

D
I
A
L
O
G
U
E**Annual General Meeting**
Monday, May 5, 2014
2:00 p.m.
Room 1014
Kenneth Rowe Bldg

Please bring your copy of this publication and the agenda,
minutes and budget documents emailed in April.
Or download them at www.dfa.ns.ca/general

Contents

President's Report	2
Grievance Committee Report	3
Dalhousie University Employment Equity Council	6
Dalhousie University Environmental Health and Safety Committee	6
Ad-hoc Committee on Child Care	7
Association-Board Committee	8
Communications Co-ordination Committee	9
Transportation & Security Committee	10
Dalhousie University Employee Benefits Committee	11
Dalhousie University-World University Service of Canada (WUSC) -- Student Refugee Sponsorship Program	12
Southern African Student Education Project	13
Pension Advisory Committee	15
Dalhousie University Pension Trust Fund/Retirees Pension Fund	18
DFA Executive Committee 2014-15	19

President's Report

By Kevin Grundy

Over the past 35 years, I have seen several changes in the senior management at Dalhousie. With each change I have shared a sense of optimism that improvements might follow. Often, such optimism has not been warranted, at least in the long term. So, here we go again.

A change in the President and Vice-President Administration and Finance this year represents a golden opportunity for the DFA to reshape our working relationship with senior administration. To date, President Florizone has shown a willingness to join with us in an effort to improve the labour environment at Dalhousie. Earlier in the year, he and Katherine Frank met with the DFA Executive and heard first hand our concerns around academic staffing levels, pensions, labour relations, research, governance and teaching. While some of our concerns were reflected in the "100 Days of Listening" document, others unfortunately were not.

At a subsequent meeting, we relayed our view of what a fresh start might look like. Central to that vision was concluding the next collective bargaining round quickly and efficiently. As our contribution to this goal, we undertook to bring to the table a trim package of proposals incorporating those issues of greatest importance to our Members, as well as engaging the services of an expert negotiator in Ray Larkin. This was well received and President Florizone indicated that the Board's team would likewise bring a focused set of proposals, including a monetary offer, at the earliest opportunity. Having served notice to bargain on April 1st, the next round of negotiations has officially begun and we will shortly have a sense of how fruitful our overtures have been.

Unlike my previous presidencies, both in negotiating years, this year was spent preparing for negotiations. As part of this preparation, our Contract Review Committee, ably led by President-elect Catrina Brown, consulted widely with our Members through meetings, surveys, individual discussions and submissions. My thanks to all who contributed to and participated

in this exercise. The results were handed over to our experienced negotiating team (Ray Larkin (Chief), Sue Budge, Shelley McKibbon, Barb MacLennan and Mandy Raining-Bird) for analysis and the development of proposals.

I urge you all to pay close attention to the negotiating bulletins that will soon come your way and take every opportunity to express your support for the negotiating team. The success of any round of collective bargaining is directly related to the unity and strength of the Membership. It is vitally important that your negotiators know they have backing of the Members just as much as they themselves have the Members' best interests at heart.

Although we are hoping for a quick resolution to bargaining in this round, we cannot say the same for another issue currently being negotiated. Despite the fact that Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) merged with Dalhousie to form the Faculty of Agriculture over a year ago, we are still mired in legal proceedings to determine who on the academic staff at NSAC will become members of the DFA. All of the NSAC staff in question are currently represented by the NSGEU. There is no disagreement with respect to the professorial staff; both sides agree that they should all belong to the DFA. The issue that remains unresolved concerns identifying those NSAC staff who perform duties that would have them ranked as Instructors at Dalhousie. The DFA maintains that many more of these individuals than the few identified by the Board should be ranked as Instructors. The case is currently before the Labour Board but, unfortunately, will not be resolved before I step down. I extend my thanks to Ray Larkin and Grant Vaughn of NSGEU for their patience and effort on behalf of these future members who find themselves twisting in the wind through no fault of their own.

There are, of course, many others I need to thank for their contributions of time, effort and skill in support of the association's activities over the last year and beyond. My continued involvement with the DFA has been in no small measure a result

of the pleasure I have derived from working with the DFA staff. Barb MacLennan and I first worked together on the bargaining team in 1990 and I, for one, have enjoyed every moment of our collaboration since. Over more recent times I have had the pleasure of working alongside Lynn Purves, Linda Robertson, Karen Janigan and her successor Donna Balkan. The DFA

is truly fortunate to be served by such friendly, professional and experienced people. Finally, on a personal note, I have enjoyed my career at Dalhousie and all the variety of experiences it has afforded me. It has been quite a ride. I'm looking forward to my time on the other side, the other side of the globe, that is. Feel free to visit.

Grievance Committee Report

Chair: Catrina Brown; Members: Andrea Chircop, Tim Juckes, David Mensink; *Ex officio*: Kevin Grundy,, Barbara MacLennan

In 2013-14, the Committee continued to work on some grievances that had been filed in previous years, as well as several new grievances.

Supplementary Employee Retirement Plan - Sexton

This grievance involves many former TUNS Members who elected to remain in the Public Service Superannuation Plan (PSSP) rather than transfer to the Dalhousie Pension Plan following amalgamation.

In 2004, the provincial legislature approved modification of the PSSP to allow for the payment into a Supplemental Employee Retirement Plan (SERP) on behalf of those members whose salaries were sufficiently high to result in pensions in excess of the Income Tax Act (ITA) maximum. These members, in turn, contributed commensurately higher premiums.

This legislation also afforded the right to certain employers to "opt out" of the SERP plan. Dalhousie was such an employer, and, in April 2006, then Assistant Vice President (Personnel Services) Michael Roughneen informed the PSSP of Dalhousie's intention to "opt out". It was not until some time later that the full impact of this decision became apparent. Not participating in SERP not only involved loss of the supplementary pension paid by Dalhousie (a relatively small amount for many of the grievors) but also resulted in a decrease in regular benefits by comparison to those of a comparable member of the Dalhousie plan. It is this disproportionate

reduction of regular benefits as a result of Dalhousie's decision to opt out that is at the core of this grievance.

