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E**Annual General Meeting**  
**Monday, May 4, 2015**  
**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.

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## President's Report

*By Catrina Brown*

When I became President at last May's AGM, the DFA was looking forward to a potentially challenging year. We were about to embark on bargaining for a new collective agreement, with the memories of our near-strike in 2012 still fresh in our minds.

At the same time, we were awaiting a decision from the Nova Scotia Labour Board which would finalize the inclusion of some 90 Faculty of Agriculture academic staff in the DFA Bargaining Unit – nearly two years after the merger which had made the Nova Scotia Agricultural College part of Dalhousie.

While the Labour Board's decision in July 2014 confirmed the integration of the new Agriculture Members into the DFA, there was still a major task ahead: to negotiate their transition to our collective agreement.

Both the collective bargaining process and the negotiation of the Agriculture transition came to a successful conclusion. The Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Faculty of Agriculture was concluded in October 2014. And for only the second time in 25 years, the DFA negotiated a new collective agreement without resorting to conciliation; the new three-year contract was ratified in early January 2015 with the strong support of DFA Members.

Part of the reason for our success was the dedication and hard work of our Bargaining Team. For the first time, the DFA hired a professional negotiator, labour lawyer Ray Larkin, who did an outstanding job on our behalf. I would like to personally thank Ray and the other members of the team: Sue Budge, Mandy Kay-Raining Bird, Shelley McKibbin and Barbara MacLennan, as well as Agriculture Members Debbie Mellish, Margie Tate and John Stackhouse, who assisted with the transition discussions.

While bargaining was the DFA's major preoccupation over the past year, we also stepped up our activity on the advocacy front. In early 2014, we had started an Issues in

Higher Education discussion series in an effort to sensitize both the Dalhousie committee and the broader public to some of the major issues of concern to faculty. In 2014-15, we held four public events as part of this series, dealing with such issues as corporatization, program prioritization and academic freedom. In October 2014, we joined forces with several other groups to sponsor a panel discussion around contract academic staff in recognition of Fair Employment Week.

We also participated in the provincial government's consultation process around the future of Nova Scotia's universities, attending focus group sessions, submitting a written brief and responding to the government's release of the consultation results. We expanded our links with student groups and sister unions as part of the Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Education Coalition, and I was a speaker at both a panel discussion on student debt and the February 4 Student Day of Action. Most recently, we have focused on the campaign against Bill 100, the Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act.

We also created an Equity Committee to advise the DFA Executive Committee on equity and diversity issues, participated in discussions around the Strategic Initiative and Diversity and Inclusiveness and responded to the release of the Belong report, applauding the intent of the report while expressing concern about recommendations calling for mandatory diversity training and a required "statement of commitment" to be signed by faculty. In March 2015, I spoke on a panel on equity issues at the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) Forum for Chief Negotiators, where I talked about both the Belong report and the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Awards, which were the subject of a Letter of Understanding in our new collective agreement.

One of my first official acts as President, immediately following the 2014 AGM, was to honour Kevin Grundy for his more than 30 years of service to the DFA. It was a privilege for me to succeed Kevin as President, and I would like to

once again thank him for his help and advice. I would also like to thank David Mensink for his support as President-Elect, and wish him success in his third time around as DFA President. And finally, I would like to thank

the DFA staff, Barbara MacLennan, Lynn Purves, Linda Robertson and Donna Balkan, for their hard work throughout the year.

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## Grievance Committee Report

*Chair: David Mensink. Members: Andrea Chircopo, Cedric Dawkins, Tim Juckes. Ex officio Catrina Brown, 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) following amalgamation rather than transfer to the Dalhousie Pension Plan. 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. 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.

After the Board’s proposal for resolving the situation was unanimously rejected by the Members, the grievance went to arbitration in May 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 its decision

taking this information into account.

The Board refused to reverse their opt-out decision and the DFA approached the Province seeking a legislative change that would exempt Dalhousie from the SERP regulations. This would relieve the Board from SERP payments while allowing PSSP members to avoid the so-called “lost pension” resulting from the application of the ITA maximum pension limit. The government agreed to raise the issue with the PSSP Board of Trustees, who indicated they needed to further analyze the request before considering amending the legislation. The issue remains in the hands of the PSSP Trustees.

