meetings.** Your participation in each step of the process is a crucial element of representing your colleagues and the FSA.

Selections and Article 18

When members are attempting to avoid a layoff by transferring or bumping or exercising their recall rights to obtain an FSA position, Article 18 of our Collective Agreement applies to the selection process in question. In Article 18 selections, the threshold standard is different than a normal open competition selection process: the selection committee must ask itself different questions when it chooses the required qualifications, and apply different considerations when it interviews and carries out the selection process. The central difference is that the committee is not seeking to hire the best candidate but rather the candidate who is qualified in accordance with the different standards in Article 18 (for bumping, transferring and recall). In Article 18 selections, the FSA will usually be involved in observing the process, to ensure compliance with Article 18 and fairness standards.

Voting rights

On selection committees for FSA positions, votes are weighted 50-50 between the FSA representatives and management. On management selection committees, a consensus approach is normally applied.

Spirit of participating

By negotiating the right to participate in the hiring of BCIT employees the FSA has give members a stake in ensuring the appointed candidate will contribute to the success of our departments across the schools and divisions at BCIT. Remember that the selection committee may be a candidate’s first introduction to the department and to the Institute – the first step in their integration into BCIT’s culture.



Our thanks to:
 Kathryn Young and Brent Cameron of Odgers-Berndtson
 for their presentation at our March 2011 Tech Rep Meeting

Balancing the FSA's 2011-12 budget, value for member dues

By Teresa Place, FSA Treasurer

The biggest change in the FSA budget this year is the addition of two new positions for FSA staff. These two new positions will bring value to the membership through extra service and support.

How are we funding these new positions? The FSA has continued to have a surplus and the main source of the surplus is unused release time. This year we have decided to reduce the money for release time and allocate these reduced funds to salaries.

What does this mean to the members? Better access to the FSA staff, quicker responses to your questions and more work being done in house.

I feel the FSA staff provide excellent service and support and by adding another two positions we will be able to reduce the workload of our current staff and provide even more value for your dues. We have planned the 2011/2012 budget with the dues continuing at 1.35%, the lowest in the sector. (See comparison below)

	Approved 2010/2011 Budget	Approved 2011/2012 Budget
Revenue		
- Membership dues		
- Interest on investment funds		
Total revenue	945,000	1,000,000
Expenses		
Amortization of leasehold improvements		
Books & publications	7,000	7,000
Capital equipment and office renovations	4,500	4,500
Equipment lease expenses	25,000	13,000
Conference fees & expenses	4,500	4,500
Election expense	5,000	5,000
Liaison/Meetings	600	600
Miscellaneous	13,000	13,000
Insurance	1,700	1,700
Office expense	9,500	9,500
Professional development & training	12,000	13,500
Professional fees	15,940	24,700
Public relations & goodwill	30,000	20,000
Publications - newsletters/orientation books	5,000	7,000
Research & consulting	1,000	1,500
Salaries and benefits		
- Staff salaries & benefits	24,000	5,000
- Release time officers salaries & benefits		
Scholarships	615,000	760,500
Social committee	166,496	105,000
Travel & accommodation	8,000	8,000
Total expenses	2,500	2,500
Excess revenue over expenses	2,000	2,000
	952,736	1,008,500
	\$3,264	\$0

Dues Comparisons

Vancouver Community College	2.15%
Langara College	2.00%
Capilano University	1.95%
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	1.95%
Douglas College	1.75%
University of the Fraser Valley	1.50%
BCIT	1.35%

Our budget will be much tighter this year. However, the FSA continues to be in a very strong financial position with net assets (assets in excess of liabilities) of 2,000,000.00 (Mar 2011).



Contest winner finds iPad a catalyst for changes to educational practice

By Paul Dayson, Communications Officer

When Judy Fraser of Specialty Nursing won our draw for an iPad in our Login to Win contest promoting the FSA's new website, the FSA had no idea it was unleashing changes in educational practice on a department.

