

From the President:

BCIT's deficit can be tackled together

An opportunity to influence Institute's operation plans, cost-saving measures

There's no holding back the bad news: BCIT's financial deficit is a big problem. Having eaten into our reserves to the tune of \$24 million in just the past three years, BCIT has budgeted to lose another \$4.4 million in 2009-10. It could be worse if revenue projections are off.

If it's not obvious, BCIT doesn't have that money to spare. The province mandates that post-secondary institutions run balanced budgets. That means BCIT has a lot of ground to make up by April when the new budget year begins. And the provincial budget says there will be no significant increase in our operating grant.

BCIT President Don Wright's request for restraint this past spring brought mixed results, with some managers and departments finding savings and others not. Restraint will not be voluntary in the next budget year.

What we feel makes this different from other recent budget crunches is that the Institute is looking to faculty and staff to help form solutions. Faculty and staff run the programs, work with the students, know their industries and their requirements, are professionals in their fields, and can tell management a lot about saving and generating money. And Institute management has shown that it wants to hear it. We've been promised that any cuts that might be required will not be the result of the sort of spreadsheet exercise that members complained about in 2007.

Instead the budgeting process has been made much more transparent and there are significant opportunities for union and member input. The budget process also links to the consultative strategic planning process and the operational planning process now under way. FSA members have the opportunity right now to influence the operational plans for their schools and departments. Now is the opportunity to share with management the cost savings and revenue generating ideas that will turn around BCIT's financial situation.

The FSA strongly supports a consultative approach to addressing financial and other issues at BCIT. This Institute was built by the co-operation of faculty, staff, and management and our collective agreement strongly reflects that. We must also recognize that, when the provincial government is calling for no increases in public sector wages for the next few years, now is not the time to compromise on wages, benefits, and workload. FSA members are asked to continue to work with the union and its staff to enforce and protect our collective agreement while offering creative solutions to the Institute's financial problems. Together we can get BCIT through this. Sharing our expertise with the management of the Institute is part of our jobs. The FSA will continue to ensure our members are paid appropriately for that effort.

*Amy Fell
President, BCIT FSA*

What's INSIDE

Provincial Budget: short of cash and foresight	2
Upcoming FSA Events	2
Research at BCIT: summit and upcoming forum	3
New agreement recognizes rights of members who work past 65	4
Help build a better Collective Agreement	5
Regularization: Becoming a regular BCIT employee	5
Rec & Athletics Instructional Classes free to all members	6
Ask your Labour Relations Representative	6

Provincial Budget: short of cash and foresight

by Paul Reniers,
FSA Executive Director

We know that BCIT is integral to the economic, social, and environmental prosperity of BC, so why doesn't the government understand the contribution we can make to recovering from the current recession? Rather than tapping into our potential, the recent budget has made it harder for BCIT to fulfill its mandate.

It's easy to think post-secondary education got off lightly in the recent provincial budget. The belt was tightened so much it cut off the circulation of funds to arts groups, amateur sport, parents advisory councils, and other worthy organizations. Institutions like BCIT, on the other hand, will see their operating grants maintained for two years. That's supposed to make us a winner in the budget game.

But it would be a mistake to feel like winners. The provincial plan for post-secondary education comes up short in many serious ways.

Salaries

The budget pledges to freeze public sector salaries as long as the province remains in deficit. The budget also projects a deficit for the next four years. For organizations already struggling with recruitment, four years without an increase is a disaster. When industrial employers are projecting wages increases over 2% a year for the same period, we don't look like an attractive option. BCIT's effort to attract expe-

rienced industry leaders to upgrade the skills of our workforce and fuel economic recovery has taken a serious blow. While the BC government might look forward to the attrition that will result among its direct employees, the potential loss of staff at BCIT would most likely affect programs where student and industry demand is highest.