### 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) Clause 14.04, which defines appointments to the teaching staff (faculty) by rank rather than by appointment type, and (2) Clause 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. In April 2013, President Traves wrote a letter proposing a resolution to the grievance. In September 2013, the DFA wrote to President Florizone with a counter-proposal. In October 2013, President Florizone responded, denying the grievance at the formal stage. The DFA served notice to send the matter to arbitration.

Arbitrator Donald Carter has been selected to hear the grievance. We anticipate hearing dates will occur in the fall of 2015.

### **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 considered the appropriate rate increase for the year 2013-14. As required under Clause 32.10 of the Collective Agreement, it brought a recommendation to the Association-Board Committee, which gave final approval to the increase in July 2014. This matter is concluded.

### **Chart of Accounts**

The DFA filed a grievance in May 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. This grievance was resolved with the Board providing the requested information.

### **Workplace safety issues (P.E.A.S.)**

An informal grievance was begun on behalf of a Member who was experiencing difficulties with his laboratory when a variety of his materials and chemicals were removed from his lab, affecting his ability to conduct his own experiments and those of his students. Following meetings with the Dean, this matter was resolved at the Informal stage when the Dean agreed to a series of undertakings that provided laboratory space to meet the Member's requirements.

### **Closure of lab (Mechanical Engineering)**

A Member's laboratory was closed by the administration with the result that neither the Member nor his graduate students were able to continue their work for some time. Following an informal grievance meeting, the Dean agreed to re-open the lab when the Member provided information regarding the "hot work" in the lab. The Dean agreed to additional resolutions which would assist the Member and the graduate students. This matter was resolved at the Informal stage.

### **Change in full-time appointment & cancellation of Chair**

The Board of Governors unilaterally reduced the 100% full-time tenured appointment of a faculty member to 50% full-time and cancelled the stipend attached to his Chair appointment. The faculty member, who had been experiencing serious family difficulties, had made arrangements with his Dean to adjust his workload in 2012-13 and 2013-14. However, he had been unable to reach an agreement with his dean for the 2014-15 academic year. He requested an adjusted workload under the University Accommodation Policy.



While the request was under consideration, the Member had proposed an interim workload adjustment. The Dean wrote to him to advise his full-time appointment was reduced to 50 per cent. A grievance was commenced in December 2014. The DFA and the Member met with Provost and Vice-President (Academic) on December 18, 2014. She denied the grievance on January 9, 2015. The DFA filed a formal grievance with President Florizone. He denied the formal grievance on March 13, 2015. The DFA Executive Committee, following a recommendation from the DFA Grievance Committee, has approved sending the case to arbitration.

### Non-payment of bargaining unit dues

Following the merger of the Faculty of Agriculture with Dalhousie University, the DFA argued that one of the Instructor Members who had been classified as holding a 50% DFA bargaining unit position should be re-classified as a 100% DFA position. The DFA commenced an informal grievance based on the failure to remit bargaining unit dues for a full time position. The Board denied the grievance at the informal stage. The DFA Grievance Committee is assessing the Board's response.

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## 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.

Changes made during the current year are as follows:

1. A representative from SSQ Financial Group presented on changes made to coverage and pricing:
  - a. AD&D Policy Reissue; Basic and Voluntary:
    - Various enhancements to the policy were made.
    - Definitions were modified to better match experience.
    - Some new benefits were added.
  - Rate decreases: 21% reduction on Basic AD&D and 7% reduction on Voluntary AD&D.

b. Emergency Medical Travel Insurance:

- Some war zones were removed from the exclusions section of the policy.

- A 5% rate increase was applied effective October 1, 2014.

2.. Faculty of Agriculture Migration Update:

K. Shand from Mercer presented on benefit transition for the academic staff from the Faculty of Agriculture. The target date of the changes was November 1, 2014.

3. 2015 Group Insurance Renewal: The following rate changes were approved effective April 1, 2015:

- Basic Life Insurance: decrease current contract rate by 11.8 %.

- SIB (Survivor Insurance Benefit): decrease rate by 6.3%.

- LTD (Long Term Disability): increase rate by 7.7%.

- Optional Life Insurance: no change.

- Health: decrease rate by 2.5%.

- Dental: no change.

- Basic AD&D (Accidental Death and Dismemberment): no change.

- Voluntary AD&D: no change.

- Travel: increase travel rates by 34% for active employees and 115% for retirees.

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>.

Finally, there has been no further action taken on the 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 to “subsidize” the premiums of ADRP members.

