

D
I
A
L
O
G
U
E**Annual General Meeting**
Wednesday, May 4, 2016
2:00 p.m.
Room 1020
Kenneth C. Rowe Building

Please bring your copy of this publication, as well as the agenda, minutes and budget documents emailed in April.

Contents

President's Report	2
Grievance Committee Report	4
Dalhousie University Employee Benefits Committee	6
Dalhousie University Pension Advisory Committee	7
Dalhousie University Pension Trust Fund/Retirees' Trust Fund	10
Association-Board Committee	11
Dalhousie University Environmental Health and Safety Committee	12
Dalhousie University Transportation and Security Committee	13
Dalhousie University Council on Employment Equity	14
DFA Equity Committee	15
DFA Communications Co-ordination Committee	16
Southern African Student Education Project	17
Dalhousie University-World University Service of Canada (WUSC) -- Student Refugee Sponsorship Program	18
DFA Executive Committee 2016-2017	20

President's Report

By David Mensink

I begin this report, my third report to the AGM as DFA President, by thanking you, DFA Members, for working with me over the past year for the benefit of your Faculty Association. It has been a lot of hard work but also a pleasure to serve as your leader. We have accomplished much during the 2015-2016 year.

I'd like to highlight various DFA activities and accomplishments over the past year:

1. **Bill 100 (Universities Accountability and Sustainability Act):** On April 30, then President of DFA Catrina Brown appeared before the law amendments committee to express concern about the impact of the legislation on collective bargaining and academic freedom. Then on May 1, CAUT Council (Canadian Association of University Teachers) voted unanimously to condemn Bill 100; moved by ANSUT (Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers) and seconded by DFA. Prior to the motion vote both Matthew Furlong of ANSUT and I spoke against the legislation. The motion includes the following "THAT any Nova Scotia university that complies with Bill 100 by applying for a revitalization plan will be subjected to the procedures leading to censure by CAUT." I also presented our views to Dalhousie Senate in May. Although we did not succeed in stopping the bill, the NS government removed some of the most contentious clauses, including a clause that would prohibit grievances if a university is undergoing a revitalization plan. This was accomplished through the efforts of many.
2. **New Home for DFA:** Thanks to the efforts of our office staff, we moved from South Street to 1443 Seymour Street. The new set up is great and we are enjoying our expanded board room.
3. **Backhouse Report:** The DFA wrote a letter to the President regarding the findings of the Backhouse Report. In particular, we emphasized and commented on five areas:

- a. Respect the role of the Senate.
- b. Change the name and location of the Human Rights, Equity, and Harassment Prevention Office.
- c. Hire a fully funded, full-time ombudsperson to deal with complaints.
- d. Involve the DFA in efforts to improve the integration of Dental Hygiene within the Faculty of Dentistry.
- e. Engage student views as the process moves forward.

4. **Strategic Planning:** We spent a day with the DFA Executive and others on DFA committees developing plans for the future. Expertly led by Laurene Rehman, DFA President-Elect, we focussed on four important themes:
 - a. Dalhousie University Governance.
 - b. DFA Governance.
 - c. Collective Bargaining.
 - d. Communications/Member Engagement.

Ongoing work on planning has been carried out through three ad hoc committees. We hope to build on this in the future.

5. **NS Standing Committee on Human Resources:** Darren Abramson, DFA Member-at-Large, represented the DFA at a hearing of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, together with ANSUT, Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). These groups are members of the Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Education Coalition. Darren focused on issues specifically related to Dalhousie University finances and how the Dalhousie Board has reduced the proportion of spending devoted to academic and academic support units.
6. **Get Science Right:** DFA co-sponsored with ANSUT and CAUT a Get Science Right pre-election forum at the Halifax Central Library. The event attracted some 200 people, including six federal election candidates and brought media attention to the Harper government's record on science policy issues, including the muzzling of federal scientists.

7. **WUSC Donation:** DFA donated \$5,000 to the crowdfunding campaign in support of the Student Refugee Program, a partnership between the university and World University Service of Canada. As a result, the campaign exceeded its \$24,000 goal to allow two refugee students to pursue their studies at Dal.
8. **CCPA Gala:** I represented the DFA at the CCPA Gala (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives). Nora Loreto, the speaker, is the author of *From Demonized to Organized: Building the New Union Movement* (2013), and a contributor to *Canada After Harper* (2015). She writes regularly for magazine, blogs and online news sites.
9. **DFA Equity Workshop:** Rosa Barker from CAUT came to DFA and presented a half-day workshop on equity and how DFA can work with others to develop a more diverse and inclusive campus. Engaging in interesting role plays and developing effective contract language on diversity and inclusiveness were highlights of the workshop.
10. **Open House:** The DFA held its first Open House in a number of years, celebrating both the holiday season and the move to our Seymour Street office. We asked attendees to bring donations to the DSU Food Bank, and we collected two boxes of food for the Food Bank.
11. **CAUT Forum for Presidents:** I attended the CAUT Forum for Presidents. Topics presented and discussed this year were University/College Finances, legal developments, University/College Governance, teaching intensive appointments, and diversity and equity on campus. I presented on diversity at Dalhousie and DFA's actions toward developing a more diverse and inclusive environment at Dalhousie.
12. **Review of Dalhousie Finances:** The DFA released its update to the Review of Dalhousie University Finances, which shows that the budget trends identified in our

original 2013 report had remained the same or worsened, including a decline in the portion of operating spending devoted to academics. In addition to a general meeting to discuss the report, we held meetings with Members in four different campus locations and presented the report at the Dalhousie Student Union council. We struck an Ad Hoc Budget Strategy Committee to guide and direct the DFA on these matters. In addition, we published an op-ed article about the report in *Metro Halifax*, Darren Abramson was interviewed on CBC Radio and the story was covered by the *Dalhousie Gazette*.

