

NEWS & VIEWS

MAY 2012

From the President's Desk

Cameron Morrill

Just over three weeks remain in my UMFA presidency and in that time I have at least one or two more “presidential” tasks to perform. One of them is this column, the last that will come out under my name.

I am pleased to start out with some good news. In our March newsletter, I told you about the breach of security within Employee Self-Service (ESS), the employee salary and benefits information system accessible through the JUMP portal, that occurred in February. The presidents of the four largest on-campus unions – UMFA, AESES, CAW and CUPE 3909 – sent a [joint letter](#) to Debbie McCallum asking for assurances that no sensitive personal information fell into unauthorized hands. Ms. McCallum replied to us, and to the university community, that the breach was relatively minor and no private information was compromised. ESS is available once again through the JUMP portal (HR tab).

There is another good reason to click on the HR tab within JUMP. A Formula Pension Calculator is now available that allows university employees to calculate an estimate of their minimum guaranteed pension upon retirement. The Calculator provides a rough estimate only of your pension benefit (for example, it cannot

predict your salary at the date of your retirement, one of the key inputs in estimating your pension benefit), but this can still be interesting. I encourage you to try this out and contact the University Staff Benefits office (tel.: 474-7428; SB-WEBMASTER@ms.umanitoba.ca) if you have questions.

Unfortunately, not all of the news is good. The University has announced that it will sign a new agreement with Access Copyright that will significantly increase the cost of copying on campus and which mandates surveillance to ensure compliance with the agreement. See the article on page 3 of this newsletter for more details.

I get to wrap up with some more good news, though. I want to remind everyone that our Annual General Meeting is Tuesday, May 15 in Marshall McLuhan Hall, starting at 2:00 PM. There are more details in this newsletter (page 4), but I want to alert you to the reception which will feature hors-d'oeuvres and one free drink ticket for each attendee.

I want to thank all of you for your support and your interest over the last two years. Our Association has a talented and dedicated staff to respond to your needs, but UMFA's real strength, and whatever

Continued next page...

IN THIS ISSUE:

2

- President's Message continued
- New Classroom Scheduling System at UM

3

- AUCC Signs Copyright Licensing Agreement with Access Copyright

4

- UMFA Annual General Meeting
- CAUT Council 2012

5

- Event to Commemorate 1919 General Strike

UMFA AGM

**Tues., May 15, 2012
2:00 p.m.**

**Marshall McLuhan
Hall**

University of Manitoba
FACULTY
ASSOCIATION
100-29 Dysart Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2M7
(204) 474-8272
faum@umfa.ca
www.umfa.ca
Twitter: @umfa_faum

President's Message (continued...)

success it ultimately achieves, comes from the commitment and solidarity of its members. I encourage you to consider becoming more involved in UMFA, whether through membership on one of our committees, the Board of Representatives or the Executive. I am optimistic that you will find the same collegiality and

satisfaction that I have found so far.

Finally, I want to congratulate again Sharon Alward and Tommy Kucera, the incoming President and Vice-President. Please join me in pledging them our support in whatever lies ahead.

New Classroom Scheduling System at UM

UMFA recently met with representatives leading the UM classroom scheduling project, which is a ROSE initiative being implemented by the Registrar's office. The UM Scheduling System, or Astra, is a web-based scheduling tool launching in the 2012-2013 academic year on the Fort Garry campus and in 2013-2014 at Bannatyne. The software will centralize the assigning of classroom space across all units, departments and faculties. Astra will be used to book space for classes, events and meetings.

UMFA has a number of concerns with the system. Astra does not look at classroom space as belonging to a specific area; rather, it looks at space as belonging to the entire university for use. In other words, just because you have a teaching space in your building, does not mean it is necessarily available for use by programs or faculty in your building. Space will now be assigned using a series of factors.

- Faculty members will be asked for their teaching and room requirements, or "preferences." For example, an individual may require a lab space, a projector, etc. Faculty office schedulers will enter these preferences into Astra, which will then narrow down the rooms available. However, the system neglects needs for accommodation as a category. This is problematic for academics with disabilities.
- The system will attempt to optimize space by

assigning classrooms based on number of enrolled students. If a class has 50 registrants, Astra will look for a room with closer to 50 seats rather than 100.

- The system will attempt to prioritize scheduling classes according to where the department/faculty is located. Arts courses will get priority in Arts buildings, for example, but when there isn't any space during a particular time, the system will look at "geographic zones" nearest the faculty "home." Astra will then endeavor to schedule classes in those zones, but space may not always be available. This may mean that trips across campus to teach will be required.
- Priority levels will factor in when requesting and booking a space. Academic use is supposed to take first priority for a space. Academic-related activity, such as department seminars, is the next priority level. Non-academic activity, such as department meetings and special events falls under the last priority level.
- Time utilization of space is also factor. For example, International College Manitoba (ICM) runs classes in 4-hour blocks and therefore can utilize a space for 12 hours a day. This means ICM could get priority.

UMFA has raised additional concerns with Registrar Neil Marnoch regarding this new scheduling process.

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New Classroom Scheduling System at UM (continued...)

The administration says that all space is university space, not faculty space. UMFA noted specific examples where a faculty or student group has raised money, or had money donated for renovations or upgrades to a building or room, and that it could be an issue if other faculties now get use of that space. UMFA also noted that such allotments may have an impact on future fundraising efforts for improvements within faculties and departments. UMFA was told that Astra schedulers will try to ensure faculties have priority use of their own space, but when that space is not used (or, potentially, is not used efficiently) by anyone in that building or faculty in a particular time slot, it could be used by other groups who are in need of space.