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## Dalhousie University Pension Advisory Committee

*By Faye Woodman and Sarah Bradley, DFA Representatives*

The PAC is a parity committee with equal representation from the Board and unions. The Chair is Katherine Sheehan. Faye Woodman (law) and Sarah Bradley (law) are your DFA representatives on the Committee.

### 1. The Dalhousie Pension Plan

In November your representatives sent you an update on the pension plan’s financial position. We indicated that “[i]n summary the 2013-14 fiscal year was an excellent year for the pension plan.”

Since that time, the plan has continued to experience good rates of return. As a result the going concern deficit is, or nearly is, eliminated. Official figures will be available later this spring. In comparison, the funded ratio of the Plan on a going concern basis in 2013 was 89% and 94%

as of the March 31, 2014 valuation. This should soon result in the elimination of the “special payments” (see below) by the University to the Pension Plan.

While the University must make special payments to make up the going concern deficit, it is exempted by provincial legislation from funding the solvency deficit. The solvency test, as opposed to the going concern test, contemplates an immediate wind-up of the pension plan. Because of the legal requirement that an annuity must be provided to all members of a pension plan on a wind up, the solvency deficit is very sensitive to interest rates. Recent reductions in interest rates have adversely affected last year’s progress towards eliminating the solvency deficit. Solvency annuity rates have dropped from 3.60% as of March 31, 2014 to 2.00% as of

February of this year. Last year saw a reduction in the solvency deficit by half to a funded ratio of 87% as of March 31, 2014. This year it is estimated the Plan's funded ratio has now declined to about 80%.

A solvency deficit does not have to be funded, but it affects Pension Plan operations in a number of ways. While there is a solvency deficit, the funds terminating members can withdraw from the Plan are reduced by the percentage of the unfunded solvency deficit. That amount will be held back for 5 years at which time it will be released after accruing interest of about 2% per annum. The provincial legislation also provides that there can be no improvements made to the Plan while there is a solvency deficit.

## 2. Indexation

There are two aspects to indexing of retiree pensions. There is annual indexing which takes place automatically subject to Plan performance. For annual indexing to occur, Plan return on a three year average basis must exceed a benchmark rate of return set at 5.05%. In addition, previous shortfalls in the Plan as a result of returns less than the benchmark must be made up in the Plan.

In the last several years, the Plan return has exceeded the benchmark but there has been no indexing because the shortfalls in the Plan still had to be covered. It appears, assuming continuing good rates of return that the Plan will resume "annual" indexing in the next year.

The other kind of indexing in the Plan is discretionary indexing. As of February of this year, the pensions of the longest retired retirees had fallen behind the cost of living by as much as 19% – an amount which represented a very significant decline in the real value of their pensions.

Discretionary indexing is dependent on the exercise of their discretion by the trustees of the Retirees Trust Fund. The trustees are comprised of six representatives from the BOG, and one each from the Senate and the DFA. The BOG also appoints a retiree representative who is not approved by the retirees and whose appointment has not been supported by the Association of Dalhousie Retirees (ADRP). The trustees can approve discretionary

indexing that costs no more than one-half of the surplus in the RTF. In March, 2014 just before the conclusion of the bargaining between the DFA and the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University (BOG), the Trustees of the Retirees Trust Fund voted to authorize substantial catch-up indexing. As a result the pensions of the longest retired retirees are now about 9% behind the cost of living.

### 3. Collective Bargaining and the Special Joint Committee on the Pension Plan

In the last round of collective bargaining, the BOG negotiated for changes to the pension plan in order to reduce its costs. At the present time, contributions to the Plan are as follows:

#### **Employees:**

6.15% \* of pensionable earnings  
2% supplementary contributions

#### **Dalhousie:**

6.15% matching contribution  
3.00% over matching (partially to recognize the increasing age overall of active pension plan members and also their increased life expectancies)  
3.44% special payments on going concern deficit

\*4.65% on earnings up to \$5,000

The Joint Committee recommended and the DFA agreed to a change to the future interest crediting rate for the calculation of termination benefits for Members who terminate employment and choose not to take a deferred pension. This change is in line with the rules found in most other defined benefit plans.

At the present time, terminating employees can withdraw from the Plan an amount that is the greater of 2X their contributions plus interest (SOCC) or their commuted value. Interest in the Plan is currently defined in any particular year as the three-year annualized net return less expenses calculated as of June 30th of the year. The interest credited cannot be less than 0% so that negative Plan returns are not reflected in the amount of interest.

