

President's Message for July 2022

By Dave Westwood, DFA President, 2022-2023



I write to you after a week of much-needed vacation time, and I hope that you too take time away from work to be with your friends, families, and loved ones. As a reminder, per Article 30.02: "Vacation entitlement is expected to be used annually but a Member may request that vacation entitlement be carried over from one year to the next. Requests shall be made to the Chief Librarian, Dean or Vice-President concerned and shall not be unreasonably denied." For most DFA Members, annual vacation entitlement is one month, which is understood to mean 25 working days. If you are contemplating retirement, be sure to have discussions with your Dean about expectations around vacation time.

Collective Bargaining Update

As mentioned in my June report, we are scheduling dates in the fall term to meet the Board at the bargaining table to negotiate the terms of a new Collective Agreement. No doubt you have seen the recent news that inflation in Canada (and interest rates) have increased yet again, and your economic concerns remain top of mind for our DFA Bargaining Team. If you have not already, I encourage you to [watch the interview with new CAUT President Dr. Peter McInnis](#) as he discusses, among other things, the negotiating context for the post-secondary sector across Canada.

Grievances

Over the summer months, we find ourselves busy with seven grievances at various stages of the process outlined in Article 29. There is no particular pattern or trend in the kinds of grievances that we are seeing, with cases ranging from issues about vacation entitlements to concerns about the conclusions reached in an investigation of harassment complaints. In the lead-up to the Annual General Meeting each year, the Chair of the DFA Grievance Committee provides a report in the DFA Dialogue on the grievances handled and the outcomes.

COVID-19

We are all tired of COVID-19 and the constant disruptions to so many aspects of our lives, but the evidence is clear that the pandemic is still far from over. At the time of writing (July 21, 2022), Mount Allison University just announced that COVID-19 restrictions (including a mask mandate for all indoor spaces) will continue for the summer and fall semesters on their campus in Sackville, New Brunswick (<https://mta.ca/about/news/updated-covid-19-community-health-protocols-thu-07212022-0927>). The DFA will be sending you a survey in August to gather your thoughts about COVID-19 protocols on our campuses for the upcoming fall semester.

CUPE3912 Members Reject Tentative Deal

On June 25, the Members of CUPE3912 rejected the tentative agreement reached during conciliation. CUPE will ask the employer to go back to bargaining and conciliation to reach a better deal. Bargaining began in late 2021. CUPE3912 represents precarious academic workers at Dalhousie. Bargaining updates are available on the [CUPE website](#).

Survey Summary: Unauthorized On-Line Sharing Platforms

Thanks to all of you who participated in our June survey regarding on-line platforms used for the unauthorized sharing of course materials. We had a 32% response rate which is good considering summer vacation schedules. Of those who responded, 67% are concerned or extremely concerned with

unauthorized on-line sharing platforms. Most respondents – over 93% - were not aware of the [template letter](#) provided by Dalhousie legal counsel that can be used to request the removal of course material from these sites. The DFA nominees to the Association-Board Committee will present the aggregate results of the survey to the Board nominees in an effort to convince the Board to do more to protect our Members from copyright infringement and indeed, to uphold the academic integrity of the programs offered at Dalhousie.

DFA Elects New Committee Chairs

The DFA Executive is pleased to announce the following Committee Chairs for the 2022-2023 year:

- DFA Grievance Committee: Mark Lewis
- DFA Equity Committee: Remi Agu
- DFA Indigenous Caucus Committee: Patti Doyle-Bedwell
- DFA Communications Committee: Amy Birchall

Committee members will be confirmed later this month. If you are interested in volunteering with the DFA, please contact dfa@dal.ca.

DFA Representatives on Dalhousie Committees

DFA Members are represented on various Dalhousie committees by volunteers from our Membership. Thank you to the following Members who are serving this year:

- Association-Board Committee: Tim Juckes (Co-Chair), and David Westwood
- Pension Advisory Committee: Jonathan Shapiro and David Westwood
- Pension Trust Fund/Retirees' Trust Fund: Jonathan Shapiro
- Employee Benefits Advisory Committee: Remi Agu and Eli Manning
- Environmental Health and Safety Committee (Halifax): Marc Obrovac, Alex Speed, Emanuel Jannasch and Marc Whalen
- Environmental Health and Safety Committee (Truro): Margaret Hartling and Paul MacNeil
- Transportation & Security Committee: Sherry Huybers
- President's Advisory Committee on Sexualized Violence: Catrina Brown and Sheila Wildeman
- Employment Equity Council: Gabriella Mosquera
- Southern African Student Education Projects (SASEP): Gary Kynoch
- World University Services Canada (WUSC): Isaac Saney (Halifax) and Joy Galloway-Jones (Truro)

Member Profiles on WeAreDal.ca

At the end of 2021, DFA launched a website WeAreDal.ca as a public-facing site. On that site, we [feature members](#) in a quick profile so students, parents, and others can get to know our members a little bit better. Featured so far: Jason Brown, Kathy Cawsey, Patti Doyle-Bedwell, Fred King, Alex Martynenko, Shelley McKibbin and Laurel Schut. If you would like to be profiled, please reach out to DFA Communications Officer Catherine.Wall@dal.ca – it takes just a few minutes of your time to answer some questions via email and send a photo.