During the informal grievance, the parties agreed on the financial impact to the grievors of Dalhousie's decision to withdraw from the SERP. Based on this analysis, a proposal for resolving the grievance was formulated and presented to the Board for consideration. The Board responded with an offer consisting of a monetary award equal to 10% of our proposal. Any Member accepting the offer would be required to retire at the earliest opportunity. Furthermore, Members already retired would not be compensated. The Members rejected the Board's offer unanimously. an official request from Dalhousie University.

This grievance went to arbitration May 31, 2012. The arbitrator found that the Board violated Article 36.01 of the Collective Agreement by failing to consider, at that time, the impact of their SERP decision on the Members affected. The Board was directed to reconsider their decision taking this information into account. Given the Board's position during the grievance and arbitration process in which they steadfastly refused to reverse their opt-out decision, the DFA thought it prudent to try another avenue suggested by our counsel, Ray Larkin.

Accordingly, Mr. Larkin approached the Province seeking a legislative change that would exempt Dalhousie from the SERP regulations. This would relieve the Board from SERP payment while

allowing PSSP members to avoid the so-called “lost pension” resulting from the application of the ITA maximum pension limit. Since this is the closest we could come to a “win-win” scenario, we invited the Board to join us in this endeavour, but they declined.

Toward the end of 2012, the Board presented the DFA with a compilation of documents that they intended to use in reconsidering their SERP decision and asked for our input. We asked them to put their decision-making on hold while our proposal to Government was under “active consideration”. We submitted a detailed analysis of the impact of the opt-out on a person-by-person basis.

During a meeting with President Florizone in 2013, the DFA urged him to join with us in a joint meeting with government officials. The President declined to attend but did indicate the Board would not object to an outcome that removed Dalhousie University from the SERP legislation. On October 21, 2013, DFA representatives met with government officials to discuss the impact of the SERP on the pension of the former TUNS faculty. They agreed they would raise the issue with the PSSP Board of Trustees who advised us that consideration of the matter would require an official request from Dalhousie University.

On December 19, the Dalhousie Board of Governors wrote to PSSP Trustees to advise they supported the approach taken by the DFA. On 19 February, the PSSP Trustees wrote to indicate they needed to further analyze the request and required further information before considering amending the legislation.

Policy grievance: sabbatical

In 2011, the DFA launched a policy grievance on the issue of sabbaticals, as the Administration’s current policy limits sabbatical leaves to tenure track and tenured faculty. The DFA believes this is inconsistent with past practice and violates the Collective Agreement’s provisions, particularly (1) Article 14.04, which defines appointments to the teaching staff (faculty) by rank rather than by appointment type, and (2) Article 30.15, which states that sabbaticals are

available to faculty members.

The informal grievance process came to an end when the Administration withdrew and indicated the DFA should move to the formal process if they wished to continue. The DFA submitted a formal grievance at the end of April, 2012.

In the spring of 2012, the President and the Director of Academic Staff Relations met with the DFA (Grievance Officer, President, and Professional Officer). The President suggested a solution could be found in consultation with the Deans, and suggested the Administration would likely have a proposal in the fall of 2012.

On April 18, 2013, President Traves wrote to letter proposing a resolution to the grievance. The DFA wrote to President Florizone on September 13 with a counter-proposal. President Florizone responded on October 15 denying the grievance at the formal stage. The DFA served notice to send the matter to arbitration. The selection of an arbitrator is currently under way.

Policy grievance: parking

Clause 32.10 of the Collective Agreement states that outdoor unreserved parking rates for DFA Members cannot be increased beyond the IMC without the agreement of the Association-Board Committee (ABC). Such an increase means the Parking Committee (now Transportation & Security Committee) must demonstrate that a larger increase is required due to increased operating costs.

In 2009, the DFA and the Board agreed on a method of calculation for snow removal costs. As part of that agreement, the Board acknowledged that any parking rate increase that required the approval of the ABC would not be implemented until the increase was approved by the ABC. In the spring of 2013 the Transportation & Security Committee was provided with incomplete information regarding parking costs. They sought further clarification from the Board but had not concluded their deliberation of the costs when the Board indicated it would seek a parking rate increase for September 2013.

The DFA initiated a grievance claiming the Board was in breach of the 2009 agreement. In the fall of 2013, the outdoor unreserved parking rates increased beyond the IMC without the approval of the ABC. The Transportation & Security Committee has concluded its consideration of the costs; we anticipate their recommendation to the ABC shortly. We understand the Transportation & Security Committee has initiated structural revisions to their committee procedures which should improve the review of parking rates in future. We anticipate this grievance will be resolved at the informal level.

Research Accountability Statement

In April 2013, the Office of Research Services announced that principal investigators would be required to sign a Research Accountability Statement prior to the funds being deposited into any grant account in Financial Services. Many of our Members expressed concern about the broad implications of the statement. In particular, they were concerned about the requirement to “assume personal responsibility for any unauthorized over-expenditure that are not the result of error by support service units, if all other reasonable alternatives to cover such expenditures have been exhausted.” The DFA commenced a grievance in May 2013. A representative group of DFA Members together with the DFA President and President-Elect met with Vice-President Crago to discuss the extensive list of concerns. The Vice-President was agreeable to a number of revisions and improvements.

There was discussion of future improvements to ensure that the large number of regulations and policies relating to research would be accessible to Members. This matter was resolved at the informal stage of the grievance process.

Chart of Accounts

The DFA filed a grievance on May 8, 2013, requesting information regarding a Chart of Accounts that was submitted to the provincial government during the Board’s negotiations for the Memorandum of Understanding between the province and Nova Scotia Universities. Although President Florizone agreed to provide the information, we have yet to receive it. The grievance remains at the informal stage.