The effective date for the new formula for SOCC has not been established because of ongoing negotiations with other employee groups. The change to the formula will only operate on future years. Interest will be calculated based on the average of the yields of 5-year personal fixed term chartered bank deposit rates (CANSIM Series V 122515). As a consequence, there will be a significant reduction in interest on SOCC for years when Plan returns are high. On the other hand, in years of negative Plan return, employees will be able to have some interest credited. It

is important to emphasize that the new formula will not affect the calculation of a member's commuted value. The change to the calculation of interest is expected to reduce the liabilities in the Plan by about \$12 million.

In the last round of collective bargaining, the DFA agreed to participate with other employee groups in the continuation of the Special Joint Committee on the Pension Plan. It is not clear at this time what work the committee will undertake.

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## Dalhousie University Pension Trust Fund/Retirees' Trust Fund

*By Ron Pink, QC., DFA Trustee*

I am pleased to present the report to the members of the Dalhousie Faculty Association as a representative of the DFA on the Dalhousie Pension Trust Fund and the Dalhousie Retirees' Trust Fund.

The Trustees of each of the Dalhousie Pension Trust Fund and of the Dalhousie Retirees' Trust Fund meet concurrently with the University's Investment Committee as each share similar investment structures. The Committee and Trustees meet at least quarterly and more often if required. The Committee and Trustees follow a strict agenda to ensure completion of all agenda items within the two hour time limit of each meeting.

The overall purpose of the Trustees is to review and ensure that the investment goals and objectives of the two Funds are being met by the investment portfolio of the Funds and by the various managers.

I cannot stress enough again the value of the work the Committee and Trustees receives from the Dalhousie Investment Manager, Colin Spinney, and the external investment consultant, Robert Mitchell. Together, these two individuals assist the Committee and Trustees regularly in

ensuring that our particular investment managers are following the mandate which have been provided to them. They annually review the performance of each manager, attend to their offices to ensure that the mandate which is provided to them is continued to be followed, review the overall performance of the various employees in the investment management firm and ensure no major changes within each particular investment house.

This year the Committees spent considerable time on the issue of "Divest Dal." These concerns raised by various Dalhousie stakeholders were a general focus during Committee meetings. The issues were not a particular concern to the Retirees' Trust Fund and the Pension Trust Fund as all Trustees recognized that the fiduciary duties require that they find the best investment for each Fund without constraint or bias.

The overall management of the Funds remains the obligation of the Trustees. We regularly review the performance of each manager against their benchmarks. As the size of the Fund grows, we are continually looking at new investments in real estate and infrastructure so as to broaden our portfolios. Changes in the nature of our investments are always incremental and cautious, but they assist in continuing to provide a balance and diversified portfolio for



the beneficiaries of the plan.

This year the trustees were pleased to provide catch-up indexation for six of the ten previous years in which full indexation was not provided. For those pensioners who were eligible for indexation since 2003, pensions will be increased by 10.273%. Increases in indexing are always reviewed by the Trustees and subject to the investment returns of the Fund over a fixed period of time and its funded position.

For the year end of December 31, 2014, the returns of the two Funds are follows:

1 year Pension Trust Fund - 11.34%. First Quartile Bench Mark – 10.34%

Retirees' Trust Fund – 9.74%. Third Quartile Bench Mark – 10.01%

4 year Pension Trust Fund- 9.74%.First Quartile Bench Mark - 8.52%

Retirees' Trust Fund – 8.76%. Third Quartile Bench Mark – 7.89%

As you see from the forgoing, the performance of the Fund continues to be successful and I express my gratitude to the staff of the Fund and fellow Committee members for making this successful.

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## Dalhousie University Employment Equity Council

*By Jacqueline Gahagan, DFA Representative*

It is my pleasure to offer this update on my activities in relation to my role on the Employment Equity Council (EEC). Since my last report, I have written to the President Florizone in response to his concerns regarding the lack of accurate data on incidents of, for example, sexual assault on campuses across the country and have offered him information on the Clery Act from the US. I believe the Clery Act offers an important example of how universities in Canada, including Dalhousie, can systematize data collection on incidents of a variety of on campus crimes, including sexual assault (<http://clerycenter.org/summary-jeanne-clery-act>) in an effort to ensure our campus is safe and welcoming for all students, faculty and staff.

