



News & Views

April 2010

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UGFA
Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday May 20 @ 10:00 a.m. in UC 442

Update on Collective Agreement– Interest Based Arbitration is Proceeding

As part of the Collective Agreement, a letter of understanding (LOU #5) with proposals and recommendations for the career progression and peer review for veterinarian members was to be developed jointly by a committee consisting of representatives from UGFA and the University Administration. The UGFA Veterinarians Committee and the University have met on numerous occasions over the past 18 months and exchanged several drafts of language. The UGFA committee has administered two Members surveys and held a number of Member meetings to adopt principles, develop positions and keep Members in the Animal Health Lab (AHL) and Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) informed.

UGFA positions and proposed language have been based on the notion of ‘parallelism’ with other UGFA bargaining unit Members. A single article, covering continuing appointment (permanent status equivalent to tenure), promotion and review, was drafted to closely model Librarians given the similarities in the two groups’ work environments.

Based on discussions and the draft proposals, UGFA believed that we had reached some level of agreement on a number of core issues. Despite these promising developments, the UGFA has had great difficulty determining the exact nature of many of the University’s demands and principles in this process.

On March 1, 2010, the University attempted to introduce several issues not previously tabled (linkage between performance review and dismissal, removal of rank title – assistant/associate/full, introduction of non-peer performance review within the article and the removal of the right of Members to develop their own Departmental Guidelines).

These changes, introduced in the most recent University draft, have led directly to the UGFA Veterinarian Committee calling for interest based arbitration; essentially, the committee believes that agreement with the University on the issues outlined in the Letter of Understanding is not possible without outside intervention and assistance. The UGFA Executive unanimously endorsed a motion to support the commencement of interest arbitration proceedings.

How could these issues impact Members of UGFA (including Faculty and Librarians)?

- *Linking annual performance review with the opportunity for dismissal of Veterinarian Members holding continuing appointment is akin to adopting a post-tenure system of review for faculty that could lead to dismissal outside of the normal discipline procedures;*
- *By insisting on a remarkably different process for one group of the bargaining unit within the collective agreement, the administration may use this as a means to seek similar concessions for Faculty and Librarians;*
- *University efforts to confuse and minimize the importance of peer review for Veterinarian Members within UGFA run contrary to the principles upon which the Association represents all of its Members (academic integrity, fairness, equity, due process);*
- *Proposals that link important employment issues such as hospital privileges, access to research funds etc. with performance raise serious questions about the University's motives towards all UGFA Members;*
- *A challenge to the rights of any of our Union's Members is a challenge to you as part of the Association.*

Know your Collective Agreement

1. Can there be 'involuntary job reductions' for faculty?

What would be the process? What happens during reorganization? Does the Collective Agreement offer any protection?

Most importantly, Members must understand that the only way they may be terminated is through:

- ✚ Financial Exigency which must be publicly declared by the University and for which there is a process stipulated within the Collective Agreement (Article 55); or,
- ✚ through the discipline process.

The non-renewal of a contractually-limited appointment is not a termination nor is retirement.

The collective agreement states that "When the University approves a reorganization which involves the closure, reduction, amalgamation, or transfer of an academic program or programs which may lead to the transfer of one or more Members, a Redeployment Advisory Committee will be struck by the Provost to provide advice on measures needed to effect the reorganization, including (where applicable) redeployment, buyout or retirement." (Article 24.3) If it has been decided that reorganization will occur, the process includes the Dean discussing with affected Member's his/her career goals and perceived fit with other units. The Dean then makes a recommendation to the Provost and the Provost will inform the Member in writing of the decision for the transfer. The Member must then accept the transfer or request, in writing, that a buy-out or retirement option be initiated.

2. Promotion and Tenure Dates

The Collective Agreement introduced some changes in the dates and processes for Tenure and Promotion decisions. A summary of dates and references to the relevant sections of the Collective Agreement are provided here for your convenience. Read your Collective Agreement!

