

ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023

DFA DIALOGUE

VOL. XXXVI

The DFA is located in Mi'kma'ki, the
unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



David Westwood, DFA President, 2022-2023

I am pleased to provide this report at the end of my third term as DFA President. It seems unnecessary to say that 2022-2023 was a busy year (it was), since that is invariably the case for all academic staff every year.

Being a bargaining year, contract negotiations rightfully captured the majority of our time and energy at the DFA, but there were many other important issues that I would like to highlight and bring to your attention.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Acknowledgements

Let me begin by thanking the many individuals who are a part of the DFA team. As most of you know, we have an exceptional group of staff who are fundamental to everything that we do as an organization.

Jack Brown (Professional Officer), **Kristin Hoyt** (Administrative Assistant), **Lynn Purves** (Administrative Officer), and **Catherine Wall** (Communications Officer) all work tirelessly to make sure that DFA Members get the best advice, support, and information possible, and I cannot thank them enough for their outstanding work on our behalf.

A huge thanks, and farewell, goes to **Barbara MacLennan** who retired from the role of DFA Professional Officer in 2022 after 33 years of exceptional service to the Association. We understand Barb is enjoying her well-deserved retirement, and her presence continues to be felt in many of our daily activities.

The DFA relies heavily upon volunteers with varying levels of workload release from their regular duties. **Mark Lewis** (Law Library) dedicated a large amount of time and expertise to the role of President-Elect this year, in addition to two major DFA portfolios as Grievance Committee Chair and Office Manager.

I am very grateful for his contributions during this challenging year and his calm and measured approach to complex and stressful situations. Thanks also to **Tara Perrot** for her contributions as Past-President.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Tim Juckes (Psychology and Neuroscience) played several key roles for the DFA, serving as Co-Chair of the Association-Board Committee and a member of the Bargaining Team, in addition to handling several cases as a grievance officer and member of the Grievance Committee. Tim brings a depth and breadth of knowledge and experience to the DFA that is unparalleled and hugely valued and appreciated.

Dominic Silvio (Killam Library) devoted considerable time and effort to the role of Treasurer, in addition to his roles with the Executive Committee and Grievance Committee.

Patti Doyle-Bedwell (Open Learning and Career Development) gave a tremendous amount of time, energy, and expertise, leading the DFA Indigenous Caucus Committee in addition to serving on the Bargaining Team, the Executive Committee, and Grievance Committee.

Amy Birchall (Animal Science and Aquaculture) and **Catrina Brown** (Social Work) continued to devote time and energy: Amy as the DFA Secretary and Chair of the DFA Communications Co-ordination Committee; and Catrina as the Second Vice-President, in addition to other DFA responsibilities.

I am grateful to **Remi Agu** (Pharmacy) for his continued leadership and advocacy as Chair of the DFA Equity Committee and member of the Executive Committee, as well as one of two DFA representatives on Dalhousie's Employee Benefits Advisory Committee.

Jonathan Shapiro (Law) deserves thanks for his wisdom and tireless energy as Chair and DFA Representative on the Pension Advisory Committee, in addition to his service as Trustee for the Pension Trust Fund and Retirees' Trust Fund.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Thanks to those who represented the DFA this year on various committees around Dalhousie: **Sherry Huybers** (Health and Human Performance) on the Transportation and Security Committee; **Eli Manning** (Social Work) on the Employee Benefits Advisory Committee; **Gabriella Mosquera** (Computer Science) on the Employment Equity Council, **Catrina Brown** and **Sheila Wildeman** (Law) on the President's Advisory Council on Sexualized Violence; **Mark Obrovac** (Chemistry), **Alex Speed** (Chemistry), **Emanuel Jannasch** (Architecture), **Marc Whalen** (Chemistry), **Paul McNeil** and **Margie Hartling** (Animal Science and Aquaculture) on the Health and Safety Committee; and **David Black** (Political Science), **Joy Galloway-Jones** (Dean's Office, Agricultural Campus) and **Isaac Saney** (Open Learning and Career Development) who support the international student initiatives of SASEP and WUSC.

I greatly appreciate the time given by all the members of the DFA Executive Committee, the DFA Grievance Committee, the DFA Communications Co-ordination Committee, and those who volunteered to lead the DFA Job Actions Committee (**Tara Perrot** [Psychology and Neuroscience] and **Jason Haslam** [English]).

A huge and very special thanks goes out to the members of the DFA Bargaining Team: **David Wallbridge** (Pink Larkin; Chief Negotiator), **Jack Brown**, **Stefanie Colombo**, **Patti Doyle-Bedwell**, **Katherine Fierlbeck**, **Tim Juckes**, **Shelley McKibbon**, and **Lynn Purves**.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Collective Bargaining

As you all know, we ratified a new three-year Collective Agreement in January 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025) that included greater wage increases than we have been able to achieve in recent rounds.

This was a top priority given the high levels of inflation that took hold in 2022 and that remain stubbornly above the long-term Canadian average of 2-3%.

The cumulative wage gains over the life of the new contract are in line with what we have seen in other recent settlements in the sector both within the region and across the country.

Make no mistake, however: we, like most workers in Canada, continue to lose ground to inflation and the general cost of living, and it is vital that we keep our focus and priority on making up that lost ground in upcoming rounds of bargaining, even if inflation returns to the target zone of 2-3% per year.

We were able to reach an acceptable agreement without going on strike. This is a testament to the skills of the bargaining team, but also the solidarity and resolve of the Membership. Your willingness to provide a resounding strike vote heading into the conciliation process was central to our ability to negotiate a contract without job action.



DFA Members vote to strike.

93.7%
Voted to accept

**Tentative
Agreement Ratified!**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

While demands for pension reform were not on the table this round, the Board has all but promised that pension reform will return in the next bargaining round.

With this in mind, we are seeking your approval at this year's AGM for several motions that will see us increase the size of our already healthy defence fund in anticipation of the need for future job action.

These motions, if approved, will enable us to provide a higher rate of strike pay and decrease the risk of financial hardship if job action becomes necessary.

You will soon see two calls for volunteers to serve on important committees arising from the new Collective Agreement: one committee will review the anomalies fund process with an eye toward ensuring the fund is effectively addressing the intended purpose of correcting anomalously low salaries, and the second will work toward developing the framework of a "teaching professor/instructor-stream" concept as outlined in very broad strokes by the Board's negotiating team.

There will be widespread consultation with instructor-stream Members in the coming year as this latter committee begins its work, so please stay tuned and engaged with this process.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT




DFA Operations

In March 2023, we ratified a new, three-year collective agreement with our staff who are represented by the Dalhousie Faculty Association Staff Union, which will provide stability and financial predictability in the coming years.

We have begun a process to review the structure and resourcing of key DFA leadership roles. The review was motivated by the experiences of recent volunteers who noted the dramatic increase in workload, responsibility, and complexity of union leadership, particularly when viewed against the other responsibilities of being an academic at a research-intensive university.

I have heard time and again that the real and perceived workload associated with DFA leadership is a major deterrent to participation from many Members who might otherwise find the work interesting and appealing.

I hope that this review will lead to concrete changes that will reduce these barriers and increase participation in union leadership from a diverse group of DFA Members.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Collegial Governance

Like many faculty association presidents across the country, I continue to be concerned about the erosion of collegial governance at our institution. Academic staff have the right, responsibility, and opportunity to play a leading role in shaping the academic mission of the university and the governance of our own departments, faculties, and other such units.

Too often, leadership in governance bodies is abdicated (voluntarily, or not) to senior administrators who are outside of our Bargaining Unit, and whose interests are not always the same as those of us who do the actual work of teaching and scholarship.

The reasons for this are many, and complex, but I urge every DFA Member to take a moment to ask how you can add your voice and academic wisdom to important academic decision-making and leadership at all levels of the institution, from your department or program right up through the Senate and/or the Board of Governors.

As an academic institution, Dalhousie should be shaped by your voices, ideas, and expertise, not by senior administrators who are often transient and motivated by internal and external considerations that are not necessarily consistent with academic ideals.

The DFA will stand up and push back against attempts to undermine the rightful participation of our Members in collegial governance, but we need you as an individual DFA Member to take up the mantle and use your existing rights to ensure that this university remains a place of academic pride for us, and our students.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT




Grievances

You will see from Mark Lewis' report that grievance and arbitration activity was high this year, continuing an alarming trend that began in the previous year.