As well, the process of reporting incidents of criminal activity, particularly sexual assault, needs to be clearer and more supportive of individuals in coming forward. It is noteworthy that other universities in Canada are already taking action on this issue.

In addition, I spoke at the Misogyny Forum on issues of the need for respect and professionalism across the campus. More recently, I hosted a panel discussion on gender-based violence and how we can work toward a safe and inclusive learning environment, including for our sex and gender-minoritized populations.

Although the Employment Equity Council (EEC) at Dalhousie had planned to meet this term, we have not yet held a face-to-face meeting. I am looking forward to meeting to discuss issues related to responding to the recently released Belong report and the ongoing absence of LGBTQ issues and the continued focus on existing, recognized equity seeking groups. I believe the recent homophobic incidents suggests the need for us to continue to look at other creative ways of ensuring our campus is a safe and welcoming learning and working environment for our LGBTQ faculty, students and staff.

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# Dalhousie University Environmental Health and Safety Committee

*By Mark Obrovac and Carmel O'Keefe, DFA Representatives*

## Role of the Safety Committee

The 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 2 DFA appointees – 1 Professorial and 1 Instructor member.

Information about the Dalhousie Environmental Health and Safety Committee can be found on the Office of Environmental Health and Safety website:

<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 cooperation 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 2014/2015

Facilities Management launched DalSAFE in September 2014. DalSAFE is a new mobile app providing access to Security Services, Tiger Patrol, interactive maps, campus notices, parking info, and other resources to enhance personal safety.

EH&S is developing an online system for WHMIS training based on the Blackboard platform. The system is currently in the beta testing stage.

In November 2014 Carmel O'Keefe was appointed representative for DFA(instructor) on the EH&S committee.

The Committee presents an Annual Environmental Health and Safety Award to recognize significant accomplishments in campus environmental health and safety. In 2014 the award went to the Killam Library Health and Safety Committee and Facilities Management's Custodial Services Team & School of Occupational Therapy's Work Safe @ DAL Initiative.

EH&S has initiated a major effort at revising and instituting new safety policies for the university including:

Overall EHS policy\*

- Terms of reference for the EHS committee\*
- Annual fume hood inspections\*
- Working with HF
- Respirator Protection Program
- Fume Hood Impairment
- Handling and Storage of Compressed Gases
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Laboratory Decommissioning Policy
- Biosafety Manual
- Radiation Safety Manual
- Lab Safety Manual
- Workplace Violence program

The policies indicated by \* have been reviewed by the EH&S committee and have been signed by the University President or are waiting for the President's signature. All other policies are under review or are in the draft stage at EH&S.

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## Association-Board Committee

*Tim Juckes, (DFA Co-Chair\*, Department of Psychology & Neuroscience); Laurene Rehman (DFA Nominee, School of Health and Human Performance), Barbara MacLennan (DFA Nominee, DFA Professional Officer); Lynn Purves (DFA Observer, DFA Administrative Officer)*

*\* Mark Lewis (Law Library) served as DFA Co-Chair until August 2014.*

The Association-Board Committee (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. ABC 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 meets monthly to deal with particular items such as waivers of advertising, extensions of limited term appointments, automatic renewals, special salary increases (SSIs), salaries above the maximum, and extensions to timelines (e.g., anomalies fund). ABC also deals with issues of broad concern to our membership. This past year we discussed the new class scheduling system, parking fee increases, administrative stipends, the university's research statement, and Office 365 and cloud storage. In addition, numerous issues related to the integration of the Faculty of Agriculture have come to ABC.

ABC nominees also receive a copy of a monthly Academic Appointment Activity Report (AAAR) document which lists all academic staff changes (appointments, promotions, tenure, sabbaticals, etc.) and provides supporting documentation. We query missing documentation and, on occasion, note that the Collective Agreement will be violated if a proposed action is taken. Such items are brought to ABC to be resolved.

In August 2014, Mark Lewis stepped down from his role as DFA Co-Chair of ABC. Mark is committed to our collective agreement and he articulately defended the interests of our Members. All the best Mark, and thank you. Tim Juckes, who had been a DFA Nominee,

agreed to take over the Co-Chair position and we welcomed Laurene Rehman as a DFA Nominee.

In 2014-15, 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. Dean Summerby-Murray is leaving Dalhousie to assume the presidency at Saint Mary's University and has stepped down from ABC. Dean Summerby-Murray was a thoughtful and balanced nominee, and we were sorry to see him leave ABC. David Gray (Dean, Faculty of Agriculture) joined ABC in April 2015.