Those are some of the activities I have been involved with during the year of my presidency. In addition, I have attended many meetings including Executive Meetings, Grievance Committee Meetings, Communications Committee Meetings, and Ad Hoc Committee Meetings. There have also been two arbitrations and three discipline cases with which I have been involved.

I will end this report with expressing my thanks and providing a quote that speaks to me. First, my thanks go out to all those members who were involved in DFA committees and activities. I thank my tireless executive committee members with a special thanks to Laurene Rehman who went far beyond the call of duty; she is a DFA treasure to be sure. I would also like to heartily thank the DFA Office Staff who, in sum, run the place. So Barb, Lynn, Donna and Linda; know that I am very grateful to you all!

The quote is from a man I have long admired and who stood up for his beliefs; Martin Luther King, Jr. His words are encouraging and mobilizing to all of us. They are "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

Grievance Committee Report

Co-chairs: David Mensink and Laurene Rehman; Members: Catrina Brown, Cedric Dawkins, Tim Juckes, Debbie Mellish, Barbara MacLennan (DFA Professional Officer)

In 2015-16, 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

Background: 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. 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 was at the core of this grievance.

Update: The review by the PSSP Board of Trustees did not result in a positive resolution between the DFA and the Board. Consequently, the DFA referred the matter back to Arbitrator Don Carter in December 2015. (In his earlier decision he had directed Dalhousie to consider the impact of the decision to opt out of the SERP on the affected former TUNS faculty.) In his December 2015 decision, he concluded that Dalhousie had considered the impact and that “the need to safeguard the financial health of the institution were reasonable and valid considerations...” .

He concluded that Dalhousie had met its obligations under the Collective Agreement. The DFA President and Ray Larkin met with the former TUNS faculty to discuss the Arbitrator’s decision. This case is concluded.

Policy grievance: sabbatical

Background: 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 and formal grievance processes did not result in a resolution; the DFA served notice to send the matter to arbitration. Arbitrator Donald Carter was selected to hear the grievance.

Update: Prior to the grievance being heard by the Arbitrator, the DFA and the Board reached a settlement in October, 2015. The parties agree, in part, that, “service in a limited term appointment at Dalhousie in the six academic years preceding a tenure stream appointment to the academic staff or appointment or promotion to the rank of University Teaching Fellow will count towards eligibility for sabbatical leave at a ratio of 1:1 provided that the Member succeeds in achieving a tenure stream appointment or appointment or promotion to the rank of University Teaching Fellow at Dalhousie University. Members who are serving on a limited term appointment are not eligible to apply for sabbatical leave.” This case is concluded.

Change in full-time appointment & cancellation of Chair stipend

Background: The Board of Governors unilaterally reduced the 100 per cent full-time tenured appointment of a faculty member to 50 per cent full-time and cancelled the stipend attached to his appointment to a named Chair. The faculty member, who had been experiencing personal problems, 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 begun in December 2014 and the DFA and the Member met with the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) on December 18 and subsequently at the formal stage with President Florizone in March 2015. A resolution was not forthcoming; the case was referred to arbitration.

Update: The parties reached a Settlement Agreement prior to the commencement of arbitration. This matter is concluded.

Non-payment of bargaining unit dues

Background :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 per cent DFA bargaining unit position should be re-classified as a 100 per cent DFA position. The DFA began 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.

Update: The DFA withdrew the Grievance 'without prejudice.' This matter is concluded.

Workload

An informal grievance was commenced in the Faculty of Engineering when a faculty member experienced difficulty regarding proposed teaching assignments. A number of meetings were scheduled to discuss the matter. No resolution has been achieved as yet; the grievance remains at the informal stage.

Salary

An informal grievance was filed regarding the salary to be paid on appointment. The faculty member was hired at the time the EDC agreement was in effect at the Faculty of Agriculture. The matter was resolved by agreement at the informal stage. This matter is concluded.

Denial of PDA claim

An informal grievance was filed when a member was denied reimbursement for 'professionally related expenditures' related to his research trip. Initially, the Board ruled that the expenses were ineligible. However, following further consideration the Board reversed its decision and allowed the expense. This matter was resolved at the informal stage.

Denial of Overload Stipend

Two informal grievances were filed when Members were denied the payment of an overload stipend for teaching additional classes above their normal workload. These matters remain at the informal level.

Dalhousie University Employee Benefits Committee

By David Mensink and Robert Beiko, DFA Representatives

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.