While there are no dominant patterns or themes uniting the cases, one common ingredient seems to be that disputes between Members and management are decreasingly likely to be resolved through discussion, negotiation, and settlement.

The Board seems to have embraced a practice of insisting on formal processes and legal arguments to resolve disputes, even when the financial costs of simply resolving minor issues are far less than the costs associated with an adversarial approach.

Do not let this deter you from reaching out to the DFA for support if you have issues or challenges in your workplace, as we can provide the advice, support, and advocacy that you need to reach a satisfactory resolution.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DFA Members Underutilize Benefits and Entitlements

I am often surprised to learn that DFA Members do not take full advantage of the benefits and entitlements that are available in the Collective Agreement. For example, I regularly hear from Members who are unwell or injured, but do not take advantage of the very generous sick leave provisions in the contract (Clause 30.05).


Sick leave provides important time and opportunity to heal, and a minor illness or condition can turn into something more serious that could require long-term disability coverage which can be problematic if sick leave was not taken initially. Many Members do not use any of their available Health Spending Account funds (Clause 32.18b), even though health and dental benefit premiums can be claimed as eligible expenses.

For our part, over the coming year we will be increasing our efforts to communicate with Members about important dates and opportunities for benefits and entitlements from the Collective Agreement, and we are planning orientation sessions for new DFA Members to help navigate the dense and lengthy contract.

For your part, I encourage you to talk to us, and to colleagues, to make sure you are aware of all the benefits and entitlements in the Collective Agreement, and to use them when appropriate. Perhaps needless to say, these benefits are negotiated in the context of other important conditions of employment such as wages.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT



I would like to make a specific plea to every DFA Member that you take your full vacation entitlement (Clauses 30.01 and 30.02) every year. This is your only opportunity to get away from work completely, and to recover from the increasingly stressful demands of academic life.

I have heard from numerous Members over the past year who have not taken a vacation in several years because they cannot find the time, or because their work responsibilities do not provide an opportunity for a complete disconnect from their duties. This is not acceptable.

Every DFA Member has the right to vacation, and if you find yourself unable to get away from work for your full entitlement, please reach out to me immediately and we will work with you to ensure that this does not happen again in the future.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Year Ahead

I will be returning as President-Elect for 2023-2024, and I look forward to offering support and knowledge to the new and continuing DFA volunteer cohort, and to working alongside our staff members for my sixth consecutive year.

We have lots of work to do monitoring the implementation of the new Collective Agreement, and keeping up with all the grievance and advocacy work that characterizes non-bargaining years.

We will also begin the cyclical work of contract review and preparations for the 2025 bargaining round, and it is never too early to reach out to us to put an idea on our radar for potential bargaining proposals. There are always new and unexpected challenges as a fresh "DFA year" begins, particularly when a new President comes into office.

I encourage you to connect with us as often as you like to keep us updated about issues of interest and concern so that we are aware of all the things that matter to our Members.

Sincerely,



David Westwood
DFA President 2022-2023



GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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Mark Lewis, Grievance Committee Chair, 2022-2023

Committee Membership

Mark Lewis (Law Library) Chair, Andrew Brown (FASS), Catrina Brown (Health), Patti-Doyle Bedwell (Open Learning and Career Development), Katherine Fierlbeck (FASS), Tim Juckes (Science), Derek Kimmerly (Health), Matthew Numer (Health), Dominic Silvio (Killam Library), David Westwood (Health), Marc Whalen (Science), Jack Brown (DFA Professional Officer)

Call for Volunteers

If you compare this report to the one in the Dialogue from last year, there has been a significant increase in the number of cases. In surveying both the landscape at Dalhousie and across the country, I believe this trend will continue. I urge you to become involved in the Grievance Committee as it is an excellent way to become aware of what is occurring on campus and to get directly involved in trying to resolve some of the issues that arise.

The Grievance Process

There are three stages to the grievance process under the Collective Agreement (Article 29). The grievor and DFA Professional Officer are involved at every stage of the process, and a grievance officer is assigned to each case. We try to pair up a senior grievance officer with a junior grievance officer for each case to help with training.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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The Informal Grievance Stage

The first stage (informal) is initiated if a resolution cannot be reached outside of grievance procedures and the Chair of the Committee believes the facts of a case might constitute a violation of the Collective Agreement.

It is worth noting that the DFA spends considerable time working with aggrieved Members to help find resolutions to problems, and most of these cases do not reach the informal grievance stage.

At the informal stage, a letter is sent to the decision-maker (often the Dean of the involved Faculty, or at times the Provost) and a meeting is held where the facts of the case are presented and the decision-maker provides a written response.

If the issue remains unresolved at this stage, the DFA Grievance Committee meets to review the case and decide whether to proceed to the second stage (formal grievance), engage in further discussion at the informal stage, or withdraw the grievance.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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The Formal Grievance Stage

The formal stage requires a written description of the facts of the case and the relevant articles of the Collective Agreement, in addition to a proposed remedy. A meeting is held with the President of the DFA and the President of Dalhousie, and a written response is provided with a decision.

If the case remains unresolved, the Grievance Committee meets to decide whether to proceed to the final stage (arbitration), continue discussions at the formal stage, or withdraw the case.

If the case is recommended for arbitration, the DFA Executive Committee has the final decision because of the potential impact on finances and the rest of the Bargaining Unit.

Typically, an external legal opinion is sought to help inform decision-making at this stage. If the case proceeds to arbitration, then the decision of an arbitrator is final and binding. Oftentimes, resolutions are found before the arbitration commences.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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Cases at Arbitration

LOU on Integration of Canada Pension Plan Enhancements

In the 2020-2022 bargaining round, the DFA agreed in principle to integrate Dalhousie Pension Plan Benefits with newly enhanced benefits under the Canada Pension Plan.

The matter was to be referred to the Pension Advisory Committee (PAC) who would recommend an accrual formula to the parties that would reflect this integration – in a nutshell, the total pension benefits from the Dalhousie and Canada Pension Plans would remain roughly the same, subject to some irreconcilable differences in the provisions of the two plans.

The arrangement would result in reduced contributions to the Dalhousie Pension Plan and the savings were to be shared by the parties. In ongoing discussions at a subcommittee of PAC, the two DFA representatives reminded the Board representatives on several occasions that the parties did not agree to equal (50/50) sharing of the savings, but that this was to be discussed at PAC along with the accrual formula.

Seven planned meetings of the subcommittee of PAC were suddenly cancelled and the Board gave notice of a grievance against the DFA with regard to this matter. Arbitration dates have been set for November 2023 and preparatory work is ongoing.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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Cases at Arbitration

Harassment Investigation

A number of DFA Members filed personal harassment claims against the Dean of the Faculty alleging a variety of behaviours and actions that they found inappropriate and harmful.


An external investigator was appointed. The investigator was not acceptable to the Members because the person was a known management-side lawyer and the Members did not believe their concerns would be fairly heard and adjudicated.

A previous grievance about the appointment of the investigator was withdrawn without prejudice as Members were keen to have the investigation proceed in a timely manner.

After an unacceptably long delay, the investigator completed the investigation and issued a report that effectively dismissed all of the concerns, arguing that the Members were given appropriate managerial direction.

The Members believe that the investigator did not understand the norms of collegial governance, and gave far too much latitude to the Dean's desire to implement radical change in the face of legitimate objections raised by academic staff.

The formal grievance process was completed without a satisfactory outcome and this case is now being prepared for arbitration.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT



Cases at Arbitration

Designated Groups

This case went to arbitration in 2020-2021, and is held in abeyance for one year while the DFA and Board work through a joint committee to see if a resolution can be reached about the application of the fourth “Principle of Fair Consideration” for the appointments process.

Details of the case have been described in previous issues of the Dialogue. The joint committee has met only once during the current year for a variety of reasons related to scheduling and personnel changes.


In fall 2022, the DFA reminded the Board of the need to activate the joint committee - one meeting was held and the committee has not met since. The DFA has suggested to the Board that a one-day mediation be held to finish the work or head back to arbitration.

Investigation of Identity

A Member was hired under the self-identification policy several years ago. In the past year the Board received a report questioning the Member’s identity.

The Board then hired a law firm to investigate the Member’s identity without notifying the Member or the DFA. The Member discovered this had occurred and contacted the DFA. The DFA contacted the Board and the process was halted.