Since Fraser received her iPad2 from the FSA, she and her colleagues have been exploring the possibility of using the device with their Simulator Labs to enrich their students' learning experience. "Not being stuck behind a computer can be a real plus," said Fraser, "and allows critical care instructors to be more spontaneous in their simulation sessions, thus adding to the reality of the SIM experience."

"I'm looking forward to using my iPad with my clinical groups," she said. "I'll be able to share my 'Unbound Medicine' app, as well as research and access online resources for my students -- right in the moment and in the ICU area."

"This is a fine example of the thinking of our members," said FSA President Amy Fell. "Judy took a personal windfall and turned it to a benefit for her students and department -- improving education at BCIT."

You can still login to win.

We now have over 560 members registered, so the next draw for an iPod Touch will take place soon. Create your bcitfsa.ca user account today for your chance to win in our draws for the two remaining iPod Touches. Prizes to be drawn as follows:

- An iPod Touch once 600 members register
- An iPod Touch once 1200 members register

Encourage your FSA friends and colleagues to enter so all prizes will be drawn soon. See our website contest rules for eligibility and details.



Judy Fraser of Specialty Nursing with colleagues Lara Parker, Mary Gillespie and El Ladhra in the Sim Lab where her iPad2 Login to Win contest prize is serving as the test for delivering materials to clinical groups. PAUL DAYSON PHOTO

Our collective commitment to a safe, tolerant and harassment-free workplace

By Heather Neun, Senior Labour Relations Representative

The FSA is committed to fostering a work environment and culture that is psychologically safe, tolerant and free of discrimination and harassment. The impetus for this article is the negative experiences of members, whose stories underline the importance of being proactive about creating a workplace that honours diversity, respects all members and protects human rights. The FSA encourages members to contact the office if they encounter such issues. There is no question that ignoring or avoiding these subjects does no one any favours - least of all because of the potential harm to the affected individuals.

Discrimination-Free Workplace:

BCIT is duty-bound to ensure that employees work in an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. When it comes to discrimination, the employer's obligations are clear. FSA members should not be subjected to discriminatory conduct. This means no demeaning or offensive conduct or stereotyping, based on a person's national or ethnic origin, their gender or sexual orientation, or other protected ground of personal identity, such as age or mental or physical disability. Whether the source of discrimination is a manager, a colleague or a student, members have a right to work free from this specific form of harassment.

In fact, BCIT recently allowed a grievance concerning homophobic conduct. In this case, a student complained about an instructor's sexual orientation and the manager adopted that complaint as if it were legitimate. One of the remedies being implemented is human rights-diversity training for area managers and the HR staff. This is a significant step in the right

direction. However, the FSA remains concerned about what keeps members from advancing similar complaints or results in them hiding aspects of their personal identity. *Where racism, ageism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination are concerned, organizations like BCIT must examine and effectively address these injustices, and proactively ensure that such conduct is both discouraged and redressed. The employer has an obligation to listen to employees, take their complaints seriously, and bring an end to the misconduct.*

Harassment Free Workplace:

An employer's duty to address discriminatory conduct in an effective and quick manner is clear. Other forms of workplace harassment may be less clear since the term "harassment" is imprecise, but the FSA's concern is conduct that violates an employee's right to psychological safety and protection from abuse of authority. The focus should be on any behavior that a reasonable person would view as unwelcome or offensive because it demeans or humiliates, or threatens and intimidates. *One arbitration decision described workplace harassment as a course of vexatious conduct or comment against a worker that should reasonably be known to be unwelcome. Specific examples include a pattern of objectionable comment or conduct, such as degrading, disrespectful or offensive remarks, threats or retaliation, and serious or repeated remarks or insults about a person's personal traits.*

Psychological Safety and Well-Being:

Employers have a duty to provide a psychologically safe workplace, but what does that mean? One expert described a workplace where "every practical effort is made to avoid reasonably foreseeable injury to the mental health of employees". The

potential for psychological injury is a major reason for doing more to address workplace conditions that permit verbal abuse, unfairness, disrespect, discrimination, and other forms of harassment. When the objective of creating a healthy workplace is taken seriously, employers broaden their focus to include situations that threaten the psychological health and welfare of employees. *Being proactive means actively fostering an organizational culture that is respectful and supportive of diversity and psychological well-being.*

The FSA is committed to realizing a healthy and respectful workplace. We have witnessed the toll that these forms of conduct can take on members' health and well-being when serious issues are inadequately addressed or swept under the proverbial rug. The harm that unresolved harassment may cause can be significant and long-lasting. A healthier workplace culture is achievable by openly discussing these matters and focusing on changing attitudes and removing the obstacles that stop people from raising their concerns. We already know what these obstacles are. They range from lack of awareness about what to do, to fears of retaliation, being ostracized and not being taken seriously. *FSA members must know where to bring their concerns and that once communicated, their concerns will be heard and the misconduct will be addressed.*

Our advice to members is to respect others and to speak up if you experience or witness conduct or comments that are offensive, harmful, degrading or disrespectful. Don't put up with it. Report the behavior and seek assistance from the FSA if you cannot resolve the matter yourself.

SILO

Building linkages between BCIT's organizational cultures

*By Paul Reniers,
Executive Director*

BUSINESS

BCIT is a remarkably diversified institution in terms of its operations. Compared to other large institutions, each program at BCIT has a surprising amount of autonomy to address its own needs and to meet its own ends. BCIT might be seen as a federation rather than unified institution. The tendency is for power in federations to gravitate towards the regions as it becomes harder and harder to satisfy all members through consistent actions and structures. While this arrangement tends to be very good at serving the specific needs of each BCIT discipline, it can also make it harder to collaborate and build synergies across operational units. Instead, silos form to insulate not just departments but also administrative structures that have been carefully built to navigate through the maze of departmental requirements.

Ever since the merger of BCIT and the Pacific Vocational Institute in 1986, there's been an interest in fostering new alliances and creating new efficiencies within the institution. Many efforts have been more painful than productive as faculty, staff, and managers run into barriers in the forms of conflicting administrative systems, working conditions, schedules, and authorities as well as a lack of time and financial support to invest in collaborations. It's always been easier and more rewarding to commit time and resources to projects controlled by one work unit than to form partnerships across work units.

That may be changing. The recent vision project and strategic plan have encouraged faculty, staff, and managers to think in institute-wide terms. The fiscal planning exercise provided practical encouragement by creating more consistency and rationality in BCIT's financial operations, making it both easier to share resources and creating less incentive for departments to attempt to isolate their funds. Other consultative efforts to bring people together from different parts of the campus not only provide better insight to how the Institute works but create opportunities for contact that are essential to identifying collaborative opportunities.

Recent attention given to research is also breaking down barriers. The growth in research funding looks attractive to potential partners. Larger grants also depend more on collaborations. As research funding builds BCIT's infrastructure, new opportunities arise for both research and education. The collaboration between the Tech Centre and the School of Energy on the smart grid is one example. The School of Construction and the Environment's Centre for Architectural Excellence is another. The development of new degrees has also encouraged teaching programs to collaborate with researchers to attract students with interesting activities and to satisfy the research interests of instructional staff.

The benefits of building these linkages are plentiful. A more integrated

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FSA plans exit survey for departing members

By Paul Dayson
Communications Officer

The FSA has been working to develop an exit survey and an interview process for FSA members leaving BCIT. The goal of this process would be to provide the FSA with quantifiable information that can be used to strengthen the negotiations with BCIT, such as future rounds of collective bargaining, and to make improvements to the FSA as an organization.

“Learning why our members leave BCIT could provide the FSA with very important information about how the Institute could better retain its employees, and how we could negotiate for it at the bargaining table,” said FSA Executive Director Paul Reniers, the FSA’s chief bargaining negotiator.

In developing this process, the FSA has been working with a team of directed studies students in the Human Resources Management Diploma Program who have lent their time and expertise to the project.