The following Group Insurance Renewal rate changes were recommended and approved by the committee for the 2016 year:

1. Basic Life Insurance: decrease current contract rate by 13.1%.
2. Optional Life Insurance: no change.
3. SIB (Survivor Insurance Benefit): decrease rate by 5%.
4. LTD (Long Term Disability): increase rate by 33.5%.

5. Extended Health Care: increase rate by 7.7%.
6. Dental Care: no change.
7. Basic AD&D (Accidental Death and Dismemberment): no change.
8. Voluntary AD&D: decrease employee rate by 12.5% and spousal by 11.1%.
9. Travel: increase travel rates by 15% for active employees and 33% 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>

Upon receiving questions about health benefit coverage from Members, we conducted a survey of our membership in August 2015. About 40% of the Members who responded to the survey said they were “generally satisfied” with the coverage, while 27% described themselves as “partially satisfied” and 32% were “unsatisfied”. The main issues raised by the Members were the lack of coverage for massage therapy, inadequate vision care and the \$500 limit on the Health Spending Account, which many Members felt was too low to cover the services they required.

Other groups are following suit to provide an updated summary of member feedback.

The DFA Executive has expressed interest in the rate changes and has encouraged the Employee Benefits Committee to review factors associated with LTD rate increases. The DFA Executive would also like the EBC to review Extended Health Care Benefits; particularly in response to information gathered by the questionnaires. Finally, with the rising cost of pharmaceuticals a significant concern, the Committee is exploring recommendations on generics substitution and other changes to modes of delivery.

Dalhousie University Pension Advisory Committee

By Faye Woodman and Jonathan Shapiro, DFA Representatives

The PAC is a parity committee with equal representation from the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University (BOG) and the Nova Scotia Employees Union, (Locals 99 and 77) (NSGEU). PAC also comprises representatives from the Dalhousie Professional and Managerial Group (DPMG) which has voice but no vote (and a veto over amendments to the Plan) and the Association of Dalhousie Retirees and Pensioners (ADRP) which has voice but no vote.

Faye Woodman, Law, and Jonathan Shapiro, Law, are your representatives. The Chair of PAC is Acting Assistant VP Jasmine Walsh.

Last fall, Sarah Bradley, law, who has taken a leave of absence from the University, was replaced by Jonathan Shapiro.

1. The Dalhousie Pension Plan

Last year's report to DFA members indicated that the Pension Plan had experienced good rates of return so that the Plan's going concern deficit was nearly eliminated and the solvency deficit was reduced. Unfortunately, this year the trend has reversed, reflecting a general decline in the stock market and continued low interest rates. As a result, it is expected that the Dalhousie Plan will once again experience a going concern deficit of 5% that is a 95% funded Plan. (The going concern valuation assumes that the Plan will be maintained indefinitely.)

The solvency deficit will increase and the Plan will dip below an 85% funded status. Nova Scotia legislation exempts the University from any requirement to fund the solvency deficit but it does require that any plan that is less than 85% funded must file valuations annually rather than the usual every three years.

Previously pension legislation required that pension plans which were less than 85% funded had to withhold a percentage amount reflecting the deficit from terminating (but not retiring) pension plan members.. In the recent amendments to the Pension Benefits Act, however, that rule was changed so there will be no withholding for terminating Members of the Dalhousie Plan.

2. Joint Committee

One goal stated by President Florizone, as part of his *100 Days* document, was to put the Dalhousie Pension Plan on a "sustainable basis." Therefore the last round of collective bargaining included sessions in which the BOG set out proposals for increasing employee contributions, reducing costs, and lessening the perceived funding volatility of the Plan. By the conclusion of the negotiations, the DFA had agreed to continue increased employee contributions but otherwise had generally resisted substantial changes to the Plan structure. The DFA did, however, agree to further discussions on Plan "reform" and to appoint your DFA pension reps to the "pension reform" committee later named the Joint Pension Committee (JPC).

The JPC, which is comprised of a subset of PAC Members, has met on numerous occasions since its establishment in 2012 after the end of collective bargaining for the 2011-2014 collective agreement.

In the course of the meetings, the JPC looked at several proposals to reduce the costs of the Plan. Generally the view of your DFA representatives has been that most major changes to the Plan can only be agreed to as part of collective bargaining. On the other hand, your representatives have always been willing to consider relatively minor amendments to the Plan which would enhance Plan finances and ultimately the core benefit-a pension based on a defined benefit, eliminate technical anomalies which could be implemented on a principled basis without imposing undue hardships on the majority of DFA Members.

Hence your representatives recommended an amendment to the Plan which would change the method of calculating the amounts that Members can withdraw from the Plan when they terminate.

This amendment was approved by the DFA Executive Committee at its meeting on April 19, 2016.

I. THE DEFINITION OF INTEREST AMENDMENT

The present position

When a Dalhousie Member terminates (not retires), she may withdraw from the Plan: the greater of:

2X her contributions to the Plan with interest, (SOCC) or
an amount equal to the commuted value (CV) of her rights in the plan (actuarially determined).