The Board issued a letter of apology to the Member but did not take the remedial action that was requested. Arbitration is scheduled for October 2023.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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Grievances

Vacation Payout


A Member had chosen to retire but was unable to take the remaining vacation days owed to them because of teaching and research obligations. The Board was initially unwilling to compensate the Member for those vacation days, but an agreeable financial settlement was reached at the formal stage of the grievance process.

Overload Teaching

A Member was not offered overload teaching assignments for additional sections of a course they were already teaching. Instead, the Dean elected to post the opportunities for CUPE sessional instructors.

A grievance was initiated on the basis that this violated the long-standing past-practice of first offering teaching opportunities to DFA Members on an overload basis before posting for CUPE members.

The grievance was withdrawn at the informal stage as it became clear that there was no common past practice across the University. This case informed discussions and decisions at the bargaining table in relation to overload teaching provisions.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Grievances

Academic Freedom

A Member noticed that a student's final grade had been changed from an ILL without their approval. The student in question did not complete requirements agreed with the professor so a grievance was filed.

Informal grievance meetings revealed that a grade appeal process had been completed, and at no point was the professor contacted to offer context for the course or situation. Work that had not previously been submitted, which earned a grade of zero, was reassessed in the appeal.

The right and responsibility to assign grades falls to the instructor of record, subject to subsequent appeals processes. A formal grievance was filed as no further progress seemed possible at the informal stage given the intersection with University policies above the Faculty level.

Pension Deduction

For a period of some months, the Board had failed to properly deduct a Member's share of required pension contributions, which went unnoticed by the Member.

A grievance was filed because the Member's future pensionable years of service were jeopardized by the Board's error.

A resolution was reached that permitted the Member a flexible plan to repay the contributions with no negative impact on future pension earnings.



GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT



Grievances

Academic Freedom

The Board declined to offer institutional support for a Member's NSERC application on the basis that the Member was not in compliance with an emerging institutional policy around research pertaining to Indigenous peoples.

After useful discussions about 'grey areas' within tri-council and institutional policies, the DFA and Board were able to reach a resolution at the formal grievance stage that allowed the Member's application to go forward with additional assurances that relevant policies were respected.


Workload and Discrimination

A Member's workload exceeded that of the Member's colleagues in the same department for a number of years. This grievance remains at the informal stage as resolution discussions are ongoing.

Senate

Senate leaders invoked a constitutional clause that permitted a decision about academic matters arising from the CUPE strike to be made by the Senate Planning and Governance Committee rather than the full Senate.

The strict requirements for this emergency measure were not met so a grievance was filed in relation to normal collegial governance rights. A resolution was reached at the informal stage as Senate leaders acknowledged the problem and committed to follow the constitution in the future.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT



Grievances

Sabbatical Deferral

A routine review of Association-Board Committee (ABC) documents suggested that a Member was denied a reduction in service requirements for a future sabbatical despite accepting a request to defer a 6-month sabbatical.

The Member received the stipulated increased rate of pay, but Members who agree to defer a sabbatical are entitled to the additional benefit of reduced service requirements.


Information provided during the informal grievance process revealed that a miscommunication at the time of the deferral led to a side-deal that granted the Member one of the two deferral benefits despite the fact that the original sabbatical application was submitted after the deadline. The grievance was withdrawn as there appeared to be no violation of the Collective Agreement.

Equity Data

This case arose at ABC after the Board repeatedly refused to share with the DFA individual-level identity data that were gathered as part of the 'Be Counted' census.

The DFA believes that these data are necessary to monitor Board compliance with the No Discrimination article in the Collective Agreement in areas such as (but not limited to) pay equity.

An informal grievance was filed and the Board proposed an LOU to create a joint pay-equity committee to meet and report before the start of the next bargaining round. The DFA is waiting to receive details of the proposal in writing.





GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Grievances

Sabbatical Salary for those who had RWA under the Pension Plan

In the past few years, the Board has begun treating Members who have used the Reduced Workload Arrangement (RWA) under s. 23c of the Pension Plan as equivalent to part-time Members for the calculation of sabbatical pay.

This means that rather than receiving 85% of their salary, Members would receive a reduced amount based on the proportion of time spent at a lower full-time equivalence (FTE). This is a change from many years of practice - according to DFA records prior to 2020 the practice was not to reduce salary, since Members working under this provision are not 'part-time' but rather considered full-time. The grievance is currently at the informal stage.

UNB Nursing Work

A Member teaching at Dalhousie Medicine Saint John has been asked to teach University of New Brunswick (UNB) nursing students enrolled in UNB courses and told this was part of their regular workload.

The facts of the case suggest that this violates the bargaining unit rights of AUNBT, which is the union representing academic staff at UNB. Through the informal grievance process, and in collaboration with AUNBT representatives, we are trying to establish if there has been a violation of one or more collective agreements.

Promotion Denial

A Member was granted tenure but not promotion. The DFA flagged multiple procedural, substantive, and human rights concerns during the process but the Board would not intervene. The grievance remains at the formal stage.



GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Grievances

Academic Freedom

A Member had a course removed from their recurring workload after an uninterrupted period of over 20 years, for the stated reason that failure rates in the course were unacceptably high. No concerns were expressed about the Member's teaching style, methods, or approach. This is currently at the informal stage.

Vacation vs. Workload

An instructor Member was scheduled to teach in May/June on short notice which prevented them from taking entitled vacation time. The grievance was resolved at the informal stage.

LTA Ending without Sufficient Notice

A Member did not receive sufficient notice under Clause 14.16 that their limited-term appointment was coming to an end. This is currently at the informal stage.

Oral Exams – Academic Freedom

A Member had chosen to use oral exams as a method of evaluation. Once the process of administering the oral exams had started the Member was strongly dissuaded from continuing the process by their Dean. This is currently at the informal stage.



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Remi Agu & Eli Manning, DFA Representatives

During the academic year, the committee met to discuss issues relating to members' benefits. The highlights of the committee's activities during the 2022-2023 academic year are summarized below.

Summary of Presentation by Alex Russell, HUB International

Biosimilars

- Provinces are transitioning to biosimilar first/transition approach. Nova Scotia requires a switch to biosimilars for Pharmacare members effective February 1, 2023.
- The Pharma industry has created Product Listing Agreements (PLAs) with insurers for discounted prices on biologics.
- Medavie Blue Cross (MBC) has 63 PLAs worth \$288K annually in net health claims as of May 2022; changes in October 2022 are expected to see further savings.
- Savings from PLAs shown as rebate credits on the annual MBC financial statement act to lower the claims loss ratio used to determine rates each year.
- Blue Cross launched biosimilar strategy options for plan sponsors: maintain current approach, biosimilar first approach, or biosimilar transition approach.
- Biosimilar transition would impact approximately 99 employees currently on biologics, with additional savings of approximately \$55K annually expected due to MBC changes in October 2022.
- Maintaining the current approach may be beneficial for employees on high-cost life-impacting medications.
- Educating members on biosimilars is an option but may not make sense as biosimilars are not necessarily the lower cost option based on data and PLAs.
- From a plan administration perspective, whether members receive the drug from a biosimilar or biologic manufacturer is inconsequential; the goal is to provide the best value plan to members, which seems to be maintaining the status quo.



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Pharmacy Services

- Members' Health Spending Account currently provides coverage for pharmacy services.
- MBC's preferred pharmacy partner network, which includes Sobeyes/Lawton's and Costco pharmacies, offers members access to therapeutic substitution.
- During the meeting, there was a query about including compounding pharmacies in the preferred pharmacy partner network, especially for members who require them for specific medications. The committee agreed to conduct further research on this.

Mental Health Plan Data

- There has been a 16% increase in spending on antidepressant drugs.
- The expenditure on new mental health services has increased by \$337K, providing an additional 2,200 hours of therapy compared to last year.
- The incidence of LTD claims due to mental health has decreased, with only 10 new claims submitted this year, compared to 11 last year.
- There was a significant increase in paramedical claims since implementing the enhanced mental health benefit in 2020.

The committee had an extensive discussion about Group Benefits Renewal. The discussion covered an overview and market landscape, underwriting arrangements, life and LTD financials and renewals, health and dental financials and renewals, and additional benefits.

The life benefit program is underwritten by Manulife, and health and dental benefits are underwritten by Medavie Blue Cross. A review of the program by the committee ensured maximum value, funding arrangements vis-a-vis risk tolerance level and identifying industry news/trends that could impact the ability of the program to provide the cost-to-benefits ratio.



EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

During the review, the major cost drivers identified were health and dental premiums that increased across the Atlantic post-secondary sector, the cost of new diabetic and cancer drugs, and increased demand for mental health services.