During collective bargaining, ABC met and dealt with the usual agenda items, though issues under consideration at the bargaining table were deferred. Since the new agreement was announced, ABC has dealt with some of the deferred issues.

ABC's ability to deal with agenda items expeditiously depends largely on the completeness of the supporting documentation. When information is missing or deemed beyond ABC's purview, the process can drag on, leading to frustration for all.

When serving on local hiring committees please pay attention to the timelines and HR guidelines to help ABC process the requests promptly. Some requests for waivers of advertising and salaries above the maximum come late to the ABC. In other cases, committees do not pay close enough attention to the guidelines that are provided by HR. Such issues cause difficulties at ABC.

# Dalhousie University Transportation and 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), reporting to Senior Administration through Jeff Lamb (AVP, Facilities Management).

## Transportation highlights

Issues discussed pertain to cars, buses, biking and walking. Each year, we discuss ways to increase the number of parking spaces available. A university-wide initiative is underway that will remove dumpsters from our parking lots and free up spaces for some new parking spots.

There is a current total of 31 dumpsters that will be replaced with a single trash compactor. Buildings that generate the most trash are the Tupper, the Killam Library and the SUB. Also, a number of new metered parking spaces will be created by expanding the Arena Parking Lot, along Alumni Crescent.

We also discuss transportation issues connected to riding buses. This year, the bus shelter locations and capacities were studied, with recommendations made to Metro Transit on how they could be improved. The average bus shelter can protect 10 riders at a time, while they are waiting to be picked up. Shelters that frequently exceed this capacity on the Studley Campus are beside the SUB and across from the Mona Campbell Building. The closest additional sheltered waiting space in both cases, is across the street, which in turn puts pedestrians at risk, as they are crossing the road to catch a bus.

Waiting for buses and finding parking spots has been particularly challenging this winter, due the extreme weather conditions. The cost of snow removal if it exceeds the amounts in the budget is recovered by raising parking rates and permits for the coming year. Snow removal costs are averaged for the past three years, and we have now had three sequential years where the annual operating costs have increased higher than the IMC can accommodate.

Parking rates for 2015/2016 are not approved until they are presented and discussed at the May and June Committee Meetings. The new rates will be posted online during the summer (<http://www.dal.ca/dept/facilities/parking-at-dal/rates.html>) and the online Parking Pass system can be used to issue and renew your parking permits (<https://parkingpermit.dal.ca/parkingpass>). Current permits expire on Aug 31, 2015, so returning faculty members should make sure to purchase their permits before that date. New permits or renewals cannot be purchased until all outstanding fines are paid.

## Security highlights

The best way to contact Security at Dal, is to download and use the NEW DalSAFE app. This FREE application is available for iOS, Android and BlackBerry (Z10) devices from the various download sites. Once loaded onto your mobile device, DalSAFE can be used to call Security Services, in case of an emergency. It also gives you up-to-date information on how to respond to a critical incident, an embedded service to report offensive graffiti and a mobile version of our campus maps (to highlight parking lots and building locations). All staff and students are being encouraged to download and use DalSAFE.

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## DFA Communications Co-ordination Committee

*By Catrina Brown, Committee Chair*

The DFA's Communications Co-ordination Committee was established in 2012-13 to work closely with the Executive Committee to fulfill strategic goals. Its purpose is to develop and implement communications plans, strategies and activities, ensure a consistent message, evaluate the effectiveness of DFA communications and provide direction and guidance to the Communications Officer. The committee, made up of Catrina Brown (Chair), Darren Abramson, Shelley McKibbin and Donna Balkan (Communications Officer, ex officio), reports to the Executive Committee on an ongoing basis and to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

2014-15 was a particularly important year for DFA communications, as it was both a collective bargaining year and a year in which the DFA raised major issues affecting faculty through submissions to government and other advocacy activities, media interviews and the ongoing Issues in Higher Education discussion series. The discussion series is one way the DFA endeavours to communicate with members and the broader public on the challenges facing universities today, including austerity and corporatization. The series was originally inaugurated in January 2014 with *Perils and Promises: corporate culture in academia*; in 2014-15, it built on that initial event with two public lectures and two panel discussions.