Capital Allowance

The budget cuts the capital allowance for maintaining and upgrading existing post-secondary buildings. Current projects backed by federal and provincial money, like the SW1 rebuild, will still go ahead. But the rest of our aging infrastructure will likely continue to deteriorate as a result. Our ability to upgrade facilities to keep pace with changing technologies is increasingly hampered.

Sector Efficiencies

The detailed budget estimates also require our sector to squeeze out another \$11 million in administrative efficiencies. While educational professionals will likely try to protect students from the impacts of those additional cuts, the losses will make work more difficult for faculty and staff who participate in or rely on sector wide services.

Financial Assistance

In a move that runs counter to long standing efforts to make post-secondary education more accessible, student financial assistance has been cut just when students need it most. Many intergovernmental agencies including the OECD have trum-

peted post-secondary education as a key area of investment for governments wanting to lead us out of the global recession. Education is key for individual and regional success in the new economy. Sadly, the provincial cuts will keep education out of reach for those who are most financially vulnerable.

Added Costs

And just when students and institutions have less money, cost pressures are rising quickly. Not only does the Higher Education Price Index run significantly above the Consumer Price Index, but the provincial government is demanding more from BCIT as well. The employer pays MSP premiums, which are going up. HST will be added to some institutional costs. The province has made it clear that the mandate for carbon neutrality, estimated last year to cost BCIT \$5 million, remains in place for next year and we'll pay an increasing carbon tax rate. That's all money flowing back to the province, effectively amounting to a net cut in our seemingly stable operating funding.

Perhaps the most devastating way in which the budget comes up short is in the fact that it makes us feel like winners. Every other sector was so badly beaten up that we feel like we got away with a few nicks and bruises. In fact it's hard to see how bad the internal injuries are for BCIT. No matter how well we suck it up and struggle through, these cuts will make it harder for BCIT to contribute to the economic, social, and environmental prosperity that BC so desperately needs.

Upcoming FSA Events

Wed, Sept. 30	Research Forum	SE6 233	2:30 - 4:20
Wed, Oct. 7	Bargaining - Pay, Benefits & Leave	SW5-1840	2:30 - 4:20
Wed, Oct. 21(Oct. 28)	General Meeting	SE6 233	2:30 - 4:20
Mon, Oct. 26	Bargaining - PTS, Job Security & Regularization	NE1-239/242	10:30 - 11:20
Wed, Nov. 4	Bargaining - Job Classification	SW6-233	2:30 - 4:20
Mon, Nov. 16	Bargaining - Workload	NE1-239/242	2:30 - 3:20

Summit on Research at BCIT

Mapping the future of research at BCIT



Management and members engaged in brainstorming solutions at the FSA Summit on Research at BCIT. PAUL DAYSON PHOTOS

The BCIT Faculty and Staff Association, with the support of BCIT's senior management, organized a two-day Summit on Research in May to examine the Institute's significant and growing research function. The summit attracted more than 80 BCIT managers, instructors, researchers, technicians, and support staff who together developed a provisional vision for research at BCIT and identified issues to be addressed on the way to creating that vision.

Key areas of consensus arrived at during the summit included:

- Research at BCIT has been driven by the passion of individual employees championing their own projects
- Research benefits faculty, staff, students, programs and the Institute generally in a variety of ways

FORUM ON RESEARCH AT BCIT Wed., Sept. 30, 2:30 p.m. – SW6-233

- Research at BCIT has a high degree of industry relevance
- Collaborations with external partners are an important aspect of our research
- More needs to be done to facilitate internal collaborations and to involve students where appropriate

Key issues identified during the summit included:

- Research and education need to be in balance in terms of how they contribute to BCIT's mandate
- To optimize the contribution of research to meeting our organizational objectives, internal structures need to

be reviewed and adapted to encourage internal collaboration

- Instructional workloads create significant challenges to involvement in research and realizing the benefits of research in the classroom
- Collective decisions need to be made about BCIT's financial support for research

Action items arrived at during the summit are:

- That a definition of research at BCIT be developed
- That a comprehensive inventory of research at BCIT be conducted
- That an on-going representative committee on research be established
- That opportunities to incorporate research into curriculum be facilitated

Since the summit, the Institute has established a Standing Committee on Research, co-chaired VP Research Jim Reichert and VP Education Paul Dangerfield, and a draft report from the summit has been released.