Librarians posting

On November 14, 2013, the DFA filed an informal grievance with the University Librarian regarding DPMG Job postings for three positions, namely Managers for Acquisitions & Metadata; System Wide Resources and E-Resources Access & Subscriptions. The DFA claims a breach of Clause 14.18 of the Board/DFA Collective Agreement because the duties of the Collections Librarian and the Technical Services Librarian were being redistributed to DPMG staff who are not Librarian Members of the DFA bargaining unit.

Following a meeting with the University Librarian, the duties properly belonging to the Collections Librarian were removed from the DPMG managers responsibilities. However, the concerns relating to the Technical Services Librarian have yet to be resolved. We remain at the informal stage of the grievance procedures.

Librarian grievance

On March 14, 2014, the DFA filed an informal grievance with the University Librarian regarding postings for two positions: the Learning & Instruction Librarian and the Collections Strategy Librarian. The meeting at the informal level was held on April 25, 2014. We are hopeful this grievance will be resolved at the informal stage.

Dalhousie University Employment Equity Council

By Jacqueline Gahagan, DFA Representative

It is my pleasure to offer this update to you on my activities in relation to my role on the Employment Equity Council (EEC). Since joining the EEC in August of 2013, I have written a letter to the President of Dalhousie University asking for his support for making our campus a safe and welcoming campus for all students, faculty and staff (letter available upon request).

This letter was written in response to the campus rallies taking place on university campuses elsewhere in Canada that involved homophobic, racist and sexist chants. Sadly, it appears that these activities were known to some student leaders and administration who decided not to intervene. In addition to this letter, I met with the President Florizone in December to talk to him specifically about the need to be proactive in our efforts to ensure our campus is a safe and welcoming one for all, not only for recognized equity seeking groups, but also for LGBTQ populations.

In February, I attended both the Rainbow Health Ontario conference and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) National Equity and Diversity Forum.

Both events highlighted the need for greater awareness of the concerns of minority populations and offered some creative solutions to addressing these. The CAUT event targeted how our universities can often overlook minority issues and how we can collectively ensure these issues are brought forward in decision-making fora. The small group discussions also allowed for more in-depth conversations on actual strategies used to overcome issues of invisibility and erasure. Although mounting national strategies are beyond the capacity of CAUT, it was suggested that all faculty members can play a significant and proactive role in advancing issues of equity and diversity within the academy.

Although the Employment Equity Council (EEC) at Dalhousie had planned a meeting in March, I was unable to attend due to my sabbatical travel schedule. It is noteworthy that although the EEC was established through the Employment Equity Affirmative Action Policy, it focuses mainly on existing, recognized equity seeking groups. I have spoken with the Human Rights and Equity Advisor about the need to consider exploring other ways of ensuring our campus is a safe and welcoming learning and working environment for our LGBTQ faculty, students and staff.

Dalhousie University Environmental Health and Safety Committee

By Cindy Penney and Mark Obrovac, DFA Representatives

Role of the Safety Committee

The Dalhousie University Environmental Health and Safety Committee meets on the third Thursday of the month from 1:30-3:00 pm 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 Professorial and one Instructor member.

Information about the Environmental Health and Safety Committee can be found on the

Office of Environmental Health and Safety web site: <http://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/about-us/safety-committees/joint-occupational-health-and-safety-committee.html>

The committee's purpose is stated as: "The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee is 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 co-operation with staff, faculty, students, and the University Administration, the Committee assists the University in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy environment."

Summary of events for 2013/2014

Tammy Chouinard (Dentistry) became Chair of the Committee in October 2013, taking over this role from Ian Blair.

Jerry Aguinaga was appointed Director of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety on June 20, 2013, taking over this position from Ray Ilson.

A new policy for personal protective equipment (PPE) in research laboratories and teaching labs was introduced by the EH&S office. This includes the mandatory wearing of lab coats and gloves

in laboratories whenever there is a potential for exposure to hazardous materials. To avoid contamination issues, PPE are not to be worn in public spaces.

A new Laboratory Chemical Safety Manual was introduced by EH&S this year. As per policy outlined in this manual, all laboratory supervisors are responsible for conducting annual inspections in laboratories. Inspection report forms are required to be sent to EH&S annually.

The Committee presents an Annual Environmental Health and Safety Award to recognize significant accomplishments in campus environmental health and safety. In 2013 the award went to Dr. Gerald Johnston (Faculty of Medicine), Professor Mark Obrovac (Department of Chemistry), and Mr. Ian Wagschal (Department of Facilities Management).

Ad-hoc Committee on Child Care

By David L. Jakeman, Committee Chair

The following motion was passed at the AGM in May 2013. "That the Executive establish an ad-hoc committee to forge partnerships to investigate and take action to bring additional high quality child care facilities to the Dalhousie community."

At the executive meeting on January 14, 2014, Motion 11.3.2 was passed appointing S. Budge, S. Brownlee, S. McKibbin, D. Jakeman and A. Thompson to the Ad-hoc Committee on Child Care.

Subsequently the child care committee met. It proposed a Motion to the executive meeting on January 30, 2014. The Motion was discussed in camera. Nothing was reported out of camera. On March 31, a written legal opinion from Ray Larkin was presented by the DFA President to the executive on the Motion. It was discussed in camera. Nothing was reported out of camera. The ad-hoc committee met with Katherine Frank and Jasmine Walsh on April 8 and a fruitful discussion ensued.

A DFA executive meeting was organized for April 23 with Ray Larkin in attendance. Two further Motions were presented by the ad-hoc committee on childcare to the DFA executive and discussed in camera.

The following Motion was approved at that meeting "In the spirit of Motion 11.1 passed at the 2013 DFA AGM, we recommend to the 2014 Annual General Meeting to pursue further investigation of expanding and financing childcare capacity in cooperation with organizations such as the non-profit University Children's Centre and the Dalhousie Administration." The ad-hoc committee plans to meet with the University Administration in May 2014.