During the year, a budgeted increase of 3.5% for health and 7.0% for dental upon renewal were identified. Furthermore, there were significant expenditures on extended health care with biologics, especially for rheumatoid arthritis/Crohn's disease, responsible for the most cost increase. Furthermore, the cost of paramedical services, including psychologists, physiotherapists, chiropractors, and social workers increased by 6.3%.

Therefore, compounded by overall inflation in the economy and the need to sustain the program, the committee was asked to vote for one of three options:

17% increase to the rates:

- Increase to members of \$4.25 Single and \$12.22 Family per month
- Impact of approximately \$390,000 to the reserve

20% increase to the rates:

- Increase to members of \$4.99 Single and \$14.38 Family per month
- Impact of approximately \$220,000 to the reserve

Full 23.9% increase to the rates:

- Increase to members of \$5.97 Single and \$17.18 Family per month
- No impact to the reserve

Considering the potential financial implications for some members and the impact on the program's sustainability, the committee unanimously voted for a 20% rate increase.



PENSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Jonathan Shapiro & David Westwood, DFA Representatives

Committee Membership

The Pension Advisory Committee (PAC) has equal representation from the Dalhousie Board of Governors, DFA and NSGEU (Locals 99 and 77).

There are also representatives from the Dalhousie Professional and Managerial Group, which has voice but no vote (or veto over amendments to the plan), and the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners, which has voice but no vote.

David Westwood joined as a DFA representative this year, and **Jonathan Shapiro** began a two-year term as Chair on July 1, 2022. Chris Hattie, Dalhousie's Assistant Vice-President (Acting) and Director, Employee Experience, replaced Jasmine Walsh on PAC as a Board representative and was appointed as Vice-Chair for a two-year term.

The Dalhousie Pension Plan

After a very strong rebound from the pandemic in 2021, markets saw significant drops across most sectors in 2022.

The Plan's investments were significantly impacted by uncertainties caused by the continued Russian invasion and occupation of the Ukraine, private banking collapses in the United States, and a sharp rise in inflation at levels not seen since the 1970s across global economies which led to the steady and rapid rise in central bank lending rates.

The Plan ended 2021 in a very strong market position, but some of those gains were clawed back by these market forces in 2022. The first quarter of 2023 was better, as markets started to stabilize and inflation began to level, but concerns remain.



PENSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT



Funded Position of the Plan


As at December 31, 2022, the Plan was funded at 102.9% on a going-concern best estimate basis. Under the pension regulations, the Plan must be in a substantial overfunded position as a provision against adverse deviation.

That overfunding requirement has reduced slightly from the 107.7% rate required last year, to a lower rate of 106.8%, due to changes in the asset mix held by the two pension funds.

At December 31, 2022, the Plan was funded at 96.4% of the requirement. This does not take into account the strong market conditions in the first quarter of 2023, which means that the Plan is likely close to fully-funded. The Plan was able to remain at this near fully-funded ratio despite major shocks in the markets in 2022, which speaks to the durability of the Plan and its structure.

For the first time since 2007, the Plan was not in a solvency deficit position, but in a fully-funded position on a solvency basis. In fact, on a solvency basis, the Plan is funded at 101.7% as of December 31, 2022. This is primarily due to the significant increase in annuity rates in 2022 in response to the rising prime lending rate from the Bank of Canada.

The Plan is now in a place where it would not have “solvency concerns” by the government’s measures, which means the Plan is funded at over 85% on a solvency basis. While the solvency measure can be a useful tool to assess the health of some pension plans, the best analytic measure for our Plan is on a going-concern basis since Dalhousie will continue to operate for the foreseeable future, and the University enjoys full solvency relief from the provincial government. However, the Plan is still required to file annual “cost certificates”, which are an interim assessment of the health of the Plan between full valuations.





PENSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Rising Inflation, Discretionary “Catch Up” Indexing, and Pension Valuation

We are all feeling the bite of rapidly rising inflation, and that is especially true for retirees in the Plan. In order to keep purchasing power for pensioners, it is important that the Plan continue to issue missed, or “catch up” indexing, where possible.

However, the trustees of the Plan can only use their discretionary power to give catch-up indexing when the Retirees' Trust Fund (RTF) is in a surplus position after a valuation of the Plan.

The new regulations permit plans with solvency relief (including the Dalhousie Plan) to file valuations every three years, rather than the previous structure requiring annual valuations. The last [valuation of the Plan was done on January 31, 2020](#), and is available to all Plan members.

Despite our best efforts to encourage the Board to conduct an early valuation of the Plan, the Board elected not to do so. This means that the next valuation of the Plan will be completed for January 31, 2023, as required by law.

That process is now under way, with results expected in the fall. The valuation will reflect the health of the Plan, and update assumptions like the expected retirement age, years of service, and the expected performance of the Plan for the future.

While the exact funding in the Plan's two trusts will not be revealed until the valuation is completed, we do expect that the RTF will have a small surplus that will allow the trustees to consider exercising their discretion to issue catch-up indexing to assist retirees with the effects of inflation over the past year.



PENSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

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Pension Unaffected by Collective Bargaining

One piece of good news in the last round of collective bargaining for our new Collective Agreement was that the Board did not attempt to negotiate changes to or concessions in the Plan.

However, the Board made it clear that this position was specifically limited to this round of bargaining only, and we expect pension issues to remain front and centre in the Board's mind in future negotiations. Given the short length of the Agreement and the fact that we are already one year into the life of that Agreement, we expect that pension issues will soon again be on the horizon.

Your DFA representatives on PAC continue to remain vigilant about issues that may be raised, and any proposed changes that will negatively and unfairly impact the pension you will receive in retirement.

The Future

DFA members contribute substantial amounts to the Plan. This year, as in the past, Members will contribute about 8.06% of pensionable salary, up to a maximum pensionable salary of \$195,313.50. The Plan remains strong, at a time when good quality defined-benefit plans are increasingly rare, especially in academic environments.

The Plan is healthy, nearly fully-funded, and has weathered the current inflationary environment remarkably well. It is as important as ever that we continue to protect it so that future retirees remain secure, especially as inflation continues to rise.

Our pension plan is a primary reason why the futures of current and retired Members are relatively secure and the Plan is very attractive to prospective employees. Your PAC representatives continue to work to support the financial health and security of the Plan, and to protect it from changes that could jeopardize the long-term security of all DFA Members, both current and retired.



PENSION TRUST FUND AND RETIREES' TRUST FUND REPORT

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Jonathan Shapiro, DFA Nominee

The Dalhousie Pension Plan is made up of the Pension Trust Fund (PTF) and the Retirees' Trust Fund (RTF). Active members pay into the PTF, and upon retirement funds are transferred to the RTF and used to pay retirees' benefits.

Each fund has a Board of Trustees responsible for the oversight of the management of that fund. There is significant overlap between the trustees on the two boards.

Fund Performance in 2022-2023


After near record-high performances in both funds last year, global markets faced contraction in 2022 as the world wrestled with the continued Russian invasion and occupation of the Ukraine, supply chain issues, lasting effects of the pandemic, and the significant rise in inflation and concomitant rise in central bank interest rates.

This affected both funds as well, with a drop in nearly 5% of the value of the funds over the year. However, both funds were able to do better than the policy benchmarks for that period and weathered these financial struggles better than many investment funds.

The investment strategy of both funds is to remain highly diversified, with investments in domestic and foreign equity markets, bond markets, and fixed assets like real estate and infrastructure.

The goal is to ensure long-term steady growth and investment returns, and to have the ability to ride out market volatility so that the funds remain secure and can provide for the pension promise made to retirees.

That strategy helped shield the funds in the current period, with some categories of investment making up for losses in other areas.



PENSION TRUST FUND AND RETIREES' TRUST FUND REPORT

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The overall returns for the Plan between January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 were negative. The PTF saw a one-year return of -5.04% (but above the benchmark in the market of -6.47%) and the RTF saw a one-year return of -5.39% (but above the benchmark in the market of -6.54%).

There was some good news as markets were strong at the start of 2023 and we hope Members will see positive returns in 2023 above the funding benchmarks required for the plan. The Plan also remains above the benchmarks for growth for every long-term period, including the 7-year benchmark for growth.

Because of the weaknesses in the market, the estimated overall funding of the Plan at December 2022 was at 102.9% on a best estimate going-concern basis, or 96.4% relative to the 106.8% funding requirement taking into account the legislatively mandated provision for adverse deviation.