Generally, but not always, the higher amount is the CV of the terminating Member's rights in the Plan, but occasionally, due to technical limitations in the plan (pension holidays paid with "phantom" contributions), unusually high Plan returns, a Member's seniority and the fact of working at Dal during the 90s and early 2000s, some terminating Members may find that their SOCC exceeds their CV. As a result, the Member may decide to withdraw the SOCC and transfer it to an RRSP rather than leave it in the Plan and see the lower CV fund a pension from the Plan, in effect "losing" the difference between the SOCC and CV. Not all members do this, of course, with many preferring the security and low administrative costs of the Plan. Nevertheless when Members withdraw their SOCC rather than taking a pension there is a (arguable) cost to the Plan and the possibility of increased volatility.

It should be pointed out that the Dal Plan is different from most other pension plans because it permits Plan Members to withdraw lump sums from the Plan after the age of 55 rather than require them to take an immediate or deferred pension. Dalhousie permits lump sum withdrawals until age 64, after which the Member has no choice but to take an immediate or deferred pension under the Plan.

The proposed amendment

The proposed amendment would change the calculation of interest accruing on a Member's SOCC. Simply, it would define interest not as the return from the Pension Plan (which by law can never go below zero even though the Plan has a negative rate of return), but as the rate of return from certain GICs. Specifically, the credited interest would be

equal to the rate of the average of the yields of 5 year personal fixed term chartered bank deposit rates (CANSIM Series V 122515). As a result of this amendment the rate of growth of the SOCC of any particular member is likely to be slowed so that for most members, SOCC is not likely in the future to exceed CV.

It is noteworthy that in the (unlikely) event that the rate of return on the GICs goes negative the new amendment provides that the rate of return for the purposes of the calculation of interest on SOCC cannot be less than zero.

A) Transitional Provision

A transitional provision will permit Members to retain any SOCC calculated under the old rules until the date of the implementation of the amendment. Thereafter the new way of calculating interest accruing on SOCC will apply. Most DFA Members will not be immediately affected by this proposal.

B) Collateral Effects

As indicated previously, when a Member retires an amount equal to the CV of a Member's rights under the Plan is transferred from the Pension Trust Fund (PTF) to the RTF to fund the Member's future pension. The Pension Benefits Act prohibits any member of a plan from contributing more than one-half of the cost of the plan. In Dalhousie terms that means that to the extent one-half of the Member's SOCC exceeds one-half of the amount of the transferred CV, there is an "excess contribution" which will be refunded to a Member upon her retirement. The change in the calculation of interest accruing on SOCC will tend to gradually reduce this excess over time for the small number of members possibly entitled. Therefore in the future it is unlikely that retiring members will receive a cash payment (which is usually unexpected) of amount equal to their excess contributions—because they will not have any.

II. THE DEATH BENEFIT AMENDMENT

When a Pension Plan Member dies before she has begun her pension, her death benefit is equal to her SOCC except that the Member's spouse, if she has one, is guaranteed an amount not less than 60% of the CV.

New legislation has mandated that the minimum amount payable to the spouse must be 100% of the CV. The Dalhousie Plan must be amended accordingly.

In addition it is proposed that the definition of interest accruing on SOCC for the purposes of the death benefits also be amended to make it consistent with that for terminating benefits. This will mean that the importance of SOCC in the calculation of the death benefit will gradually reduce.

Finally, the amendment to the death benefit terms in the Pension Plan eliminates the present requirement that group life insurance received by a deceased member's spouse be subtracted in calculating the death benefit payable under the Pension Plan. The requirement is anomalous because it is not applicable if the group life insurance is paid to someone else in the deceased member's family, such as a child or anyone else for that matter. This is unfair (especially since many members do not appreciate its implications), encourages gaming of the system and/or designation of a beneficiary for the group life insurance other than the spouse.

The amendment will sever any tie between group life insurance and the calculation of death benefits.

This amendment was approved by the DFA Executive Committee at its meeting on April 19, 2016.

3. Indexing

There are two kinds of indexing of pensions-in-pay under the Dalhousie Pension Plan. There is automatic indexing which occurs when the return on assets exceeds the "return target" necessary for the ordinary operations of the Plan. The amount of automatic indexing in any year cannot exceed the cost of living less the return target. The other type of indexing is discretionary indexing which is used to catch up those years when the return on assets is less than the return target. Discretionary indexing is at the discretion of the trustees of the Retirees Trust Fund (RTF) (which includes one member from the DFA) when there is a surplus in the RTF.

In addition, discretionary indexing cannot be more than one-half the surplus.

4. Changes to the Pension Benefits Act of Nova Scotia

New Pension legislation was proclaimed in effect as of June 1, 2015. There are a number of provisions including changes to minimum benefit levels such as immediate vesting and a 100% of commuted value death benefit and many technical changes which will affect the operations of the pension plan regarding valuation measurement, and unfunded liability and solvency deficit funding.

PAC will be considering an omnibus amendment to the Pension Plan in response to these changes to the Act.

5. The Introduction of the University Pension Plan Transfer Act by the Province

The University Pension Plan Transfer Act was proclaimed to be in effect as of May 11, 2015.