Some of the year's communications highlights included:

- With the DFA Bargaining Team, the preparation and distribution of eight bargaining bulletins to Members, as well as a full update on bargaining (November 2014), the details of the new collective agreement (December 2014) and two letters to President Florizone related to bargaining issues.
- Public lecture by Linda McQuaig, entitled *Profit U: Who controls our universities... and why you should care*. (April 2014, postponed from March due to a major snowstorm).
- Whose priorities? Whose choices?: panel discussion on program prioritization with Craig Heron, Len Findlay and Jacqueline Skiptunis (September 2014),
- Public lecture by Jim Stanford, entitled *Money, Myths and Manipulation: Debunking austerity economics* (November 2014)
- *Silencing the Academy: Academic freedom and the future of university governance*: panel discussion with Jim Turk, Letitia Meynell and Victor Catano (March 2014)
- A Fair Employment Week panel discussion on issues facing contract academic staff, organized by the DFA and co-sponsored by CAUT, CUPE 3912 and ANSUT (October 2014).
- Participation in the Department of Labour and Advanced Education's consultation process, including focus group sessions and a written brief (December 2014), as well as media interviews in response to the Department's report of the consultations (March 2014).
- Media interviews in response to Dalhousie's Budget Advisory Committee report, the report of the government's consultations on Post-Secondary Education, and Bill 100.
- A variety of advocacy-related activities, including participation in the Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Education Coalition, the February 4, 2015 Student Day of Action and the campaign against Bill 100.
- Work on an update of the DFA's 2013 Review of Dalhousie University Finances to include statistics from the 2012-13 and 2013-14 fiscal years.
- 43 new news items and 31 new blog posts on the DFA's website, [www.dfa.ns.ca](http://www.dfa.ns.ca).
- 334 tweets on the @dalfacultyassoc Twitter feed between April 2014 and March 2015. As of March 31, 2015, we have a total of 601 followers on Twitter, increased from 462 at the same time the previous year.
- 94 new posts on the DFA's Facebook page.

## DFA Equity Committee

*By Catrina Brown, Committee Chair*

One of the highlights of the past year was the creation of a DFA Equity Committee as an ad-hoc committee of the DFA Executive Committee. The committee consists of Catrina Brown (Chair), Heather Andreas, Barbara Hamilton-Hinch, Jacqueline Gahagan, Nancy MacDonald, Cassandra Hanrahan and Donna Balkan (Communications Officer).

The committee's mandate is to:

- Make recommendations and report to the Executive Committee concerning policies, guidelines, model clauses, best practices, actions and campaigns with regard to equity at Dalhousie and in post-secondary education in general.
- Make recommendations to the Executive Committee on policy matters relating to marginalized groups and issues of marginalization, including exclusion, discrimination harassment and accommodation.
- Alert the DFA Executive to issues of concern to marginalized groups and individuals within the DFA membership.
- Review policy documents and other material on equity and diversity issues produced by the Dalhousie administration, CAUT, other faculty associations, etc.
- Review provisions of the DFA collective agreement through an equity lens and make recommendations to the Executive Committee and/or Contract Review Committee on possible changes/additions.
- Gather information relevant to equity issues at Dalhousie.
- Suggest educational and communications activities related to equity.
- Coordinate with other equity-related groups within the University and the broader community.

The committee's Terms of Reference, which were approved by the Executive Committee in February 2015, make it clear that the committee's mandate goes beyond the anti-discrimination provisions of university policies and human rights legislation. The Terms of Reference recognize that discrimination can be systemic as well as overt, and is not exclusive to gender, race, disability or sexual orientation. With that in mind, we ensured that the committee included at least one Member on a Limited Term appointment, recognizing that contract academic staff are marginalized on the basis of their employment status.

The Equity Committee held two meetings in 2014-15, and was consulted via email regarding the DFA's input into consultations held by the Committee for Dalhousie's Strategic Initiative on Diversity and Inclusiveness. Committee Chair Catrina Brown and Communications Officer Donna Balkan also met with staff from Dalhousie's Human Rights, Equity and Harassment Prevention Office and Human Resources staff to discuss the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Awards, the mandate of the Equity Office and other equity-related issues.

We are also endeavouring to include equity-related themes in DFA events, such as the Fair Employment Week panel on contract academic staff the DFA co-sponsored in October 2014. In 2015-16, the committee will explore other possible events related to equity issues.