P&T Timelines

Promotion and Tenure - Faculty Activity	Date	Article
<p>Dept. Chair issues a memo to all Faculty Members addressing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All applications for the granting of tenure and/or promotion are due to the Chair by August 15th b. All materials for the purpose of performance review and assessment are due to the Chair by August 15th c. The Chair will arrange with each Member to meet prior to the commencement of deliberations. (Actual meeting to occur prior to the end of August) d. In cases where the Faculty Member anticipates he/she will be submitting an application for Tenure and/or promotion, that he/she start discussion with the Chair regarding appropriate external assessors for his/her case in June. e. The Dean is available to meet upon request, to review the Faculty Member Assessment File. (Prior to the end of August.) f. Failure to submit the Assessment File (without prior approval from the Dean/Provost) will result in an unsatisfactory assessment and, in the final year of candidacy for Tenure will result in the termination of the Member's appointment. 	June 1	21.16 (a), 21.20, 21.21, 21.32, 21.34, 21.55, 21.56
<p>The Chair and the Faculty Member will agree on a list of acceptable external assessors and will forward this list to the Dean. If agreement cannot be reached the Department Committee will decide on the acceptable assessors.</p>	Starting in June	21.17 (a) to (f)
<p>Chair will ensure that documentation pertaining to the Member's DOE and teaching/course evaluations is properly included in the Faculty Member's file prior to the commencement of the committee deliberations.</p> <p>Member's have the right to view their file after giving two days notice.</p>	By Sept. 3	21.21 14.9
<p>Department Committee proceeds with reviewing files</p>	Sept. 13	21.18- 21.36

Call for Committee Members - We Need Your Help

One of the important tasks UGFA has is just “keeping up” with what’s going on! As part of that task, the Faculty Association Executive approved the formation of two committees, who have been asked to look at what’s going on in two significant areas of our working world. We need interested Members to participate in these groups, to determine where there are issues of concern to UGFA Members, to become informed about those issues, and to suggest to UGFA Executive and Council - as well as the Faculty Senate Caucus and Senate - some approaches that might be used to deal with matters in a way that takes into account the interests of both Members and of the whole University. **If you would be willing to participate - or if you can suggest people who would be valuable on these committees - please let us know!**

The first committee is concerned with **Workload and Curriculum Change** (WCC). Issues could include how changes in curriculum and course offerings affect us, transparency in teaching assignments, class sizes, TA assistance, time for development of new courses, on-line teaching, course-release arrangements, impact of accessibility requirements - and so much more! With enough volunteers, we would break the group into sub-units for colleges with related interests: CSAHS & COA; OVC-AHL-VTH; CBS & CPES; CME & OAC and the Library.

A second committee approved by UGFA Executive is the **Administrative Oversight Committee**, and it is also looking for volunteers. Again, it is important that we pay attention to what’s going on - whether it is about reorganization of academic units, a burgeoning administrative superstructure, perceptions that the quality of education is changing, pension plan problems, or things that people believe must be true because a dean said so! If this sounds like your kind of rabble-rousers or if you know someone who would be just perfect for the job - please contact us!

Both these committees will be critical in informing and guiding UGFA Executive and Council. Equally or more important, they will provide the basis on which UGFA will be able to **communicate with our Members, so that they can understand just what is going on, and provide suitable feedback - to UGFA, to Senate, and to the university community as a whole.**

For the important task of communicating and reporting feedback to members, we are seeking volunteers for a **Communications Committee**, which will prepare and edit material that will appear in UGFA *News & Views* and also in our *Negotiator*.

For further information on any of these committees please contact Sue Hubers at the UGFA Office (ext. 52126 or shubers@uoguelph.ca).

“Retiring” Issues

Age 65 *used* to be when folks sniffed that magic air of freedom - or got sized up for a presentation rocking chair. Although Ontario removed mandatory retirement, there are still issues that concern those approaching age 65, whether or not they intend to retire at that point.

- **“Golden handshakes”** - you may hear about some of these options, or better yet, you can READ about them in your collective agreement! Pay attention to page 193 (letter of Understanding #10), and note that this offer is conditional (requires approvals) and is for Members who are between 55 and 65 - *under* 65. A “Phased Retirement” approach is available for faculty between ages 55-67 (Article 53.38-.46).
- Research-active faculty who are retired or considering it may be unaware of a *de facto* policy of terminating NSERC (or other?) research grants of retired research-active faculty. This was brought to the attention of UGFA by a retiree in such a position, and may be a concern to potential retirees. Ask, don’t assume!