The new Act will provide a mechanism "to Facilitate the Transfer of University Pension Plans to the Public Service Superannuation Plan." Generally it will be necessary for each university to negotiate the specific terms of the transfer subject to guidelines. Acadia University has already agreed to a transfer its Plan to the PSSP. The PSSP is not covered by the Pension Benefits Act as is the Dalhousie Plan, but by separate legislation.

It is noteworthy that the demographics of the Dalhousie Plan and the PSSP are different with the PSSP being comprised of a younger cohort.

This is for your information only, there is no proposal on the table.

Dalhousie University Pension Trust Fund/Retirees' Trust Fund

By Ron Pink, QC., DFA Trustee

It gives me great pleasure to report to the Dalhousie Faculty Association on the activities of the Dalhousie Pension Trust Fund and Dalhousie Retirees' Trust Fund.

The Dalhousie Faculty Association has appointed me as a Trustee on both the Retirees' Trust Fund and the Pension Trust Fund. I have had the pleasure of serving on the Trust for over five years.

The two Trust Funds meet concurrently with the Investment Committee of Dalhousie University's Board of Governors.

The Trustees for the Dalhousie Pension Trust Fund and the Dalhousie Retiree Trust Fund meet approximately four times per year and at every meeting the Plan's investment consultant is in attendance. The Plan has been well served by Segal Rogerscasey. Mr. Robert Mitchell is most experienced in the investment industry and provides sound advice to the Trustees. As you will see this later in this report, the efforts of Mr. Mitchell and the Dalhousie in-house staff of Colin Spinney and Nancy-Beth Foran have been most successful in providing sound results on behalf of the beneficiaries.

As you may recall from my report from last year, I advised Members of DFA about the issue of "Divest Dal". This issue has concerned the Board of Trustees. The issue continues to percolate under the surface and will be returning to the Trustees for consideration at the next meeting in April.

An issue which the DFA should be aware of concerns the study of the ongoing underfunding of the Pension Trust Fund. The study is to analyze the systemic concerns and issues surrounding this underfunding and any potential resolutions. The study is ongoing. No decision has been reached and no time table for a decision has been estimated.

As I suggested earlier, the funds continue to perform exceptionally well. The current fund status is as follows:

Pension Trust Fund – 85.4%

Retiree Trust Fund – 108.5%

As for investment performance over the past year, the results are as follows:

Pension Trust Fund – 8.35% - First quartile

Actuarial Funding Target: 6.00%

Policy Benchmark: 7.39%

Retirees' Trust Fund – 5.47% - Second quartile

Indexation Hurdle: 5.05%

Policy Benchmark: 6.16%

As you can appreciate in these turbulent economic times, these returns are significant and are adding real value to the Fund.

Over the past two, three and four years, the returns of the Fund have been as follows:

Pension Trust Fund

	2 years	3 years	4 years
Annual return	9.83%	11.99%	11.48%
Benchmark	8.86%	10.60%	10.08%

Quartile - 1st for the three years

Retirees' Trust Fund

	2 years	3 years	4 years
Annual return	7.57%	9.72%	9.65%
Benchmark	8.07%	9.12%	8.75%

Quartile - 2nd for all three years

Overall, as your Trustee on the Board of Trustees, I continue to be pleased with the investment return of the Fund and the overall management administered by Dalhousie. I continue to be ever watchful for the interests of the beneficiaries to ensure a secure retirement.

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)

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: in 2015-16, Jasmine Walsh (Assistant Vice-President (Acting), Human Resources) continued as the Board Co-Chair and David Gray (Dean, Faculty of Agriculture) and Sandy Logan (Academic HR Administrator) continued as Board Nominees. ABC operates by concurrent majority. Agendas largely concern the administration of certain clauses of the Collective Agreement, including matters that would otherwise not be in compliance with the Collective Agreement and matters that require the approval of ABC as defined in the Collective Agreement. ABC also deals with issues of broad concern to our membership.

ABC meets monthly to deal with particular and recurring items such as waivers of advertising, extensions of limited term appointments, spousal appointments, automatic renewals, special salary increases (SSIs), salaries above the maximum, administrative stipends, extensions to time-lines (e.g., anomalies fund, tenure limits), and parking fees. In addition, this past year we discussed advertising requirements for 14.16(b)(ii) appointments, a new job description template for instructors in the Faculty of Agriculture, membership of the MacRae Library Appointments Committee, the Joint Panel on the University Library System (Appendix XIII of Collective Agreement), procedures regarding appointment, reappointment, and tenure and promotion in the School of Dental Hygiene, equity and the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Awards (DDFA), the administration of the professional development allowance (PDA) across faculties, and the migration to Brightspace.

We held a special ABC meeting in November to discuss two issues that were not getting enough attention in our regular agenda-driven meetings (appointments under Article 14.16(b)(ii) and the Absence and Overtime Reporting

Superuser User Guide). We have been told that the latter issue is being rolled out for staff but will not be imposed on DFA Members unless units (e.g. departments) decide to use this system to administer leaves and absences. We would be interested in hearing from Members in units where this system is adopted.