Association-Board Committee

Mark Lewis (DFA Co-Chair Law Library); (Tim Juckes, DFA Nominee, Department of Psychology & Neuroscience); Barbara MacLennan (DFA Nominee, DFA Professional Officer); Lynn Purves (DFA Observer, DFA Administrative Officer)

The functions of the Association-Board Committee (ABC) are set out in Article 8 of the DFA-Board Collective Agreement: The ABC considers matters of interpretation or application of the Collective Agreement. It has three nominees each from the DFA and Board, and operates by concurrent majority. In practice the agenda of the ABC largely concerns 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.

In 2013-2014, Jasmine Walsh (Director, Academic Staff Relations) was the Board Co-Chair and Robert Summerby-Murray (Dean, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences) and Sandy Logan (Academic HR Administrator) were Board Nominees, Katherine Frank (AVP of Human Resources) served as acting Board Co-Chair from October 2013 through February 2014.

The ABC agendas are often lengthy and most agenda items relate to matters such as waivers of advertising and extensions for limited-term appointments, extensions to time-lines, appointment renewals and special salary increases. As long as proper information is provided the committee is able to deal with most matters in a thorough and efficient manner. When proper information is lacking the business of ABC can drag on.

Last year we had reported that the awarding of Special Salary Increases (SSIs) had been causing some difficulties at the ABC. We can now report that the process has been streamlined and complications have been reduced.

Another area where the ABC has been working to streamline procedures revolves around pregnancy/adoption leaves that might overlap with a sabbatical; both sides of ABC have been

working to resolve complications that have arisen and we believe that we will soon have final text for this agreement.

As per usual in this report, we would like to remind you of the assistance you can provide when serving on local hiring committees in relation to the issue of Waivers of Advertising coming late to the ABC (i.e. after Members have already taken up their appointment). As you might imagine, this causes difficulties at ABC. In short, when serving on these committees pay attention to the timelines that are necessary for all the paperwork to be completed following the proper procedure. Also, pay attention to the guidelines that are provided by HR when serving on these committees.

The nominees to ABC also receive a copy of a monthly "Staff Matters" document which details all academic staff changes – appointments, promotions, tenure, sabbaticals etc. The name and format of this document has changed in the past year to AAAR which stands for Academic Appointment Activity Report. We examine this document, together with supporting documentation, query missing documentation and, sometimes, note that the Collective Agreement is about to be violated if a proposed action is taken. In those circumstances, we insist that the matter be brought to the next ABC meeting to be dealt with properly. Steps have been taken to streamline this process; however, in some instances the problem of missing documentation persists longer than we are comfortable with.

Of course, there will always be differences of opinion at ABC about how some matters should be treated, or how the Collective Agreement should be interpreted. When such differences of opinion occur, the nominees from both sides work in a professional and respectful manner in the effort to resolve those situations.

Communications Co-ordination Committee

By Catrina Brown, Committee Chair

In 2012-13, the DFA Executive Committee established a Communications Co-ordination Committee to work closely with the Executive to fulfill its strategic goals. The committee's primary roles are to make recommendations to the Executive regarding communications strategies and policy, feed into pre-bargaining surveys and other communications-related activities and provide direction to the Communications Officer in the implementation of communications goals and objectives.

While the committee is still in the process of drafting its terms of reference, it has been meeting on an ongoing basis during 2013-14. The committee currently consists of Catrina Brown (Chair), Jason Haslam and Shelley McKibbin, and there are plans to recruit additional members in the coming year. DFA Communications Officer Donna Balkan sits on the committee *ex officio*.

The year's communications highlights included:

- The continued dissemination of the DFA's Review of Dalhousie University Finances, which was published toward the end of 2012-13.
- The inauguration of the DFA "Issues in Higher Education Discussion Series", aimed at sensitizing the university community and the public to issues of concern to the DFA. Two events in the series were planned for in 2013-14: a January 23 panel discussion entitled *Perils & Promises: corporate culture in academia* with Dr. Marjorie Stone and Dr. Eric Newstadt; and a March 26 public lecture by author and journalist Linda McQuaig entitled *Profit U: Who controls our universities... and why you should care*. However, due to a major snowstorm which shut down the university, the Linda McQuaig lecture was cancelled and rescheduled for April 30. The Communications Committee is in the process of planning additional events in this series for

the fall of 2014.

- Publication of 29 news items and 25 blog posts on the DFA website.
 - Increased activity on the DFA Facebook page and Twitter feed. As of March 31, 2013, the DFA had a total of 462 followers on Twitter and the numbers are steadily increasing.
 - In support of the Contract Review Committee, distribution of two pre-bargaining surveys, one on salaries and one on working conditions.
 - In February 2014, the hiring of Donna Balkan as the DFA's part-time (60%) Communications Officer to replace Karen Janigan, who had announced her resignation.
-

Transportation & Security Committee

By Gwendolyn MacNairn, DFA Representative

This committee meets on a monthly basis. The current Co-Chairs are Steve Andrews (the DPMG Rep) and Kathie Wheadon-Hore (the Dalplex Rep). A new committee member was added to represent the Agricultural Campus.

Transportation highlights

The SmartTrip Bus EPass program was renewed for a second year. This program aims to reduce the number of vehicles being driven onto our campuses. Although the number of staff and students that bus, bike, or walk have increased, we still have more cars that need to be parked on campus than the number of parking spaces available. Ongoing building projects continue to impact the total number of spaces available. This year, the parking lot on the corner of University Avenue and Summer Street was closed, to make way for the Collaborative Health Education Building.

During the previous two years, it was observed and documented that spaces in the “Reserved” lots were never fully occupied. This generated a new initiative that was implemented in September for “Reserved” parking only; your permit was issued for a specific “lot” but not for a numbered “spot” within that lot. This meant that several more permits were sold for each lot, or for a specific level within a parkade. Although some permit holders were concerned about the viability of this new policy, it should be noted that there was never a time when a space could not be found. Moving forward, the question I am asked most often is by how much are the parking permits going to be raised for next year, after all the storms we have had this winter? Snow removal costs are averaged for the past three years, and we have now had two sequential years where the annual operating cost have increased higher than the IMC can accommodate.