UMFA is also concerned that the new system could cause meetings or other events to be moved to a new space across campus or another time block, which may impact attendance at events such as department council meetings.

Preparations, including room inventories and training, have been ongoing. In April, Astra administrators began using the system to book spaces for the fall term. It is expected that by the end of May, room schedules along with equipment listings, preferences and even photos of the classroom space will be available for viewing.

UMFA wants to hear from you about this system. Please let us know about your concerns, or your positive experiences thus far with Astra.

AUCC Signs Copyright Licensing Agreement with Access Copyright

There has been another disappointing development in the ongoing copyright saga among Canada's post-secondary institutions and affiliated organizations. On April 16, the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada (AUCC), the organization representing Canada's university presidents, announced an agreement with Access Copyright on a copying license to cover the reproduction of paper and digital content on university campuses. The UM President, David Barnard, was on the AUCC team that negotiated provisions.

It is up to each individual university whether they wish to sign the Access Copyright agreement, and the University of Manitoba recently indicated (*The Bulletin*, May 3, p. 2) that it intends to sign the AUCC agreement prior to the May 15 deadline. The reason for doing so, according to the administration, is because it will provide protections against claims of violation from publishers operating through Access Copyright and will provide rights to materials that are difficult to obtain.

According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), the agreement harms the interests of academic staff and students, fails to reflect current law and undermines efforts to create better ways of accessing, using and sharing educational and research material. CAUT has urged institutions to refuse to enter into this license agreement.

This agreement comes less than three months after the much disparaged January 30 deal between Access Copyright and the Universities of Toronto and Western Ontario. The [licensing agreement](#) reached between AUCC and Access Copyright is similar to the [Western/Toronto](#) deal.

This means that an annual fee of \$26 per full time student will apply in order to copy and distribute copyright-protected works, up from a previous fixed fee of \$3.38 per student plus an additional amount in per page fees that worked out to an average total of \$17.

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AUCC Signs Copyright Licensing Agreement with Access Copyright (continued...)

The university says it plans to cover the fee costs, rather than pass them to students.

According to CAUT, the license creates new rights to the benefit of Access Copyright that do not exist in copyright law, specifically by defining copying to include “posting a link or hyperlink to a digital copy.” Additionally, under section 11 of the license, there is a requirement to create survey instruments to monitor works used on campus and the volume of that use. Because the license defines copying to include transmission of information by electronic mail and storage, as well as posting, displaying, uploading and linking to digital files, the survey instruments will require intrusive monitoring of professors, librarians,

researchers and students, including their email, that will violate privacy and academic freedom.

As in the case of Western/Toronto, the timing of the AUCC deal is odd. Parliament is expected to pass [Bill C -11](#) – an amendment to the Copyright Act in the near future. The legislation contains copyright provisions beneficial to educational institutions. In addition, copyright decisions are pending from the Supreme Court of Canada which may further expand fair dealing rights.

To see the AUCC clause, or for further information on the Access Copyright deals, please visit [CAUT's website](#).

UMFA Annual General Meeting

UMFA Members are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Tuesday, May 15 at 2:00 p.m. The AGM will take place in Marshall McLuhan Hall. The meeting is important in that financial statements and the budget for the next year must be approved and that cannot happen until the quorum of 50 Association Members is met or exceeded. There will also be an Order of the Day that will focus on Bargaining Preparations for the next round of negotiations. As well, the recipients of the Roy Vogt Memorial Award for Exceptionally Meritorious Service (Pat Nicholls), the

CAUT Dedicated Service Award (Peter Blunden), and The Paul Fortier Prize for Student Activism (Brian Latour) will be recognized.

The incoming President and Vice-President for 2012-2013 will also be formally announced and introduced.

UMFA Members and guests are encouraged to stay after the meeting for a reception to honour the award recipients and to mingle with colleagues.

The agenda has been sent out to UMFA Members.

CAUT Council 2012

From April 26 to 29, UMFA President Cameron Morrill, Vice-President Sharon Alward and Executive Director Linda Guse attended the annual CAUT Council.

A multitude of important topics were discussed during the three day event including recent matters involving academic freedom, copyright, and a notice of motion regarding the [censure of Wilfrid Laurier University and](#)

[the University of Waterloo](#). Recently negotiated settlements from nine universities across Canada were also reviewed.

Additional business included a review of CAUT's activities over the last year, budgets, and announcement of the 2012-2013 Executive Committee members.

Event to Commemorate 1919 General Strike

The 1919 General Strike in Winnipeg was a pivotal event in the history of the Canadian labour movement. In anticipation of the 100th anniversary in 2019, a group of volunteers is working to establish a permanent cultural heritage site to tell the story of the strike period.

On May 25, a fundraiser featuring a buffet dinner and variety show will be held at the Ukrainian Labour Temple. In addition, heritage park models designed by UM Environmental Design students from the Faculty of Architecture will be on display. The event is meant

to raise awareness of this milestone, and to recognize and celebrate the human rights, labour rights and social reforms championed by the strikers.

Tickets are \$35 each or 2 for \$60, and can be purchased by contacting Sandra Gessler, Faculty of Nursing, at 770-9298 before May 16.

Share your thoughts!

Your comments on the newsletter are very welcome and much appreciated.
Please send feedback to:

Cameron Morrill, UMFA President (umfa-pres@mts.net)

Or

Candace Weselowski, Communications Officer (cweselowski@umfa.ca)

We look forward to hearing from you.

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