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 some instances, items come late to ABC. For example, ABC might be asked to approve an appointment after the candidate has been informed or has actually arrived on campus. In such cases, it is difficult for ABC to do a proper review. In other cases, departmental pressure for urgent approval puts undue pressure on the ABC Nominees. We understand that in some cases timing issues are unavoidable, and in such instances the DFA Nominees do their best to accommodate. Still, ABC's responsibility is to thoroughly consider all matters, and, as appropriate, we remind the Board Nominees that consideration of items that come late to ABC might lead to outcomes that unnecessarily frustrate various parties.

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 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 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 2015/2016

A significant safety event occurred in the Tupper building in September and Security Services maximized efforts to ensure everyone's safety on campus.

The First Annual Environmental Health and Safety Expo was held on October 14th from 11:00 am to 2:30 pm in the Studley gymnasium.

It was very well attended by Dal staff, faculty and students with over 30 displays and demonstrations. Plans are being made for next year's event.

Audra Hayden (Dentistry) became the new Chair of the Committee in November.

Architecture and Planning (for the Faculty Workplace Safety Framework initiative) won this year's Environmental & Safety Award 2015. Honourable mention was bestowed to FM Security Services Team and Dalhousie Snow Removal Teams in Halifax and Truro.

The Committee's Terms of Reference were revised and signed by the University President in January 2016.

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 Training*
- Lab Safety Manual
- Safety Showers*
- Flame Resistant Clothing*
- Fire Extinguisher Simulator*

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.

Dalhousie University Transportation and Security Committee

By Gwendolyn MacNairn, DFA Representative

This committee meets on a monthly basis. The current Chair is Kathie Wheadon-Hore (the Dalplex Rep). Reporting to Senior Administration is done through Jeff Lamb (AVP, Facilities Management).

Transportation highlights

Issues discussed pertain to cars, buses, biking and walking – and how we can improve the experience of getting on and off our campuses in a timely manner. I would like to highlight four changes:

1. To encourage the use of active transportation, new bike racks have been installed on all campuses.
2. A new lot was purchased, called the Rosina lot, which is located on the Sexton Campus, along Queen Street, behind the Central Public Library. This added 200 spaces to the general permit parking pool, and resulted in us cancelling our lease with the Fenwick parking facility.
3. Anyone needing a parking space for a few hours during the day, can use the new Pay & Display area which was created in the former Arena Parking Lot, along Alumni Crescent (52 spaces available). These can be used for up to 4 hours at a time, and do not require having a permit.
4. Construction of the new Fitness Centre removed parking spaces that were previously located in the Dalplex lot (75 general permit spaces and 12 metered spaces).

Parking rates for 2016/2017 are not approved until they are presented and discussed at the May and June Committee Meetings. Although we had less snow this winter than the previous two years, the clearance costs are averaged over three years. The new rates will be posted online during the summer 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, 2016, 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

In response to events that were happening on the Carlton Campus in August and September, we understood the importance of knowing how to react to a critical incident. Each department has been encouraged to hold workshops to become familiar with the terminology and generate a plan on how to respond, if a critical incident were to occur - either in your building, or on your campus. In general, there are events when you should stay within your building and wait for the environment to be declared safe before you exit; and there are situations when it is best to exit the building, through secondary routes such as side-doors and back-doors. If this has not happened within the building where you work, current information can be found by downloading the DalSAFE app (onto your mobile device). Listed under the section: Critical Incident Response are two definitions (Threat and Critical Incident) and four stages (Hold Out, Get Out, Hide Out, and Take Out).

Dalhousie University Council on Employment Equity through Affirmative Action

By Jacqueline Gahagan, DFA Representative and Anne-Marie DeLorey, Acting Advisor, Human Rights and Equity

The Council has been very active since August 2015, preparing for the 2015 Census and then advising on employment equity initiatives, including reporting our work to the federal Labour Program under the Federal Contractors Program. The Council's work is incorporated into and is a valued part of the initiatives under Strategic Priority 5.2.

The Council on Employment Equity through Affirmative Action is a committee representing the Dalhousie Community and is appointed in accordance with Dalhousie's Policy on Employment Equity through Affirmative Action. The Council works with the Advisor, Human Rights and Equity and is comprised of representatives from each employee group and bargaining unit, members of five equity-seeking groups, the President of the Dal Student Union, three vice-presidents, the AVP Human Resources and the Advisor. The DFA representative is Jacqueline Gahagan.

In preparation for the 2015 Census, the Council was briefed on the status of employment equity initiatives at Dal and was consulted on the design of the census questions, the communications plan and the preparations to engage staff and faculty for the November launch. The Council discussed and advised on the response to the Federal Contractors Program First Compliance Report request. The Council was briefed on the initial stages of employment equity planning that would follow from the 2015 Census results which would ensure we met our obligations for that Compliance Report, due on June 30, 2016. In October we also added a new Council member, Barb Hamilton-Hinch, who represents racialized people at Dal.