With the students, the FSA has been examining how best to contact members who are leaving or have left the Institute, and developing questions and process for an exit survey. This survey would form the initial part of the process, with voluntary follow-up interviews being conducted with some of the members. All answers collected through this process will be confidential and would only be shared in a manner that preserves respondents’ anonymity.

The FSA hopes to have this exit survey and interview process in place by the fall of 2011.

Building institutional strength through our collaborative connections

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organization can be both stronger and more flexible. While we continue to meet the needs of students and industry, collaboration also encourages innovation and allows us to reach into new areas of activity. Broadening these connections provides greater security for faculty and staff as they and the Institute become more flexible. About a third of the layoffs we experienced in 2010 were in departments with only one FSA member, showing that there is security in numbers. By contrast, Academic Studies successfully avoided a layoff by having one instructor deliver courses within his expertise but in three different departments.

Good intentions don’t produce a stronger, more flexible organization on their own. Specific measures have to be in place to overcome the administrative and cultural silos that have been tacitly reinforced over decades. First of all, our core activities have to be well supported or faculty and staff will rightly be concerned about damaging the excellent programs that serve students and industry so well. Faculty, staff, and front line managers need to be empowered so that innovation and good ideas can be explored. Work units aren’t going to stick their heads up by gambling on something new when individuals feel threatened or insecure. That also means a rational and well understood system for resourcing new endeavors and collaborations needs to be in place. BCIT organizationally, and not just the front line employees, needs to make an investment in order to reap the rewards. Finally, the Institute needs a clear direction for focusing these efforts so good judgment can be exercised in determining what kind of activities fit with where BCIT is going.

As the union of BCIT’s faculty and staff, the FSA contributes to busting these silos by trying to offer an Institute-wide perspective and consistent terms and conditions of work across many areas. In discussions with members and managers, we try to find the balance between protecting what we have and providing for growth. We encourage, participate in, and even facilitate campus-wide conversations. By standing outside of BCIT’s hierarchy, we can freely question administrative and departmental requirements which have negative impacts on our members and the work of the Institute. We have a collective agreement that puts surprising authority in the hands of departments and members. At the same time, we strive for common provisions and equity between our members. As the administrative and disciplinary silos at BCIT begin to give way to collaboration and rationalization, the FSA will be there to ensure a balance between security and opportunity.

BoG rep: a need for collaboration

By Kevin Wainwright, Faculty Rep, BCIT Board of Governors

My first year as the FSA representative on the BCIT board of governors is almost complete. It has been an interesting and challenging experience. I am replacing Mark Angelo, a BCIT icon, who has served for years as our BoG representative. Filling the shoes of someone of Mark's stature is no easy task.

I must say that I have been impressed by the quality of the board members. I have a high regard for the new Chair, Mike McPhie. He, and the other members, ask many of the right questions. They take their roles seriously and have demonstrated a genuine concern for the health and future of the organization. Transparency and accountability have been a priority.

One of the big challenges has been in getting my head around the role of a BoG member. When I was FSA president, I advocated for the membership; as a program head, I advocate for my program, students and School. As a member of the board, I have to look at the bigger picture. Given my connection to BCIT, this is not always an easy task. I still want to complain about the heat in my office.

As an employee of BCIT who is on the board, I face the challenge of separating policy from procedure and the conflicts that may entail. What may seem like a poor policy may be a good policy poorly enacted. If the board sets (or approves) policy, then the institute determines procedure. Given the size and complexity of BCIT, procedures need to be a collaborative effort that is based on an open discussion of the policies and goals. To that end, I hope to encourage greater awareness and understanding.

Representation. Negotiation. Advocacy.



FSA contributions to EdCo

By Kathy Siedlaczek, Vice-Chair, BCIT Education Council

Education Council (also known as EDCO) is a legislated body established under the College & Institute Act. The purpose of EDCO is to advise the Board of Governors on the development of a variety of educational policies, programs, or priorities, and to set policy, criteria, and procedures for issues such as academic awards, academic standing, appeals, and examinations. The main goal of EDCO is to support and maintain the quality of educational programs at BCIT.