The increased parking rates for 2014/2015 will be posted online during the summer (<http://www.dal.ca/dept/facilities/parking-at-dal/rates>.

[html](http://www.dal.ca/dept/facilities/parking-at-dal/rates)) and the online Parking Pass system can be used to issue and renew your parking permits (<https://parkingpermit.dal.ca/parkingpass>). New permits or renewals cannot be purchased until all outstanding fines are paid.

Security highlights

If you need assistance to deal with a security situation or a medical emergency, we need to remind everybody on campus that a call to 911 is not appropriate. We have too many buildings with peculiar locations on campus that are not easy to find. For example, an emergency reported in the “CS” building could mean “Central Services” or “Computer Science”. To prevent a delayed response time, you must instead call 494-4109 (in Halifax) and 893-4190 (in Truro). Dalhousie’s security staff will relay your needs to an appropriate responder.

Dalhousie University Employee Benefits Committee

By David Mensink, DFA Representative

The Employee Benefits Committee (EBC) is a joint committee composed of members from the Board, Senate, DPMG, NSGEU (Locals 77, 99), and the DFA. The committee meets regularly, approximately bimonthly, throughout the year. Committee members use their experience with Plan members to provide ideas, guidance and feedback in order to effectively administer the Plan. Major objectives of the committee are to:

1. Develop health strategies, e.g. wellness.
2. Ensure that the plan is attractive and competitive compared to relevant employers across Canada.
3. Promote employee knowledge of Plan selections and cost management.
4. Provide consistent benefit coverage across all employee groups, as feasible.

Specifically, the committee oversees the administration of various employee benefits including Group Life Benefits, Survivor Income Benefits, Long-Term Disability, Major Medical Insurance, Health Travel Coverage, Dental Plan, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, Optional Life Insurance, and Voluntary Personal Accidental Insurance. This year, the committee was chaired by Mr. Lee Crowell and the DFA representatives were Dr. David Mensink and Dr. Robert Beiko.

Two key decisions, supported by the DFA executive, were made during the current year:

1. Beginning April 1, 2014, drug coverage under the Dalhousie Medical Plan was approved to extend to members of the Plan who are 65 or over with an FTE of 50% or greater. Previously, these members were required to join the Nova Scotia Seniors' Pharmacare Program for drug coverage and pay required premiums to Pharmacare. Since more employees continue to work past the age of 65, it made sense to allow all employees – throughout their career – to benefit from the comprehensive drug coverage provided by the the Dalhousie Medical Plan.

2. Employee Benefits program renewals: Premium Rate changes were approved effective April 1, 2014:

- Group Life Benefits: decrease of 19% (employees will see no change to their contribution as the Board pays 100% of this premium)
- Long-Term Disability: increase the premium by 12%.
- Major Medical Insurance: decrease the premium by 2%
- Health Travel Coverage: increase premium by 25%. Dental Plan: decrease premium by 2.3 %.
- Survivor Income Benefits, Accidental Health and Dismemberment, Optional Life Insurance, and Voluntary Personal Accident Insurance: no change.

For more detailed information about these changes, go to the Human Resources section of the Dalhousie University web site, <http://www.dal.ca/dept/hr.html>.

The DFA Executive voted in favor of a cross-experience rating for the Dalhousie health plan suggested by the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners (ADRP). In essence, the ADRP proposal was to increase the premiums of all active members by a small amount, approximately \$1.33 single and \$1.64 family, to “subsidize” the premiums of ADRP members and thereby, to reduce their rates from \$27.60 to \$14.77 single and from \$55.20 to \$39.16 family. The EBC Committee will vote on the ADRP cross-experience rating proposal at a later date.

Dalhousie University-World University Service of Canada (WUSC) -- Student Refugee Sponsorship Program

By Theresa Ulicki, Faculty Advisor-DFA Representative

The DFA participates in the Dalhousie University-WUSC Student Refugee Sponsorship Program (SRSP), which sponsors refugee students to come study at Dalhousie. Other partners include the Administration, Student Union, Bookstore, Alumni Association and Aramark. Together, we sponsor one or two students a year for an initial twelve month period. The Dal committee has sponsored over 50 students since first joining the program in 1981.

These students come from refugee camps where Canadian aid workers and their affiliates identified them as having sufficient ability and academic preparation to succeed in Canadian universities. This year WUSC-Ottawa will also begin sponsoring refugee students from Syria and Iraq. The process of selection is highly competitive and takes from eighteen to twenty-four months. Upon arrival in Halifax, the students begin the difficult process of adjusting to a new country and culture, and new academic demands, with the assistance of the committee members.

This year we had only one student arrive in Halifax, as the second student was unable to come due to medical reasons. She will be joining us in September. The student we are currently sponsoring, Ayan Mohamed Sharif, was born in Somalia, but has lived almost all of her life in asylum in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya.

With a few exceptions, the Dalhousie WUSC SRP has sponsored male students in the past, but we have sponsored a female student each of the last two years. Ayan is currently registered in the Faculty of Science and is hoping to enter Engineering. She is adjusting well. The committee will soon be helping her file her taxes, register for summer classes, put together a cv, find accommodation for the summer and next fall and we are in the process of trying to find part-time employment for the summer

months and fill out student loan applications. In the meantime, the committee is also beginning the process of ranking candidates to bring two new students here for the next academic year.

The Dalhousie WUSC Local Committee has been busy this year. In addition to recruiting a few new members, the Committee raised awareness about WUSC and refugee issues through events such as Shine a Light. The Dalhousie History Department hosted a curling bonspiel, the proceeds of which went to the WUSC local committee.