Catch-up Indexing Status and Valuation of the Plan

There was no further exercise of trustees' discretion to award catch-up indexing to retirees, because there has not been a recent valuation of the Plan which would establish a surplus from which to issue such indexing. The last valuation of the Plan was conducted on January 31, 2020.

Further to legislative requirements, the Plan is currently undergoing a full valuation, which will be dated from January 31, 2023. At the conclusion of that valuation, the actuary will determine whether there is a surplus of funds in the RTF as of that date. If a surplus exists, the trustees will decide whether or not to use up to half of that surplus for the purposes of catch-up indexing for members.

Given that there was a small surplus in the RTF at December 31, 2022 and the month of January 2023 saw strong returns in the market and the Plan, I expect there will be a small surplus in the RTF which can be used for catch-up indexing. This comes at a welcome time given the effects of inflation felt by retirees and the reduction of purchasing power that comes with it. The remaining missed indexing is still less than 7%, as it was at the last annual report.



PENSION TRUST FUND AND RETIREES' TRUST FUND REPORT

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New Asset Mix and Effect on the Plan

A new asset mix study which was completed last year led to adjustments in the investments in the Plan. Those adjustments affected the ability to weather the volatility in global markets in the last year, with slightly more investments in fixed assets that were less susceptible to swings like those experienced by equities.

It also reduced the provision for adverse deviation required by the province's Superintendent of Pensions. In the past, the asset mix of the Plan required an overfunding provision of 7.07%, but that will be reduced with the new asset mix to 6.8%.

In the valuation of the Plan currently underway, that new smaller provision for adverse deviation will positively affect the health of the Plan, any surplus in it, and any further funding requirements for the next three-year cycle.

Overall Value of the Plan Fund

The overall market value of the PTF is \$854.3 million at December 31, 2022, a drop from its value of \$901.7 million a year ago, due to the contraction of markets through most of 2022. Similarly, the market value of the RTF is \$835.2 million at December 31, 2022, a drop from its value of \$914.8 million a year ago. The overall value of the Plan sits at just under \$1.7 billion.

The Plan weathered the uncertainties and upheavals in the world in 2022 relatively well and our fund managers continue to overperform the market. In 2023, as the world starts to emerge from the pandemic (as it becomes endemic), and if inflationary pressures continue to ease from their peaks in August, we hope to see some recovery for the Plan in the next year.

I look forward to serving as your nominee and trustee on both funds on an ongoing basis.



ASSOCIATION-BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

Tim Juckes, ABC Co-Chair and DFA Nominee

Committee Membership


DFA Representatives: **Tim Juckes** (DFA Co-Chair, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience); **David Westwood** (DFA Nominee, School of Health and Human Performance), **Barb MacLennan** (DFA Nominee, DFA Professional Officer; until June 16, 2022) replaced by **Jack Brown** (DFA Nominee, DFA Professional Officer; from June 17, 2022), and **Lynn Purves** (DFA Observer, DFA Administrative Officer)

Board Representation: A Game of Musical Chairs!

Pay attention - there's a test at the end!

The Board representatives to the committee changed over the year: Marlo Shinyei (Acting Director, Academic Staff Relations) continued as Acting Co-Chair until Laura Neals returned from leave in June, and then resumed her Acting Co-Chair role when Laura took another leave beginning in November; Kim Brooks (Dean of Management) was a Board Nominee until December, when she became Acting Provost, and was replaced by John Newhook (Dean of Engineering) in the New Year; Dipti Periwal (HR Advisor, Faculty Recruitment, Academic Staff Relations) was a Board Observer for September and October 2022, and a Board Nominee from November 2022 until she took leave beginning in April 2023; and Ruth Murray (former Director of Finance and Administration, Faculty of Engineering) became a Board Observer for November and December 2022 and then a Board Nominee in January 2023.

Test:

- 1. When was the Board shorthanded?*
 - 2. Did the Board ever have too many players on the ice?*
- 



ASSOCIATION-BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

Our Work

The Association-Board Committee (ABC) considers matters of interpretation or application of the Collective Agreement. Agendas largely concern the administration of certain clauses of the Collective Agreement, including matters that would otherwise not be in compliance with the Collective Agreement and matters that require the approval of ABC as defined in the Collective Agreement. ABC also deals with issues of broad concern to our Membership. ABC operates by concurrent majority.

ABC meets monthly to deal with particular issues, such as practices in Faculties and mistakes, misinformation, or requests for exceptions relating to provisions of the Collective Agreement. Often these issues come to our attention thanks to communication from our Members.

We also deal with recurring items such as waivers of advertising, extensions of limited-term appointments, spousal appointments, ad-hoc appointments committees, automatic renewals, special salary increases (SSIs), salaries above the maximum, administrative stipends and job descriptions, extensions to timelines (e.g., anomalies fund, tenure and promotion limits), administrative stipends, compliance with the Academic Staffing LOU, and parking fees. All meetings have continued to be held via Zoom but in May 2023 we will try in-person again.

ABC nominees also receive a copy of a monthly Academic Appointment Activity Report (AAAR), which lists all academic staff changes (appointments, promotions, tenure, sabbaticals, etc.) along with supporting documentation. We query missing documentation, request clarification, identify errors, and, on occasion, note that the Collective Agreement will be violated if a proposed action is taken. The list of AAAR-related items is long and takes months to fully resolve.



ASSOCIATION-BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

The 2022-23 Tasting Menu

Timeliness

In last year's report, we noted that it can take frustratingly long for information requested to be provided. This continued to be a problem, in part because of personnel issues in HR, leading the DFA to write a letter to the Provost. There was immediate but short-lived improvement; delays in providing documents, responding to emails between meetings, and drafting minutes continue.

Bargaining

This past year we went through another collective bargaining round, which meant that some items from ABC were moved onto the bargaining agenda (e.g., changes to Y-value forms, use of DFA Travel Funds for attending virtual conferences) and other issues, such as preparation for access and essential services in the event of a strike, returned to ABC's agenda.

ABC Jurisdiction

The Board nominees have repeatedly insisted that it is not the role of the ABC to question the processes or reasons leading to agenda motions (e.g., reappointments). The Board sees such questioning as interfering with committees' work and management's right to make decisions and have told us that if we believe there is a violation of the Collective Agreement, we should grieve.

The DFA nominees have argued that our responsibility as a committee is to review and seek clarification and not simply rubber stamp every choice made by a Dean, every recommendation made by a committee, and every action taken by management. After months of arguing and the Board refusing to budge, we were told we would have to 'agree to disagree'. At some point, this unresolved matter is likely to require further attention.



ASSOCIATION-BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

COVID-Related Issues

We raised issues of the terms of reference and composition, including DFA representation, on the Return to Campus (RTC) committee and discussed COVID protocols for the winter term. Our discussion of carrying forward unused money in the DFA Travel Fund from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 was successful.

At the bargaining table the Board agreed to an LOU:

“The Parties agree to a further waiver of the carry-forward maximums relating to the DFA travel fund as described in Clauses 30.33 and 30.34 for 2021/22 and 2022/23. Unspent balances will be returned to each unit’s travel fund for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 year respectively. The Parties agree that on 1 April 2024, no further waivers to the carry-forward maximums will be made, and any excess of underspending shall be taken into general Dalhousie University revenue as prescribed by Clause 30.34.”

Pay Equity, Gender and Other Designated Group Information

The DFA’s responsibility to monitor the Collective Agreement’s equity provisions depends on the Board providing appropriate data, and in formats that the DFA can use in analyses.

In particular, we have requested that pay equity data be provided as raw data in spreadsheet rather than graphic format, but the Board has claimed that privacy concerns prevent them providing this.

We have also requested information about gender and other designated group information, but the Board has responded that they no longer include gender in their payroll records so cannot provide it.

Failure to provide the DFA this information compromises our responsibility to monitor equity. The matter is now being pursued as a grievance.



ASSOCIATION-BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT



Changes to Y-Value/Creditable Years Forms

A sub-committee of ABC, with additional membership from **Dominic Silvio** and **Patti Doyle-Bedwell**, reviewed and revised the Y-Value and Creditable Years forms to reflect the contributions of traditional ways of knowing and/or non-traditional scholarship. These revisions were approved by ABC.

Changes to Appendix III (Calculation of Y-Values) in the new Collective Agreement will reflect these changes, in particular to the sections concerning other relevant experience and the maximum value for Y/Creditable Years.