Membership on EDCO includes six FSA positions. These positions are 2-year terms, and FSA members are elected to EDCO by their FSA colleagues in the relevant constituency. Other positions on EDCO include GEU instructors (4), GEU support (2), students (4), educational administrators (4), and a few ex-officio positions.

FSA members are active participants on EDCO, both at full-council meetings and on the two main Standing Committees: Programming & Policy. FSA members contribute to the work of EDCO by reviewing proposals for new programs and major changes to existing programs, and reviewing and making recommendations on educational policies.

There are a number of benefits to being a member of EDCO. A key benefit is learning more about the processes involved in making educational decisions at the Institute. Members learn about new programs that will be offered by the Institute, new/revised policies that will affect their programs, and are able to share their knowledge and help colleagues in developing strong proposals for new programs.

Currently, FSA members are making a significant contribution in the updating of BCIT's Programming Policy (Policy 5004). Some of the key contributions are revisions to a series of Policy 5004 components, including: BCIT credential types, credential definitions/standards, the program development/approval process, and proposal templates for new programs and major changes to existing programs. Each of these revisions supports the goal of maintaining the quality of educational programs at the Institute.

Participating on EDCO is important work for FSA members. The next time elections come around for FSA positions on EDCO, make sure you take the time to vote for one of your colleagues, or consider putting your name forward for a position. To find out more about EDCO, and to see the current list of FSA members on EDCO, see <http://www.bcit.ca/about/administration/edco.shtml>.



FSA Bylaw changes planned for fall AGM

**By Taco Niet,
FSA Director-at-Large**

Over the past few months the FSA Executive has been working to bring our policies up to date and, through this process, we have identified a number of issues with our current bylaws. For example, there are provisions in the bylaws that are counter to the Society Act and also sections which are confusing and unclear. Rather than continue working with bylaws that have these issues, the Executive decided to take on the task of updating our bylaws over the next few months.

To date, we have taken the existing bylaws and drafted an updated version that clarifies confusing language and fixes some of the more obvious issues.

To ensure we follow all provisions of the Society Act and to develop bylaws that will serve the FSA for the foreseeable future, we are hiring a lawyer to work with us and bring our bylaws fully up to date. We are looking forward to working with the lawyer to ensure the bylaws empower the FSA to take on the tasks required to represent our Members.

Over the next few months, we will be working with the lawyer to develop a final draft set of bylaws for the FSA. Once we have a draft that the Executive is comfortable with, we will send out the draft and arrange a meeting to present the new bylaws to the Members. At this meeting we will have the lawyer available to answer questions about the draft and clarify any legal is-

sues. Member suggestions and comments will be taken on the draft for consideration. After this, at the next available General Meeting, we will bring forward a motion to adopt the new bylaws.

We do not expect the result to produce radical changes to the FSA and we are not approaching these revisions with any particular agenda for re-making the FSA. Rather, we want to make sure that we've got the bylaws right to meet the needs and potential challenges of the next several years.

If you have any questions or suggestions relating to the FSA bylaws and our plans for updating them, feel free to contact Taco Niet, who is leading this initiative for the Executive.

The BCIT Faculty and Staff Association Team

Executive Committee

- Amy Fell, President
- Terry Gordon, Vice-President
- Teresa Place, Treasurer
- Joe Boyd, Director-at-Large
- Neil Cox, Director-at-Large
- Steve Finn, Director-at-Large
- Colin Jones, Director-at-Large
- Taco Niet, Director-at-Large
- Silvia Raschke, Director-at-Large

Staff Members

- Paul Reniers, Executive Director
- Heather Neun, Senior Labour Relations Representative
- Christine Nagy, Labour Relations Representative
- Tess Rebbitt, Labour Relations Representative
- Eileen Chaban, Financial Administrator
- Paul Dayson, Communications Officer
- Marian Ciccone, Office Assistant

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