Expenses to run the WUSC SRSP have increased substantially. The cost of sponsoring a student increased from \$3500 to \$5000 per student this year. This is the second increase in the last two years. This increase, along with other costs, have forced the committee to reconsider if it can afford to sponsor two students each year. The committee realizes it needs to increase its fundraising efforts in order to keep up with these costs.

The program continues to do well, thanks in no small part to the generous and varied contributions of so many members of the University community and not least those of the DFA membership. If DFA members would like to become personally involved, they can assist with the students' orientation to Canada through offering to host them, showing them around Halifax on holidays or weekends, helping them in their studies and encouraging students to become involved. If you wish to help or need more information, please feel free to contact the committee at wusc@dal.ca.

Southern African Student Education Project (SASEP)

By Gary Kynoch, DFA Representative

OVERVIEW

SASEP Purpose

The purpose of the Southern African Student Education Project (SASEP) is to contribute to the development of Southern Africa by offering black students – a historically disadvantaged group – a full scholarship to pursue graduate studies at the Master's or PhD level at Dalhousie University. Originally aimed specifically at South Africa, SASEP has now been extended to students in the Southern African region.

SASEP covers the entire cost of student placements, including tuition, round trip airfare, a monthly stipend for living expenses, medical coverage and a modest allowance for books and warm clothing. The number of placements available is entirely dependent on successful fund-raising efforts, and the length of academic study of scholarship recipients. In the past, annual donations to SASEP were roughly equal to the cost of supporting one student in full-time study per year.

As of April 2014, thirteen students from South Africa have been awarded graduate degrees under SASEP. This year we are offering places to two students, one from Zimbabwe for an MA in Political Science and the other from Botswana for a PhD in Economics.

History

SASEP has been operating at Dalhousie since 1987. Initially, the South African Education Trust Fund (SAETF) in Ottawa matched all funds which SASEP raised. 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.

Currently, contributions are made on an annual basis by the Dalhousie Student Union, the Dalhousie Faculty Association and individual

faculty and staff members. The DSU contribution is a result of an agreement in the spring of 1990, which annually supports a \$1.00 contribution to SASEP from each full-time student at Dalhousie.

SASEP is further supported by the university administration, which has agreed to waive international student differential fees for SASEP students on an ongoing basis. International Research & Development (formerly Lester Pearson International) provided administrative and academic support for the program until 2010/11, when primary responsibility for the program was taken over by an Advisory Committee of DFA Faculty members who all share an interest in Southern Africa.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Administration

Recruitment, selection and all academic matters are handled by the SASEP Advisory Committee, currently chaired by Dr. Gary Kynoch. Support services for SASEP students, including visas, health insurance and housing, are to be provided by International Student & Exchange Services. International Research & Development continues to monitor the project's finances.

Recruitment

In light of our difficulty in attracting applications from sufficiently qualified South African candidates over the past several years, we took a pause from recruitment in 2012-13. At last year's DFA annual meeting we proposed to change the name of the project to the Southern African Student Education Project and to broaden the pool of eligible candidates to students 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 found over the past several years that the South African students from whom we received applications did not typically have the academic qualifications necessary for success in Dalhousie graduate programs, while at the same time we had to turn away a number of highly qualified candidates who were citizens of other Southern African countries – almost all of which have significantly greater educational needs than South Africa – who heard about the program while pursuing their studies in South African universities.

Given both the limited demand from South African students, and the apparent demand, and need, from students in other countries in the region, we proposed that the program's terms of reference be changed to allow us to offer places to students from other Southern African countries. This change was approved by the DFA in spring and formalized in September 2013. We launched a new recruiting call and competition in fall 2013 for the 2014-15 academic year. The expansion of our mandate was justified by the extraordinary number of queries and applications generated in comparison to past years. We received 43 MA applications and 18 PhD applications for the 2014/15 academic year. The two applicants to whom we have made offers are both stellar students – multiple award winners with exemplary academic records.

Finances

Due to our failure to attract suitable South African students for several years, while still receiving contributions from the DFA and DSU, SASEP currently has approximately \$112,000 in available funds that will increase to \$128,000 by the end of this year. This accumulation has enabled us to make a commitment to two students this year, but once this nest egg is depleted current funding levels are not sufficient to support even one new student per year. The combined contributions from the DFA and DSU come to roughly \$22,500 annually - \$7,500 from the DFA and \$15,000 from the DSU. The annual cost of supporting a single SASEP scholarship is approximately \$30,000 (depending on the program), and these costs will continue to increase with tuition hikes, rising prices for

air travel and increased costs of living. The immediate situation is not critical because of the accumulation of funds, but as we move forward we will not be in a position to offer a single scholarship annually and if we accept another PhD student, recruitment will have to cease for a number of years. A five year commitment to a PhD requires in the neighbourhood of \$150,000.

Our expanded mandate has also resulted in an increased workload, and we would like to allocate SASEP funds for the hiring of a student assistant each year that we recruit. The student would work with the chair of the committee and would be responsible for filing applications, along with routine communication with applicants and referees concerning the details of the scholarship and the status of the files. SASEP currently has no administrative support and a student assistant would make the workload much more manageable.

With these issues in mind, we are planning to approach the DFA executive to request an increase in funding for the program.

We are very grateful for the support Dalhousie Faculty and students have provided to this program over the course of many years. 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 (in however limited a way) to the development of intellectual leaders in a region with exceptional potential but extraordinary challenges.

Pension Advisory Committee

By Faye Woodman and Kevin Grundy, DFA Representatives

The Pension Advisory Committee (PAC) is a parity committee with equal representation of the Board and unions. The Chair is Faye Woodman and the Vice-Chair is Katherine Frank, Assistant Vice-President, Human Resources. Kevin Grundy is the other DFA representative on the Committee.

This spring, Faye Woodman will finish her four-year term as Vice-Chair and then Chair of PAC, but will continue as your representative on the Committee. Kevin Gundy will permanently retire and will be replaced by Sarah Bradley from the Law Faculty and formerly Chair of the Benefits Committee.