The FSA will be holding a Forum on Research on the last Wednesday in September. This forum will be an opportunity for member and community feedback on the Draft Report to the BCIT Community for the Summit on Research at BCIT. To view this and other materials from the summit please visit the online document library at workplace.bcit.ca and log-in with your mybcit password. We encourage you attend this forum and to read through these materials in advance of this event.

BCIT President Don Wright (below left) speaks to the summit (below).



New agreement with Institute recognizes rights of members who work past 65

by John Hardie,
FSA Senior Labour Relations Officer

In early 2007, the provincial government announced that as of January 1, 2008 workers would not have to retire at age 65 and passed an act to end mandatory retirement. The Act changed the protection against age discrimination in the BC Human Rights Act from '19-65' to '19 years or more' removing any ceiling on age (except for Bona Fide Occupational requirements).

The BCIT-FSA Collective Agreement already had an exception (MemAg 04FSA13) that enabled FSA members to work past age 65, though there were some changes to their rights most notably the narrowing of rights to sick time.

During the summer, BCIT and FSA came to an agreement (Memag 09FSA25) based on the changes to the legislation and Human Rights Code. This agreement will assure that no discrimination will occur if you continue to work past 65 and includes an agreement to repair any sick banks that have been affected.

If you are past 65 and want to make sure your banks have been adjusted properly, please contact your departmental attendance keeper and then your Associate Dean. If you continue having issues, contact anyone of the FSA's Labour Relations Representatives and we will be glad to help.

If you decide to work past 65 you will have all rights under the Collective Agreement as you have today, the only exception to that will be:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Long Term Disability | Not Eligible |
| 2. Life Insurance 65- 70 | Payment will be \$ 10,000 |
| 3. Life Insurance after 70 | Not Eligible |
| 4. Pensions | Will depend on personal circumstances and plan |

Changes from MemAg 04FSA13

Under the new agreement if you work past age 65:

Note: This is not an exhaustive list.

- You will be able to borrow or pool Sick Leave benefits;
- You will accrue Sick time and it will be cumulative from year to year;
- You will NOT be considered a new Employee;
- You will NOT be terminated because of your age;
- You will NOT be terminated if you have an illness or injury that keeps you from working for more than six months;
- The Employer will NOT be able to rely on unsatisfactory performance appraisal to terminate an you for non-culpable reasons;
- BCIT may will still notify you around your 65th birthday to tell you about the changes to Long Term Disability but it is for you to elect when you want to retire.

Remember, if you wish you can still retire at age 65. It is just no longer mandatory.



The FSA's VP Terry Gordon (right) and Senior Labour Relations Representative John Hardie (left) speaking with PTS instructors at the orientation session held September 9.

PAUL DAYSON PHOTO

Regularization: becoming a regular BCIT employee

Regularization is the process by which a temporary employee at BCIT becomes a regular, or permanent, employee.

Temporary employees at BCIT (full- or part-time) can become regular employees in three ways:

1. By being the successful candidate for a posted permanent position or
2. By being a “backfill” for three continuous years. If you are hired to replace someone who is on leave, you are said to be backfilling. You may backfill more than one person at a time or backfill more than one person over time.
3. By being an employee hired to meet a temporary need for more staff with two continuous years of service.

How do I know if I am backfilling or meeting a temporary need?

The paperwork your Associate Dean completes to get authority to hire you will indicate which you are. The FSA has copies of this paperwork for review or you can contact BCIT Human Resources.