Storm Closure Policy

The growth in working from home tied to the University's storm closure policy led to discussion about Members' work on days when the University is closed. The Board explained that it expects Members to work from home, if possible, when the University is closed, but recognizes that this will not be possible for everyone. Such 'understanding', however, can lead to inequities that could lead to revisiting this issue.

Parking

This year we inquired about whether the cost of general parking permits could be pro-rated, given that Members might not be using their parking permits throughout the year as a result of COVID restrictions.

The Board noted that Members could purchase permits by the term, but no further concessions were possible. We also inquired about parking reductions in the McCain underground parking and why we had not been informed in advance, as well as the conversion of the tennis courts (between Sheriff Hall, South Street, and the LSC) into parking.





ASSOCIATION-BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

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Sick Leave and Salary Continuance

We have recently raised an issue concerning Members' sick leave entitlement prior to long-term disability. Although a rare occurrence, it is important for the parties to clarify the practice so those affected will receive appropriate coverage. Both parties are searching their archival documents to clarify the policy.

Reduced Workload Agreement (RWA) under the Pension Plan


We became aware of issues related to calculation of pay for Members on sabbatical leave who have had RWAs under the pension plan. The Board appears to have been treating all reduced workloads, whether under the pension plan or not, similarly, leading to some inconsistency in application of the Collective Agreement provisions. This matter is now being pursued as a grievance.

Professional Development Allowance (PDA)

This year a mistake in the email recipient list meant one unit did not receive the usual reminder regarding the deadline for submission of PDA expenses. The DFA nominees requested the deadline be extended for this unit's Members but the Board refused, claiming the reminder is a courtesy and that the information about PDA claims is clearly outlined in the Collective Agreement.

School of Languages

The DFA inquired about steps being taken to create a School of Languages in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The Board confirmed this is in the works. We will continue to monitor developments.





ASSOCIATION-BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT



Memorial University-Dalhousie Memorandum of Understanding

The DFA nominees raised the matter of an MOU between the Classics departments of MUN and Dalhousie relating to shared teaching of courses and availability of such courses to students at both universities. The Board nominees were unaware of this MOU but undertook to investigate.

Cape Breton University Medical Campus

The DFA nominees are monitoring the developing role of Dalhousie faculty in establishing the medical campus at CBU. A memorandum issued by Dalhousie and CBU suggests much of the responsibility for the foreseeable future will fall to Dalhousie and its faculty, which suggests the DFA should be consulted throughout.

Parental Leave Guide

The DFA side is working on a revised Parental Leave Guide to incorporate new legal provisions. This document will be presented to ABC for approval and then made available to all Members.



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

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Committee's Purpose

"The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee was established by the President to establish an Environmental Health and Safety Program as set out in the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The Committee assists the University in attempting to achieve the highest possible standards of environmental health and safety. In cooperation with staff, faculty, students, and the University Administration, the Committee assists the University in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy environment."

Halifax Report

The Environmental Health and Safety Committee (Halifax) meets monthly to discuss all aspects of health and safety on campus. Committee membership includes university appointees and representatives from employee and student groups. There are positions for two DFA appointees – one professor and one instructor Member.

DFA Membership

Mark Obrovac (Chemistry), **Alex Speed** (Chemistry), **Marc Whalen** (Chemistry), **Shawn Xiong** (Biochemistry & Molecular Biology) *NOTE: Shawn Xiong is replacing Emanuel Jannasch while he is on leave for 2022-2023.*





ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

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Summary of Activities

As part of its regular activities, the committee:

- Conducted monthly reviews of safety and security incidents that occurred across campus and followed-up/recommended corrective action where appropriate.
- Advised the Safety Office and provided feedback on new safety training and new safety guidelines.
- Advised the University on appropriate measures to be taken in response to Department of Labour compliance orders resulting from safety incidents on campus.

Highlights include:

- Providing feedback on guidelines, and procedures for the University's COVID response.
 - Reviewing procedures and plans and providing feedback for the establishment of a Containment Level 3 (CL3) biological lab.
 - Providing feedback on new programs and guidelines introduced by the Dalhousie Environmental Health and Safety office. These include an online Laser Safety Training course and many guidelines and procedures related to chemical safety.
- 



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

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Agricultural Campus Report


DFA Membership

Paul McNeil (Plant, Food, and Environmental Sciences), Margie Hartling (Animal Science and Aquaculture)

Summary of Activities

- Met monthly except during the summer hiatus.
- Dealt with incident investigations as needed.
- Pedestrian crosswalks – review and assessment, possible educational awareness program for September.
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) training review.
- Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) checked and batteries replaced as needed.
- Dealt with the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona.
- Annual fire drills completed.
- Review of emergency showers and eyewash stations protocol.
- Routine chemical and Bio waste disposal.

You can read more about Dalhousie's Environmental Health and Safety program [here](#).





TRANSPORTATION & SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT

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 Sherry Huybers, DFA Representative

The Transportation and Security Committee meets six times from September to June. Membership consists of voting representatives from all unions and prominent bodies on all campuses, including the DFA, NSGEU (Local 77 and Local 99), Dalhousie Professional and Managerial Group, Dalhousie Student Union, and Senate.

Non-voting members include the Director of Security Services, the Traffic Officer, the Facilities Communications Officer, and the Office of Sustainability. Peter Jones (Sexton Campus) has been chairing the committee meetings this past year. Click [here](#) for minutes for the monthly meetings.


Parking Highlights

Parking Rates

Parking rates for 2022-23 were discussed at the June 2022 Transportation and Security Committee meetings. Committee members voted and recommended not to increase the parking permit fee for 2022-2023.

Committee Chair Peter Jones sent a letter to the AVP Finance with this recommendation. However, Dalhousie administration decided to implement a 1.25% increase based on the DFA allowable amount from the Collective Agreement (Clause 32.10).

The parking rates for 2023-24 will be presented and discussed at the May and June 2022 Transportation and Security committee meetings. Click [here](#) for further information regarding parking.





TRANSPORTATION & SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT

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Software Application for Tracking Permits

This year, the Security Office switched to a software application for the sale and tracking of parking permits. Hang tags are no longer issued with the switch to virtual parking permits.

License plates are now used as proof of permit – when scanning a license plate, the software identifies whether the vehicle is authorized to park on campus. The application allows for a credit card payment option as well as a payroll deduction option for full time, permanent faculty and staff.


Debit and cash payments are still accepted and processed in person. In-person support for purchasing or renewing permits is still provided.

Permit Sales

Permit sales are down by one-third for 2022-2023 compared to previous years, due to hybrid work schedules.

Parking Enforcement

At the beginning of the academic year, Security staff started with a soft approach to enforcement by putting up barricades to keep faculty, staff and students from parking in aisles and blocking the roadway. In October 2022, Security officers started heavier ticketing/booting enforcement of vehicles.





TRANSPORTATION & SECURITY COMMITTEE REPORT

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Transportation Highlights

Employee Bus Pass

The Employee Bus Pass (E-Pass) has been ongoing with significant uptake in fall 2022. Dalhousie continues to work with HRM sorting out the details of the E-Pass.

Sustainable Commuting Plan

The Transportation Demand Management for Sustainable Commuting Plan was circulated in September 2022. The complete Sustainability Plan is being refreshed, starting with the Operational Plan then will move on to the six sub plans including Climate Change, Procurement, Waste Management and Sustainable Transportation. Goals, actions, and targets will all be updated. If you would like a copy, contact Kareina D'Souza at kareina.dsouza@dal.ca.

Security Highlights

Response to Unsanctioned Street Party

Along with Residence Life and Housing, and Student Health and Wellness, Security Services were involved in a significant planning and response exercise related to the October 1, 2022 unsanctioned street party.

This plan focused on safety and security on campus. There was activity on campus, but it was not destructive and nobody was seriously hurt. The on-campus Housing Medical Response Team was included in the plan and provided a high level of service, taking on a lot of the heavy lifting in relation to first aid response, easing the burden on Security Services and the Residence Life staff.


Response to Hurricane Fiona

The effects of and the response to Hurricane Fiona lasted three to four days. The power was down for a couple of days, but residence buildings and most of the research areas were supported by generators during this time. DalSafe Notification was used for mass notifications to 27,000 active subscribers during Fiona Hurricane and campus building closures.