The Dalhousie Pension Plan

Finally, after several years of difficulties, the Dalhousie Plan has experienced a reduction in both its going concern and solvency deficits. Just recently, a rough estimate of the going-concern position as of January 31st of this year showed a going concern funded ratio of 92%, a slight increase from last years funded ratio of 91%. This is more significant than it appears at first blush since the latest estimate reflects the application of new mortality tables as required by the Canadian Institute of Actuaries. These tables predict greater longevity for retirees and are expected to increase Plan liabilities by 5-8%.

The solvency funded ratio of the Plan is estimated to have improved to approximately 85% from 74.9% last year. The attainment of a 85% funded ratio means that the Plan will not be required by legislation to undertake annual valuation filing but may resume a three year cycle. It also eliminates the requirement to withhold about 30% of the funds to be transferred to terminating (but not retiring) members for a period equal to the lesser of five years and the elimination of the solvency deficit. Besides the inconvenience of not receiving the whole amount of their pension refund in a timely manner, terminating members only have a have a right to interest of a little over 2%.

Annual Pension Plan Report

Dalhousie University Pension Administration (the Board of Governors (BOG)) has partnered with the consulting firm Mercer in the development an annual report to members for the 2012-2013 Plan year. The report will include information on the financial health of the Plan for that year, governance and benefits.

PAC was initially slated to preview this document, but the BOG bypassed PAC and presented the Report to Dalhousie Plan members via a link through Dal News.

Joint Committee

In the last round of collective bargaining the DFA agreed to participate with other employee groups on a joint committee to examine the Dalhousie Pension Plan. In late winter the acting VP Finance, Ian Nason, requested the constitution of this committee. The committee has not met as yet.

Indexation

As of this date, the retirees suffering the greatest indexing shortfalls are around 16.5% behind the level of increases in the consumer price index (cost of living). The good news is that it is expected that retirees' pensions will be indexed next year. However, in view of the deficiency from previous years, PAC established a subcommittee to study the issue comprised of a representative from Eckler Ltd., Jeff Turnbull; the BOG, Lee Crowell; and the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners, Paul Huber. The subcommittee was not able to reach any agreement.

It was argued on behalf of the retirees that the present system of indexation is dysfunctional in a number of ways. Under the Dalhousie Plan indexation takes place automatically (current year indexation) and on the exercise of discretion by the trustees of the Retirees Trust Fund (RTF) (to make up the non-indexation of previous years).

In order for automatic indexing to occur two conditions must be met. First, the rate of return of the RTF must exceed a benchmark amount of 5.05%. Secondly, lower than benchmark returns for the Plan in previous years must be made up by retaining the excess returns in the Plan.

Significantly, the excess applied to indexing in a year cannot exceed the CPI less the benchmark of 6.05%. Any excess above the CPI also cannot be applied to future low returns. Instead indexing must be suspended and can only be caught up through discretionary indexing allowed by the trustees.

Catch-up indexing for years for which there was no indexing of retirees' pensions can only be paid at the discretion of the trustees of RTF, if

- the RTF plan has a surplus, and
- then in amount that does not exceed one-half of the surplus.

Recently, the trustees of the RTF (the majority of whom are appointed by the BOG) have declined to exercise their power to order catch up indexing on the basis of ensuring the financial stability of the RTF. This is certainly within the trustees' power if the decision is based on appropriate considerations. It should be noted, however, that any indexing of retirees' pensions will reduce the surplus in the RTF and hence increase the overall deficit of the Plan. This is because the Pension Trust Fund (PTF) (the active members' fund) has a deficit. Since the funds in the RTF and PTF are aggregated to determine the required contributions by the BOG to the Plan, the effect of discretionary indexing, at this time, will be to force the BOG to increase its special payments to the Plan. It is estimated that for every one million dollars of discretionary indexing paid to retirees, the annual BOG contribution to the Plan will be increased by \$100,000.

In effect, the retirees are shouldering a substantial portion of the risk associated with the funding of the Pension Plan in the form of non-indexation.

Thus is not correct to suggest that only the BOG carries the risk of under performance in the Plan in the form of increased contributions. Retirees also are affected through non-indexation of their pensions.

DFA active members should consider carefully the implications of this model for their future retirement security.

A matter of interest: Pension Plan for grant paid research Employees

In 2010 a policy was introduced which would no longer permit Researchers to offer their employees membership in the Dalhousie Pension Plan. In any case, significant numbers of their employees were denied any pension coverage due to Researchers' oversight or reluctance to pay the high cost.

The administration this year has introduced a new defined contribution pension plan for grant paid employees.

Phased retirement and other methods of slipping away

Phased retirement

New legislation has been introduced (not yet enacted) in Nova Scotia to enable pension plans to implement a program of phased retirement. Generally, phased retirement is a mechanism through which an employee can reduce their workload after a certain age, say 60, draw a pension to make up, at least in part, for their reduced salary while at same the time continuing to contribute to their pension plan and accruing benefits at percentage working for their eventual full retirement at 65.

To date, the Dalhousie Pension Plan has not introduced any provisions which would permit its members to take phased retirement. It is likely that a phased retirement program would be fairly costly for the Plan, as most early retirement benefits are. In addition it is unlikely that the BOG would agree for such arrangements unless approval of each applicant was at the discretion of the BOG.

Special Reduced Workload Arrangement (RWA)

DFA members are reminded that the pension plan contains provisions for a reduced workload (RWA). Members on a RWA (and reduced salary) only contribute to the Plan in proportion to their reduced salary. The BOG makes up the difference so the member is credited with pensionable service as if they were working full time. This is limited to members who are not yet 71. The member cannot receive their pension while on a RWA. Each claimant must be approved by the BOG.

Retire and re-hired on a part-time basis

Finally, some members who have retired have also negotiated post-retirement contracts of up to three years in their respective faculties. There is no requirement to reduce one's workload although most do. During this arrangement, the member can receive their pension, but cannot continue to contribute to the Plan and to accrue future pension benefits. Employees with a 50% or more FTE will be members of the DFA on a limited term ontract covered by the collective agreement.