This was a start-up year for the committee and much time was devoted to establishing its mandate and discussing possible future activities. There was a great deal of interest in reviewing the collective agreement from an equity perspective. The committee will also monitor the administration's response to the Belong report and consider possible improvements to the promotion and implementation of the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Awards.

# Southern African Student Education Project (SASEP)

*By Gary Kynoch, DFA Representative*

## OVERVIEW

### SASEP Purpose

From its inception, the purpose of the then South - now Southern - African Student Education Project (SASEP) has been to contribute to the development of South 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 University. This is now extended to students in the Southern African region.

### 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. First, the university 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 all 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 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.

As of April 2014, thirteen students have been awarded graduate degrees under SASEP. Two students were admitted on SASEP scholarships for the 2014-2015 academic year. Shingirai Taodzera from Zimbabwe is enrolled for the MA in Political Science and Kgomotso Montsi from Botswana is pursuing a PhD in Economics.

## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

### Administration

SASEP funds are administered by FGS, while recruitment, selection and all academic matters are handled by the SASEP Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Gary Kynoch.

### Recruitment

The Southern African Student Education Project 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 received 43 MA applications and 18 PhD applications for the 2014/15 academic year. The two applicants who began their studies in fall 2014 are both stellar students – multiple award winners with exemplary academic records.

### Finances

Earlier this year, we approached the DFA to request an increase in funding for the program, given our expanded mandate and increased costs. An increase from \$7,500 to \$10,000 was approved by the DFA Executive Committee on a recom-

mendation from the DFA Finance Committee and is included in the proposed 2015-2016 DFA budget.

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 under-

scores 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.

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## Dalhousie University-World University Service of Canada 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 Dalhousie 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. Last year WUSC-Ottawa began 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 sponsored two students Wenasa Alaraba and Akuei Diing, both are originally from South Sudan, but have lived in asylum in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya since they were very young children. With a few exceptions, the Dalhousie -WUSC SRSP

has sponsored male students in the past, but recently we have made a special effort to sponsor women and have sponsored a female student each of the last three years. Wenasa is currently registered in the Faculty of Arts, while Akuei is registered in Engineering. Both are adjusting well to Dalhousie and life in Halifax. The committee will soon be helping them file their 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 new members, the Committee raised awareness about WUSC and refugee issues through events such as Shine a Light and a coffee night at Just Us Coffees. We had specific committee members dedicated to fund-raising and social events. The Dalhousie History Department hosted a curling bonspiel, the proceeds of which went to the WUSC local committee (the third year in a row).

Expenses to run the WUSC SRSP have increased substantially. The cost of sponsoring



a student increased from \$3500 to \$5000 per student last year. We have also been asked by WUSC Ottawa to increase our monthly stipend. These increases, along with other costs, have forced the committee to reconsider if it can afford to sponsor two students each year. We are committed to sponsoring two students again next year, but will have to monitor this on a yearly basis.

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.

Thank you to everyone for supporting this worthy program! 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](mailto:wusc@dal.ca).

### 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. to 4:30 p.m.  
(except university holidays)

The DFA office is located at 6280 South Street.

Telephone: (902) 494-3722

Email: [dfa@dal.ca](mailto:dfa@dal.ca)

## DFA Executive Committee 2015-2016

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

*David Mensink (Chair), Catrina Brown, Christine Moore*

*The following people have been elected by acclamation for positions on the 2015-2016 DFA Executive Committee and will take office at the end of the Annual General Meeting*

**President-Elect:** Laurene Rehman (Health and Human Performance)

**Second Vice-President:** Cindy Penney (Physiology and Biophysics)

**Secretary:** Jason Brown (Mathematics and Statistics)

**Treasurer:** Ian Colford (Sexton Design and Technology Library)

**Members-at-Large** *Term Ending April 2017:*

Jennifer Adams (Sir James Dunn Law Library)

Sarah Jane Dooley (Sexton Design and Technology Library)

Karen Foster (Sociology and Social Anthropology)

Debbie Mellish (Environmental Sciences, Agricultural Campus)

Bruce Rathgeber (Plant and Animal Sciences, Agricultural Campus)

*They will join the following people on the 2015-2016 DFA Executive Committee:*

**President:** David Mensink (Counselling and Psychological Services)

**Past President:** Catrina Brown (Social Work)

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

Darren Abramson (Philosophy)

Heather Andreas (Chemistry)

Kathy Cawsey (English)

Cedric Dawkins (Rowe School of Business)

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

The Non-Bargaining Unit position remains vacant.