Following the 2015 Census, the workforce analysis was completed and a confidential presentation was made to the Council. The Council discussed the implementation of the employment equity plan and particularly how to engage the Dalhousie community in supporting

implementation. The Council recently met to review the preparations for the Employment Systems Review and has advised on the inclusion of staff and faculty in discussing barriers to equitable employment at Dalhousie. The Council also decided to recruit a representative of the Dal community for Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity (SOGI) and Eddy Ng was welcomed to the Council.

Through the spring, the Council will continue to meet to support the preparation of the FCP compliance report and will start work to update the employment equity policy with the newly appointed Special Advisor, Diversity and Inclusiveness, Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard.

DFA Dialogue XXIX 2015-16

DFA Equity Committee

By Catrina Brown, Committee Chair

The DFA Equity Committee was created in 2014 to make recommendations to the Executive Committee on policies, issues and activities related to equity and diversity. The committee consists of Catrina Brown (Chair), Heather Andreas, Barbara Hamilton-Hinch, Jacqueline Gahagan, Nancy MacDonald, Cassandra Hanrahan and Donna Balkan (Communications Officer).

The Equity Committee held five meetings in 2015-16. In addition, the committee joined with the DFA Executive Committee for a workshop presented by CAUT Equity Officer Rosa Barker (November 2015) and a meeting with Norma Williams, recently appointed Dalhousie's Executive Director, Diversity and Inclusion (March 2015). The committee also devoted one of its meetings to meet with Anne-Marie DeLorey, Human Rights and Equity Advisor, to discuss the role and mandate of Dalhousie's Human Rights, Equity and Harassment Prevention Office.

One of the Equity Committee's first initiatives during the past year was to provide input into the Task Force on Misogyny, Sexism and Homophobia in the Faculty of Dentistry, headed by University of Ottawa Professor Constance Backhouse. In May 2014, four committee members met with Task Force member Nita Ayer and followed up the meeting with a written submission summarizing our comments. Concerns expressed by the committee included the lack of attention paid to homophobia and transphobia in Dalhousie equity initiatives; the lack of a safe, effective and confidential reporting system for incidents of harassment and sexual assault; and the unclear mandate of the Human Rights, Equity and Harassment Prevention Office. The committee also raised the potential for conflict between some of the recommendations of the Belong report – in particular, mandatory equity training for faculty and the signing of a 'statement of

commitment' – and the DFA collective agreement.

With the contract review process for a new collective agreement scheduled to start during the summer of 2016, a priority for the Equity Committee during the upcoming year will be to look at the agreement through an equity lens and recommend areas where equity and diversity-related provisions may be strengthened.

DFA Communications Co-ordination Committee

By Catrina Brown, Committee Chair

The DFA's Communications Co-ordination Committee was established to provide advice and assistance to the Executive Committee on communications issues and activities. Its purpose is to develop and implement communications plans, strategies and activities; ensure a consistent message; evaluate the effectiveness of DFA communication and provide guidance to the DFA Communications Officer. The committee reports to the Executive Committee on an ongoing basis and to members at the Annual General Meeting.

In 2015-16, the committee held four meetings and welcomed two new members – Kathy Cawsey and Jason Brown – in addition to existing members Catrina Brown (Chair), Darren Abramson and Donna Balkan (Communications Officer, ex officio).

Communications was one of the four main themes of the DFA Executive Committee strategic planning meeting in September 2015, and much of the discussion centred around how to better inform and engage our members.

In February 2016, the Communications Co-ordination Committee initiated the development of a new electronic vehicle for member communications, a monthly e-bulletin entitled News You Can Use. The primary purpose of this e-bulletin is to share links to articles on issues in post-secondary education that would interest DFA members, although it would also include some DFA-related news. The first issue of News You Can Use was distributed on March 2, 2016, and future issues will come out during the first week of every month.

Other communications highlights of 2015-16 included:

- The Get Science Right town hall meeting held in September 2015 in collaboration with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) and the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers (ANSUT).

Held just prior to the federal election, the event attracted some 200 people to the Halifax Central Library to hear from a panel of scientists and science advocates. The event also generated significant media coverage, including a column by Claire McIlveen in the Chronicle Herald and a CBC Radio interview with DFA Member and Get Science Right panelist Tom Duck.

- The release of the updated Review of Dalhousie University Finances in February 2016. The DFA published both a report and a brochure, which were distributed at a General Meeting and at local Membership meetings around Dalhousie. An op-ed article about the report by David Mensink was published in Halifax Metro, Darren Abramson was interviewed on CBC Radio's Information Morning, and the report was covered by the Dalhousie Gazette.
- A total of 44 news items and 16 blog posts were posted on the DFA website since April 2015.
- A total of 192 tweets on the @dalfacultyassoc Twitter feed between April 2015 and March 2016. As of March 31, 2016, we have a total of 730 Twitter followers, increased from 601 at the same time the previous year.
- A total of 74 posts on the DFA's Facebook page between April 2015 and March 2016. As of March 31, the page has a total of 141 "likes", up from 119 at the same time the previous year.

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 2016, fourteen students have been awarded graduate degrees under SASEP. The two most recent students were admitted on SASEP scholarships for the 2014-2015 academic year. Shingirai Taodzera from Zimbabwe graduated with an MA in Political Science in fall 2015 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 until July 1, 2016 at which time Dr. Matthew Schnurr from IDS will take over as chair.