A retirement guide to your pension and your retirement.

A retirement guide to one's pension and retirement is being prepared by the Dalhousie Pension Plan Administrative Group. It should be available later this year.

The next round of collective bargaining

In his "100 Days" report and in various pronouncements, President Florizone has indicated that the BOG sees it as a priority to reduce the cost (in the name of "sustainability") of the Dalhousie Pension Plan. Recent pressures to reduce benefits/or increase the cost to employees, or both, under the Plan come at a time when, as indicated previously, the financial situation of the Plan is looking better. Further, the Dalhousie Pension is in many aspects a model of what a defined benefit Plan should be. It is competently and honestly run with employee oversight. The benefits are modest. The average pension paid under the Plan is about \$33,000 a year. There is an absence of "perks" which has exacerbated the difficulties of some Plans. No one group gets special benefits and the early

retirement benefits -- often a costly proposition -- are very limited. The Plan is not indexed as af right. Rather, indexation depends on a number of conditions that severely -- and some may say too severely -- limit the ability to index pensions.

The Dalhousie Pension Plan is a good Plan, but it is not by any stretch of the imagination a "rich" or "gold-plated" Plan. It is a modest Plan in which all members of the Dalhousie Community participate and which deserves to be preserved intact for both those of us getting older who can finally recognize its value and for our younger scholars who deserve our support.

DFA Office Hours

September-May

Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(except university holidays)

June- August

Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(except university holidays)

The DFA office is located at 6280 South Street.
Telephone: (902) 494-3722
Email: dfa@dal.ca

Dalhousie University Pension Trust Fund/Retirees' Pension Fund

By Ron Pink, QC., DFA Trustee

I am pleased to provide you with my report to the Dalhousie Faculty Association and its membership with respect to the investment under the Dalhousie Pension Trust Fund and the Dalhousie Retirees Trust Fund.

The Investment Trustees is now chaired by Mr. George McLellan, a member of the Board of Governors. He has continued the tradition of the Committee, since I have been a member, to provide for free and open discussion and debate on all subject matters. The Committee is well served by the staff in the Investment Office of Dalhousie namely Cohn Spinney and his team as well as by the consultant of the Committee, Robert Mitchell. Both Mr. Spinney and Mr. Mitchell have a long history with the Plan and are familiar with all its details and operations and work diligently on behalf of the beneficiaries to ensure adequate results.

All discussions of the Committee centre around one principle — how can we ensure the most prudent returns for the Plan members.

For the year ending December 31, 2013, the Pension Trust Fund had a rate of return of 16.43% and the Retirees Trust Fund had a rate of return of 14.3%. These levels of returns are very “healthy” but are particularly consistent with the investment strategy of the Committee, its policies and its asset allocations. The Committee is most concerned about obtaining the best rate of return within the parameters of the Statement of Investment Policies and Goals of the Committee.

The Committee has recently had a discussion about taking into account environmental and social governance factors in its review of investment opportunities. The Committee has recently considered amending its Statement of Investment Policies and Goals to reflect these matters when considering new investments.

The actuary to the Pension Plan has advised the Plan that the new “life expectancy tables” which will take effect before the next valuation will have a significant impact on the Plan. It will result, in essence, in an 8% increase to Plan liabilities. Simply put, retirees are living longer and it takes more money to fund their pensions.

Over the past 10 years, the annualized Fund returns are as follows:

Pension Trust Fund

Fund Return — 6.77

Funding Requirement — 6.70

Retirees Trust Fund

Fund Return — 6.92

Fund Requirement — 5.05

As you can see from the foregoing, the Funds continue to meet their objectives.

It is a pleasure to serve on the Investment Committee on your behalf. I believe that you can be assured that the decision making of the Committee is always in the best interests of the members and the fiduciary duties of the members of the Committee are always reflecting upon what is in the best interests of the beneficiaries.

I trust the foregoing meets your approval.

DFA Executive Committee 2014-2015

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Catrina Brown (Chair), Kevin Grundy & Christine Moore

The following people have been elected by acclamation for positions on the 2014-2015 DFA Executive Committee and will take office at the end of the Annual General Meeting

President-Elect: David Mensink (Counselling and Psychological Services)

Secretary: Cindy Penney (Physiology & Biophysics)

Treasurer: Pierre Stevens (Mathematics & Statistics)

Members-at-Large *Term Ending April 2016:*

Shelley McKibbin (W. K. Kellogg Health Sciences Library)

Darren Abramson (Philosophy)

Cedric Dawkins (Rowe School of Business)

Heather Andreas (Chemistry)

They will join the following people on the 2014-2015 DFA Executive Committee:

President: Katrina Brown (Social Work)

Past President: Kevin Grundy (Chemistry)

Members-at-Large *Term Ending April 2015*

Andrea Chircop (Nursing)

Ellen Hickey (Human Communication Disorders)

David Jakeman (Pharmacy)

Jack Novack (Continuing Education)

Thomas Trappenberg (Computer Science)

The Second Vice-President, Non-Bargaining Unit and one Member-at-Large positions remain vacant. A call for nominations for these positions will go out in May.



**DATE: MONDAY,
MAY 5**

**TIME: 4 PM
(FOLLOWING AGM)**

**LOCATION: EARL OF
DALHOUSIE PUB
(BASEMENT OF
UNIVERSITY CLUB)**

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION:
DFA@DAL.CA**

YOU'RE INVITED!

TO CELEBRATE KEVIN GRUNDY'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DALHOUSIE FACULTY ASSOCIATION

Kevin Grundy has been active in the Dalhousie Faculty Association for three decades and is stepping down as President at the 2014 Annual General Meeting. He will be leaving the DFA and Dalhousie in May to return to his native New Zealand. Let's raise a glass in Kevin's honour on Monday, May 5 at 4 p.m., immediately following the AGM.