COUNCIL ON EMPLOYMENT EQUITY REPORT

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Gabriella Mosquera, DFA Representative

The Dalhousie Council on Employment Equity meets four times each year to discuss issues related to work with Dalhousie's Human Rights and Equity Services to provide advice on planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating Dalhousie's Employment Equity Policy, its Employment Equity Plan, and relevant policies.

During 2022 and the winter of 2023, the Employment Equity Council has focused on reviewing their Terms of Reference (TOR) in an effort to update the Council's responsibilities, operation, membership, and nominations process. The Council's TOR is still under review.

The Council has been having discussions about the Self-Identification Questionnaire and Census Survey, in order to make their contents more inclusive in regard to sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation, as well as include definitions of African Nova Scotians within the forms.

The Council has also been reviewing Dalhousie's Employment Equity Policy, as well as the Employment Equity Plan.

Finally, during this time, Huwaida Medani was recruited as Dalhousie's Employment Equity Manager, a position that had been vacant for over two years.

NOTE TO MEMBERS: *There was no report submitted for the Dalhousie President's Advisory Council on Sexualized Violence.*





EQUITY COMMITTEE REPORT

Remi Agu, Equity Committee Chair

Committee Membership

Remi Agu (Pharmacy) Chair, Heather Andreas (Chemistry), Catrina Brown (Social Work), Eli Manning (Social Work), Ifeyinwa Mbakogu (Social Work), Raghav Sampangi (Computer Science), David Westwood (DFA President, ex-officio), Catherine Wall (DFA Communications Officer, ex-officio)

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the committee identified new initiatives including:


- DFA participation in new-faculty orientation. The DFA Executive Committee or the Equity Committee may facilitate university caucuses' introduction during the orientation, which may help new faculty find support on campus that they may not see in their departments, units, or schools.
- Encourage Dalhousie to develop a university-wide faculty mentoring program. Many schools and departments have mentors from within their unit, but this may not meet the needs of a person from an equity-seeking group. A university-wide program may fill this gap.
- A need for policy around access to equipment/facilities on campus. New racialized colleagues often struggle to get access to equipment for their research. Although equipment is highlighted as being available and accessible to support their research during academic position interviews, access becomes difficult once the candidates arrive on campus.
- Pooling unused Health Spending Accounts for faculty with disabilities and their families.
- Requesting resources and timelines for accessing accommodations for faculty (or compensation to work without necessary accommodations).

EQUITY COMMITTEE REPORT

- Advancing equity-based arguments for Anomalies Fund applications.
- Additional and specific funding for faculty development for Indigenizing and decolonizing professional and pedagogical development, and for Universal Design for Learning and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.
- Diversifying the Professional Development Allowance to help DFA members cushion the excessive demand for their funding and time to meet work from home expectations during the pandemic.

During this academic year, the focus of the Equity Committee, with the help of the DFA President was to explore how these suggestions may be realized.

Two of the events coordinated this year by the Communications Co-ordination Committee:



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Reconcili-**ACTION**
In Research: Is
The Academy
Headed In The
Right Direction?

Dr. Debbie Martin
Health Promotion

Friday, Sept 30, 2022
10 am (zoom)

DFA Communications Officer
Catherine.Walledal.ca for info


Join us for an
online discussion
with
Director/Producer
Gerry Potter

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 20
5 PM (AST)

"Great!...RANKS WITH THE BEST!"
-Joe Berry, Co-Author, Power Despite Precarity

IN SEARCH OF
**PROFESSOR
PRECARIOUS**

How Will I
-PAY RENT?
-GIVE MY KID?
-PAY OFF STUDENT
LOAN?
-PREP LECTURE?



SEE IT
FIRST
FAVA
FEST
Cinema
City

COMMUNICATIONS CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE REPORT

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Amy Birchall, Communications Co-ordination Committee Chair

Committee Membership

Amy Birchall (Agriculture) Chair, Jason Brown (Science), Erin MacPherson (MacRae Library), David Westwood (DFA President, Ex-Officio), and Catherine Wall (DFA Communications Officer, Ex-Officio)

The DFA Communications Co-ordination Committee is happy to be active again. The 2022-2023 academic year saw several stand-out activities.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

In September we celebrated National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with a presentation given by DFA Member Dr. Debbie Martin titled, "Reconcili-ACTION in Research: Is the Academy headed in the right direction?".

Dr. Martin is a Professor of Health Promotion, Faculty of Health, with cross-appointments in Dalhousie's Faculty of Dentistry and Faculty of Management. This presentation was well-attended and provided excellent education on the key principles that highlight the need and obligation for both truth and reconciliation. It was a pleasure to have Dr. Martin speak and share this topic and her research with our members.

Fair Employment Week

October saw many events for Fair Employment Week. The DFA held a screening of the documentary, *In Search of Professor Precarious*. After the screening, there was a discussion period with producer, Gerry Potter. We also participated in a national social media campaign, Make it Fair, coordinated by the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT).

COMMUNICATIONS CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE REPORT

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Public Forum on University Governance

Shared governance is the foundation of our academic institutions. We were pleased to hold a public forum jointly coordinated by the DFA, Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers (ANSUT), CAUT, and the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU).

Speakers included: DFA Past President **Dr. Julia Wright**; MSVUFA President **Dr. Dianne Piccitto**; CAUT VP **Dr. Robin Whitaker**; DSU President **Aparna Mohan** and DSU VP **Sydney Keyamo**.

Our panelists shared their thoughts regarding how decision-making powers are becoming centralized in the hands of a few which can marginalize the voices of academic staff and students. The Committee is very grateful to our panelists and to everyone who attended this important event.

African Heritage Month

February was African Heritage Month. We were very pleased to have DFA Member **Dr. Isaac Saney** deliver his presentation, "Building Black Canadian Studies: Dalhousie's Contribution".

Dr. Saney is a University Teaching Fellow and Director of the Transition Year Program. During this session, Dr. Saney's passion for the collective power of people, equity, justice, and human dignity shone through.

We also held a social media campaign highlighting DFA members from the black community and their accomplishments. We would like to extend out sincere thank you to Dr. Saney and each DFA member who contributed to the campaign.



COMMUNICATIONS CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE REPORT

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Dr. Robert S. Rodger Lecture Series

Our most recent event was a presentation for the annual Dr. Robert S. Rodger Lecture Series. Our 2023 keynote speaker was **Dr. Fabrice Colin**, President of Laurentian University Faculty Association. Dr. Colin spoke regarding the landmark insolvency proceedings at Laurentian University.

The 2021 claim of insolvency was a first in Canada's post-secondary education sector. We were so thrilled to have Dr. Colin come speak regarding his experience and insights.

Collective Bargaining

This committee was active again during collective bargaining. There were numerous communications initiatives during that time including Membership surveys, messaging, and job action preparation.

Thanks!

I would like to extend my personal thanks to all members of this committee. Without the efforts of everyone we would not be successful. An extra special thanks to **Catherine Wall**, DFA Communications Officer, whose vision truly does guide and steer us.

Please watch for more events coming in 2023 – 2024.

NOTE TO MEMBERS: There was no report submitted for the DFA Indigenous Caucus Committee.





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EXCELLENCE
Teaching, Research, Service.

STEFANIE COLOMBO, PHD
Associate Professor
Dir. Animal Science and Aquaculture



EXCELLENCE
Teaching, Research, Service.

Shelley McKibbin, MLS
Information Services Librarian
Management Services Librarian



EXCELLENCE
Teaching, Research, Service.

KEITH BRUNT, PHD
Associate Professor, Pharmacology
Dir. Medication Research



EXCELLENCE
Teaching, Research, Service.

PATTI DOYLE-BEDWELL, JD, LL.M
Associate Professor, Indigenous Studies
and Transition Year Program, HSS
Native Studies Instructor, FOLIO



EXCELLENCE

EXCELLENCE
Teaching, Research, Service.

Christine Frigault, MEd, MEd, CCC
Career Educator, Career Services Center
Counselor, Student Health and Wellness



EXCELLENCE
Teaching, Research, Service.

Frederick D. King, PhD
Assistant Professor
Hess School of Business



EXCELLENCE
Teaching, Research, Service.

JASON BROWN, PHD
Chair and Professor
Dir. Mathematics and Statistics



Social Media Activity

This year, DFA increased our social media presence with several campaigns. One highlighted the excellence demonstrated by our Members in teaching, research and service. Others focused on Fair Employment Week, African Heritage Month, and collective bargaining. Thanks to all those who participated!