The Process: The two-year snapshot

When you have worked as a temporary employee for two years, Human Resources reviews your employment history and asks: **‘Is this person backfilling a position at this time?’**

If the answer is yes, you can remain a temporary employee for one more year. But, if you are hired for a fourth year, you must become a regular employee day one of that fourth year.

If the answer is no, you become a regular employee day one, year three.

What is a gap and what does it mean for my regularization?

A “gap” occurs when two temporary contracts are not immediately back to back. A gap can be a work day, a week, a month or the summer period.

If the gap between your temporary contract is **five months or less**:

- You begin your new contract at the same step you were on at the end of your previous contract. And
- The service time during both contracts will be added together to calculate when you will move up the salary scale. And to determine when you regularize.

If the gap between your temporary contracts is **five months or more**:

- You will have a new initial placement calculated. And
- Your previous service time will be lost. And
- Your previous service time will not count towards regularization.

Help build a better Collective Agreement

Join your colleagues for a series of forums for FSA members designed to provide direction in the upcoming round of bargaining in spring 2010.

Come share your ideas and opinions.

Scheduled FSA Bargaining Forums

Pay, Benefits & Leave

Wed, Oct. 7, 2:30 - 4:20 pm
SW5-1840

PTS, Job Security & Regularization

Mon, Oct. 26, 10:30-11:30 am
NE1-239/242

Job Classification

Wed, Nov. 4, 2:30 - 4:20 pm
SW6-233

Workload

Mon, Nov. 16, 2:30 - 3:20 pm
NE1-239/242

Meetings with Departments

The FSA’s Collective Agreement Committee is also interested in meeting with departments that have concerns they would like addressed in bargaining. To arrange a meeting please contact preniers@bcit.ca.



BCIT PHOTO

BCIT Rec & Athletics instructional classes free to all FSA members

Instructional Programs, published on pages 8 and 9 of the 2009/10 Recreation Guide will now qualify as “fitness classes” and employees will no longer be required to pay for these classes. These expanded fitness classes are in addition to the free Group Fitness classes that are scheduled on a regular basis, in the Fitness Studio from 11:30 to 12:20, and employee access to the Fit Pit - Weight Room.

The details on registration and participation are as follows:

- Registration opened on Wednesday, September 16.
- Registration has to be in person with a valid employee card
- Registration is on a first come first serve basis as some courses have limited participants.
- Registrants are limited to two classes per term, in addition to the free noon hour Group Fitness classes.

Recreation Services has also advised that for all members interested in participating in the noon hour Group Fitness classes, you now need to register at the Fit Pit for the term. Registration for this free class opened on September 9.

Ask your Labour Relations Representative

Q I will have contributed to my pension plan for 35 years as of this September. I understand that means I cannot contribute any longer. So will my best five years be the last five years?

A While you can no longer contribute, BCIT will continue to report your salary to the pension plan. Your best 5 years can include the years your work after you cease contributing.

What are the “best 5 years”?

Your pension is based on two variables: salary and the number of years you have contributed. The salary variable is “based on the average of your highest five salary years”. (They do not need to be consecutive years.)

The pension calculation formula is: 2% X five-year highest salary average X total years of pensionable service.

Note: The pension plans’ web sites are very helpful. I also recommend calling them directly: the customer service reps are well versed and happy to be of assistance.

All three pension web sites are found at www.pension.bc.ca.

Under the My Account section on each pension plan web, site you’ll find a Pension Estimator tool that will give you an estimate of the pension you would receive based on your current information. It saves you having to try to figure out what your best five years are so far.

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
 Randy Singer, Director-at-Large (on leave)

Staff Members

Paul Reniers, Executive Director
 John Hardie, Senior Labour Relations Representative
 Elinor Hudon, Labour Relations Representative
 Christine Nagy, Labour Relations Representative
 Ian Stockdale, Labour Relations Representative
 Eileen Chaban, Financial Administrator
 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