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. We plan to recruit again in the fall of 2016 for one placement at the MA level.

We are very grateful for the support Dalhousie faculty and students have provided to this programme 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.

Dalhousie University-World University Service of Canada Student Refugee Sponsorship Program

By Theresa Ulicki, Halifax WUSC Faculty Advisor and Anne LeLacheur, Truro WUSC Faculty Advisor

The DFA participates in the Dalhousie University-WUSC Student Refugee Sponsorship Programme (SRSP), which sponsors refugee students to come study at Dalhousie. Other partners include the Administration, Student Union, Student Services, Bookstore, Alumni Association, Chartwell's and Aramark. The SRSP operates on both the Truro and Halifax campuses. Together, we sponsor three students a year for an initial twelve month period. The Halifax committee has sponsored nearly 60 students since first joining the programme in 1981. This year Truro celebrated its 30th 'Birthday' and sponsorship of its 25th student by holding an information session complete with cake for the campus.

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. In the past couple of years WUSC-Ottawa began sponsoring refugee students from Syria and Iraq. The selection process is highly competitive and takes from eighteen to twenty-four months. Upon arrival in Canada, 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 the Truro campus was pleased to welcome Pacifique Nicholas, he is from Rwanda, but has been in the Dzaleka Refugee camp in Malawi since 2000. He has enjoyed his first winter in Canada and has successfully completed his first year of Engineering. The Halifax campus sponsored two students, Monica Peter and Sami Al-Doss. Monica is originally from South Sudan, but has lived in asylum in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya since she was a young child. Sami is from Syria, which he fled in 2012, and was living in Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan.

With a few exceptions, the Halifax WUSC SRSP has sponsored male students in the past, but in the past 4 years it has made a special effort to sponsor women and has sponsored a female student in each of these years. Both Sami and Monicah are adjusting well to Dalhousie and life in Halifax. Both the Truro and Halifax committees will soon be helping these students 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.

This year the University ran a very successful fundraising campaign to support the WUSC programme on both campuses. Just over \$30,000 was raised – in no small part due to the generous \$5,000 donation made by the DFA – and all funds were matched by the University administration. In total, the campaign raised nearly \$61,000. Additionally the student levy at the Halifax campus has been increased from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per student. (Students on the Truro campus pay a student levy of \$4.00 per year.) The University has also committed to further increasing its support of WUSC students. Starting next year, the University will be providing tuition support and residence and meals for an additional 2 students. The DFA Finance Committee recommends support for summer residence for four WUSC students (Halifax campus) and one WUSC student (Truro campus) for the 2016-2017 fiscal year, subject to final 2016-17 budget approval at the AGM.

This combined with the funds raised means WUSC Halifax will be able to increase its sponsorship to 4 students for the 2016-2017 academic year and Truro will be in a position to better support its current students. Both committees are in the process of reviewing and ranking applications now.

The Halifax 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. Truro also held several fund raising events such as Glow in the Dark Zumba and an Easter Gift Tree.

The programme 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 programme!

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 Truro and Halifax on holidays or weekends, helping them in their studies and encouraging their students to become involved.

Furthermore, after 5 years as Faculty Advisor for the Halifax campus programme, Theresa Ulicki will be stepping down in January 2017. If you wish to take on this rewarding position, please contact Theresa at ulickit@dal.ca. For more general information about WUSC, please feel free to contact the committee at wusc@dal.ca (Halifax) or anne.lelacheur@dal.ca (Truro).

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 1443 Seymour Street
Telephone: (902) 494-3722
Email: dfa@dal.ca

DFA Executive Committee 2016-2017

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

David Mensink (Chair), Laurene Rehman, Joanne Mills

The following people have been elected by acclamation for positions on the 2016-2017 DFA Executive Committee and will take office at the end of the Annual General Meeting

President-Elect: Darren Abramson (Philosophy)

Second Vice-President: Cindy Penney (Physiology & Biophysics)

Secretary: Jason Brown (Mathematics & Statistics)

Treasurer: David Mensink (Counselling & Psychological Services)

Members-at-Large (*Two years: term ending April 2018*):

Catrina Brown (Social Work)
Carrie Dawson (English)
Lori Dithurbide (Health and Human Performance)
Thomas Duck (Physics & Atmospheric Science)
Elizabeth Kay-Raining Bird (Human Communication Disorders)

Member-at-Large (*One year: term ending April 2017*):

Deborah Tamlyn (Nursing)

They will join the following people on the 2016-2017 DFA Executive Committee

President: Laurene Rehman (Health and Human Performance)

Past President: David Mensink (Counselling & Psychological Services)

Members-at-Large (*Term ending April 2017*)

Jennifer Adams (Sir James Dunn Law Library)
Sarah Jane Dooley (Sexton Design & Technology Library)
Debbie Mellish (Environmental Sciences)
Bruce Rathgeber (Plant & Animal Sciences)

The Non-Bargaining Unit position remains vacant.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

PIERRE STEVENS
AND
ELIZABETH KAY-RAINING BIRD

CAUT Dedicated Service Award recipients