SOUTHERN AFRICAN STUDENT EDUCATION PROJECT REPORT

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David Black, SASEP Chair

DFA Representatives

David Black (Political Science) Chair, Gary Kynoch (History), Theresa Ulicki (International Development Studies), and Matthew Schnurr (International Development Studies)

The Southern African Student Education Project (SASEP) contributes to the development of Southern Africa by offering black South Africans – a historically disadvantaged group – a full scholarship to pursue graduate studies at the Master's or PhD level at Dalhousie. This is now extended to students in the Southern African region.


SASEP has been operating at Dalhousie since 1987. Initially, the South African Education Trust Fund (SAETF) in Ottawa matched all funds raised by SASEP. Once SAETF ceased operating in 1993, Dalhousie assumed full responsibility for the project and SASEP has been completely funded by the Dalhousie community ever since.

Funding and Support

The DFA contributes \$10,000 to SASEP each year. The Dalhousie Student Union contributes \$1/year for each full-time student at Dalhousie. Contributions are also made by individual faculty and staff members. SASEP is further supported by the Dalhousie Administration.

First, the Administration has agreed to waive international student differential fees for SASEP students on an ongoing basis. Second, the SASEP Advisory Committee, made up of DFA faculty members who share an interest in Southern Africa, provides administrative and academic support to the project.

SASEP covers the entire cost of student placements, including tuition, round-trip airfare, a monthly stipend for living expenses, medical coverage and an allowance for a laptop, books and warm clothing. The number of placements available is entirely dependent on fundraising efforts, and the length of academic study of scholarship recipients.





SOUTHERN AFRICAN STUDENT EDUCATION PROJECT REPORT

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Students

As of April 2022, a total of 18 students have been awarded graduate degrees under SASEP. The most recent is Liandrah Gapare from Zimbabwe, who completed the MSc program in Chemistry in summer 2021 and began a PhD (not funded by SASEP) at Dalhousie in fall 2021.

SASEP would normally have recruited a student for the 2021-2022 academic year, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainty of students being able to come to Dalhousie from Southern Africa, SASEP delayed its recruitment.

We recruited two students this year, Zimbabweans Muzomkhulu Ncube and Laura Jele, who both began MEng degrees in Civil Engineering in fall 2022.

Both Muzomkhulu and Laura have successfully completed their first of two years of study. Towards the end of the fall semester, Muzomkhulu transferred to the MSc in Civil Engineering program to participate in a funded research project.

Administration

As of 2019-2020, SASEP funds started being administered by both Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) and the department in which the student is studying.

Previously, FGS handled the finances; however, it did not feel it had the administrative capacity to continue with this model.

FGS administers routine finances, such as tuition, while Departments handle airfare, visas, rent and any other costs. Recruitment, selection and all academic matters are handled by the SASEP Advisory Committee, currently chaired by David Black.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN STUDENT EDUCATION PROJECT REPORT

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Recruitment

SASEP is open to eligible candidates from historically disadvantaged groups who are citizens of the Commonwealth countries of Southern Africa (South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe).

We are very grateful to the DFA, DSU, and individual faculty and students for the many years of support they have provided to this program. It is a tangible manifestation of internationalisation that underscores the strengths and outlook of the Dalhousie community.

We hope that this community will continue to support SASEP as it adapts to the changing needs of Southern Africa, and contributes to the development of intellectual leaders in a region with exceptional potential but extraordinary challenges.



The 2023 African Heritage Month theme, Seas of Struggle – African Peoples from Shore to Shore, recognized the resiliency, strength, and determination of people of African descent from the shores of Africa to the shores of Nova Scotia -- with the Atlantic Ocean being the everlasting connection.

DFA Member Dr. Isaac Saney delivered a presentation as part of our Public Speaker Series, and we also highlighted DFA members in a social media campaign.



WUSC STUDENT REFUGEE PROGRAM REPORT

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Joy Galloway Jones, WUSC Faculty Advisor, Agricultural Campus

Agricultural Campus

Since 1985, the Faculty of Agriculture (formerly NSAC) has been sponsoring at least one student in the World University Services Canada – Student Refugee Program (WUSC-SRP). In fall 2022, Agau became our 32nd sponsored student.

Agau is originally from South Sudan and came to us from a camp in Uganda. He is studying Engineering, ran for Dalhousie's cross-country team, and was recently named to the Dean's List.

He has settled in nicely, in part due to the mentorship of Yuot, the SRP candidate from 2021. Yuot graduates this year with his Engineering Diploma and will be moving to the Halifax campus to complete his degree.

We are currently waiting for confirmation for the new student scheduled to join us in fall 2023. We believe we are able to support the refugee students well, in part due to the generosity of the DFA. Thank you one and all.

Note:

- In 2022-2023, DFA contributed a total of \$27,650 to WUSC-SRP:
 - In the spring term, we supported one student in Halifax.
 - In the fall and winter terms, we supported two students in Halifax and one on the Agricultural campus.

NOTE TO MEMBERS: There was no report submitted for WUSC in Halifax.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2023-2024 DFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Mark Lewis
Sir James Dunn Law Library
President



David Westwood
Health and Human Performance
President-Elect | Past President



Catrina Brown
Social Work
Second Vice-President



Dominic Silvio
Killam Memorial Library
Treasurer

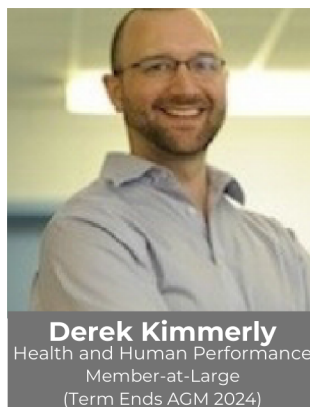
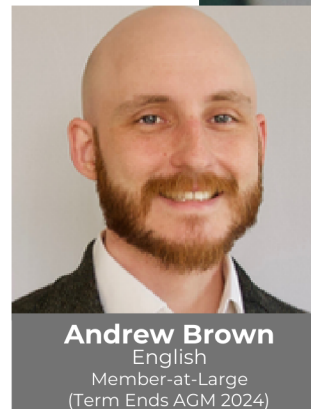
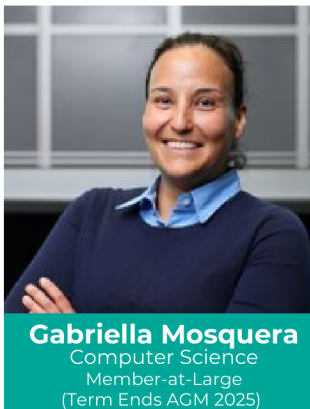
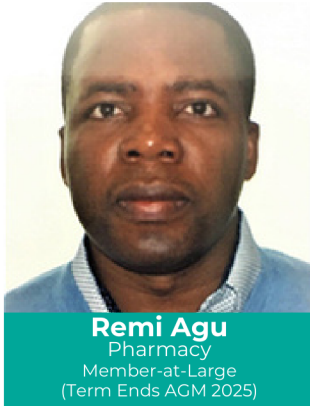


Amy Birchall
Animal Science and Aquaculture
Secretary



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2023-2024 DFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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The Non-Bargaining Unit member position is vacant. Thank you to the departing members of the Executive Committee for their contributions to the DFA:
Philip Bennett (Physics and Atmospheric Science)
Vincent Masse (French)

DFA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Tara Perrot (Psychology and Neuroscience), Chair
Andrew Brown (English)
Matt Numer (Health and Human Performance)

DEDICATED SERVICE AWARD

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Congratulations to **Dr. Julia Wright**, recipient of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) Dedicated Service Award.

Julia served as DFA President in 2019-2020, expertly leading the Association through the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic

To help us learn, share and move together through the pandemic, she spearheaded the establishment of the Student, Staff and Faculty Alliance, a group of people representing various institutions in Nova Scotia's post-secondary education sector.

Julia has also served on DFA's Bargaining Team, Executive Committee, Grievance Committee, Finance Committee, and the Association-Board Committee.

A tireless advocate for collegial governance and academic freedom, Julia presented as a panelist at CAUT Council on collegial governance, participated as a speaker for CAUT's Town Hall Series: COVID-19 and the Academic Job, presented at the Atlantic Canada Council of Faculty Associations on governance issues, and in early 2023, was a panelist for DFA's Public Forum on University Governance.

Thank you, Julia, for all the great work you've done for the DFA, CAUT and your academic colleagues.